



The ILO DWT/CO-New Delhi ends this year strong, with the launch of its Decent Work Country Programme for India 2023-2027. After a year of consultations and deliberations with the tripartite constituents, the DWCP was launched on 20 December, in the presence of **Mr Shombi Sharp**, UN Resident Coordinator in India, **Ms Arti Ahuja**, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, **Mr Sougata Roy Choudhury**, Employers Federation of India, **Mr Ravindra Himte**, Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh, and **Mr Ashok Singh**, ILO Governing Body Member (Workers).

The DWCP aligns with the ILO's global vision and the aspirations of the tripartite constituents and has a triad of strategic priorities for the next five years, which are:

- ▶ International Labour Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work promoted, social dialogue strengthened, and constituents supported for effective policy responses
- ▶ Full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including through formalization and a just transition
- ▶ Promote and strengthen institutions to enable all workers, especially the marginalized and vulnerable, to improve their employment outcomes and progressively achieve universal social protection

The DWCP also aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027 and will help advance towards **Sustainable Development Goal 8 "Decent Work and Economic Growth"** by contributing to India's national priorities of generating adequate decent, productive job opportunities, creating sustainable livelihoods for citizens, ensuring adequate social protection systems (particularly for the workers in the informal economy), creating an enabling environment for increasing women's participation in the labour market, establishing an ecosystem for skilling, and promoting a culture of innovation-based entrepreneurship.

Promoting Decent Work In India

October to
December
2022

A message from Ms Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO DWT/CO-New Delhi

After five wonderful and colourful years in India, it's time for me to say goodbye to you all. It has been a privilege to work alongside all of you constituents and citizens of the world's largest and most vibrant democracy. Our time together was rewarding as it was challenging, as we faced the pandemic, lost loved ones, yet were united in facing the hardships that have reaffirmed in us the resolve to build forward better and leave no one behind. I express my gratitude to each of you for helping advance our mandate of decent work for all women and men.

India's strength lies in its diversity and plurality, which is fundamental to our work in building a more just and inclusive world of work. I am confident in the potential of the youthful and dynamic workforce of the country that the tripartite constituents will help unlock. This new year also brings with it a milestone in India's development journey and on the world stage, as it takes over the G20 presidency and I wish it the very best in this endeavour.

The creativity of the country, the architectural heritage dating back thousands of years and the artisans who preserve millennia-old craft traditions are some wonderful memories I take back with me to the ILO Headquarters, which is where my next appointment will be. So, I will still be connected with you and hope our paths cross again. Till then, I leave our Decent Work Agenda and the new Decent Work Country Programme 2023-27 in the able and capable hands of my colleagues in India, whom I owe a debt of gratitude as well, for all the work they put in for the success of our mission. India will always be in my heart, and I shall look out for it.

Namaste and au revoir!



Highlights

- ▶ The **Asia Pacific Regional Meeting 2022** was held on 6-9 December in Singapore, the first one after the COVID-19 outbreak. The meeting concluded with governments, workers' and employers' organizations agreeing to bolster efforts to achieve social justice and decent work for all, with the **Singapore Statement**. The meeting emphasized upon the **'unprecedented social and economic crisis on the regions'** due to the pandemic, which amounted to millions of lives lost and devastated businesses and jobs, and the recovery from it remains uneven. In light of this, the Singapore Statement highlights a series of priorities for action at national level, high amongst which is the need to ratify ILO fundamental conventions and further strengthen the capacities of government, employer and worker representatives to carry out effective social dialogue. It also urges governments and social partners to ensure labour protection for all through the promotion of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.



