

# World of Work

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## WORLD PARLIAMENT OF LABOUR TURNS 100





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# ILO in History

## The International Labour



In October of 1919, the first International Labour Conference (ILC) opened in an atmosphere of hope and anticipation. As delegates gathered in Washington, D.C., they were about to set in motion elements of the Treaty of Versailles that concerned the world of work. By the end of the Conference on 29 November – a full month later – six Conventions, six Recommendations and 19 resolutions had been adopted.

But the Conference not only adopts international labour standards, it also sets the broad policies of the ILO. A good example is the Global Jobs Pact adopted by the ILC 90 years after its first session in 1919. Following the global economic and financial crisis, the Global Jobs Pact proposes a wide range of response measures that countries can adapt to their specific needs and situation.

Today, the International Labour Conference meets once a year in June, in Geneva, Switzerland. Occasionally, the ILO prepares special Maritime Sessions of the International Labour Conference – since 1919, ten of these sessions have been

# Conference: Motor of the ILO



*Delegates to the First Session of the International Labour Conference, Washington D.C. (1919)*

held. This is why we are already heading for the 100th Session of the annual Conference this year – well ahead of the 100th anniversary of the Organization.

In this world parliament of labour, each ILO member State is represented by a delegation consisting of two government delegates, an employer delegate, a worker delegate, and their respective advisers. Many of the government representatives are cabinet ministers responsible for labour affairs in their own countries.

Employer and worker delegates are nominated in agreement with the most representative national organizations of the social partners.

Worker and employer delegates to the Conference often challenge political convenience and the views of ministries, adding the perspectives of enterprises and workers' rights to government

**“EVERY DELEGATE HAS THE SAME RIGHTS, AND ALL CAN EXPRESS THEMSELVES FREELY AND VOTE AS THEY WISH”**

priorities. Every delegate has the same rights, and all can express themselves freely and vote as they wish. Worker and employer delegates may sometimes vote against their government's representatives or against each other. This diversity of viewpoints, however, does not prevent decisions being adopted by very large majorities or in some cases even unanimously. ■

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# Cover Story

## 1919–2011: ILO Conferences in changing times

### Working conditions: Setting the trend

From its earliest days the International Labour Organization developed a mandate that was quite distinct from the rest of the League of Nations, the forerunner of the United Nations founded in 1919. While the League was established with considerable difficulty, the ILO was in full swing early in its existence. Its first years were marked by its exceptional first Director, Albert Thomas, a Secretariat engaged in interactive dialogue with labour ministers and an International Labour Conference overflowing with energy. Between 1919 and 1920 alone, nine Conventions and ten Recommendations were adopted that changed the face of the world of work.



*The first Director of the ILO, Albert Thomas from France*

### Promoting international labour standards: Establishment of ILO supervisory procedures

International labour standards are backed by a supervisory system that is unique at the international level and that helps to ensure that countries implement the Conventions they ratify. The ILO regularly examines the application of standards in

member States and points out areas where they could be better applied. If there are any problems in the application of standards, the ILO seeks to assist countries through social dialogue and technical assistance.



The ILO has played a role at key historical junctures – the Great Depression, decolonization, the creation of Solidarność in Poland, the victory over apartheid in South Africa – and today in the building of an ethical and productive framework for a fair globalization. The 100th Session of the International Labour Conference in

June 2011 is an occasion to look back at some of its landmark sessions since 1919. It remains the only international conference where governments share national representation with employer and worker delegates – a basic feature of its work down the years which has enabled the ILO to stay attuned to social and economic priorities.

The first ILO Convention dealt with the regulation of working time, one of the oldest concerns of labour legislation. The dangers to workers' health and to their families of working excessive hours had already been recognized in the 19th century. The Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1) established the famous eight-hour day and the 48-hour week. Hours of work remained on the ILO agenda throughout

the 1920s and 1930s and the Organization was the principal forum for international debate and the adoption of international labour standards on the issue. Today, ILO standards on working time provide the framework for regulated hours of work, daily and weekly rest periods, and annual holidays. These instruments ensure high productivity while safeguarding workers' physical and mental health.



The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations was set up in 1926 to examine the growing number of government reports on ratified Conventions. Today it is composed of 20 eminent jurists appointed by the ILO Governing Body for three-year terms. The Committee's role is to provide an impartial and technical evaluation of the state of application of international labour standards. The reports of the Committee of Experts and the Conference

Committee on the Application of Standards are available on the Internet to millions of users. Governments and the social partners thus have an even greater incentive to solve problems in the application of standards in order to avoid critical comments by these bodies. Upon request by member States, the ILO provides substantial technical assistance in drafting and revising national legislation to ensure its conformity with international labour standards.



*The ILO Committee on the Application of Standards meeting at the 1939 and 2010 Sessions of the International Labour Conference*





## The Great Depression: Promoting a “new deal” for the world economy

In the early 1930s, the Organization’s work was directly linked to proposing solutions for the overriding problem of the time – the Great Depression. This global economic crisis had begun in 1929 and led swiftly to mass unemployment in many countries. But the unprecedented rise in unemployment overwhelmed the capacity of the then known mechanisms of coping with unemployment, namely

unemployment insurance. There was clearly a dire need for additional instruments of policy to counteract the widespread social distress that had been generated by the economic collapse.

The ILO responded well to this challenge. It was in the forefront of the advocacy of a coordinated international effort to bring about a recovery of the global economy. Following a



## Declaration of Philadelphia: Securing basic human and economic rights

The ILO’s work was severely hampered by the Second World War. The League of Nations, with which the ILO was associated, was defunct and the ILO was evacuated from Europe to Montreal. If the ILO survived and was soon in full swing again, this was largely due to adoption of the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944. The Declaration



## Freedom of association: Consolidating the foundations of the ILO

The Declaration of Philadelphia also opened the door for new ILO standards on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. In 1948, the International Labour Conference adopted the Freedom of Association and the Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87). The right to organize and form employers’ and workers’ organizations is the prerequisite for sound collective bargaining and social dialogue between the social partners – protected by the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining

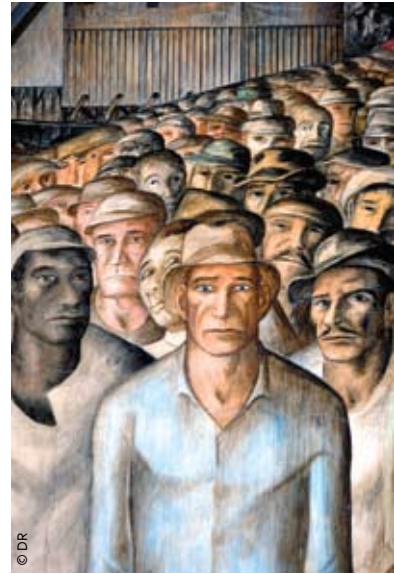




number of articles in the ILO's *International Labour Review* and a major report in 1931, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution in 1932 calling for a comprehensive programme of concerted international action on monetary, trade and public works policies as a means of overcoming the Great Depression.

The focus on public works in the 1930s was in tune with

contemporary progressive thought on economic and social policy. In the United States, the orthodox monetary and fiscal policies which had led to the Great Depression were replaced by President Roosevelt's New Deal. In 1934, the ILC adopted the Unemployment Provision Convention (No. 44), later revised in 1988 by the Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention (No. 168).



states that labour is not a commodity and sets out basic human and economic rights under the principle that "poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere".

The Declaration of Philadelphia provided the basis for a broader mandate in the world that emerged from the war. With its adoption, and its incorporation into the ILO Constitution in 1946, a new phase of standard-

setting activities was launched. The instruments adopted in the decade following the Second World War laid down the intellectual foundation of much of the subsequent human rights standard-setting in the United Nations. These standards have exercised a major influence in setting a floor under workplace policies, and human rights more generally, in the emerging post-colonial world.



US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and ILO Director-General Edward Phelan signing the Declaration

Convention, 1949 (No. 98) adopted by the Conference one year later.

The right to organize is deeply rooted in political democracy, which cannot function fully unless freedom of association is recognized. Trade union leaders are often in the front line of political change in favour of greater democracy, and in many cases are assassinated, imprisoned or exiled for their beliefs and their actions.

In the following decades, the ILO's successful engagement in Poland,



where an electrician named Lech Walesa led a strike that launched the first independent, self-governing trade union in the then Eastern bloc, and later became President of that country, was not unique. Following the

Lech Walesa with ILO Director-General Francis Blanchard

coup d'état in Chile in 1973, the ILO was the only international organization allowed into the country to investigate a human rights complaint: the worst of the restrictions of freedom of association were removed in 1979, though the restoration of democracy took much longer. A limited but important number of cases before ILO supervisory bodies have also defended employers' rights vigorously.



## Gender equality: Promoting more and better jobs for women

With growing numbers of women entering the workforce during and after the Second World War, the ILO began to reformulate the “women’s concerns”, along with others, as one of human rights and a demand for equality. The way was now open for the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), which was adopted in 1951 and went well beyond the “equal pay for equal work” provision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted three years earlier.

Today the four key ILO gender equality Conventions are the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); and Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183).

Convention No. 111 broadened the field by including sex as a prohibited ground of discrimination, and ILO Conventions

## Adoption of the Declaration on Apartheid

The fight against apartheid in South Africa marked the first major test of ILO policies in favour of equality. In 1964 the International Labour Conference unanimously approved the Declaration concerning the Policy of Apartheid of the Republic of South Africa and the ILO programme for the elimination of apartheid in the field of labour. The Declaration reasserted the principle of equal opportunity, condemned the South African Government’s racial policy and demanded that South Africa renounce its policy of apartheid.

In order to avoid being officially excluded, the Republic of South Africa withdrew from the

ILO of its own accord, notifying its departure on 11 March 1964. The 1964 Declaration requested the Director-General to submit a special report every year to the Conference,



## The fight against child labour: Accelerating action

Child labour has preoccupied the ILO since its early days, when the First Session of the International Labour Conference adopted the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 5), fixing the minimum age for employment of children in industry at 14 years. The ratification rate of the early ILO Conventions on child labour, however, was slow throughout the long period up to 1973 when a new ILO Convention covering the entire economy was adopted, the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment Convention (No. 138).



Nos. 100 and 111 were the first ratifiable international instruments with the specific aim of promoting equality and elimination of discrimination. Convention No. 183 provides for 14 weeks of maternity leave to women living in ratifying countries.



which was put before a special committee until 1994. These reports demonstrate how international pressure against apartheid evolved over more than 25 years, ending with boycott and isolation of apartheid South Africa and coupled with increased material support for the national liberation movements and trade unions fighting apartheid.

In 1990, Nelson Mandela, then Vice-President of the African National Congress (ANC), attended the 77th Session of the ILC, where he paid tribute to the ILO for its struggle against apartheid. South Africa rejoined the Organization on 26 May 1994, three years after the official abrogation of the apartheid laws and ten days after the election of Nelson Mandela as President of the Republic.

In June 2007, the ILO awarded its first annual Decent Work Research Prize jointly to Nelson Mandela and Professor Carmelo Mesa-Lago, in recognition of their unique personal contribution to improving the lives of people around the world.



*Nelson Mandela at the International Labour Conference (1990)*



It was only with the adoption of Convention No. 138 and the creation of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in 1992 that the movement picked up steam. Against the background of the growing concern that certain forms of child labour are so grave and

inhumane that they can no longer be tolerated, the 87th Session of the Conference unanimously adopted another instrument, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). Some 95 per cent of the ILO's member States have now ratified it, while some 85 per cent have ratified Convention No. 138.





## Promoting responsible business through the MNE Declaration

In the 1960s and 1970s, the activities of multinational enterprises (MNEs) provoked intense discussions that resulted in efforts to draw up international instruments for regulating their conduct and defining the terms of their relations with host countries, mostly in the developing world.

