



# Promoting Decent Work in India

Update from  
May – June  
2021

Overcoming the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the month of May and June fueled the recovery efforts for ILO Constituents.

At the historical, first virtual International Labour Conference (ILC), delegates from 181 countries including India representing the Governments, Workers and Employers adopted unanimously a Global Call to Action for a human-centred COVID-19 recovery that prioritizes the creation of decent jobs for all and addresses the inequalities caused by the crisis. A World of Work Summit was held on 17 – 18 June, which featured addresses from world leaders and representatives of workers' and employers' organizations, and the United Nations.

Key dates were observed – World Day Against Child Labour, International Domestic Workers Day, World MSME Day, and World Environment Day. They offered an opportunity to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable communities and renew our commitment towards supporting them to cope with the 'new normal'. Read more about our initiatives in this issue.

## ► Highlights

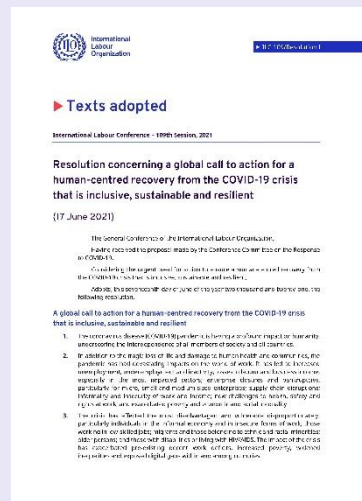
ILC 2021

### Global Call to Action for a Human-Centred Recovery

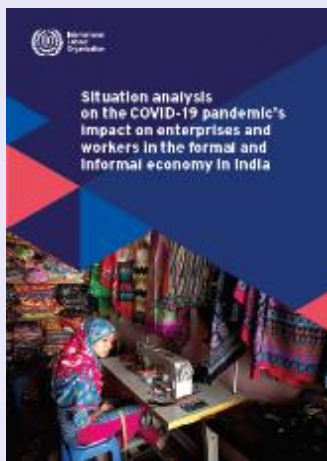
Outlining a comprehensive agenda, it commits countries to ensuring that their economic and social recovery from the crisis is “fully inclusive, sustainable and resilient.”

The Call includes two sets of agreed actions. The first covers measures to be taken by national governments and their employer and trade unions (TU), ‘social partners’, to achieve a job-rich recovery that substantially strengthens worker and social protections and supports sustainable enterprises.

A second set of actions covers international cooperation and the role of multilateral institutions, including the ILO, with the aim of increasing the level and coherence of their support for national “human-centred” pandemic recovery strategies. [Read here.](#)



### Situation analysis of enterprises and workers



### COVID-19 pandemic's impact on enterprises and workers in the formal and informal economy

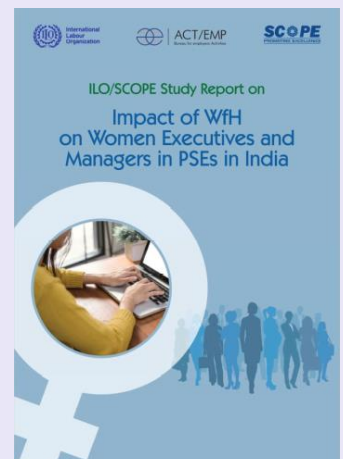
To enable evidence-based social dialogue for designing and implementation of policies and programmes responding to COVID-19 pandemic, a situation analysis of enterprises and workers from three States of the country- Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh was undertaken. Building on the study findings, ILO will work closely with its constituents in India, to design more focused interventions to improve access of MSMEs to relief measures and workers to social protection and good working conditions in enterprises, alongside re/up-skilling measures and alternate livelihoods. [Read here.](#)

### Impact of Work from Home

### ILO/SCOPE Study report on Impact of WfH on Women Executives and Managers in PSEs in India

This joint report highlights outcomes of the study on impact of working from home (WfH) on women executives and managers working with Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) in India. In continuation of ILO’s support to PSEs to promote gender equality at workplace, the study assessed existing policies, needs and feedback from the women executives and managers.