- ▶ Hosted a tripartite **Ethiopian delegation** for a study tour, as part of activities under **South-South Technical Cooperation**. The delegation, led by **Dr Beker Shale**, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Labor and Skills, Government of Ethiopia aimed to understand the skilling landscape, specifically the functioning and operations of Agriculture and Food-processing Sector Skills Councils and apprenticeship work in India. The visit included a capacity building workshop at NSDC International to understand India's skilling landscape, followed by industry visits to Centres of Excellence, to focus on sub-domains like food, vegetables, fruits, edible oils, packaging of food products and poultry. A courtesy meeting with **Ms Arti Ahuja**, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment and with the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship including **Mr Rajeev Chandrasekhar**, Hon'ble State Minister, **Mr Atul Tiwari**, Secretary and other senior officials.



Publications and Media

- ▶ **Asia-Pacific Employment and Social Outlook 2022: Rethinking sectoral strategies for a human-centred future of work**

Labour markets are recovering from the COVID-19 crisis, but now face new challenges like inflation. The report gives the regional labour market context and makes a first-time assessment of regional sectoral estimates to highlight which sectors are growing as sources of jobs, which are shrinking and which harbour opportunities for “decent work”.



- ▶ **India: The Employment - Environment - Climate Nexus: Employment and environmental sustainability factsheet**

The Employment-Environment-Climate Nexus Factsheets are a series produced for countries in the Asia-Pacific region. This Factsheet provides key features of labour market and environmental sustainability performance in India, as well as vulnerability to climate change and sectors with green jobs potential.



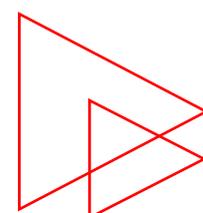
- ▶ **ILO Voices: The mica dust made me sick, I'm glad to be back at school**

Suman, a 15-year-old from Jharkhand shares her experience of the pandemic and how the ILO helped connect her back with her education.



Asia Pacific Regional Meeting Coverage

- ▶ [India needs policies focussing on job-rich growth and equality: ILO chief Gilbert F. Houngbo](#)
- ▶ [Promote freedom of association, do not curb workers' rights: ILO declaration](#)
- ▶ [Big industries don't observe uniform labour standards in India: Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh at ILO meet](#)
- ▶ [New law needed to help gig, platform workers: ILO DG](#)
- ▶ [Explained | The lingering crisis of labour post-pandemic](#)
- ▶ [ILO regional meet begins on December 6; Director-General calls for social security for all](#)
- ▶ [Interview with Labour Minister | SC order on higher pension contribution has many implications, says Bhupender Yadav](#)



Main activities in line with the Decent Work Country Programme 2018-2022

- ▶ Two state-level **stakeholder consultations** on **women migrant workers** were organized in Andhra Pradesh and Delhi. Representatives from state and district labour departments, Department for Women and Child Development, Ministry of External Affairs, workers' and employers' organizations social partners and academia attended the events. The consultations were a part of the **Work in Freedom** project, which presented the lessons learned in the region, in the past decade of its work. Discussions focussed on **promoting mobility with choice**, the ineffectiveness of bans and restrictions on women's labour migration and shared the experience of other sending countries in **promoting decent work and safe migration**, and the fundamental principles and rights at work that prevent women from being trafficked into forced labour conditions. **Mr Venkat Medapati**, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and APNRTS CEO, **Mr Dinesh Kumar** shared the work done by APNRTS in providing access to welfare schemes and grievance redressal.
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- ▶ Attended the "**Field Experience Sharing by Trainers and WISC Staff**" workshops in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Bihar. The ILO is supporting awareness raising workshops on labour rights, gender rights and good OSH practices and community leadership program with unorganized workers in these states, where around 75 trainers have been identified and trained. Trainers highlighted that they have successfully registered around 800 workers in various welfare schemes like BOCW, E-Shram and Domestic Workers' Welfare Boards.
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- ▶ Underlined the importance of social protection along with how India can cover its 'missing middle' at a **workshop on the Social Security Code 2020**, organized by the **Bhartiya Mazdoor Samaj**. Discussed the International Labour Standards on social protection and the normative framework for building a comprehensive social protection policy at the national level, to recognize the good initiatives taken by India, to protect its citizens with better social security coverage, and to ensure measures are taken to leave no one behind in the development journey.
- ▶ To **promote gender equality in the world of work**, organized two workshops with women leaders in Central Trade Unions, and women and men leaders in Employers' and Business Organizations. Highlighted the importance of gender equality in the post-pandemic world, which grapples with losses to the gains made for gender equality made previously. Discussions focussed on discrimination, violence and harassment at the workplace, pay inequality, care economy and strengthening women's voice and representation, while also touching upon decent work deficits.
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- ▶ Participated in a **multi-stakeholder consultation** on Jharkhand's mica mining sector organized by the State's Department of Mines, which was supported by the **Responsible Mica Initiative (RMI)** and **Bal Kalyan Samiti**. Presented the ILO's Decent Work approach and the FPRW framework as appropriate to the Mica mining sector of Jharkhand.