Labour-related and social policy issues were among the concerns to which the activities of MNEs gave rise, and were the subject of hot debate during the 1970s, especially at the World Employment Conference in 1976. The ILO's search for international guidelines in its sphere of competence resulted, in 1977, in the adoption by the ILO Governing Body of the Tripartite Declaration of



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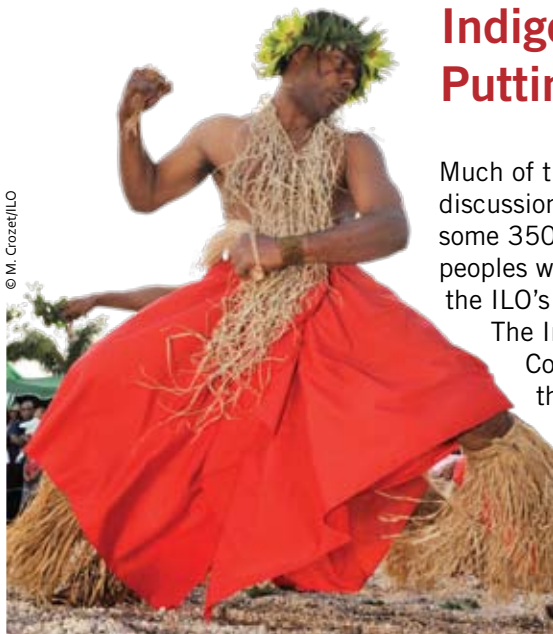
## Promoting safety and health at the workplace

According to the ILO, about 80 per cent of occupational deaths and accidents could be prevented if all ILO member States would use the best accident prevention strategies and practices that are already in place and easily available. Almost half of the 188 Conventions adopted by the International Labour Conference since 1919 have a bearing on health and safety issues.

In 1981, the Conference adopted the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155), which remains a cornerstone in the system of ILO standards on occupational safety and health (OSH) covering a wide



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## Indigenous and tribal peoples: Putting rights into practice

Much of the contemporary discussion about the rights of some 350 million indigenous peoples worldwide is based on the ILO's work on this issue.

The International Labour Conference has adopted the only two international Conventions dealing with indigenous and tribal peoples: the Indigenous and Tribal Populations

Convention, 1957 (No. 107) and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

Convention No. 169, which revised Convention No. 107, provides for the consultation and participation of indigenous and tribal peoples with regard to policies and programmes that may affect them. It provides for enjoyment of fundamental rights and establishes general policies

Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration). In 1979, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution concerning follow-up to the World Employment Conference, urging full utilization of its follow-up procedures including a reporting system on the effect given to the MNE Declaration in the member States of the ILO.

The principles laid down in the MNE Declaration offer guidelines to MNEs, governments, and employers' and workers' organizations in such areas as employment, training, conditions of work and life, and industrial relations. Its provisions are reinforced by certain international labour Conventions and Recommendations which the

social partners are urged to bear in mind and apply, to the greatest extent possible.

The MNE Declaration has since been joined by other international instruments, including the UN's Global Compact introduced in 1999, as well as by other international initiatives. Encouragingly, today there is much greater recognition in the business community of the importance of corporate social responsibility than there was in 1977. Nevertheless, the ILO Declaration remains unique in having been produced by the ILO's tripartite process of social dialogue – a global agreement negotiated by representatives of both employers and workers, with a positive message at its core. It is a valuable tool in the global journey towards socially responsible labour practices.



range of sectors and generic hazards. Prevention is at the heart of these standards and is embedded in the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 197), which seek to promote a preventative safety and health culture, together with management systems for safety and health through national policies, systems and programmes.

regarding customs and traditions, land rights, the use of natural resources found on traditional lands, vocational training for employment, handicrafts and rural industries, social security and health, education, and cross-border contacts and communication.

Over the years, many countries have adopted or amended legislation putting Convention No. 169 into practice. A number of Latin American countries, including Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, have recognized in their constitutions the multi-ethnic character of their respective populations. In 1995, the Government of Guatemala

and four insurgent groups signed the Agreement on the Identity and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the basis for the peace process in the country. In 1987, for its part, Norway set up a parliament for the Sami people with consultative and limited administrative authority. Denmark has set up Greenland Home Rule authorities so that many local matters may be governed by and for the Inuit peoples of Greenland.





## Building a social floor for all: ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

On 18 June 1998, the ILC was poised to adopt the Organization's first explicit and comprehensive statement of a commitment to human rights since the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944. Although the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work now enjoys universal support, it was a matter of considerable controversy at the time as many developing countries were afraid that it would undermine their ability to take advantage of low-cost labour to maintain their export markets.

The principles and rights the Declaration refers to include the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining and the elimination of child labour, forced labour and discrimination linked to employment. The key feature of this instrument was its universality – it laid down principles and rights that all countries were to respect by virtue of their membership of the ILO, irrespective of whether they had ratified the standards concerned.

## Decent jobs for all: Launch of the Decent Work Agenda



*The Dignity of Labour by Maurice Denis in the former ILO Building*

## Extending social security to all

In 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose Article 22 recognized that “Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security”. In 1952, the ILO adopted the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention (No. 102), and in 2001 it decided to launch a Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for all.

The Global Campaign consists of two dimensions. The first “horizontal” dimension comprises the extension of basic income security and access to health care, even if at a modest level, to the whole population. The second “vertical” dimension would seek to provide higher levels of income security and access to higher quality health care at a level that protects the standard of living of people



It thus could be seen as a first step towards building a social floor to the global economy. It also included a follow-up to assist countries in realizing these principles, and regular reporting on progress towards them. Opinion on the Declaration was not unanimous, but in practice, the outcome has been an increase in the rate of ratification of the eight core labour Conventions concerned, and all have now been ratified by more than 80 per cent of ILO member States.

© ILO PHOTO



*Final vote on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*

Initiated in 1999 by ILO Director-General Juan Somavia, the Decent Work Agenda promotes a development strategy that recognizes the central role of work in everyone's life. The ILO provides support in the form of integrated decent work programmes developed at country level with its constituents.

These programmes set priorities and targets within national development frameworks and aim to tackle major decent work shortcomings through effective programmes that meet each of the ILO's four strategic objectives:

to promote and implement the standards and fundamental principles and rights at work; to enhance opportunities for men and women to obtain decent employment and wages; to expand the scope and heighten the effectiveness of social protection for all; and to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

In his report to the 87th Session of the International Labour Conference, the Director-General recalled the issues inherent in the concept of decent work: "The ILO is concerned with decent work. The goal is not just the creation

of jobs, but the creation of jobs of acceptable quality. The quantity of employment cannot be divorced from its quality. All societies have a notion of decent work, but the quality of employment can mean many things. It could relate to different forms of work, and also to different conditions of work, as well as feelings of value and satisfaction. The need today is to devise social and economic systems which ensure basic security and employment while remaining capable of adaptation to rapidly changing circumstances in a highly competitive global market."



© DR

even when faced with fundamental life contingencies such as unemployment, ill health, invalidity, old age or loss of a breadwinner.

Meanwhile, the UN's High Level Committee on Programmes is developing a common "One UN" concept for its Social Protection Floor Initiative. Together with the World Health Organization (WHO) and a number of other agencies, the ILO is leading the task.



## A bill of rights for seafarers

*Second (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference in Genoa, Italy (1920)*

From its first days, the member States of the ILO realized that in the world of work, seafarers and shipowners were different. Not land-based but working on the seas, they not only moved huge amounts of world trade even 90 years ago, but represented the most fluid and wide-ranging workforce on the planet. In 1920, the ILO held its 2nd International Labour Conference in Genoa, Italy, devoted to seafarers. In all, ten Maritime Sessions of the International Labour Conference have adopted 68 Maritime Conventions and Recommendations, covering all aspects of working conditions at sea.

But times change, and so has the volume of trade carried by sea. Eventually, it became



## Promoting social justice in times of uncertainty: ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization

Amid widespread uncertainty in the world of work, ranging from financial turmoil and economic downturn to growing unemployment, informality and insufficient social protection, the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference adopted a landmark Declaration designed to strengthen the ILO's capacity to promote its Decent Work Agenda and forge an effective response to the growing challenges of globalization.

Through the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, governments, employers and workers from all member States call for a new strategy to sustain open economies and open societies based on social justice, full and productive employment, sustainable enterprises and social cohesion. The Declaration acknowledges the benefits of globalization

## Tracing a path out of the global crisis: The Global Jobs Pact

Faced with the prospect of prolonged unemployment, poverty and inequality and the continuing collapse of enterprises, the 98th Session of the International Labour Conference in 2009 adopted a Global Jobs Pact designed to guide national and international policies aimed at stimulating economic recovery, generating jobs and providing protection to working people and their families.

The Global Jobs Pact was adopted following strong support voiced during a three-day ILO

Global Jobs Summit by heads of state and government, vice-presidents and ministers of labour, worker and employer representatives and other leaders. At the same time, the summit also provided strong support for an enhanced involvement of the ILO in the G20.

The Pact urges measures to retain persons in employment, to sustain enterprises and to accelerate employment creation and jobs recovery combined with social protection systems, in particular for the most vulnerable,

clear that the seafarers working on the “supertankers” and other ships needed a “super-Convention” that not only covered their needs but addressed the need of the shipowners and governments for fair competition as well. Thus, the most recent ILO Convention was born. The 94th International Labour Conference adopted the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, in February, providing a comprehensive labour standard and setting the tone for future Conventions that will regulate not only a sector but address the issues posed by globalization. The new standard is not only a landmark of the seas but a pioneering contribution to making globalization fair.

*Adoption of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006*



but calls for renewed efforts to implement decent work policies as the means to achieve improved and fair outcomes for all.

The Declaration marks the most important renewal of the Organization since adoption of the historic Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944. In addition, it is a significant step forward in respecting, promoting and realizing the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work adopted by the ILO in 1998.

*Maat, the old Egyptian goddess of truth and justice... The word “maat” can be translated as “justice”, “truth” and “world order”*

integrating gender concerns in all measures. It also calls for the construction of a “stronger, more globally consistent supervisory and regulatory framework for the financial sector, so that it serves the real economy, promotes sustainable enterprises and decent work and better protects the savings and pensions of people”.

*In September 2009, world leaders of the G20 meeting in Pittsburgh welcomed the ILO Global Jobs Pact and committed to “putting quality jobs at the heart of the recovery”*





# Photo Report

## Fighting forced labour through labour inspection

### A photo report from Brazil

The following photo report on a Special Mobile Inspection Group (GEFM) mission to the Rio Negro region has been sent to us by Fernando Antonio de Araujo Lima Junior, chief of the Labour Inspection Division for the Eradication of Slave Labour (DETRAE), Brazil.

This June, the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva will hold a general discussion on labour inspection. Efficient labour inspectorates have the potential to prevent accidents at work, protect workers, improve their working conditions and enhance productivity by guaranteeing a decent working environment. They can also help to make an ILO vision become a reality: that no human being spends a day of his or her life working under coercion or suffering degrading or inhuman treatment.

Brazil has taken a lead in realizing this vision. Successive national action plans adopted in 2003 and 2008 have resulted in the liberation of thousands of workers through labour inspection activities and measures to fight impunity of employers. The ILO, through its Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour, has supported these national efforts over the past decade.

Among the key measures adopted by Brazil in the fight against forced labour is the creation of a Special Mobile Inspection Group (GEFM) in 1995, under the Ministry of Labour, combining the efforts of specially trained and equipped labour inspectors, labour prosecutors and police officers.

Since 2002, with support from the Governments of Brazil, Norway and the United States, the ILO has implemented successive technical cooperation projects to support the implementation of the national action plans and to strengthen the management capacity of Brazilian suppliers and buyers, thus reducing the risks of forced labour within their supply chains. The projects have sought







*The labour inspectors often use waterways because the roads are either precarious or non-existent. This trip on the Rio Negro river requires the combined efforts of all crew members of the GEFM to get the boat moving and reach the place where workers are subject to slave-like working conditions.*



*The GEFM meets numerous difficulties, including precarious bridges, mud roads, forest trails, and flooded villages, before it can reach places of intervention. Its activities are also subject to other risks, including threats and attacks by landowners who do everything they can to make inspections difficult.*





*A labour inspector fills in a form based on the declarations of a worker exposed to sun and heavy weather, as there is no shelter in this place.*



*The GEFM is often confronted with workers in slave-like working conditions, consuming food that has been produced under unhygienic conditions – exposed to the sun, insects and chemical agents used on the plantation.*

in particular to strengthen the capacity of national agencies, including the GEFM, under the coordination of the CONATRAE (National Commission against Slave Labour). Other activities have included the development of a database for the Labour Inspection Secretariat, the drafting of state-level plans of action against slave labour, and training of the judiciary and law enforcement agents in those parts of Brazil where the incidence of forced labour is most severe.

