



Tripartite National Dialogue on

Global call to action for a human-centered recovery from COVID-19 crisis in the context of India

Organized by

ILO in collaboration with Ministry of Labour and Employment,

Government of India



Executive Summary

A Tripartite national dialogue on the Global call to action for a human-centered recovery from COVID-19 crisis in the context of India was organized by International Labour Organization (ILO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE), Government of India on 10 December 2021 in New Delhi. The Global call to action for a human -centered recovery from the COVID-19 crisis resolution was passed by the General Conference of the International Labour Organization on 17 June 2021. The resolution stressed the criticality of the recovery steps to be inclusive, sustainable and resilient.

The objective of the meeting was to discuss the Global call to action for a human-centered recovery from COVID-19 in a tripartite forum of the Government, workers and employers in the four priority areas:

a) Inclusive economic growth and employment;
b) Protection of all workers; c) Universal social protection; d) Social Dialogue in the context of India, while fostering convergence and tripartite action contributing to the implementation of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and Sustainable Development Goals in India.

Over 150 participants from MOLE and its institutions, other Ministries, Government institutions, employers and workers organizations,

senior researchers and academicians and ILO attended the conference.

Shri Bhupender Yadav, Honourable Minister for Labour and Employment, Environment, Forest and Climate Change was the chief guest at the event.

The event witnessed two high-level tripartite panel discussions that discussed the immediate and future challenges in India across the working sectors in the four key priority areas and provided recommendations for future deliberations and action points for a human-centered recovery in the world of the work in India.

Inaugural Session

The inaugural session had participation from Mr Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, Ms Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO Decent Work Team (DWT) for South Asia and Country Office for India, Mr Satoshi Sasaki, Deputy Director, ILO DWT/CO-New Delhi. Mr Rajeev Dubey, Council of Indian Employers, Mr Binay Kumar Sinha, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh.

Honourable Minister for Labour and Employment Environment, Forest and Climate Change Mr. Bhupender Yadav was the Chief Guest of the event.



Ms Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO welcomed the gathering and reminded in her opening remarks about the devastating socio-economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, both globally and in India. She stated that in India, almost 90% of informal workers are in the informal economy, out of which 400 million workers were at the risk of falling into or deeper into poverty. She elaborated that India is on a V- shaped economic recovery and it is expected that the employment to population ratio will soon return to the pre-pandemic level. But globally including in India the long persistent trend of growing income inequality has been further aggravated with the pandemic.

The ILO constituents from India have taken a number of actions, including joining hands with all other member States in the International Labour Conference, 2021, to demonstrate to the World their resolve to tackle and inverse the situation for the better. The Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis being inclusive, sustainable and resilient were

unanimously adopted and later endorsed by the UN General Assembly, as well as by the BRICS-

Ministerial meeting presided over by India in 2021. The first set of actions in the Global call covers measures to be taken by national governments and their employer and trade union social partners, to achieve an inclusive job-rich recovery that substantially strengthen worker and social protections and supports sustainable enterprises.

Ms Walter highlighted the following four key areas for action outlined in the Call to Action:

- i) Inclusive economic growth and employment- for a broad-based recovery with decent work opportunities for all, it is critical to ensure that the hardest-hit sectors are able to bounce back and to foster investments with large job creation potential. Policies are needed that can create an enabling environment for innovation, and support small enterprises, skills development and environmental sustainability.
- ii) Protection of all workers-The pandemic has highlighted serious gaps in protections for workers. A redoubling of efforts to promote fundamental rights, International Labour Standards (ILS) and workers' protection is needed, including on issues such as adequate wages, limits for working time and strong occupational safety and health measures. The crisis demonstrated the need to integrate alternative work practices like teleworking, and to seize the opportunity to advance gender equality and combat violence and harassment in the workplace. Ratification of Convention 190 would be an important step in this regard and would have a positive impact on female labour force participation.
- iii) Universal social protection-The pandemic has shown the importance of social protection starting with income security, employment protection and essential health care. Universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection, with a strong public sector and healthcare systems, will be

essential for preventing future crisis and building a better normal.

iv) Social dialogue- plays an important role in the response to the pandemic at all levels-national or sub-national, various economic sectors, value chains and businesses. For a strong and sustainable recovery, consultations between governments and the social partners must continue to inform policy and focus more on the capacity building of public administrators, workers, employer's associations.

The International Labour Organization's Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, adopted in 2019 at the 108th International Labour Conference, supports a common set of principles and goals to the Call to Action. It is a roadmap for a human-centred future of work that is needed even more urgently now and provides the essential foundation for the Call to Action that we are discussing here today. India strives to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Accelerated action to achieve the SDGs is even more urgent today as the world responds to the pandemic's devastating impacts.

By invoking the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Climate Conference COP 26, she reiterated the importance of bringing all nations together to combat climate change, mitigate and adapt to its effects. As the world responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, recovery packages must prioritize measures to ensure the transition to environmentally sustainable economies is just and advances decent work. There is no future without the protection of the environment. As a way forward there is a need to foster inclusive, green and job-rich growth. Ms Walter concluded by appealing for convergence of discussion and action points to ensure that no one is left behind from this recovery process.

Followed by Ms. Walter's welcome address, ILO film 'Global call to action for a human centered recovery', was screened.

Mr Satoshi Sasaki, Deputy Director, ILO DWT/CO India in his remarks further elaborated the importance of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the future of Work, 2019 Some of the key aspects

captured by the declaration in the changing world of work are technological innovation, demographic shifts, climate change & globalization. The declaration pins on the Human-Centered Approach for the future of work crucial for shared prosperity and decent work for all. It can be facilitated only by investing more in people's capabilities, institutions of work and recognising the critical role of International Labour Standards and of Social Dialogue in advancing decent and sustainable work for all.

Mr Sasaki reminded that Covid-19 was not only a health crisis, but also how it adversely impacted the economy and labour markets and the worst affected are women, children, the youth and the migrant workers especially the internal migrant workers.