The study findings brought to light a number of issues, followed by a set of recommendations streamlined into guidelines for gender sensitive work from home policy in Public Sector Enterprises. [Read here.](#)



## ▶ Main activities

### In line with the India Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP 2018-22)

**Priority 1: Promote, adopt and implement international labour standards for protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work**

▶ **To observe World Day against Child Labour (WDACL) 2021, ILO India office organised a series of activities.**

- A virtual consultation '**Act. Inspire. Scale Up: COVID 19 and its impact on child labour in India**' was organised by SDG Target 8.7 Platform. Representatives from Ministry of Labour and Employment and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, ILO, UNICEF, Employers' and Workers' Organisations, Civil Society and Media actively shared their priorities to overcome the threat of increase in child labour in the country. Children voicing their concerns about closed schools and parents losing their livelihood to COVID-19, was highlight of the event. [Watch the video here.](#)



Photo 1 Ms Prasad, MOLE, Ms Walter, ILO, Dr Haque, UNICEF and Mr Nagar, MPR at the inaugural event of WDACL

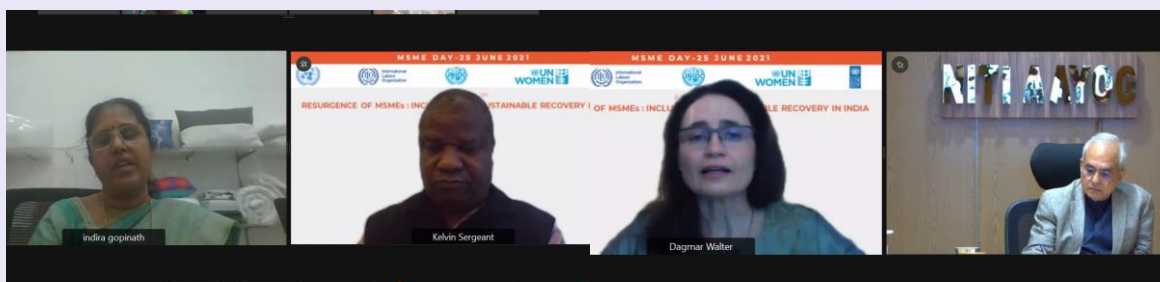
- Ms Dagmar Walter, Director ILO-India, **oriented parliamentarians and government officials** on International Labour Standards protecting children from getting engaged in work at a panel discussion organised by Lok Sabha Secretariat Parliamentary Research & Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE). [The webcast of the event is available here.](#) (Choose the 12 June 2021 panel discussion on child labour from the list of archived webcast videos on this page)
- An **Op-Ed from Ms Walter** was published by the Hindu, highlighting the role India can play in curbing the global increase in Child Labour. [Breaking the cycle of child labour is in India's hands](#)
- [The Asia Regional Child Labour \(ARC\)](#) project initiated its **field interventions in Bihar and Jharkhand** targeting the engagement of children at work in Mica mining belt. The virtual event witnessed participation from State, District and Block level officials, media, civil society organizations and also children rescued from workplaces. [Watch event video here.](#)
- The ILO's [Promoting FPRW in the Cotton Supply Chain](#) project in collaboration with the Department of Labour, Government of Telengana, State Resource Cell, organised **virtual multi-stakeholders' social dialogue** to create awareness on the hazards of child labour and promote fundamental principles and rights at work
- **Ranjith Prakash**, National Project Coordinator of ILO was **interviewed by UN News Hindi** about the Global Child Labour estimates jointly published by the ILO and UNICEF. [Listen here](#)
- South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (**SARTUC**) were **supported by the ILO** experts to organize a virtual event to mark the World Day Against Child Labour. Regional trade unions were supported to identify the problems faced by respective countries in eliminating child labour and **the role trade unions** can play to strengthen fundamental principles and rights at work.