### More than 39,000 slave workers rescued

Between 1995 and 2010, more than 39,000 slave workers have been rescued by the GEFM. In 2010, it inspected 305 farms, releasing 2,617 slave workers. The total compensation paid to these



*A worker shows us where he gets drinking water. GEFM members learnt that the same place also serves as a toilet for workers, a place to wash their clothes and a watering hole for animals.*







workers was 8.7 million Reais (about US\$5.2 million). Since 1995, the total compensation paid to freed workers is over 62 million Reais (about US\$37.1 million), with a significant growth in the amount of compensation paid each year over the period.

The GEFM is a key element of the Government's strategy to combat slave labour. Using teams composed of labour inspectors, labour prosecutors and Federal Police officers, the GEFM investigates complaints of slave labour in situ, frees workers and prosecutes the owners of estates or other enterprises where workers have been found in conditions analogous to slavery.

Complaints of slave labour are made by workers who manage to flee from estates and walk – sometimes for many days – to reach a city, or by those who have been freed at the end of their service and subsequently denounce the ill-treatment they have received. The main bodies that help victims of slave labour to file a complaint



*Labour inspectors collecting signatures from workers who have filled in the forms.*



*Sugar cane buds easily from the furrows and it grows fast. But the work associated with it is hard – even more for those who have come here to work under slave-like conditions that do not respect minimal safety provisions ... years ago, this worker suffered an accident cutting sugar cane. He stayed in the same work, although his leg was not completely cured.*



*The labour inspector obtains a signature from an illiterate sugar cane harvester.*



are the Pastoral Land Commission, represented by priests and missionaries acting in local parishes, the Federal Police, rural workers' unions and workers' cooperatives.

### Surprise inspections to free workers

GEFM teams undertake surprise inspections of estates in order to levy fines and free workers when irregularities such as severe forms of exploitation, slave labour or child labour are discovered. Some of the abuses that the teams look out for are: indebtedness; the presence of armed guards; evidence of ill-treatment or degrading working conditions, generally associated with lack of hygiene in workers' living quarters; lack of work safety; very low wages; and excessive working hours.

Workers generally incur an initial debt towards the employer when recruited. The debt is then artificially maintained, because they have to pay for their transport to the farm and subsequently buy everything (garments, food, medicines and even working tools) in the

estate shop, at prices far above those of the market. Workers are prohibited from leaving the farm, and are regularly threatened to discourage them from attempting to do so.

If the situation discovered on an estate is particularly serious, and the landowner refuses to pay fines or creates obstacles



*Workers who were found in slave-like conditions meeting with a group of GEFM inspectors after their successful operation against forced labour.*





*GEFM action is not restricted to freeing workers who are victims of modern-day slavery. It also covers the payment of labour compensation to freed workers in respect of "labour offences", as well as the payment of unemployment benefits. Here, GEFM labour inspectors determine the wages due to a worker they found in slave-like conditions following the cancellation of the labour contract.*

*After inspectors receive the appropriate labour compensation from the employer (in respect of the violations committed), a temporary work card is issued, allowing workers to receive unemployment benefit equivalent to the minimum wage for the next five months, in accordance with legislation.*



*A worker who was found in slave-like working conditions with his new labour and social security cards, making him feel like a "real" citizen of his country.*



*The owner of an enterprise where the GEFM found workers in slave-like conditions signs a document establishing the fines fixed by the labour inspectors.*

to the work of the GEFM, the Ministry of Labour may request that the bank accounts of members of the agricultural enterprise inspected be frozen, and may arrest those involved.

The activities of the Special Mobile Inspection Group have promoted significant changes

in the behaviour of landowners and in their relations with workers. The presence of the GEFM has taught victims of slave labour about their rights and taught landowners their obligations. This has helped to improve working conditions and to weaken the climate of impunity and easy money present in some regions of Brazil. ■





# General Articles

## 100th Session of the International Labour Conference to discuss major social security challenges



This June, the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference will discuss the ILO's strategic objective to extend social security coverage to all. The reality we face is that the majority of the world's population lacks access to social protection, and it is a majority that needs social protection most – the poor and the

vulnerable living in the developing regions of the world. They all lack affordable access to health-care services. What's more, children, the elderly, disabled and unemployed have no access to reliable forms of income support of the kind which men and women in more developed countries enjoy. On the other hand, efforts to extend coverage are already bringing results in a number of countries.

Launched eight years ago, the ILO's Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All has strongly supported these efforts. They include bringing basic pensions to all elderly persons – as is already happening in Bolivia, Brazil, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Nepal, South Africa and Thailand, while a number of other middle- and low-income countries are expected to follow. The forthcoming Conference discussion provides a timely opportunity to come up with further ideas on how to quickly and effectively raise social protection coverage globally and attain at least a basic social protection floor. The challenge of extending social protection is compounded by the ageing of societies, in both developing and developed countries, as the following two articles show.



# Social security and ageing populations in developing countries

**It is common knowledge that life expectancy in Western countries has increased over the past several decades and will continue to rise. However, it may come as a surprise to some that the ratio of elderly people is rising faster in the developing world than in industrialized countries. What's more, in some instances the average life expectancy in emerging countries now exceeds that of richer nations. Already today, a majority of the world's older people live in low-income countries with no pension coverage. In 50 years, 80 per cent of the elderly will be in these countries. Alyssa Sewlal, an ILO intern, reports.**

In the early 1950s, life expectancy at birth for the world as a whole was approximately 46.6

years. For 2010–2015, it is projected to be 68.9 years. In Asia, where life expectancy was just 41.2 in the period 1950–1955, it is now expected to reach 70.3 years for 2010–2015. In addition to increasing life expectancy, birth rates have also decreased in many parts of the world, resulting in a demographic shift where the population of people over age 60 is growing rapidly. However, in developing nations where this population ageing is happening, governments with limited resources now have a relatively short span of time in which to ensure that they have effective retirement income schemes in place.

## The case of India

India is an interesting example, with nearly 80 million elderly people today, a number set to increase considerably in coming years. There are numerous reasons for this sharp demographic change, but advances in





An elderly person runs an automobiles junk shop near Jama Masjid, Delhi, India

education, medicine, sanitation and family planning have a lot to do with it.

As well as affecting how long people live, these advances have also changed some of India's social dimensions, particularly one of the most distinct features of Indian culture: the joint family system. In India, adult children have traditionally continued to live with their parents or in-laws, and play an important role in ensuring their care and support in old age. But this is slowly changing as India's economy rapidly develops, leaving elderly Indians in a particularly precarious situation. Informal old-age income support systems have always been available, so for this and other reasons a state-financed pension in India has hardly been extended, and has until recently been largely denied to the workforce in the informal economy.

Bimal Kanti Sahu, Insurance Commissioner of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation

in India, notes that some policy-makers have suggested reviving the joint family system by enacting laws that force adult children to take care of their elderly parents and relatives.<sup>1</sup> But, he says, such policies may actually exacerbate the problem. Others have suggested strengthening the requirement that the working population save for their retirement, whether in public or private schemes. Instead, it seems that India will have to find a balance between traditional family support and self-support in the form of pension and other retirement benefit schemes.

### Ageing: A major challenge for developing and emerging countries

The ILO report prepared for the International Labour Conference<sup>2</sup> shows that the challenge of caring for an increasingly elderly population is an issue not only for India, but for other rapidly developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America where population ageing is set

<sup>1</sup> Bimal Kanti Sahi: *Improvements in life expectancy and sustainability of social security schemes*, Report for the 6th International Policy and Research Conference on Social Security, Luxembourg, 29 September–1 October 2010

<sup>2</sup> ILO: *Social security for social justice and a fair globalization*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011



to grow at increasingly higher rates. Just as in India, this means that the resources of these countries are being severely stretched.

As the report points out, the problem is compounded by the fact that a vast number of elderly people are employed in the informal economy and have little or no access to any contributory social security schemes; this means that it must be a matter of priority to address the issues of social security provision appropriately.

Where the development discourse once focused on limiting social expenditure, it is now widely understood that social spending is actually necessary for growth. In the Conference report, the ILO's social security experts point out that well-designed social protection programmes, particularly in the form of social security pensions, rather than being a hindrance to economic development have proven "very effective in preventing poverty and social insecurity throughout an individual's entire life cycle"; moreover, they fulfil a vital role as an economic stabilizer.

### A basic social floor is affordable in developing countries

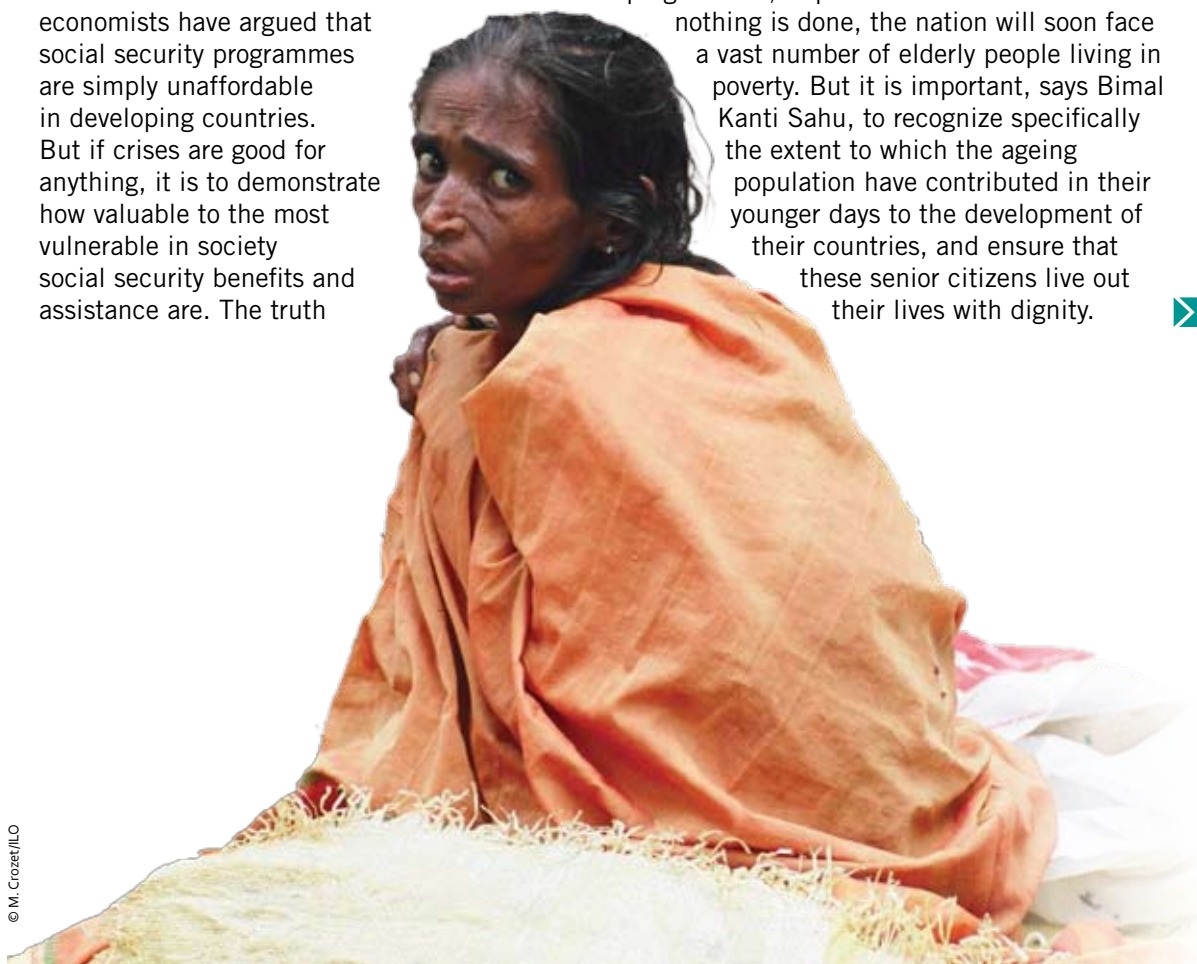
Some financial institutions and economists have argued that social security programmes are simply unaffordable in developing countries. But if crises are good for anything, it is to demonstrate how valuable to the most vulnerable in society social security benefits and assistance are. The truth

## “IN INDIA, ADULT CHILDREN HAVE TRADITIONALLY CONTINUED TO LIVE WITH THEIR PARENTS OR IN-LAWS, AND TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN ENSURING THEIR CARE AND SUPPORT IN OLD AGE”

is, says the ILO's social security team, that a basic social protection package is affordable in virtually all countries, costing – if appropriately designed – a relatively small percentage of GDP. For these programmes to be successful, the key may be for them to be implemented gradually.