In the context of India, different constituents responded to the crisis rapidly. The Government of India responded quickly with various stimulus packages and, employers' organizations and workers' organizations extended support to the policy responses along with ILO.

He informed that ILO quickly re-purposed various programmes to respond to the work crisis due to the pandemic. Safe return to workplace especially for those workers engaged in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and home-based workers were capacitated on Covid-19 preventive measures, ILO business programme conducted online to help small scale entrepreneurs, integration of Covid-19 and HIV-TB messaging for migrant workers in Gujarat, roadmap for development of policy framework for the inclusion of internal migrant workers. Workers Information and Support Centres, WISC was another key step during this time which has become the heart for inseminating information and services. ILO provides the tools and technical support through various social partners and the government to organise various training programmes especially for young entrepreneurs.

Global call to action which was unanimously adopted by the constituents in International Labour Conference (ILC) in June 2021, emphasis on achieving sustainable, inclusive and job rich recovery from the pandemic, and more importantly to be more inclusive, sustainable, resilient and

prioritize decent work and address the inequality issues of the workers.

In the Indian context under the four key areas for Call to Action more focussed points were drawn to achieve sustainable, inclusive and job rich recovery and some of the key points included:

- Strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for growth of MSME's and large businesses, promoting female labour force participation and contributing to green growth under the pillar on Inclusive economic growth and employment
- Revitalize social dialogue mechanism and participatory decision making, promoting Tripartism and consensus on key social and economic policies affecting labour, employment, productivity and economic growth and capacity building for Decent work discussion at the state level under the pillar on Social dialogue
- Advocacy and awareness generation for improving and expanding social protection coverage, awareness raising on government schemes and supporting workers' access under the pillar on Universal Social Protection-
- Reducing informality, ensuring wage security, health and safety and promoting rights at work, advocating for equal employment opportunities especially for women, addressing challenges pertaining to informality working conditions and social protection under the pillar on Protection of all workers

Mr Sasaki concluded his address by drawing attention to the discussion and the criticality of the future action points from the meeting to be focussed on nation's priorities on development policies linking to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). It will also further feed into the next India Decent Work Country Programme DWCP,



(2023-27) to be developed by ILO in consultation with the constituents.

Mr Rajeev Dubey, Council of Indian Employers

thanked MOLE and ILO for organizing the national tripartite dialogue and appreciated the timeliness of the meeting. He elaborated that as a tripartite community working in close collaboration with the ILO, the following two issues need to be addressed for both the formal and unorganized or the informal sector which accounts for 90 per cent of the total employment in the country including migrant workers and special attention needs to be given to youth and women.

- meaningful, sustainable, decent and productive employment.
- creating a competitive, fair and inclusive economy.

He highlighted the commitment of the employers towards:

- Creation of necessary skills, competencies and mindsets that result in employability and employment which is productive and sustainable.
- Social protection benefits for all including the informal workforce.
- Bringing the benefits of the formal sector in the informal sector especially access to information, governance and finance on terms that are viable for the beneficiaries.
- Ensuring fair wages, decent working conditions, occupational safety and health standards and removing all forms of discrimination especially child labour and sexual harassment
- Proactively addressing the structural impact of climate change on the economy and the future world of work.

He emphasised that the power of technology and humans need to be brought together to find solutions to the above-mentioned five key issues. Any conflict arising along the way should be resolved through social dialogue. Working in a tripartite manner, facilitated by the ILO, would make a positive difference.



Shri Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister for Labour and Employment, Environment, Forest and Climate Change

Mr Binay Kumar Sinha, Worker's representative, Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh complimented the Government of India for standing out as an example for adopting a human-centric approach during the time of the pandemic as it could prioritize the safety of the people over the economy. It was pointed out that more cash flow would be required in order to revive the economy. And therefore, it is critical to increase the employment opportunities and also the purchasing power of the people. It was stressed that more attention and monitoring should be given to the implementation of the schemes which benefits the workers. And employers should consider the workers as their primary capital. There should be more inclusion of the unorganized sector and universal social protection should be extended to all the workers. An appeal for the introduction and implementation of the code of wages were also made to ensure the rights of the workers. There should be more inclusion of trade unions as it can encourage the social dialogue process from the ground level thereby strengthening the tripartite system not only in the centre but also at the state level. A request for the revival of the Indian Labour Conference was also submitted to the Government of India.

Shri Bhupender Yadav, Honourable Minister for Labour and Employment Environment, Forest and Climate Change in his keynote address emphasised the criticality of the continuous dialogue process to ensure a sustainable and resilient work future for the country. Drawing from the International Labour Organization's Global call to action, honourable minister reiterated the importance of human centric approach and the importance of capacity building, improved occupational safety and standards, green jobs, preventive and curative health measures to stabilize and improve work sectors. He reiterated that the Government of India recognizes the importance of trade unions and their continuous role in the protection of workers' rights. He assured that the government is always open to any dialogue convened by ILO.

The honourable Minister acknowledged the importance of ILO's suggestion on leveraging technology for delivering healthcare services and he mentioned that the government is considering to constitute a committee on the same. The government is working on various fronts: capacity building of workers, exploring different social protection measures (such as pension) and strengthening dispute resolution system through tripartite mechanism where representatives of the government, employers' and worker's association are collaborating. The honourable minister cited the example of Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC's) pilot project of free health check-ups for all labourers above the age of 40 years, across four cities/ states. He highlighted the need to understand the occupational health hazards to curate need specific preventive healthcare. The success of this ESIC pilot project would determine the government's future plans to linkage all ESIC hospitals and subsidiary dispensaries to strengthen healthcare solutions for workers. For areas where ESIC is not present, Ayushman Yojna would be linked to extend similar kind of healthcare services to workers.