## ▶ Main activities

**Priority 2: Create sustainable, inclusive and decent employment for women and the youth, especially vulnerable to socio-economic and environmental exclusion and in informal economy.**

- ▶ With the aim of enhancing understanding of challenges related to realizing gender equality and to strengthen the capacity of workers to be able to address them, a national training workshop on 'Building Capacities of **Young Trade Union Leaders on Gender** and World of Work' was organised under the Sustainable Global Supply Chains in South Asia Project. About 90 young trade unions members participated in the three day training, which will mainly benefit the informal and home based workers in the lower tiers of supply chains.
- ▶ To discuss setting up of '**South Asia Knowledge Hub on Labour Migration**' a round table was organized with the representatives from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka along with advisors and observers from global agencies. The [ILO's GOALS Programme](#) envisages the hub as an embodiment of a collective initiative for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration and an innovative approach to knowledge sharing.
- ▶ ILO-UNV initiated **entrepreneurship training** for youths using Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training programme. In the economy recovering from the impact of COVID-19, it will enable young people to explore new business opportunities.
- ▶ On the occasion of **MSME Day**, ILO along with the UN, UNIDO, UN Women and UNDP organized a discussion on 'Resurgence of MSMEs: Inclusive and Sustainable recovery in India'. Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI aayog gave the keynote address for the event. ILO also hosted a fireside chat on Sustainable and Competitive Value Chains. A joint OP-ED from all agency heads- [Reigniting Indian MSMEs for inclusive, sustainable recovery and growth](#) – was published.



*Photo 2 Ms Gopinath, Zen Group, Mr Sergeant, ILO, Ms Walter, ILO, Dr Kumar, NITI Aayog at MSME day event*

**DWCP Priority 3: Tripartite mechanisms work better for protecting rights of workers through promoting labour administration, occupational safety and health (OSH) and social protection.**

- ▶ Post COVID-19, enterprises are being supported to ensure safe return of employees at work through appointment of **Health and Hygiene Ambassadors**. ILO supported selection and capacity development of these ambassadors by conducting training of trainers. Ambassadors will enhance the awareness and infrastructure facilities in their organizations for the promotion of occupational health and hygiene.
- ▶ Employers and workers were encouraged to devise the plans for scaling up the pilot of '**Establishment of Enterprise-Level COVID-19 Task Force**'. ILO's experts from India and International Training Centre- Turin discussed the strategies and plans to promote the task forces at enterprise level with social partners. This will ensure promotion of social dialogue....



## ▶ Main activities

**DWCP Priority 3: Tripartite mechanisms work better for protecting rights of workers through promoting labour administration, occupational safety and health (OSH) and social protection. (continued...)**

...and smoother adaptation of new normal at work.

- ▶ Trade Unions and Employers' organizations in India were oriented on recurrent discussion on social protection, in preparation for the International Labour Conference 2021.
- ▶ Trade Unions were supported to develop their **workplans and implementation strategies for 2021** through a consultation organized with ACTRAV (Bureau of Workers' Activities). TUs were also briefed about usefulness of 'Workers Information and Support Centre (WISC)' and 'Impact of COVID-19 on the achievement of SDG in India- Enhancing Trade Unions presentation' in these discussions.
- ▶ Rajasthan **Policy on Pneumoconiosis** including Silicosis Detection, Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation was shortlisted for the Future Policy Award of the World Future Council, often referred to as the Oscar on Best Policies. ILO supported the Government of Rajasthan to prepare the submission and has been actively engaged to support the sector through [Paving the way for a sustainable natural stone industry in India](#) project.
- ▶ Recommendations from ILO's project [Technical support to ESIS for improving and expanding access to health care services in India - A transition to formality](#) were presented to the Employers' and Workers' organizations. The learnings from the project and the proposed actions will improve effectiveness of the ESI, positively contributing to the employee welfare.
- ▶ ILO and Government of Nagaland held discussion about importance of **indigenous knowledge systems and practices** as a 'major resource' for climate change adaptation. The two institutions will continue their knowledge exchange and explore opportunities for possible collaboration.

## ▶ Key engagements

- ▶ At the **UN Global Compact Leader's Summit 2021**, Ms Walter represented at a panel discussion on "Towards Economic Prosperity: Perspectives from South Asia". Watch the [broadcast of the session here](#).
- ▶ Neha Wadhawan, National Project Coordinator, Work in Freedom programme spoke at the World Day Against Child Labour event organized by North East Social Communication organization. [Watch the discussion here](#).
- ▶ **New resources**
  - [The Work in Freedom Handbook](#): A critical glossary of terms relating to freedom and unfreedom in the world of work
  - [State of occupational safety and health](#) practices at workplace for domestic workers in COVID-19 and possibilities for action
  - [Reclaiming space for workers in the 21st century](#): A literature review on worker centers