Social security has long been a defining element of industrialized countries, playing a crucial role in easing the blow of not only a range of life-cycle crises but also of numerous economic ones, and serving to effectively reduce income inequalities. There are obvious reasons why governments of emerging and developing countries need to organize and implement universal social security programmes, in particular the fact that if

nothing is done, the nation will soon face a vast number of elderly people living in poverty. But it is important, says Bimal Kanti Sahu, to recognize specifically the extent to which the ageing population have contributed in their younger days to the development of their countries, and ensure that these senior citizens live out their lives with dignity.





## ► Pension reform and ageing populations in developed economies

**The forthcoming Session of the International Labour Conference will also discuss pension reform in developed economies. The debate will be continued in 2012 when the Conference will hold a general discussion on employment and social protection in the new demographic context. The two discussions are expected to redefine the position of the ILO vis-à-vis policies recommended by other international organizations in this area. Gary Humphreys, a US-based journalist, reports.**

"In 1950 there were more than seven people of working age for every pensioner in the OECD," says Edward Whitehouse, an economist at the Social Policy Division in the Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). "By 2047 that number is likely to fall to just two workers per pensioner."

Whitehouse believes that addressing this problem will require a mobilization of all available resources in labour markets to boost productivity. That mobilization includes making older people, and particularly older men, work longer, whether by increasing retirement ages or reducing incentives for workers to retire early. "Since the 1970s the work participation rates for older men have fallen substantially," Whitehouse says, pointing to incentives embedded in pension systems as the main driver of the trend.

### Problem understood?

That this problem is well understood is evidenced by the trend in pension reform undertaken by a range of countries over the past decade, Whitehouse says, noting that in almost every case policy-makers have included some element designed to encourage people to work longer and to deal with provisions that significantly encouraged early retirement. Not every country has taken that line, however, and Whitehouse notes that Greece, Luxembourg, Spain, and Turkey have until now not chosen to make such changes.

But is the OECD right to put such emphasis on pension reform? Martin O'Brien, an economist and specialist in older worker employment issues at the University of Wollongong, Australia doesn't think so, arguing that the OECD fails to take into account the impact of labour market conditions on the choices made by older workers. "While some OECD research appears to recognize the labour market disadvantage faced by older workers, including in comparable estimation results of labour market variables, it is unwilling to advocate a strong active policy stance on labour demand and employment," states O'Brien in a recent article.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, tinkering with the pension system won't mean much unless there are jobs available for older men to stay in. John Woodall, a senior social security specialist at the ILO, concurs. "It needs to be stated and restated strongly that the idea of keeping people in work longer is only realistic if suitable work opportunities are available," he says.

Whitehouse rejects the notion that the OECD is neglecting the issue of demand for older workers. "We're well aware of this problem," he says, pointing to recent OECD publications that highlight the number of OECD countries that now have in place some form of legislation banning age discrimination in employment, for example. However, for Whitehouse, the evidence on the efficacy of such policies is unconvincing, as noted in a recent OECD report<sup>4</sup> that states: "It is difficult to detect whether these measures have been effective in tackling age discrimination and improving employment opportunities for older people."

For the ILO's John Woodall there is a broad overlap in the ILO's and OECD's analysis of the



issues. "I think this would be agreed in general terms among all the agencies working on the field – certainly including the ILO, the OECD and the World Bank," Woodall says.

## Need for an integrated approach

That said, Woodall believes that there is an important difference in emphasis that needs to be acknowledged. "The differences [between the institutions] concern assessing the weight to be placed on different aspects of the broad issue," he says. According to Woodall, "it is of the utmost importance to recognize that the issues of financing retirement benefits as societies age and adapting labour market policies to the needs of older workers are intimately linked. These issues must be addressed in an integrated manner." ■

## OTHER NECESSARY POLICY RESPONSES

From an ILO point of view a discussion on the demographic challenges societies are facing worldwide should also include the following issues:

- An integrated and coherent approach to youth employment promotion
- Increasing female labour force participation and promoting gender equality
- Promoting employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- Managing migration
- Improving employment opportunities for older people
- Investing in employability within a lifelong learning framework
- Combating age-related prejudices and discrimination with particular attention to older women
- Creating fair and safe working conditions for all workers

<sup>3</sup> M. J. O'Brien: "Older male labour force participation in OECD countries: Pension reform and 'the reserve army' of labour", 2010

<sup>4</sup> A. C. d'Addio, M. Keese and E. Whitehouse: "Population ageing and labour markets", in *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*: forthcoming issue on *Population ageing*



# How to **EASE** social dial sports professionals and

**They are the men and women who each weekend run out on to the world's football stadiums, basketball courts, baseball diamonds and athletics arenas. But are the world's professional sportsmen and women also workers? Andrew Bibby, a London-based journalist, reports on recent attempts to regulate the employer–employee relationship for some two million people working in sport in the European Union.**

The performances of the world's professional sportsmen and women will be cheered (or booed) by their fans, written up by sports journalists and commented on by television pundits. The really talented will become celebrities, global brands in their own right.

On the back of their sporting prowess rests a multi-billion-dollar business, built upon ticket sales, TV rights and commercial sponsorship.

Many wouldn't see the world's professional sportsmen and women as workers. But employment law also relates to sport, according to Walter Palmer, General Secretary of the European Elite Athletes Association (EU Athletes). He has no doubt at all that professional sportspeople are indeed workers. "It's something that has to be recognized, and dealt with," he maintains.

Walter Palmer himself has reason to know the issues well: he is a former professional basketball player, having played both in the American NBA league and in European professional basketball. In addition to his role at EU Athletes, he also works closely with the union federation UNI Europa, which has



# ogue between their employers

recently decided to establish a dedicated unit for the sports sector. “We need to regulate the employer–employee dynamic and relationship in sport,” he says succinctly.

It’s a view that is shared on the employers’ side by the European Association of Sport Employers (EASE), originally established when the French employer organization CoSMoS (Conseil Social du Mouvement Sportif) came together with similar bodies in other European Member States.

“EASE’s creation in 2003 was in response to a particular need, that of ensuring social regulation in Europe in the sports sector,” says EASE’s Executive Manager Emilie Coconnier. “We can say that, as part of the process of professionalization that is taking place in sport, there is an increasingly clear ‘employer consciousness’ developing.”

**“EASE’s CREATION IN 2003 WAS IN RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR NEED, THAT OF ENSURING SOCIAL REGULATION IN EUROPE IN THE SPORTS SECTOR”**

EASE has worked closely with UNI Europa since 2006 and the two organizations have signed joint agreements on, among other things, health and safety in sport and minimum contract terms. Their relationship has now been taken a stage further, with the agreement by the European Union to accept EASE and UNI Europa as social partners for a formal social dialogue committee, initially





➤ established on a two-year test phase basis. The idea that social dialogue – regular meetings between employers' and workers' bodies, more commonly associated with industries such as banking, postal services and shipbuilding – can also operate in the sports sector may come as a surprise to some, although in fact social dialogue already operates in football, where the football professionals' union FIFPRO is in social partnership with two employers' bodies, EPFL and ECA.

## European social dialogue in sport

According to Emilie Coconnier, European social dialogue is a natural extension of the national social dialogue in sport that already operates in countries such as France. "It's a tool that can find solutions to problems that can't be regulated at national level," she says. In turn, it can also help develop social dialogue in countries without such a tradition. She talks among other things of the opportunities to increase job mobility among those working in sport in Europe.

The new social dialogue between EASE and UNI Europa has had to tackle the sometimes tricky definition of "sport", an industry which includes an enormous range of businesses, including fitness clubs, trainers, event promoters, sporting goods manufacturers, regulators, retailers and the sports media as well as the athletes themselves.

In total, around two million people work in sport in the European Union alone, according to one survey. EASE and UNI Europa have agreed to establish three parallel areas for discussion, one covering professional sport, one for active leisure (activities such as fitness, winter sports and sailing) and one focusing on not-for-profit sport. Although distinct, the three areas are socially and economically linked, and will all be covered through the new social dialogue.

## Perception of super-rich stars is misleading

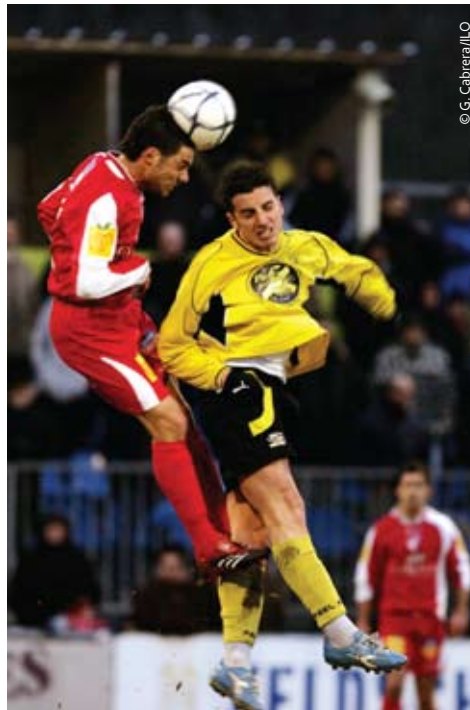
There have been suggestions from some quarters that the professional side of sport is somehow removed from traditional employment concerns. Walter Palmer rejects this notion of the "specificity of sport", however. He warns that the usual public perception of professional athletes as super-rich megastars can be misleading. He points to a recent survey across Europe carried out by the European Basketball Players Association (UBE), which found that many players were on relatively modest

salaries: 226 players out of 483 earned less than 30,000 euros a year, and only 140 earned 60,000 euros or above.

The same UBE survey also makes it clear that professional athletes have many of the same workplace concerns as other people. Health and safety (an early focus for the EASE/UNI Europa dialogue) is one of these. UBE reports that "a very high proportion of respondents reported that professional basketball is hard physical work" and that 49 per cent of those surveyed felt that playing basketball was a risk to their health.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, these concerns were much greater for older players (those aged 26 or older), especially as their relatively short working lives as basketball players could be curtailed by injury. Older players were also much more likely to report that their work was causing them stress.

Sportsmen and women share with workers in the media and entertainment industries a concern over the exploitation of intellectual property (IP) rights. As Walter Palmer points out, professional athletes are often forced to give up or assign their image and IP rights in order to be allowed to compete, sometimes (as in relations with the Olympic movement) from a position of effective individual powerlessness.



© G. Cabrera/LO

EU Athletes and UNI Europa have called for individual athletes' rights to be better protected: "It should be remembered that sportsmen and women, as citizens and employees, have rights to their image and reputation, data resulting from their individual performances on the playing field and the intellectual property resulting from such performances. These rights are the valuable commercial and moral property of athletes and require effective enforcement," according to a statement put out by the two organizations last year.

## Contentious anti-doping measures

In some areas of their employment, however, professional sportspeople in a wide range of disciplines have their own particular issues which need addressing. One of these is anti-doping. Whilst both employers' and players' organizations are committed to drug-free sport, the actual way in which anti-doping measures are undertaken is more contentious. Many professional sportsmen and women are required to undertake "whereabouts reporting", so that drug-testing officers undertaking random tests know where to find them at any time of the year. This can involve filling in a time slot in advance every few months, hour by hour for every day of the year, identifying exactly where they will be.

For Walter Palmer, there are privacy and civil liberties issues here which are not necessarily being properly addressed. "The enforcement of anti-doping rules must be proportional and balanced. Anti-doping rules should conform to the law, and not the other way round," he says, calling on WADA, the World Anti-Doping Agency, to engage more in dialogue with independent players' unions.

## ILO Conventions apply to the sports sector

For EASE and UNI Europa, the ILO's international Conventions apply to the sports sector as much as to any other. In a joint statement issued in December 2008, they called for the development of collective bargaining and social dialogue at national (and eventually European) level. They also called for specific minimum requirements in all professional players' employment contracts,

# “ANTI-DOPING RULES SHOULD CONFORM TO THE LAW, AND NOT THE OTHER WAY ROUND”

including details of treatment of intellectual property rights for images.