He elaborated the Government's efforts to push for speedy recovery of the Indian economy and workers, cited the example of PM SWANidhi Yojna for street vendors. He also mentioned that the urgent need for capturing disaggregated data was reiterated by the Honourable Minister and the launch of the e-Shram portal is to be considered as a primary step in the direction of evidence-based policy making. This is also important to identify the high employment generating sectors (in addition to agriculture) and also to promote social security to the workers. GOI is already in the process of collecting relevant data on migrant workers, domestic workers, transport workers, care workers, agricultural sector and few other sectors most affected by the pandemic. The government is committed to uphold the Article 21 of Indian Constitution - the right to live with dignity. To work in this direction the government is striving to build capacity among workers, focussing on renewable energy production and generation of green jobs to mitigate the threats of climate change. India is proving to be an effective leader in representing the developing nations' ask for technology transfer and financial support from developed countries, as per the international commitments. He also mentioned that the urgent need for capturing disaggregated data was reiterated by the Honourable Minister and the launch of the e-Shram portal is to be considered as a primary step in the direction of evidence-based policy making. This is also important to identify the high employment generating sectors (in addition to agriculture) and also to promote social security to the workers. GOI is already in the process of collecting relevant data on migrant workers, domestic workers, transport workers, care workers, agricultural sector and few other sectors most affected by the pandemic. The government is



committed to uphold the Article 21 of Indian Constitution - the right to live with dignity. To work in this direction the government is striving to build capacity among workers, focussing on renewable energy production and generation of green jobs to mitigate the threats of climate change. India is proving to be an effective leader in representing the developing nations' ask for technology transfer and financial support from developed countries, as per the international commitments. He encouraged and welcomed the ILO's consultative process and the suggestions from the meeting. He extended his support in strengthening the rights of the workers and formulating effective policies and also assured the effective implementations the recommendations that is brought forth by the tripartite national dialogue.

The inaugural session was followed by a vote of thanks from ILO.

Following the inaugural session, two high-level panel discussions were organized

High Level Panel I: Leaving no one behind:

Universal Social Protection and protection of all workers for a human-centered sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID- 19 in the world of work in India.

The panel was chaired by Mr. Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, Minister of Labour and Employment, Government of India. The panel members were Ms Manali Shah, National Secretary, SEWA, (Workers' Representative); Mr Arun Chawla, Director General, FICCI Executive Director, AIOE, Employers' representative; Ms. Vinita Singhal, Principal Secretary, Government of Maharashtra; Prof Pravin Kumar Sinha, Senior Expert

The priorities identified by constituencies with respect to the global call to action formed the basis for discussions by this panel, with a particular focus on the following inter-related themes based on these priorities:

- Formulating and effectively implementing comprehensive social protection policies, inclusive of informal economy workers, as a basis for ending poverty and reducing inequalities.
- Generating a better understanding of the importance of tripartism and solidarity in closing coverage and financing gaps and enhancing the financial sustainability of social protection systems.
- Adapting social protection systems to respond to new and rapidly changing realities and shocks.
- Reducing institutional fragmentation to improve access, awareness raising, coverage gaps and overlaps while promoting and strengthening good governance.

Within this context, the specific questions that the Panel considered, were as follows:

- i) What are the transformative actions needed to ensure coverage and entitlement to social protection to all workers in the informal economy? (how far have we progressed and is there fiscal space to do so?)
- ii) What could be the convergent action/s by the MOLE and social partners for driving the human centered recovery from COVID-19 in the world of work in India?

In respect of each question, the Panel sought to; i) Identify key opportunities and challenges; ii) Outline the roles of the tripartite constituents; iii) Propose key next steps.

This session recognized the current challenges and problems that Covid-19 has brought forth, in particular for the world of work, and also various measures taken up as solutions in order to achieve Universal Social Protection and protection of all workers.

Key Discussion:



High Level Panel I: Left to Right- Ms. Vinita Singhal, Principal Secretary, Government of Maharashtra, Mr Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, Minister of Labour and Employment, Government of India, Mr Arun Chawla, Director General, FICCI Executive Director, AIOE, Prof Pravin Kumar Sinha, Senior Expert, Ms Manali Shah, National Secretary, SEWA

Mr Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, Minister of Labour and Employment, Government of India, opened the discussions. He pointed that the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) estimated the total number of workers in the country to be 470 million workers and only 19 million workers are in the organized sector. He acknowledged that the pandemic has exposed the vulnerabilities of

unorganized sector workers and highlighted the need to extend social security protection to the workers. He shared some of the recent steps taken by the MOLE, GOI which are:

 Registration of unorganized sector workers on e-Shram portal linked to Unique Identification Numbers (UID); this could serve as a point of convergence for all the central and the state social security schemes. This database would provide important insights with regard to effective designing and implementation of various welfare measures for the unorganized sector. The intent is to achieve the nine principal social security branches as mentioned in the ILO Social Security Convention No. 102.

- Universalization of social protection: the four labour codes, including the Social Security Code would help to strengthen the universalization process.
- Wage Code would promote minimum wages for all workers and moreover, it has been linked to skill sets as well.
- Special focus on migrant workers and promoting fixed term employment has been included within the scope of Industrial Relations Code
- Need to secure overall health and safety of all workers (including migrant workers) have been highlighted in the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Condition (OSH) Code. The penalty of non-compliance to EPFO and ESIC guidelines has been increased, this would help to fund the Social Security Protection efforts, both in terms of extending outreach and implementing programmes.