▶ The Department of Industries, Government of Andhra Pradesh is piloting a multi stakeholder committee in Vishakhapatnam on the ILO's recommendation to promote inter-departmental coordination and dialogue, for creating enabling environment for the promotion of sustainable enterprises and held its second meeting. **Mr R Valaven**, Special Chief Secretary Industries and Commerce and **Mr Gudivada Amarnath**, Minister – Industries, Information Technology and Infrastructure, State Government of Andhra Pradesh attended the meeting. A study tour with MSME delegates to Korea was held in September and they presented their key learnings at the event. The meeting was attended by GM-District Industries Centre, MSME-Development Institute, Deputy Labour Commissioner, Lead banks, District head of fisheries department and textiles department, district skills development office, and Andhra Pradesh Food Processing Society.



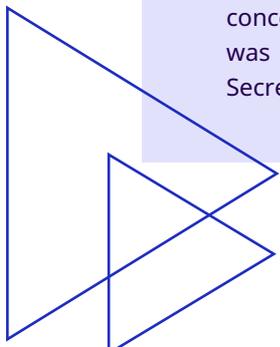
▶ Organized a stakeholder consultation with the **AN Sinha Institute of Social Studies** on a project research study titled **“Mapping the elements of Decent Work in the Brick Kiln Sector of Bihar with focus on Family Debt Bondage and its implications for children”**. Stakeholders shared inputs on the proposed methodology and approach for the actual research study and data collection from the field. The workshop was attended by officials from the Departments of Labour, Education, Social Welfare and Mines of the Government of Bihar and representatives of Trade Unions (BMS, SEWA), Brick Kiln owners' association, UNICEF, civil society organizations and academia.



▶ To build trade unions' capacity on labour rights, devise state-level joint strategies for policy advocacy, and engage with MSME employers in providing good working conditions, hosted a consultive workshop with state chapters of 11 central trade unions from Rajasthan and Odisha on **“Protection of Rights of Workers in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), in particular, Occupational Health and Safety (OSH)”** in Odisha. Representatives from INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, AICTTU, TUCC, LPF, SEWA, BMS and NFITU joined the workshop.



▶ Presented the ILO's perspective on **“FDI and private sector led local development strategies for sustainable growth and better-quality jobs”** at the **“Odisha: Emerging destination for food processing sector”** session at the **Make in Odisha** event. Shared the ILO's overall mandate and need for social dialogue in evolving local development strategies. In parallel, organized an MSME networking event with the state government for the food processing sector. The event facilitated dialogue between local enterprises and corporates/importers on potential for business development, technology transfer, and addressing concerns related to labour and environment in the supply chain. The food processing policy of the state was also released with **Mr Pratap Keshari Deb**, State Minister for MSME, and **Mr Saswat Mishra**, Secretary MSME.