These issues are increasingly being addressed at national level. In the Netherlands, for example, the Dutch Employers' Association for the Sports Industry (Werkgevers Organisatie in de Sport, WOS) has worked with the Dutch athletes' union NL Sporter in a 2009 study *A world to win: Professionalization of the employment relationships for professional athletes in the Netherlands*. The study suggests that Dutch sports organizations lack expertise in the area of employment relationships, that professional athletes lack expertise themselves in this area, and that – outside football – professional athletes are not well organized. The study also calls for more attention to the need for a safety net for talented young athletes who fail to turn professional, as well as to the importance of helping sports professionals find employment opportunities once their career is over.

The Dutch report also identifies particular problems in the social security position of athletes, including their ability to access unemployment benefits. This is an issue also identified by the European Basketball Players Association, which points out that social security procedures in many countries fail to take into account the short span of a top-level sporting career and the high risk of injury.

The development of European social dialogue is one sign of the rapid pace of change in relation to sport and employment issues. Another is the recent creation of the European Professional Sport People's Forum, which brings EU Athletes and UNI Europa together with the European professional footballers' union FIFPRO. But changes are not limited to Europe. UNI Europa's parent organization, UNI Global Union, is now taking active steps to establish a UNI Sport Global Union, linking players' unions worldwide. A first global conference being arranged by UNI is likely to be held in Geneva later in 2011. ■



# Indigenous women entrepreneurs in Papua GET Ahead

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Despite being one of the richest regions in Indonesia, 41.8 per cent of the population in Papua is living below the poverty line. Many of them are indigenous Papuans who constitute two-thirds of the region's population of 2.3 million. With their traditionally low status in society, indigenous women are the most affected by poverty and underdevelopment. Gita F. Lingga, Communications Officer in the ILO Office in Jakarta, reports about a recent ILO project which trained hundreds of indigenous Papuans, mostly women, in basic entrepreneurship skills.

Like many other women who live in a patriarchal society, the indigenous women of Papua do not have many opportunities to take part in the development process. Their traditionally low status in the tribal hierarchy

and poor education make them second-class members of society who have to occupy themselves with food and children, and serve their husbands.

While some indigenous women have engaged in agricultural business, their poor educational levels hinder them from improving their businesses and generating income. Most women, for example, do not even know the value of the vegetables they sell from their gardens and are thus unable to set reasonable prices.

As part of a poverty reduction programme in Papua, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the ILO have implemented the Entrepreneurship Skills Development (ESD) programme with specific attention to women in the three regencies of Jayawijaya, Lani Jaya and Yahukimo in the Papua highlands, one of the poorest regions in Papua. The project aimed to develop community entrepreneurship skills, primarily among indigenous Papuan women.

Why women? “Because women are very productive. They are at the core of the family’s economic livelihood in the Papua highlands,” explains Tauvik Muhamad, the ILO Programme Officer responsible.

Between January 2009 and September 2010 the project trained hundreds of indigenous people in basic entrepreneurship skills using the principles of the ILO’s training package Gender and Entrepreneurship Together (GET Ahead). The GET Ahead module not only focuses on administration, finance and marketing, but also gives women a voice.

## Indigenous women empowered for the first time

“We can see major changes in this respect,” confirms Christian Sohilait, Head of the Provincial Planning and Development Agency of Lani Jaya. “Anyone in the region can now hear women talk about how they knit wool using machines. Women from the Papuan highlands living in a patriarchal society have been empowered for the first time.”

Progress can be seen in many places. In Jayawijaya, for example, women increasingly engage in paid business activities. They are breaking the traditional barriers, and as Wempi Wetipo, Head of Jayawijaya regency, puts it, people have started “to change their mindset in order to make a better living”.

This is confirmed by Serlina Wenda, a coffee-milling entrepreneur: “The programme not only gave me the necessary knowledge, but also a chance to expand my business by helping me with a loan and giving me access to the financial system.”

Before her business took off, Serlina was constantly frustrated by not being able to fulfil her family’s basic needs. She has to feed a large number of dependants, including her husband, grandmother, sister and six children. She still remembers her long journey to becoming a successful entrepreneur: “Every day, I went to see my new neighbours. I told them that I wanted to start a coffee business, but I did not know how to go about it. They only told me that they pitied me.”

Yulia Waliho, a honeybee entrepreneur in Lani Jaya, has also become a different person. Today, she is more confident in her ability to run her enterprise as she gained the financial

and management skills needed to advance her business.

Before getting into the honey business, Yulia experienced many ups and downs in her entrepreneurial activities. She used to run a small stall, selling candy, soap, cooking oil, and so on. However, few buyers paid in cash and her business went bankrupt. She tried to reopen the same business but it only lasted for three weeks. Now, Yulia is able to meet her family’s daily needs. She was even able to save some money, not only for her children’s education but also for her own. “I went back to college, continuing my studies and I graduated,” she says, her eyes shining.

## Significant achievements

Given the challenges and gender inequality that exist in the central highlands of Papua, the project has made significant achievements. With some 625 entrepreneurs trained, the number of target beneficiaries exceeded the original plan, which was to reach 250 people. The training programme has also successfully met the gender-specific targets, as 70 per cent of participants (437) were women, while 137 people were trained as trainers.

“To ensure sustainability, the project provided hands-on entrepreneurship training, with special attention to marketing and coaching both for new entrepreneurs and for relevant NGOs, including Yasumat and Ekonomus, which serve as business development service providers,” explains Tauvik, adding that the independent evaluator found that the project is relevant to community needs and interests and fits within current government priorities.

Women like Serlina and Yulia can only confirm this. “I am grateful for this programme – it was really helpful,” concludes Serlina, recalling an old local proverb: *Nyeki Awa Loh Halok, Nyape Awalok Hat* (If the hand does nothing, the mouth will not be chewing). ■





# Employment in the tourism industry to grow significantly

**The travel and tourism industry is one of the largest and most dynamic industries in today's global economy. It is expected to generate about 9 per cent of total GDP and provide more than 235 million jobs in 2010, representing 8 per cent of global employment. Last November, over 150 government, employer and worker delegates from more than 50 countries, meeting at the ILO's Global Dialogue Forum on New Developments and Challenges in the Hospitality and Tourism Sector, discussed new developments and challenges in the sector. The Forum was opened by Mr Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Mr Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO.**

Compared to other sectors of the global economy, the industry is one of the fastest growing, accounting for more than one-third of the total global services trade. The ILO Forum addressed the high intensity of labour within the industry, making it a significant source of employment and placing it among the world's top creators of jobs that require varying degrees of skills and allow for quick entry into the workforce by youth, women and migrant workers.

According to an ILO report<sup>1</sup> prepared for the Forum, international tourism was affected by the global economic and social crisis but is projected to grow significantly over the coming decade. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is expecting the sector's global economy to provide 296 million jobs by 2019.

The tourism sector suffered a decline beginning in the second half of 2008

<sup>1</sup> ILO: *Developments and challenges in the hospitality and tourism sector* (Geneva, 2010), available on the ILO web site





and intensifying in 2009 after several consecutive years of growth. A sharp reduction in tourist flows, length of stay and spending, as well as increased restrictions on business travel expenses, led to a significant contraction of economic activity in the sector worldwide.

Among the most affected during the crisis were international tourist arrivals, decreasing by 4 per cent in 2009, while international tourism revenues were projected to go down 6 per cent by the end of 2009. The regions hit hardest by the decline in worldwide international tourism were the Middle East (–4.9 per cent), Europe (–5.7 per cent), and the Americas (–4.6 per cent). Only Africa showed constant growth (+2.9 per cent), based on a comparatively low travel volume.

Despite the crisis, global employment in the tourism industry increased by about 1 per cent between 2008 and 2009, the report says. But there were significant regional differences with respect to the impact of the crisis on employment in hotels and restaurants. While the Americas suffered a 1.7 per cent decrease in employment, employment in Asia and the Pacific region remained resilient, gaining 4.6 per cent.

### A need for more social dialogue

On the second day of the Forum a panel discussed new ideas concerning the huge

potential for social dialogue in the sector and sustainable forms of tourism with a strong poverty reduction potential. The panel addressed good practices that could be shared with other developing countries, particularly within the framework of South–South development cooperation.

“TODAY WE HAVE A SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED EMPLOYEES. HOTELS NEED TO TRAIN THEIR EMPLOYEES. IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY”

It was observed that the challenging work environment in the tourism industry also enhances the value of social dialogue in the workplace and, where such processes are formalized, they create real opportunities for constructive collaboration within major companies in the hotel and tourism sector.

At the same time, participants noted that the central role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) within the sector makes the application of universal and formalized social dialogue difficult to achieve.

“A need for new and creative forms of social dialogue corresponding to the realities in a small company in the sector has become







© M. Crozet/ILO

➤ apparent. This could take the form of regular consultation between owners/managers and workforce representatives, as well as surveys of employee satisfaction and attitudes in order to highlight worker concerns,” explains Wolfgang Weinz, ILO Senior Technical Specialist for the Hotels, Catering, Tourism sector of the Sectoral Activities Department.

### Training and skills needs

The Forum especially looked at education and vocational training as key requisites for the operational effectiveness of the sector. Its workers tend to have limited professional qualifications, and a need for enhanced

training and education, including health-related issues, has become visible.

According to Wolfgang Weinz, “the growing significance of technology and more demanding customers, as well as environmental issues, require a more effective customer/employee relationship. Competitiveness and productivity in the industry depend on skill levels, professionalism, commitment, passion, loyalty and soft skills of the workers.”

Participants agreed that motivated workers are the most talented employees – willing to stay with their company. Some of the



soft skills needed, including language and communication skills, courtesy, discipline, conscientiousness, self-confidence, adaptability, creativity and punctuality, can be enhanced through training. Gaps were also noted in the management capabilities of management within the industry.

“Today we have a shortage of qualified employees. Hotels need to train their employees. It is the only way to improve the quality,” explained Ghassan Aidi, President of the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA).

### The role of governments

The role of government was identified as key to developing the tourism industry. To become an attractive destination for tourists, a location requires a wide range of services including infrastructure and effective destination marketing.

Hotels and restaurants also have a huge potential to reduce poverty in many parts of the world. Partnerships between the private and public sectors should be enhanced to ensure more effective coordination and benefits for local communities.

According to Neb Samouth, Government representative of Cambodia and panellist, “Community-based tourism and ecotourism has benefited over 30 local communities,

**“A NEED FOR NEW AND CREATIVE FORMS OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE CORRESPONDING TO THE REALITIES IN A SMALL COMPANY IN THE SECTOR HAS BECOME APPARENT”**

providing alternative sources of income and employment. Local projects help to protect natural resources and provided a good platform for social dialogue.”

The need to improve working conditions and the important role of social dialogue were stressed by Ron Oswald, General Secretary of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations (IUF): “Depending on what kind of tourism and of employment tourism brings to the poorest parts of the world, it can contribute to poverty reduction. Workers in tourism need to be given the ability to raise themselves out of poverty through representation organizations and ultimately, in ILO terms, collective bargaining.” ■







# “UN Cares”: Learning about the realities of HIV and AIDS

Workers often face discrimination, stigma, and other violations of their fundamental rights at work on the basis of real or perceived HIV status. They are also at risk of HIV infection if they are not aware of the modes of transmission of the virus or of prevention methods. The United Nations system is a workplace like any other and implements “UN Cares”, a system-wide workplace programme on HIV in an effort to create awareness. Charlotte Cols reports about a recent learning session organized by the programme at ILO headquarters in Geneva.

Among the some 100,000 women and men working for the United Nations worldwide, an estimated 1.5 per cent may be living with HIV. This is more than the 1 per cent threshold that usually serves as a benchmark to define an epidemic at national level.

Mobility and stress on the job often characterize the professional lives of UN staff and increase their risk of becoming infected with HIV. It is therefore important for the members of the various UN agencies to be trained in how to protect themselves.

On the occasion of World Aids Day – which takes place every year on 1 December – UN Cares organized a learning session in the ILO headquarters in Geneva. This interactive

training involved 26 staff members from various UN agencies and was based on a method called “WildFire” – referring to the rapidity with which HIV can spread.

In a thought-provoking role-play, two participants were asked to take on the role of HIV-positive persons, without the knowledge of other participants. After a first round of “shaking hands”, as a symbol for having unprotected sexual intercourse, the number of people at risk of contracting HIV grew exponentially.

During the two-hour exercise guided by expert facilitators, the participants reflected on how it would feel to be infected with HIV or not to know their HIV status. They also discussed whether to share information about their HIV status with their partners, friends or supervisors.