To realize these efforts effectively there is a need for robust data collection. The All-India Survey of Migrant Workers has been started with the objective of documenting the pattern of migration and the challenges faced by them. This would help to tailor the evidence-based programmes, particularly for migrant workers. The registration by unorganized workers at the E-Shram portal would further help to supplement the effective planning and implementation of various welfare measures. An understanding of the trade wise contribution of each sector in employment generation would help to achieve sector specific goal-oriented results

Ms Manali Shah, National Secretary, SEWA, Workers' Representative focussed on the primary areas for the social protection of workers especially after the pandemic, namely, work security, social security, child & healthcare, insurance and food security. Referring to a survey conducted by the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) with workers in the unorganized sector after the second

wave of the pandemic, she mentioned that 87 % lost their livelihoods, 16% are unemployed, 97% stated a decrease in income, 92% do not have jobs and 15% stated of occupational shift and there is a drastic reduction in the piece-rate wages. She emphasised that inclusive economic growth & employment and universalization of social protection schemes can be achieved only through social dialogue. It should be ensured that workers should be provided with the three basic necessities of food, cloth and shelter and with three basic services of banking, health and education at their doorstep. Both the basic necessities and services should be received together to ensure a holistic development. Key issues and suggestions made towards the resilient recovery from the pandemic in the work economy in India are:

- E-Shram portal does not provide categories of all the trades that are practised in India. This may leave out registration of workers engaged in some specific categories of trade. Therefore, it would be a limiting factor while designing trade specific policy and programmatic interventions, if not modified.
- E-Shram portal is working very slow and steps should be taken to mitigate this technical problem.
- Central trade unions should be granted the status of Common Service Centre (CSC), for this specific purpose of assisting with the registration of workers at E-Shram portal. This could be facilitated either by a national or state specific issuance of identity cards (for the same purpose). Existing data with state levels to be transferred to e-Shram portal thereby increasing the speed of registration and avoid duplication.
- Social Protection for vulnerable and unorganized workers requires long term financial commitment and the central and state governments are required to allocate more funds towards it. Almost all the states have formed the welfare boards under the state rules but the rules are not yet implemented and the boards are not functioning properly due to a lack of funds. Special focus is to be given to health and maternity, life and disability and child protection measures. Welfare boards to be extended to the unorganised sector as well and registration process to be further

simplified for the maximum inclusion of workers in this sector.

Mr Arun Chawla, Director General, FICCI Executive Director, AIOE,

Employers' representative raised critical points in order to achieve Universal Social Protection in the post covid 19 scenarios. The challenges on lives and livelihood post-Covid-19 were more pronounced for South Asian countries including India. 85% of workforce are in the informal sector and they struggle to meet the basic necessities while facing the threat of infection. To achieve universal social protection, need to build on the principle of sustainability aspect of the social protection system for it to be effective and adequate over the long term. Two major steps towards this direction could be:

i) preventing the informalizing of employment by creating a favourable environment for sustainable enterprises, especially for small and medium enterprises; and

ii) providing incentives for enterprises to facilitate work transactions, protect enterprise and business stability for a future crisis and thereby it will provide a cushion for employers and trickledown effect will be mitigated.

In addition, there is a need to raise awareness among workers about existing government schemes. A study conducted by the ESIC and ILO, focusing on improving and expanding access to health care service in India, came up with two critical suggestions and they are i) need to build capacity of and create awareness among workers on various existing social security schemes ii) need for expansion of social protection to gig and platform economy workers, as contractual relation is not defined between the platform and the worker as employment. In this regard, India has shown the way of recognizing the importance such workers. By highlighting ILO's recommendation 202 which delinks entitlement to social security from formal employment and envisages a universal coverage aligned with each country's economic development, he pointed out that there is provision of seeking international support if national government's economic and fiscal capacities are inadequate. He suggested that ILO can pave way for broader discussion regarding this area. There should be convergent

actions for all the stakeholders for driving the human-centered recovery and three approaches need to be followed:

- Enhancing the social protection policies that are currently in force and raise awareness among the eligible beneficiaries regarding the same and further help them avail the benefits. In addition, it has to be ensured that the employers are complying with the provisions of the policies and schemes.
- Augment the capacity of employers and organizations to promote and share good practices for maintaining health and hygiene of workers.
- Social dialogue is a key point for recovery and a safe space to be facilitated to promote dialogue between employers and employees.

Learnings from research studies (conducted by AIOE and ILO) on the aftermath of internal migration in India due to Covid-19 from an industry perspective and good practices for balanced employer-employee relationship highlighted the common approach adopted for sustaining and balancing employeremployee relations. Within both these studies, the importance of social dialogue was highlighted. It is suggested that a task force may formulated with equal representation from all stakeholders, this shall bridge gap between stakeholders and make way for human-centered approach to tackle challenges. Collaboration and social dialogue are keys for future actions and the common consensus is inevitable for human centered recovery for the post pandemic world.



Ms. Vinita Singhal, Principal Secretary, Labour, Government of Maharashtra revisited the important lessons that COVID has taught us and there are three major ones:

Health adversities: Many of the workers had adverse effects of covid because of the risk they have incurred over time due to their nature of work. Workers were already exposed to health hazard due to the industry they are in which made them more susceptible. Creating a subset in Ayushman scheme will help those workers who are facing health vulnerabilities due to their work and provide more infrastructure on health facilities especially in risk involved industries

Social security net: For those workers who already had established welfare boards had (e.g., domestic workers board, construction workers board) money for their welfare and the government were able to use it for them during the crisis for their support and welfare but other sectors who didn't have welfare boards, the government faced a huge number of difficulties to support them during the time of Covid-19 relief measures due to the paucity of funds. Creating virtual sub-boards with associated related industries and employers with CESS will create a safety net in both organized and unorganized sectors in terms of finances and in terms of five to six schemes. This will also help to provide some unemployment benefit when there is a situation of adversity.

Issues regarding migrant workers: Portability of ration cards and extended portability for ICD scheme to the children were found very effective in Maharashtra. Portability of other schemes needs to be designed on a national scale. Transportation of migrants on a long-term basis should be looked into and a consistent policy is required as it should be considered as a part of social security in a long-term basis.

Two steps are suggested for the recovery of the economy and they are:

- Resurrection of jobs
- Need to create more jobs.

And tools to achieve them are a) skill up gradation and skill management b) more employability in MSME c) push for employment-intensive industry d) along with sustainability labour intensive employment through skill development with the support of Government for entrepreneurship and startups as it should be the aim for the coming five years and it can ensure the path of economic recovery from the current crisis.

