

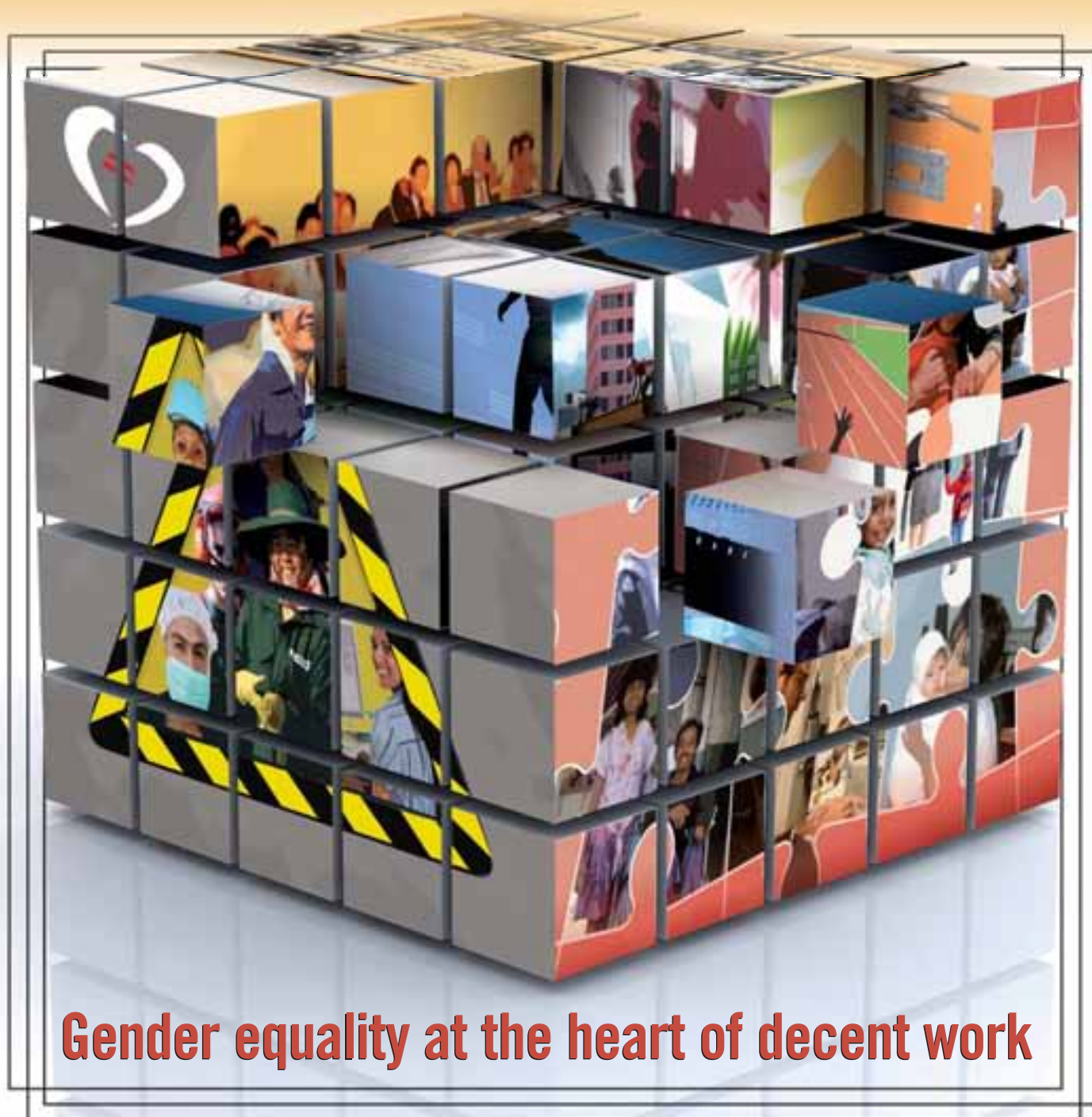
World of *Work*



International
Labour
Office

Geneva

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ILO



No. 65, April 2009

Gender equality at the heart of decent work

In this issue

Themes from the ILO Gender Equality Campaign 2008–2009 • Maternity protection • Education • Youth employment • Non-discrimination • Skills • Migrant workers • Green jobs • Social dialogue • Work/family balance • Older workers • Health insurance • Flexicurity in the financial crisis • Workplace solutions for childcare • Photo report: Crossing the gender divide

Women at work, past and present: Like night and day



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As the ILO marks its 90th anniversary, a year-long campaign on gender equality at the heart of decent work culminates with a discussion at the International Labour Conference. The ILO has always been in the forefront of promoting gender equality at work, and women's rights, and this year's campaign and discussion will be a milestone in the Organization's efforts to shine new light on the status of women in the world of work.

Yet frankly speaking, it hasn't always been so. The early days of the ILO saw the adoption of some measures that effectively *restricted* women from some forms of work, most notably the Night Work (Women) Convention, 1919 (No. 4). Banning women from night work, like other legislation preventing women from working in certain jobs, including factories and mines, was in keeping with the times.

But times change. Today, social progress together with economic development and technological advancement have not only proved too "protective" laws to be wrong, but have seen women enter the workforce in massive numbers around the world. Yet debate still rages in many countries over the benefits or liabilities of special protective labour legislation for women.