The experience helps people understand what it means to protect one’s self and one’s partner, and provides information on rights and entitlements under UN personnel policy. It also encourages staff members to build a fair, equitable and respectful workplace environment with zero tolerance for stigma and discrimination. This last objective reflects the main principle agreed on in the ILO Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work (No. 200), adopted at the International Labour Conference in June 2010.

Dr Sophia K. Kisting, Director of the ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work (ILO/AIDS) mentioned during the learning session the importance of applying the new international labour standard: “For a person living with HIV it is essential for his or her dignity to have a job and to continue to work like anyone else.”



Dr Sophia K. Kisting,  
Director of the ILO  
Programme on HIV/  
AIDS and the World of  
Work (ILO/AIDS)

## “Sometimes colleagues did not even dare to use my phone”

Mr Manuel Da Quinta, who represented the UN System HIV Positive Staff Group (UNplus) in the session and has been openly living with HIV for 15 years, illustrated the challenges met in the workplace through his personal experience and his struggle against the lack of knowledge and tolerance at work. “Sometimes colleagues did not even dare to use my phone,” he said.

A vast majority of workers living with HIV don’t reveal their HIV status at work for fear of being avoided by colleagues, losing out on a promotion or being dismissed under other pretexts. These fears have negative consequences for the individual and for the work environment. They can lead to loneliness and discourage people from seeking medical help and support. “It is essential to talk and not to feel isolated,” said Mr Da Quinta.



## “IT IS ESSENTIAL TO TALK AND NOT TO FEEL ISOLATED”

By organizing learning sessions UN Cares tries to encourage a more open communication on HIV amongst staff. With greater knowledge and a willingness to discuss the issue openly, it is more likely that those affected by HIV will be less afraid of stigma and discrimination. Their colleagues will also be more likely to ensure they feel comfortable and integrated in the workplace.

Also, workers are better in control of their own risks and behaviours when the workplace provides them with a safe environment where they can test their HIV status on a voluntary basis, with guarantees that personal information such as one’s status will remain strictly confidential.

The bottom line is that no matter where one works, the need to ensure that workers are protected and informed remains vital. Despite a certain decline in global trends, the HIV pandemic is far from over; new HIV infections keep appearing in many countries, even where HIV prevalence is low. ■

Many thanks to Ms Joanna Morris (WHO), Mr Xavier Orellana (UN Cares/UNAIDS), Ms Jill Caughley (ILO), Dr Jacquie Hardiman (ILO), Dr Sophia Kisting (ILO/AIDS) and Mr Manuel Da Quinta (UNplus) for raising awareness among UN staff members and for organizing this event. For more information on HIV/AIDS and the UN system, please see: [www.uncares.org](http://www.uncares.org); [www.unplus.org](http://www.unplus.org); [www.who.int/hiv](http://www.who.int/hiv); [www.ilo.org/aids](http://www.ilo.org/aids)



# News

- ➔ Weak jobs recovery to continue through 2011
- ➔ Economic crisis cut global wage growth by half
- ➔ ILO meeting discusses safety in growing container industry
- ➔ World Day for Social Justice, 17 February 2011
- ➔ International Women's Day turns 100

# Weak jobs recovery to continue through 2011

With global unemployment, as officially measured, at record highs for the third straight year since the start of the economic crisis, the ILO warned in its annual employment trends survey<sup>1</sup> that weak recovery in jobs is likely to continue in 2011, especially in developed economies. The report also says that youth employment is a world priority.









## ▶ Youth unemployment remains stubbornly high

Worldwide, 78 million young people were unemployed in 2010, well above the pre-crisis level of 73.5 million in 2007, but down from 80 million in 2009. The unemployment rate among youth aged 15–24 stood at 12.6 per cent in 2010, 2.6 times the adult rate of unemployment. However, the ILO also warned that among 56 countries with available data, there were 1.7 million fewer youth in the labour market than expected based on pre-crisis trends, and that such discouraged workers are not counted among the unemployed because they are not actively seeking work.

“Youth employment is a world priority,” stated Mr Somavia. “The weak recovery in decent work reinforces a persistent inability of the world economy to secure a future for all youth. This undermines families, social cohesion and the credibility of policies,” he added.

The study points out that the delayed labour market recovery is seen not only in the lag between output growth and employment growth, but also in productivity gains poorly reflected in

real wage growth in many countries. “This can threaten future recovery prospects, as there are strong linkages between growth in real wages, consumption and future investments,” the report says.

## Regional trends

In South-East Asia and the Pacific, unemployment rates did not increase on average during the crisis, but the number of workers in vulnerable employment rose to 173.7 million in 2009, a 5.4 million increase since 2007. South Asia has the highest rate of vulnerable employment in the world, at 78.5 per cent of total employment in 2009. In East Asia youth unemployment remains a major challenge at 8.3 per cent in 2010, 2.5 times the adult rate.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the rapid recovery has led to strong job growth, but vulnerable employment has increased.

In sub-Saharan Africa, more than three-quarters of workers are in vulnerable employment while around four out of five workers are living with their families on less than US\$2 per person per day, and in North Africa an alarming 23.6 per cent of economically active young people were unemployed in 2010, according to the report.

In Central and South-Eastern Europe and CIS region unemployment declined to 9.6 per cent, having peaked in 2009 at 10.4 per cent, the highest regional rate in the world.

The report also warns that in developed economies a “narrow” focus on reducing fiscal deficits without addressing the challenge of job creation will further weaken employment prospects in 2011 for the unemployed, for those who have dropped out of the labour force due to discouragement and for new entrants into the labour market.

The report underlines the importance of measures that can help boost employment generation and jump-start a sustainable jobs recovery, stressing that improved labour market outcomes would support a broader macroeconomic recovery and could help offset the adverse effects of fiscal consolidation. ■

For more information see [http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS\\_150440/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_150440/lang--en/index.htm)

## OTHER KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- Total global employment in industry declined in 2009, which is a major divergence from the historical annual growth rate of 3.4 per cent over the period from 2002 to 2007. In the Developed Economies and European Union region, employment in industry plummeted by 9.5 million between 2007 and 2009, while in the developing regions industrial employment grew, though at a much reduced pace.
- Global employment in agriculture grew in 2009, which represented a divergence from historical trends and reflected the fact that the lower-productivity agricultural sector often serves as a buffer for workers who lose jobs in manufacturing and services.
- Increasing food prices around the world represent a growing threat. For non-agricultural sectors, continued sharp increases in food prices could lead to employment losses if inflation is passed on to other areas of the economy.

# Economic crisis cut global wage growth by half

**According to a recent ILO report,<sup>2</sup> the financial and economic crisis has cut global wage growth by half in 2008 and 2009.**

Analysing data from 115 countries and territories covering 94 per cent of the approximately 1.4 billion wage-earners worldwide, the *Global Wage Report 2010/11: Wage policies in times of crisis* says growth in average monthly wages slowed globally from 2.8 per cent in 2007, on the eve of the crisis, to 1.5 per cent in 2008 and 1.6 per cent in 2009. Excluding China from the aggregate, the global average wage growth dropped to 0.8 in 2008 and 0.7 in 2009.

The report cites considerable variations in wage growth rates across regions, saying that while wage growth slowed but remained consistently positive in Asia and Latin America, other regions such as Eastern Europe and Central Asia experienced a dramatic fall. Advanced economies experienced a drop in the level of real wages, which fell in 12 of 28 countries in 2008 and in seven in 2009.

According to ILO Director-General Juan Somavia, “this study shows another face of the lingering employment crisis. The recession has not only been dramatic for the millions who lost their jobs, but has also affected those who remained in employment by severely reducing their purchasing power and their general well-being.”

The report – the second issued by the ILO on the subject since 2008 – says the overall short-term impact of the crisis on wages should be looked at within the context of a long-term decline in the share of wages in total income, a growing disconnect between productivity growth and wages, and widespread and growing wage inequality.

In particular, it says that since the mid-1990s the proportion of people on low pay – defined as less than two-thirds of median wage – has increased in more than two-thirds of countries with available data.

Looking ahead, the report says the pace of the recovery will depend, at least partly, on the extent to which households are able to use their wage to increase consumption.

“Wage stagnation was an important trigger of the crisis and continues to weaken recovery in many economies,” Mr Somavia said, adding that “we are facing a world of deficient aggregate demand amidst large unmet needs and continued high unemployment. Macroeconomic policy-makers must turn their attention to employment and to wage determination to strengthen the tepid recovery and address longer-term social and economic imbalances.” ■



<sup>2</sup> ILO: *Global Wage Report 2010/11: Wage policies in times of crisis* (Geneva, 2011)





## MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- 50 per cent of countries have adjusted their minimum wages either as part of their regular minimum-wage review process or with the aim of protecting the purchasing power of the most vulnerable workers. This is a departure from earlier crises, when minimum-wage freezes were the pattern.
- For low-paid workers, who are especially vulnerable to falling into poverty, there is need for a better articulation between minimum wages and social and labour market policies.
- Wages are better aligned with productivity in countries where collective bargaining covers more than 30 per cent of employees, and minimum wages reduce inequality in the bottom half of the wage distribution.
- Collective bargaining and minimum wages, along with well-designed income policies, can lift the incomes of workers in the recovery.

# ILO meeting discusses safety in growing container industry

**The container shipping market represents about 16 per cent of the world's goods loaded in tonnes. With its growing market share, the risk of accidents also increases, says a report<sup>3</sup> prepared for an ILO Global Dialogue Forum on Safety in the Supply Chain in Relation to Packing of Containers, held in Geneva on 21–22 February 2011. The meeting tried to find a common approach throughout the supply chain to ensure the application of the appropriate standards for packing containers.**

The container shipping market represents about 16 per cent of the world's goods loaded in tonnes. Despite the turbulence of the financial markets in 2007, growth throughout the top 100 container ports increased overall by 6.4 per cent in 2008.

The use of containers continues to grow – and a greater proportion of them than ever is carrying cargoes from China to the United States and Europe. The majority of these containers are from established shippers with sophisticated despatch facilities, who understand the stresses and forces

to which containers are subjected throughout the supply chain.

However, there is also evidence that many accidents in the sector are attributed to poor practices in relation to the packing of containers, including overloading.

“If you think any fool can stuff a container, think again. One in six container journeys results in damaged cargo. Many incidents are caused, or made worse, by bad packing. Losses exceed US\$5 billion a year, according to the United Kingdom P&I Club, one of the oldest protection and indemnity insurers worldwide,” says Marios Meletiou, the ILO's Senior Ports and Transports Specialist.

According to the ILO report, this has caused major concern particularly because the victims of accidents attributed to poor practices in packing containers can be the general public, transport workers, or their employers, who have no control over the packing. The report stresses the need to find ways to capture the often “remote” players in the industry and ensure that they fully abide by good practice guidelines.

The report also warns that many organizations involved in packing containers may not fully understand the need for the effective loading and securing of cargoes. In a number of cases



<sup>3</sup> ILO: *Safety in the supply chain in relation to packing of containers* (Geneva, 2011)





➤ in which cargoes have moved, there is evidence to suggest that the packers who stuffed the containers did not appreciate to what extent containers can move and how forces change as they proceed along the supply chain.

“For a better understanding of the forces, packers should be invited to participate in interactive training programmes that are readily accessible and appropriate. It would also be relevant to examine whether there is a need for accredited certification to demonstrate a candidate’s successful completion of the course,” explains Marios Meletiou. A good example of such training is the ILO Portworker Development Programme (PDP) which includes two specific training units on packing containers.

The development of packing and good practice guidelines and an accompanying training programme will only be successful if packing organizations and others implement the recommendations. The ILO Forum therefore

also considered the means by which they are disseminated: voluntarily good practice guidelines or the enactment of specific legislation, which would require packing organizations to comply with it.

“The ILO meeting showed that there are a multitude of stakeholders in the various sectors involved in the supply chain. An analysis of these findings demonstrates that the stowage and securing of goods, the establishment of responsibilities and implementation of rules, regulations and best practices, as well as the interlinking of all the players in the supply chain and communication (or lack thereof), will all have an impact on safety in the industry,” concludes Alette van Leur, Director of the ILO’s Sectoral Activities Department. ■

*For more information see [http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/meeting-reports/WCMS\\_151373/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/meeting-reports/WCMS_151373/lang--en/index.htm)*

## World Day for Social Justice, 17 February 2011 Statement by ILO Director-General Juan Somavia

It is time to build a new era of social justice on a foundation of decent work.