Prof Pravin Kumar Sinha, Senior Expert, emphasized that majority of the workers in India are in the informal sector and therefore policies should be formulated looking at the majority and not only the minority of working section. The nature of the informal sector cannot be changed quickly and therefore policy to be designed according to the informal sector. Few suggestions for streamlining informal sector are:

- Shift the focus from terms of employment to work conditions in India.
- Continuous measures to be taken to collate data regarding the informal sector and also to recognize the nuances and dynamic nature within the informal sector.
- Fund allocation should not only be for the registration process of informal workers.
- Trade unions' offices can also be used as service centres and utilize their capacity to capture the data of all workers.
- Use of ATM- As account holding is mandatory and the scope to modify it as a delivery mechanism for the benefit of the worker needs to be explored.
- Reviving the Indian Labour Conference as it is critical for social dialogue. There is a need for employers and employees to come together for the ease of exchanging ideas.
- Establishment of guidelines for human rights in the business sector
- ILO need to be more participatory in the state level and bring smaller administrative units into the gamut of the discussion on decent work in order to further facilitate evidencebased policy making.

Points for discussion from audience members:

- It is generally observed that the employers tend to employ lesser women workers as they have to provide them with more facilities needs to be checked and in order to counter this situation incentives to be provided for employers who gives more opportunity of livelihood for women.
- Shramik cards are not made for 46-56% of contractual workers and they are excluded

- from many schemes and this need to be addressed.
- International Labour Standards (ILS) and protection of rights to be followed across the working sectors.
- An exclusive dialogue to be convened for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to evaluate the special measures to be taken for their recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

Key Recommendations

- Universalisation of Social protection:
- Provision of Comprehensive social protection inclusive of informal economy workers.
- enhanced coverage and closing the financing gaps and ensure financial sustainability of social protection systems.
- Higher allocations and long-term social protection financing by both central and state governments for protection of workers in particular those in the unorganised sector.
- Increase in public investment on social sector/ expenditure on social protection schemes
- Streamline e-Shram portal to facilitate registrations of unorganized workers.
 Technology based registration may not be possible for workers with little education and access to technology.
- Common Service Centres (CSC) to be facilitated and allow trade unions to share their membership details.

- Creation of welfare boards for all the work sectors including for those in the unorganised sector. Taking into cognizance the lessons learnt from the existing welfare boards: defunct due to lack of fund and other challenges in terms of implementation.
- Convergent actions to be taken for all the stakeholders for driving the human-centered recovery such as enhancing the social protection policies that are currently in force. Workers organization have to play the role of raising awareness about eligibility of benefits and workers registration and employers to ensure compliance to existing legal provisions for the protection of employees.
- Evidence based policy planning:
- Focused efforts should be made to collect disaggregated data of workers in every sector, with priority focus to those in the unorganised sector as this data/ information will be crucial for evidence-based policy making.
- Social Dialogue:
- Promote good practices on employeremployee relationship by augmenting the capacity of employers and workers organizations.
- Incentivise the employers for enabling employment and participation of more women workers especially in the industrial sector to promote gender parity.
- Promote social dialogue through creation of safe space for both employers and employees.

High level Panel II: Converging to build back better

Inclusive economic growth, employment and Social Dialogue for a human centered sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 in the world of work in India.

The panel was chaired by Ms Dagmar Walter, Director ILO DWT/CO with Mr Atul Tiwari, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Mr H Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary Education, Government of NCT of Delhi, Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE, Mr Ashok Singh, ILO GB Member.



High Level Panel II: Left to Right: Mr Ashok Singh, ILO GB Member, Mr Atul Tiwari, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ms Dagmar Walter, Director ILO DWT/CO, Mr H Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary Education, Government of NCT of Delhi, Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE

The panel drew upon the priorities identified by constituencies with respect to the Global Call to Action with a particular focus on the following themes:

Achieving a just transition to a green economy.

- Facilitating a transition from insecure forms of work to formality, including gig and platform work
- Strengthening labour force participation and opportunities for women.
- Promoting employment and decent work using both tripartite and bipartite social dialogue.

The specific questions deliberated by the Panel were as follows:

i) How can we better foster a just transition to green economy, especially for vibrant local economies benefiting both women and men? What is the outlook for entrepreneurship and job creation to grow the green economy?

- ii) What measures are required to foster better working conditions for higher productivity to move towards more formal businesses and worker arrangements, including gig and platform work? What role does the skilling of women and men in the workforce play?
- iii) What are the key policy measures required for refocusing on female labour force participation (COVID-19 has put spotlight on entrepreneurship, creation of jobs, retaining women workers and sharing the unpaid care work.)
- iv) How can both tripartite and bipartite social dialogue be used to expedite post COVID recovery in the context of promotion of employment and decent work for all?

This panel channeled the discussion towards the criticality of the principle of inclusion and inclusive measures in economic growth and employment. It recognized the utmost importance of Social Dialogue for a human-centered sustainable and resilient recovery of the workers in the Indian economy and sought to: Identify key opportunities

and challenges; Outline the roles of the tripartite constituents; Propose key next steps:

Key Discussion:

Ms Dagmar Walter discussed the adverse effects of the pandemic and how it hardly spared any sector and the worst affected were subsistence farmers, micro and small businesses and industrial workers. There were regional variations across states and territories regarding the extent of the economic downturn. Evidence-based policymaking and putting emphasis on what is required and what needs to be monitored and adjusting action where needed is crucial. It is important to build convergence, synergies and joint action to revitalise and strengthen social dialogue mechanisms at all levels for better outcomes in workplaces, economic sectors, geographical areas and the world of work at large in India.

Mr H Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary Education, Government of NCT of Delhi

Covid-19 and the lockdown brought out the fault lines in the nation's labour market and economy. There was an immediate realisation that there is a need to focus on foundational strengthening of facilities from all the stakeholders-- private sector, governments, state governments, employers, and the larger society. Among all the sectors health especially accessibility to health provisions, shelter and food security to be given prime importance. There is a need for a shift in thinking with regard to education. The workforce in India is not meeting the industry standards in several sectors and therefore skill development schemes are critical to mitigate the problems of unemployment. The government of Delhi have established skill university with advanced degrees. Guarantee of minimum wages, inclusion and registration of workers from unorganised sector in e-shram portal is one another step taken to ensure the protection of workers and these factors help the move towards the sustainable development goal number eight.