- ▶ The Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) helps small-scale entrepreneurs to start and grow their business, as a strategy to create more and better employment for women and men. The office conducted two batches of SIYB trainings, in **Andhra Pradesh with Association with Lady Entrepreneurs of India (ALEAP)** and in Odisha with **Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (IED)**. **Mr Gudivada Amarnath**, Minister – Industries, Information Technology and Infrastructure, State Government of Andhra Pradesh inaugurated the training and extended support to ALEAP in facilitating land allotment and access to finance on a priority basis for the women undergoing the training. Following the classroom training, the participants will be mentored over the next few months and counselled to generate business ideas, register the business under various government schemes. The ILO stressed on the importance of young entrepreneurs being the economy's treasure and they require an enabling environment for them to grow and become generators of decent jobs.



- ▶ Under the ILO-ESIS project, launched the **“Extending Social Health Protection to Informal Sector Workers in India: A Survey Report”**, report prepared jointly with Institute for Human Development (IHD). The ILO focuses on social health protection as part of its larger goal of developing strong Social Protection Systems and through this project, has been providing technical support to the Employees’ State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) to strengthen its health services while increasing coverage and financial protection of working people in India. **Dr Rajendra Kumar**, Director General, ESIC and **Prof Alakh Sharma**, Director IHD were among the dignitaries at the event which also hosted a panel discussion on “Extension of Social Health Protection in India: Possibilities and Challenges”.

- ▶ As part of a pilot of a feasibility study on ‘waste to wealth’ in public institutions, with the Pune Municipal Corporation and SWaCH, inaugurated **biomethanation units** that convert organic waste into biogas at the source. These units provide decent jobs to informal waste pickers and six units have become operational, each with a capacity of 10 kgs waste per day.



- ▶ An awareness session for MSMEs on **labour laws and good practices in workforce management** for productivity enhancement in Andhra Pradesh was organized with AIOE. The session helped develop an understanding of the provisions under the new labour codes, and requirements for compliance at the event, which was presided over by **Mr G Rama Rao**, Joint Labour Commissioner.



- ▶ Participated in a roundtable discussion on Social Sectoral Priorities from the Labour Rights perspective at a two-day consultation on **“Transformative Financing For Gender Equality: A Consultation for the Union Budget 2023-2024”** organised by Feminist Policy Collective, IWWAGE, Sahaj and UN Women. The consultation aims to inform and influence policy priorities for the upcoming Budget 2023-24, from a transformative financing and gender equality perspective. Shared lessons from work with women migrant workers in the informal economy, importance of increasing female participation in the labour force, recognition of ASHA and Anganwadi workers and their contribution to the care economy, using social dialogue mechanisms and involving tripartite constituents in decision making on budgetary allocations, and the scope of linking gender resource budgeting (GRB) initiatives to the ILO's approach to gender equality promotion in the world of work.

- ▶ Participated in **public hearing on inter-state migration** and understanding issues that women migrant workers face in their search for better employment opportunities, living and working conditions by SEWA Delhi. The ILO was part of the jury and provided inputs to the report and recommendations prepared based on women worker testimonies from multiple states (Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan) who migrate to Delhi.



- ▶ The IndustryAll union in Gujarat hosted the **Shipbuilding-Shipbreaking Action Group Meeting**, which discussed the progress in the **Alang Shipyards** since the ratification of the **Hong Kong Convention** by India in 2019. Visited the ship breaking yards and the downstream industry comprising of the rerolling mills, small shops and small factories and home-based work where scap and waste from the ships was being recycled. Serious concerns on OSH and working conditions were observed in the downstream industry, which were further discussed with SEWA, INTUC and BMS, as they organize waste recyclers.



ILO in the Media

- ▶ [Striking fall in wages could lead to social unrest, warns International Labour Organisation](#)
- ▶ [Jobs market yet to fully recover in Asia-Pacific post-pandemic: ILO report](#)
- ▶ [Human capital. Why informal employment poses a major challenge for India](#)
- ▶ [Global jobs growth will 'deteriorate significantly' this quarter, says International Labour Organization](#)
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- ▶ [Odisha: An Emerging Destination For Food Processing Sector](#)
- ▶ [Social security cover needs to be inclusive, comprehensive, digitally enabled, says Neelam Shami Rao](#)