Recent events flashing across the world’s television screens have brought into sharp focus demands that have been brewing in the hearts of people: the desire for a decent life and a decent future based on social justice.

The fault lines of the global economy, apparent for a long time, are cracking open to reveal uncertainty and vulnerability, sentiments of exclusion and oppression and a lack of opportunities and jobs, made more painful by the global economic crisis.

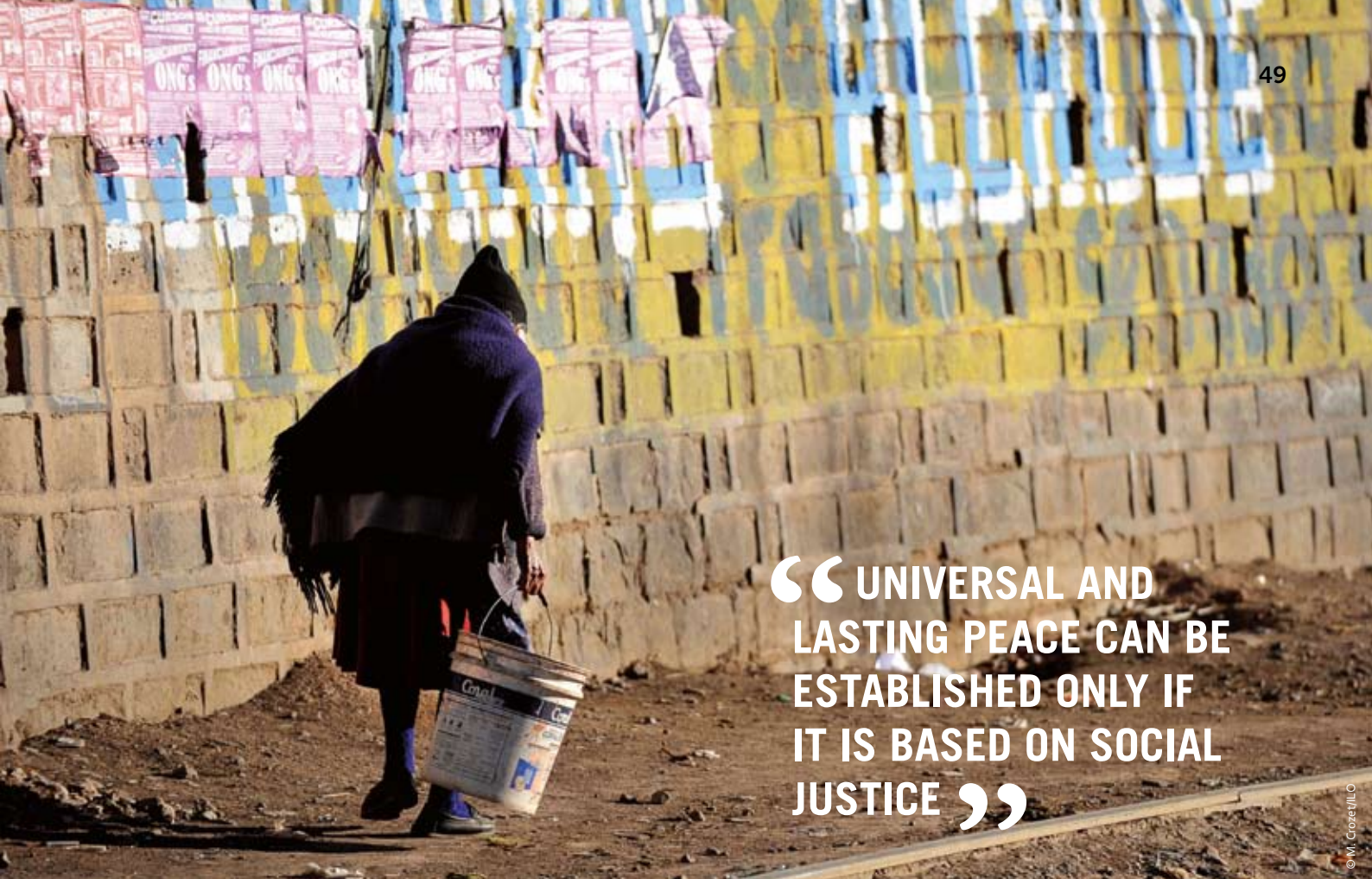
Women and men without jobs or livelihoods really don’t care if their economies grow at 3, 5 or 10 per cent per year if such growth leaves them behind and without protection. They do care whether their leaders and their societies promote policies to provide jobs and justice, bread and dignity, freedom to voice their needs, their hopes

and their dreams and the space to forge practical solutions where they are not always squeezed.

The reality is that people commonly judge whether society, the economy and the polity are working for them through the prism of work. Whether they have a job, or not, the quality of life it permits, what happens when they have no work or cannot work. In so many ways the quality of work defines the quality of society.

Yet the world of work is in tatters today: more than 200 million people are unemployed worldwide, including nearly 80 million youth, both figures are at or near their highest points ever. What is more, the number of workers in vulnerable employment – 1.5 billion – and the 630 million working poor living with their families at US\$1.25 a day or less is increasing.

At the same time, global inequalities are growing. The crisis has cut wage growth in half, reduced social mobility through work and trapped more



## “ UNIVERSAL AND LASTING PEACE CAN BE ESTABLISHED ONLY IF IT IS BASED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ”

© M. Crozet/ILO

and more people in low-paid jobs. Income gaps are growing in some countries. Youth face the increasing likelihood of never finding a decent job – the prospect of a lost generation looms. And the middle class often finds itself in the middle of nothing and going into reverse.

Achieving a fair globalization calls for a new vision of society and economy, with a balanced approach to the role of state, markets and society and a clear understanding of the possibilities and limitations of individual action in that framework. Action must go beyond simply recovering growth – we will not get out of the crisis with the same policies that led to it.

We need to move toward a new era of social justice. What will it take? In the world of work the steps are clear:

- First, recognizing that labour is not a commodity, policies must be based on the human values of solidarity, dignity and freedom – labour is not just a cost of production. It is a source of personal dignity, family stability and peace in communities;
- Second, make employment creation targets a central component of macroeconomic policy priority alongside low inflation and sound fiscal accounts;

- Third, provide fiscally sustainable social protection to the eight out of 10 people who lack any form of social security in the world today, starting with a basic floor of universal social protection;
- Fourth, recognize that fundamental rights at work and social dialogue which belong to the realm of human freedom and dignity are also instruments of enhanced productivity and balanced development;
- Fifth, stimulate investment and investors in small enterprises, employment intensive sectors, inclusive labour markets and skills development.

As Tunisia and Egypt are showing us, jobs and justice, bread and dignity, protection and democracy, national and global security are not unrelated demands. What happens in the future will very much depend on whether the connections are recognized and acted upon.

Decent work makes the connections. “Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice.” The cautionary words of the ILO’s 1919 Constitution resonate today. It is indeed time to build an era of social justice on a foundation of decent work. ■



# International Women's Day turns 100

The year 2011 marks the centenary of International Women's Day. The theme of celebrations in the ILO was "Making the crisis recovery work for women!"



**This year, International Women's Day was celebrated in the ILO with a high-level panel debate, including Ms Carmen Bravo Sueskun, Women's Confederate Secretary for the Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions (CCOO) in Spain; Mr Olusegun Oshinowo, Director-General of Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association; Ms Anja Wyden, Geneva State Chancellor for Switzerland; and ILO Director-General Juan Somavia.**

The panel discussion was based on an ILO background paper prepared for International Women's Day: *Making the crisis recovery work for women*. According to ILO data, the impact of the latest economic crisis on employment continues to be felt by both men and women workers in many countries. While the global unemployment

rate for men stood at 6 per cent in 2010, it was 6.5 per cent for women.

The paper says that further recovery measures should continue to seek innovative ways to create decent work to ensure that women – alongside men – have equal access to better education and training leading to jobs. Women should, as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women says, have equal chances with men for careers in science and technology, as new jobs emerge and old jobs recover.

In developed economies, trends in labour force participation highlight the different impact of the crisis between the sexes, with the participation rate among men falling from 69 per cent in 2007 to 68.4 per cent in 2009, compared with an increase from 52.7 per cent to 53.1 per cent for women over the same period. The larger relative impact on men is mainly because the industries that were most affected by the crisis, including construction and financial services, are characterized by high



*ILO celebrates International Women's Day 2011: Panel discussion with (from left to right) Ms Carmen Bravo Sueskun, Women's Confederate Secretary, Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions, CCOO, Spain; Mr Juan Somavia, ILO Director-General; Ms Jane Hodges, Director, ILO Bureau for Gender Equality; Ms Anja Wyden Guelpa, Geneva State Chancellor, Switzerland and Mr Olusegun Oshinowo, Director-General of Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association*

shares of male employment. The total employment rate for men nonetheless exceeded that of women.

### More women in "vulnerable employment"

Globally, the number of working poor grew by 40 million more than what would have been expected on the basis of pre-crisis trends – and the breakdown by sex for "vulnerable unemployment" shows, for 2009, that 48.9 per cent of males and 51.8 per cent of females faced the daunting challenge of being in precarious circumstances as contributory family workers or own-account workers. According to the ILO paper, there is a clear segregation of women in sectors that are generally characterized by low pay, long hours and often informal working arrangements.

The paper also notes that certain austerity measures might negatively affect women's financial situation, and especially the most vulnerable women. Examples of such measures include cuts in public jobs and funding of charity organizations, as more women than men work in these sectors, and cuts in social protection

such as child benefits and childcare centres, which affect single mothers and women on low incomes.

Governments that already had social protection schemes in place before the crisis have been better able to cope with its negative fallout. The impact of the crisis at household level was softened and the drop in aggregate demand alleviated. Social security systems respond not only to social needs, they are an economic necessity. Recovery after the crisis is demonstrating more than ever that social security is a condition for growth rather than a burden to society.

### Recovery measures benefited women

Several governments have put in place recovery measures which have benefited women. Among these, measures for getting women and girls into education, training, science and technology, which could improve women's equal access to full employment and decent work, are gaining popularity.

The paper cites other measures, including reskilling, training and unemployment protection, unemployment benefits and measures for

women workers, initiatives for women to return to work after maternity leave and encouragement for men to take paternity leave, in addition to more accessible childcare services, cash transfer programmes for poor households, retraining of unemployed persons to new jobs which break gender stereotypes, and keeping or increasing minimum wages, as women are lower paid than men due to the gender wage gap.

"Gender equality and women's economic empowerment are essential to achieve effective and sustainable development and to foster a vibrant economy. It is important to recognize the unique contribution women can make as countries work out of the economic crisis, and women must therefore be included in social dialogue and decision-making processes. Recovery policies need strong gender components to mitigate and prevent disparate effects on women and men in the future," said Jane Hodges, Director of the ILO Bureau for Gender Equality, before the event. ■

*For more information see [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_151285/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/docName--WCMS_151285/index.htm)*





# Around the



*H. E. Ambassador Dante Martinelli, Permanent Representative of the Swiss Confederation to the UN*

## Swiss Confederation ratifies Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

Switzerland is the 12th member State, the 6th European country, and the first landlocked State with maritime interests to ratify the MLC, 2006. The Swiss ratification gives a major boost to the ratification campaign launched by the ILO Director-General in December 2010, inviting member States to ratify the MLC, 2006 either on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of its adoption in February 2011 or at the equally symbolic 100th session of the International Labour Conference in June 2011. The first requirement for entry into force of the MLC, 2006 – coverage of 33 per cent of the world gross tonnage – has already been attained with over 48 per cent of world gross tonnage. Switzerland's ratification is an important step forward towards achieving the second requirement of 30 ratifying countries. The MLC, 2006 provides a "bill of rights" for the world's more than 1.2 million seafarers and establishes a level playing field for shipowners.

## ILO calls for "Just Transition" with green jobs and decent work

Last December, the ILO praised the 16th Conference of Parties (COP16) on climate change for including social and decent work dimensions in the outcome document, signalling broad recognition for a "just transition" to a low-carbon economy with decent work and greener jobs. The ILO organized a series of side events, involving other UN agencies, to discuss decent work and the social dimensions of climate change, showcasing progress made by countries with the ILO Green Jobs Programme, such as Brazil, China, Costa Rica and India. The ILO agenda for Green Jobs promotes a socially fair transition, in which vulnerabilities, changes in the labour market and new business models and opportunities are addressed through an inclusive social dialogue.