Mr Atul Tiwari, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and

Entrepreneurship assessed from the central perspective on how to achieve foster working conditions for higher productivity and move towards more formal businesses worker arrangements and how to tackle the gig and platform economy. The importance of the skilling of women and men in the workforce to contribute to building high productivity working arrangements were stressed. Lessons from the pandemic and future action points were highlighted.



- Convergence and coordination of multiple departments within the government were crucial.
- Skilling and reskilling migrant workers can be an important step in helping the workers to diversify their employability.
- The importance of communication was greatly highlighted during the times of the Covid-19. Disseminating the right information and proper communication ensured the lives and safety of millions during these unprecedented times.
- Joining forces of the government and the civil societies turned out to be the biggest strength in reaching out to the most vulnerable population. Functions and roles to be reoriented to respond to the effects of the pandemic. For example, in the skill ministry, a customized skill crash programme was designed to equip covid care workers. 2.5 lakhs people responded to the course.
- Role of information and technologies. Digitised and online courses paved the way to reach out to the maximum number of potential candidates. Special attention is given to women candidates in terms of travel allowances, placement support and reorientation of working hours.

 Continuous reskilling and upskilling are the need of the hour and for future security.

Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE, Employers' representative.

The transition to a green economy and the contribution of women is integral for inclusive growth. Aggressive challenges are taken upon to achieve the shift to a green economy. There will be a shift to non- fossil-based energy, aiming for a 3fold increase to non-fossil energy-based consumption by 2030. The key to this transition is the formulation of climate change policies with a human-centred approach. Around 2.15 crore jobs are dependent on fossil fuel and therefore the transition to a green economy needs to be carefully designed to prevent any job losses. In states such as Iharkhand and Chhattisgarh's, 30-45% of total revenue comes from coal-based industries. Without a clear-cut transition plan, large scale employment will be deeply impacted in these states. Below given points are required to ensure a smooth transition to a green and inclusive economy.

- Social dialogue needs to be initiated and concrete steps to be taken by tripartite members to mitigate any adverse implications to the workers for a smooth transition to a green-based economy.
- Skill development is required to prepare the workforce. Requirement of reskilling and upskilling as new kind of knowledge and expertise is required to develop green industries.
- Imparting labour-intensive technology in renewable energy is also a requirement for job security.
- Finding more innovative opportunities in the renewable energy field.
- Collaboration with International organizations and Universities to learn and adopt new technologies and innovative experiences.
- Increase in women participation participation of women in employment is going drastically down and especially with the impact of COVID-19 it has further deteriorated. Detailed research and studies need to be designed in order to address these problems. Earlier studies conducted by ILO have shown that the worst affected from the age of 25-35 years. Flexibility in work timing is one area that came

to the forefront with Covid-19 and the work situation and how it can be benefitted for women in the industries needs to be carefully studied. The flexibility of work along with skill up-gradation to be explored as a solution to increase women participation in the work sector

 Need for incentivising employers to encourage recruitment of more women by industry and overcome gender-based discrimination and bring in more gender parity.

Mr Ashok Singh, ILO Governing Body Member, Workers' representative:

With the onset of the pandemic, the requirement of the public sector cannot be undermined in India and the skill-based education system to be given more importance to ensure more employability. Sustainable improvement in human development indicators should be treated as the prime factors for inclusive growth and development. In many countries, inequalities are at their highest levels in thirty years and are widening and further rising due to the Covid-19 crisis. Few issues and measures are discussed below for future discussion and action points:

- Political leadership is important for economic and social recovery especially for relief and welfare measures for workers in enterprises. Political leadership should focus more on creating a business environment that attracts new firms and boost communities and they should also be constantly monitored and improvised by the government.
- For the achievement of SDG Goal 8.2 higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors are required but with the increase in the unemployment rate it is a deep concern and careful deliberation is needed to address the issue of employment generation and for the creation of labour-intensive sector in the context of a greener economy.
- Skill-based Universities are the need of the hour to ensure that employers are adequately equipped for the changing environment of employability.

- Labour markets have been disrupted, exposing the production gaps and calling for an extension of national social protection codes as a top priority for the country's policy agenda.
- Social protection through different schemes to be expanded to address the current crisis.
- Universalization of social protection for all workers.
- For the social dialogue to be more participatory and inclusive, representation of informal sectors is necessary and just nor restricted to the welfare boards alone. Four pillars of the nation- workers, farmers, youngsters and jawans to be further strengthened.
- Women and informal sector workers being the most vulnerable during the pandemic need separate quidelines to ensure their upliftment.
- In order to achieve Sustainable development goals, social dialogue is required to demand the government to incorporate protection of rights to work, living wages, free quality health and education to all citizens.
- Equal salary for contract and regular (permanent/ non-contract) workers

Key Recommendations

Skilling, Upskilling, Reskilling:

- Link skilling to meet the current industry standards/labour market needs; building competencies for the jobs of the future;
- Skill development schemes across sectors and importance for skill-based education
- Prioritize skilling and reskilling of migrant workers for better employability

- Convergent actions should be encouraged between the government and social partners
- Recognize the increasing role of information technology and digitalization in skilling and lifelong learning.

• Transition to green economy:

- Job creation through shifting to labour-intensive technology while transitioning to a green economy.
- Promote tripartite social dialogue and take concrete steps for smooth transition to a green-based economy
- Strengthening labour force participation and opportunities for women:
 - Ensure increased women participation in the work sector; Gender-inclusive recruitment policies
 - Ensure inclusion and representation of workers in most vulnerable situation including women and migrant workers, in the social dialogue process.
 - Incentivise employers to encourage recruitment of more women by industry and overcome gender-based discrimination and bring in more gender parity.
- Concerted efforts should be made to facilitate a transition from insecure forms of work to formality, including for gig and platform work.

Concluding Session:

The concluding session was presided by Dr H. Srinivas, Director General V.V Giri National Labour Institute.

In his concluding remarks he mentioned that convergent actions of the government agencies, employers' associations, employees' associations have led to reducing the impact of the covid-19 pandemic today. As a way forward to the discussions on the Global call to action, he highlighted the following:

- The ILO convention C 102 recommends extending nine social security benefits and the discussion culled out the security benefits which can be aptly put into place in the Indian context for the recovery of the economy and working conditions.
- Capacity building in the green job sector and a futuristic approach towards work can be seen as the hallmarks for a human-centered recovery.
- The code on wages and the code on social security have defined the social security benefits to gig and platform workers and it can be considered as an important milestone for India.
- Universalisation of wages and no discrimination policies between gender accelerated inclusive growth in the economy.
- Streamlining of e-shram portal requires urgent attention.
- Adoption of appropriate technology is very critical in order to balance the welfare of the workers and at the same time can help grow a business-oriented ecosystem.
- Appropriate technology remains one of the major issues to be explored in the future. Along with the upskilling of hard skills, soft skills should also be given due importance



Dr H. Srinivas, at the concluding session

in order to have an aptly skilled worker and increase productivity.

- Providing social security benefits to all will be a huge challenge but the efforts towards it need to be taken in tandem and in unity to achieve the goal of inclusive development and society.

▶ Way Forward: Key recommendations under the four key priorities for Global Call to Action

a) Inclusive economic growth and employment • Incentivise the employer for the employment and participation of more women workers especially in the industrial sector to promote gender parity.

- Augment the capacity of employers and organization to promote good practices of employer- employee relationship.
- Flexibility in work timings along with skill up-gradation to be explored as a solution to increase women participation in the work sector.
- Promote skill development schemes and importance for skill-based education
- Continuous skilling and reskilling of migrant workers for better employability
- Shift to labour-intensive technology while transitioning to a green economy
- Increasing role of information and technology to be recognized.
- Women and informal sector workers being the most vulnerable during the pandemic need separate guidelines to ensure their upliftment.

b) Protection of all workers

- Disaggregated data collection of workers in every sector especially those in the unorganised sector enable evidence-based policy making.
- Streamlining e-Shram portal to facilitate registrations of unorganized workers.
 Common Service Centres (CSC) to be facilitated and allow trade unions to share their membership details.
- Increase in public investment on social sector/ expenditure on social protection
- Creation of welfare boards for all the work sectors including for those in the unorganised sector
- Equal salary for contract and regular (permanent/ non-contract) workers
- Convergent actions to be taken for all the stakeholders for driving the humancentered recovery such as enhancing the social protection policies that are currently in force and to raise awareness for the eligible beneficiaries and further help them avail the benefits and also to be made sure the employers are complying with the existing legal provisions for the protection of employees.

c) Universal Social Protection

- Universalisation of social protection for all workers. Long term finance commitment from both the Central and the State governments are required and more funds to be allocated towards it
- Enhancing the social protection policies that are currently in force and to raise awareness for the eligible beneficiaries
- Human centric approach is required for capacity building, improved occupational safety and standards, green jobs, preventive and curative health measures to stabilize and improve work sectors
- Extension of national social protection codes and social protection through different schemes to be expanded to address the current crisis.

d) Social Dialogue

- To promote dialogue, creating a safe space for both employers and employees.
- Inclusion and representation of the most vulnerable working population such as women and migrant workers in the social dialogue process is imperative.
- Inclusive Social dialogue is necessary for the achievement of SDG's.
- Initiate social dialogue with all the stakeholders for more sustainable and green jobs
- An exclusive dialogue to be convened for MSME's to evaluate the special measures to be taken for their recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

Annexure I- List of Abbreviations

AIOE All India Organisation of Employers'

BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

COP Conference of the Parties CSC Common Service Centres

DWCP Decent Work Country Programme

DWT Decent WorkTeam

ESIC Employees State Insurance Corporation

FICCI Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry

HQ Headquarters

ICDS Integrated Child Development Services
ILC International Labour Conference
ILO International Labour Organization
ILS International Labour Standards
MSME Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

NCT National Capital Territory
PLFS Periodic Labour Force Survey

SCOPE Standing Conference of Public Enterprises

SDG Sustainable Development Goals
SEWA Self Employed Women's Association

UN United Nations

Annexure- II- Agenda of the meeting:

Tripartite national dialogue on Global call to action for a human-centered recovery from COVID-19 crisis in the context of India

Friday, 10 December 2021

Venue: Silver Oak, India Habitat Centre

Welcome Address- Ms Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO DWT/CONew Delhi -10 mins ILO HQ film- Global call to action for a human centred recovery Current scenario, challenges, sharing results/impact stories- Mr. Satoshi Sasaki Deputy Director, ILO DWT/CO New Delhi -7mins Address by Employers' representative (Mr. Rajeev Dubey, CIE) - 8mins Address by Workers' representative (Mr Binay Kumar Sinha, BMS) - 8mins Address by Mr. Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, MOLE, GOI-10 mins Chief Guest Address (or Keynote address) by Mr. Bhupendra Yadav, Honourable Minister of Labour and Employment and Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India -15 mins Vote of Thanks (by ILO) - 2 mins Tea Break High Level Panel I: Leaving no one behind: Universal Social Protection and protection of all workers for a human centered sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 in the world of work in India" Panel moderator: Mr Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, MoLE, GOI(15 mins) Members: 7 mins each Ms. Vinita Singhal, Principal Secretary, Government of Maharashtra Prof Pravin Kumar Sinha, Senior Expert Employers' representative (Mr. Arun Chawla, DG FICCI &Executive)
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Director, AIOE)
Workers' representative (Ms. Manali Shah, National Secretary, SEWA)