For more information see  
<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/lang--en/index.htm>

## ILO Decent Work Research Prize awarded

Last February, the ILO Decent Work Research Prize was awarded to Professor Jayati Ghosh (India) and Professor Eve C. Landau (Israel and Switzerland) for their outstanding contribution to knowledge on the central concerns of the ILO. The jury of eminent international experts on labour and social policy issues named Professor Jayati Ghosh of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (India) and also the Executive Secretary of the International Development Economics Associates (IDEAS) for major scholarly contributions to the analysis of decent work in the context of globalization, as well as the interlinkages between employment, gender and development. Professor Eve C. Landau, an academic and Director of Studies at the International Faculty of Comparative Law in Luxembourg, has been acknowledged for her academic contribution to the advancement of knowledge on ILO standards, labour law and social justice. Both laureates will receive US\$5,000 and an invitation to present their work during the ILO's Governing Body session in Geneva in November 2011.

For more information on the ILO Decent Work Research Prize see [www.ilo.org/inst](http://www.ilo.org/inst)

## ILO expands database

The ILO has expanded its online database of labour market statistics to include information disaggregated by sector of the economy. Data are available for 17 sectors in 54 countries according to their national classifications, ranging from agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and construction to trade or transport, among others. The new content is being introduced just a few months after the ILO Department of Statistics launched a renovated and expanded short-term indicators database aimed at providing analysts, policy-makers and the media with the latest labour statistics. The database also contains labour market indicators for countries that release official information on a monthly or quarterly basis. Currently, it provides national profiles for 75 countries and over 100 indicators disaggregated by gender. Users can obtain a printable page with the latest data or download Excel files. The ILO statistics tool also includes an interactive map containing most of the data, organized by country and topic.

Users can access the updated database at  
<http://laborsta.ilo.org/sti/>

# Continents



## Rural women face increasing inequality

A new United Nations interagency report on the gender dimension of agricultural work says women still benefit less than men from rural employment and face new challenges due to the current economic and food crises. The report – *Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty* – says: “Although gender inequality varies considerably across regions and sectors, there is evidence that, globally, women benefit less from rural employment, whether in self- or wage-employment, than men do.” At the same time, the report says that besides other challenges regarding gender disparities in rural employment, “the recent financial and food crises have slowed down the progress towards greater gender equity” and decent work for women in agricultural and rural areas over the past few years. The report, by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), brings together the latest thinking on the gender dimension of rural and agricultural work and seeks to promote the debate about the importance of women for rural economic growth and poverty reduction.

For more information see [http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/lang--en/WCMS\\_150558/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/lang--en/WCMS_150558/index.htm)

## ILO/EU initiative to improve safety and health at work

Responding to a pressing need to improve the safety and health of workers, the ILO and the European Union launched a new project last December aimed at reducing occupational accidents and diseases in six countries in Eastern Europe (Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), Africa (Malawi and Zambia) and Central America (Honduras and Nicaragua). One of the main activities will be to support the national tripartite constituents in developing national action plans for occupational safety and health (OSH) based on the needs and gaps in these countries. Seminars for national policy-makers will be held to sensitize them on OSH and push for high-level support at the national level. Two key products will be developed as an integral part of the project: a methodology to determine more accurately the number of occupational accidents and work-related diseases in each country, and a practical tool to enable countries to make their own calculations of the costs of not improving OSH conditions.

For more information, please contact the ILO Programme on Safety and Health at Work (SAFEWORK), [safework@ilo.org](mailto:safework@ilo.org)



## New ILO migration project

Last December, the ILO launched a new project in South-East Asia to improve the governance of cross-border labour migration. The five-year project, known as TRIANGLE (Tripartite Action to Protect Migrant Workers from Labour Exploitation), will carry out activities in Cambodia, China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam. It will provide direct support to more than 20,000 women and men migrant workers, through information services, training and legal assistance. Many more will benefit from the development of stronger policies and better practices in line with standards set by international and regional instruments on the protection of migrant workers' rights. TRIANGLE is supported by the Australian Government Aid Program (AusAID), with funding of more than US\$9.8 million.

For more information, please contact the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok at [bangkok@ilo.org](mailto:bangkok@ilo.org)



# Media Shelf



## Global Employment Trends 2011: The challenge of a jobs recovery

ISBN 978-92-2-124545-2.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$48, €33, 50 Swiss  
francs. Also available in  
French and Spanish.

The annual *Global Employment Trends* report provides the latest global and regional estimates of employment and unemployment, employment by sector, vulnerable employment, labour productivity and working poverty, while also analysing country-level issues and trends in the labour market. This year's report is the first to assess how the world's labour markets have been faring during the ongoing economic recovery and to provide projections of employment and unemployment prospects for the world as a whole as well as the various regions.



## The role of collective bargaining in the global economy: Negotiating for social justice

Susan Hayter (ed.)  
ISBN 978-92-2-124099-0.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$50, €33, 50 Swiss  
francs.  
Co-published with Edward  
Elgar.

This book looks at the role that collective bargaining plays in ensuring that workers are able to obtain a fair share of the benefits arising from participation in the global economy and in providing a measure of security against the risk to employment and wages. The various authors examine how this fundamental principle and right at work is realized in different countries and how its practice can be reinforced across borders. They highlight the numerous resulting challenges and the critically important role that governments play in rebalancing bargaining power in a global economy.



## Regulating for decent work: New directions in labour market regulation. Advances in Labour Studies

Sangheon Lee and  
Dierdre McCann (eds)  
ISBN 978-92-2-124559-9.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$110, €75, 110 Swiss  
francs.  
Co-published with Palgrave  
Macmillan.

This book, the first in the new series *Advances in Labour Studies*, is an international and interdisciplinary response to the neoliberal ideologies that have shaped labour market regulation in recent decades. It draws on contributions by leading experts across a range of disciplines, including economics, law, political science and industrial relations. International in scope, it includes chapters on both advanced economies (Canada, Europe, United States) and the developing world (Brazil, China, Indonesia, Tanzania). The volume advances the academic and policy debates on post-crisis labour regulation by identifying new challenges, subjects and theoretical perspectives.



## Work inequalities in the crisis: Evidence from Europe

Daniel Vaughan-Whitehead  
(ed.)  
ISBN 978-92-2-124885-9.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$90, €60, 90 Swiss  
francs.  
Co-published with Edward  
Elgar.

This book provides an in-depth overview of the effects of the crisis on inequalities in the world of work. It examines these inequalities multidimensionally, looking at employment, wages and incomes, working conditions and social dialogue, and also investigates whether the crisis may halt the progress made in Europe towards better quality jobs and working conditions. Following an assessment of trends in 30 European countries, 14 country case studies by noted specialists report on individual enterprises and sectors as well as policy solutions adopted at the national and local levels. It also sheds much light on an aspect of the crisis poorly documented thus far, namely its microeconomic effects on different types of workers and the areas of work that directly matter to them.



## Assessing green jobs potential in developing countries: A practitioner's guide

Andrew Jarvis, Adarsh Varma  
and Justin Ram  
ISBN 978-92-2-124571-1.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$30, €22, 30 Swiss  
francs.

The knowledge of how the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy will affect employment, especially underlying job movements, is vital to informing policy, yet there are few comparable studies for developing countries. A key bottleneck is scarcity of information, particularly employment and production data on green jobs as well as linkages with the rest of the economy. As part of the ILO's Global Green Jobs Programme, this guide provides practical solutions to help fill these information gaps. Though meant to stand on its own, the guide also serves as a companion to a series of country studies published separately by the ILO.



## Making microfinance work: Managing product diversification

Cheryl Frankiewicz and  
Craig Churchill  
ISBN 978-92-2-124140-9.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$75, €55, 70 Swiss  
francs.

This textbook, designed for middle and senior managers in microfinance institutions, is relevant for institutions that have already diversified and are looking for ways to manage their diversification more effectively as well as those that have not yet done so and are looking for guidance on where and how to begin. As the second volume of a training programme, it builds on the highly acclaimed *Making microfinance work: Managing for improved performance*. It includes chapters on various product options and how to combine different product menus to serve specific market segments, and concludes with discussions about managing partnerships and devising strategies to achieve a diverse product portfolio.



### Job-rich growth in Asia: Strategies for local employment, skills development and social protection

Cristina Martinez-Fernandez, Kees Van Der Ree, Sylvain Giguère and Aurelio Parisotto  
ISBN 978-92-2-124089-1.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$35, €24, 30 Swiss francs.  
Co-published with OECD.

This ILO-OECD report reviews some of the main labour market and social policy challenges that developing Asia faces. The report proposes a development approach that integrates skills, employment and social protection with local development strategies to achieve more “sustainable and balanced” patterns of growth. It provides guidance on how to implement employment and skills policies to maximize their impact on job creation and quality employment, considers the development of social protection systems to make the economy both more productive and inclusive, and addresses vertical and horizontal policy coordination.



### Brazil: An innovative income-led strategy. Studies on Growth with Equity

ISBN 978-92-9-014958-3.  
Geneva, IILS/ILO, 2011.  
US\$28, €22, 30 Swiss francs.

Over the past few years, Brazil has launched a wide range of employment and social policies. Because the measures were carefully conceived and implemented in parallel with supporting macroeconomic policies, the country managed to reduce poverty and informality while achieving one of the most remarkable economic recoveries in the world, even in the face of the global economic crisis.



### Germany: A job-centred approach. Studies on Growth with Equity

ISBN 978-92-9-014962-0.  
Geneva, IILS/ILO, 2011.  
US\$28, €22, 30 Swiss francs.

Germany experienced one of the most dramatic declines in output as a result of the crisis. And yet employment fell only marginally. This study shows how this was achieved through a carefully designed job-centred strategy. It also highlights areas where action is needed in order to consolidate economic recovery. In particular, by making the labour market more attractive to workers, Germany would be rewarded with significant gains, both economic and social.



### Indonesia: Reinforcing domestic demand in times of crisis. Studies on Growth with Equity

ISBN 978-92-9-014966-8.  
Geneva, IILS/ILO, 2011.  
US\$28, €22, 30 Swiss francs.

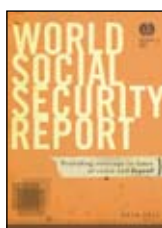
The experience of Indonesia shows how growth could be combined with equity goals in responding to the crisis. Rather than resorting to competitive devaluations, wage cuts and financial deregulation – as predicated by the conventional wisdom – Indonesia opted for a well-designed boost to domestic demand and prudent financial management. Though much remains to be done, the country has been rewarded with encouraging social and economic results.



### Equality at work: The continuing challenge. Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 2011. Report of the Director-General

ISBN 978-92-2-123091-5.  
Geneva, ILO, 2011.  
US\$30, €23, 30 Swiss francs.

Provides a dynamic picture of progress towards equality at work over the past four years and sets out some findings, conclusions and recommendations for future action. The report notes the persistence of discrimination and gives practical examples of ways to overcome it. Areas of progress are highlighted, including anti-discrimination legislation, a new ILO instrument on HIV and AIDS at the workplace, and moves to strengthen equality bodies. This report underlines the fact that greater vigilance is needed to ensure that the positive trends of recent decades are not reversed.



### World Social Security Report 2010/11: Providing coverage in times of crisis and beyond

ISBN 978-92-2-123268-1.  
Geneva, ILO, 2010.  
US\$50, €35, 50 Swiss francs.

This is the first in a new series of biennial reports that aim to map social security coverage globally, to present various methods and approaches for assessing coverage, and to identify gaps in coverage. Backed by much comparative statistical data, this first report takes a comprehensive look at how countries are investing in social security, how they are financing it, and how effective their approaches are. It examines the ways selected international organizations (the EU, OECD and ADB) monitor social protection and the correlation of social security coverage and the ILO Decent Work Indicators. The report's final section features a typology of national approaches to social security, with a focus on countries' responses to the economic crisis that began in 2008.



### Extending social security to all

ISBN 978-92-2-123064-9.  
Geneva, ILO, 2010.  
US\$50, €35, 50 Swiss francs.

Social security represents an investment in a country's “human infrastructure” no less important than investments in its physical infrastructure. This guide provides testimony showing that some level of social security can be afforded even at early stages of national development. It outlines basic concepts such as the social protection floor and the social security staircase, analyses the affordability of various approaches, and examines the results of practices around the world, especially in low- and middle-income countries.



# Building a safety and health culture brick by brick

No. 71, April 2011



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