Open discussions - 15 minutes

12.20 PM- 1.20 PM	High level Panel II: Converging to build back better "Inclusive economic growth, employment and Social Dialogue for a human centered sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 in the world of work in India"
	Panel moderator: Ms Dagmar Walter, Director ILO DWT/CO NewDelhi - 10 mins Members:
	 Mr H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary, Education, Government of NCT of Delhi - 10 mins Mr. Atul Tiwari, Addl. Secretary, M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship - 10 mins
	 Mr Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE, Employers' representative -10 mins Mr. Ashok Singh, ILO GB Member, Workers' representative - 10 mins Open discussions -10 mins
1.20- 1.30 PM	Concluding remarks/ sum up — Dr.H Srinivas, Director General, V.V Giri National Labour Institute- 6 mins Way forward and vote of thanks - Director ILO DWT/CO New Delhi - 2 mins



Tripartite Dialogue on Global Call to Action for a human-centered recovery from COVID-19 crisis in the context of India

Satoshi Sasaki, Deputy Director, ILO DWT/CO-New Delhi

Date: Friday / 10 / December / 2021



2

ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019

Changing world of work:

- Technological innovation
- Demographic shifts
- Climate change
- Globalization
- A Human-Centred Approach for the Future of Work crucial for shared prosperity and decent work for all

Investment in:

- People's capabilities
- Institutions of work
- Critical role of International Labour Standards and of Social Dialogue in advancing decent and sustainable work for all





India: World of work response to COVID-19

- Economic and social recovery through stimulus packages for sustainability of businesses and jobs
- ► EOs and TUs provided inputs to policy response and extended direct action.
- Guidelines to promote OSH measures to prevent spreading of COVID-19 at the workplace.
- ▶ EOs: New membership strategies and setting up new services; studies on ramifications on internal migration in India; impact of working from home on Women Executives and Managers.
- ► TUs: Guidelines on COVID-19 interventions based on evidence; strengthening bipartite relations at the workplace; Setting up Workers Information and Support Centres



Not just a health crisis. Photo: Arun Sankar/AFP

Dedicated portal on COVID-19: https://ilo.org/covid19

Advancing social justice, promoting decent work





Re-purposing ILO Programmes

- ► Safe return to workplace; Social partners, especially engaged in MSMEs, including home-based workers, capacitated on COVID-19 preventive measures
- ► An ILO business programme went online to help small-scale entrepreneurs get businesses up and running
- Integration of COVID-19 and HIV-TB messaging for migrant workers in Gujarat
- Road map for development of policy framework for the inclusion of internal migrant workers
- Exchanges between UN agencies, social partners; enabling organizations to re-purpose their programmes accommodating the impact of COVID-19
- Over 10,000 young entrepreneurs trained under ILO/UNV programme







6



A CASE: 'ONE FLOUR MILL' - Supporting resilience during COVID-19

Krishnakumari, Kerala

"I undertook a quick survey to identify business opportunity. I found that there is no flour mill in nearly four km radius of our village. I knew that people wanted fresh flour delivered to their home during lockdown and saw this as an opportunity. I invested a partial sum, prepared a business plan and loaned remaining amount from the bank to buy machinery"

- Technology Management Development Programme (TMDP), under Industries Department of Government of Kerala and Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), offers the ILO's Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) curriculum
- ▶ She now has one staff member and earns a stable income of Rs 1500 per day

Advancing social justice, promoting decent work





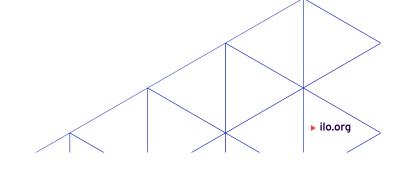
Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from COVID-19

Call to Action unanimously adopted by the constituents in ILC in June 2021

- ▶ Aims at achieving sustainable, **inclusive and job-rich recovery** from the pandemic.
- ► Commits countries to work for an economic and social recovery from the crisis that is fully inclusive, sustainable and resilient.
- ► Calls for policies that prioritize the creation of decent work for all and address inequalities.

Four key areas for call to action:

- Inclusive economic growth and employment
- Protection of all workers
- ▶ Universal social protection
- Social dialogue



Advancing social justice, promoting decent work



Four key areas for CTA: Indian context

Inclusive economic growth and employment

- Policy and regulatory framework for growth of MSMEs and large businesses.
- Boosting productivity; setting up mechanisms for supporting innovation, research and development, capacity building on new technology.
- Developing capacities for higher level value chains and integration into global value chains.
- Promoting female labour force participation.
- Contributing to green growth (green value chain, skilling, and labour market information on green jobs)
- Youth employment and Skill Development; LMIS, digital skills and skills for the future (including in green jobs and artificial intelligence)

Social Dialogue

- Sustainable and inclusive recovery through social dialogue.
- ► Revitalize social dialogue mechanism and participatory decision making.
- Promoting Tripartism and consensus on key social and economic policies affecting labour, employment, productivity and economic growth.
- Capacity building for Decent work discussions at the state level.

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▶ ilo.org



8

Four key areas for CTA: Indian context

Universal Social Protection

- Transition to formalization leading to rights based social protection.
- Advocacy and awareness generation for improving and expanding social protection coverage (reducing exclusion errors and ensuring simplification of processes for easier access.)
- Enabling legal and policy environment and advocacy for social protection to informal/ migrant workers.
- Provision of social protection for all the workers that contribute to the growth of the industry/business.
- Awareness raising on government schemes and supporting workers to access them.

Protection of all workers

- Reducing informality, ensuring wage security, health and safety, promoting rights at work.
- Generate evidence and access to data on labour and employment.
- Focus on women, youth and migrant worker.
- Advocating for equal employment opportunities for women, safe working conditions, work-life balance; Women in the care economy.
- Addressing challenges pertaining to informality, working conditions and social protection.



The ILO is a custodian of Sustainable Development Goal 8 – Decent work and Economic Growth. However, the ILO's mandate cuts across all of the SDGs through its work to promote decent jobs and social justice for all.



Creating links

National Priorities

UN SDG in India

India Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2023-27