Night work is a good example. From the 1919 Convention to provisions of the 1990 Protocol

allowing for exemptions to the prohibition contained in ILO Convention No. 89, ILO constituents have tried to adapt relevant international labour instruments to changing times. They sought a new balance capable of offering the best guarantees of protection for women workers while keeping up with social progress and contemporary thinking on the status of women in the working world.

Yet the relaxation of rules on working hours is but one step in a broad, slow transition in the role of women in the world of work. Despite considerable progress over the last decades, gender gaps in employment and pay persist worldwide.

Notwithstanding the tenor of the times in the early days, gender equality in the world of work was enshrined in the ILO Constitution from day one, and has been reflected in relevant international labour standards adopted since then. The four key ILO gender equality Conventions are the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156), and Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183). These Conventions show that the ILO does indeed move with the times – and will continue to do so.

World of Work
THE MAGAZINE OF THE ILO

World of Work magazine is published three times a year by the Department of Communication and Public Information of the ILO in Geneva and distributed free of charge. Also published in Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Finnish, French, Hindi, Japanese, Norwegian, Spanish and Swedish.

EDITOR

May Hofman Öjermark

SPANISH EDITION

In collaboration with the ILO Office, Madrid

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Corine Luchini

PHOTO EDITOR

Marcel Crozet

ART DIRECTION

MDP, ILO Turin

COVER DESIGN

Paprika

EDITORIAL BOARD

Thomas Netter (Chair), Charlotte Beauchamp, May Hofman Öjermark, Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman, Corinne Perthuis, Hans von Rohland

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All correspondence should be addressed to the ILO Department of Communication and Public Information, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland.

Tel: +4122/799-7912

Fax: +4122/799-8577

Email: ilo_magazine@ilo.org

www.ilo.org/communication

Printed by ILO Turin

ISSN 1020-0010

Gender equality in the global financial crisis

A year-long campaign to raise awareness of gender equality issues has coincided with the worst worldwide financial crisis for decades. Will progress towards gender equality be affected, and if so, how?

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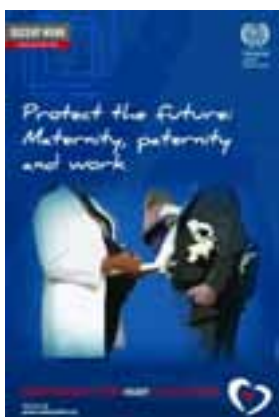
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Created in 1919, the International Labour Organization (ILO) brings together governments, employers and workers of its 182 member States in common action to improve social protection and conditions of life and work throughout the world. The International Labour Office, in Geneva, is the permanent Secretariat of the Organization.

Gender equality at the heart of decent work



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Over the past year the ILO's Bureau for Gender Equality has held a major awareness-raising campaign: Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work. In the following pages *World of Work* looks at themes of the campaign so far and interviews Jane Hodges, Director of the Bureau for Gender Equality.

What will be the impact of the financial crisis on employment opportunities for women and men? Will it translate itself into a setback for the gender equality achievements made over the past years?

Jane Hodges: The most recent *Global Employment Trends for Women* released on this year's International Women's Day gives us an analysis of the initial data gathering. Projections point to 22 million more unemployed women by the end of the year! Overall, women and men have been impacted differently right from the start of the economic downturn, as a result of the different employment situation for women and men before

the crisis. Weak labour market situations are exacerbated by crises. We can see that in this first stage, in the developed economies there are more men than women losing their jobs. This is due to the fact that the sectors where most job losses are occurring at present, such as manufacturing and construction, are male-dominated sectors. But this "tip of the iceberg" is predicted to be outdone by female job losses as the next wave of bankruptcies, closures and retrenchments takes hold.

For example, women's unemployment rates are still higher compared to men's: in 2008 global unemployment rates stood at 6.3 per cent for women compared to 5.9 per cent for men, and 2009 estimates place the female rate at 7.4 per cent and the men's at 7 per cent. Moreover, women continue to suffer multiple disadvantages in terms of access to labour markets. Women are found more in the informal economy, in vulnerable employment, part-time work and are still on average paid less than men for work of equal value.

The economic crisis is expected to increase the number of unemployed women by up to 22 million in 2009, according to the report *Global Employment Trends for Women* issued by the TRENDS team of the ILO Employment sector. The ILO also said the global economic crisis would place new hurdles in the path toward sustainable and socially equitable growth, making decent work for women increasingly more difficult, and called for "creative solutions" to address the gender gap.

The report indicates that of the 3 billion people employed around the world in 2008, 1.2 billion were women (40.4 per cent). It said that in 2009, the global unemployment rate for women could reach 7.4 per cent, compared to 7.0 per cent for men.

The report says that the gender impact of the economic crisis in terms of unemployment rates is expected to be more detrimental for females than for males in most regions of the world. It adds that the only regions where unemployment rates are expected to be less detrimental for women are East Asia, the developed economies and the non-EU South-Eastern Europe and CIS, which had narrower gender gaps in terms of job opportunities prior to the current economic crisis.

The labour market projections for 2009 show deterioration in global labour markets for both women and men. The ILO projects that the global unemployment rate could reach between 6.3 per cent and 7.1 per cent, with a corresponding female unemployment rate ranging from 6.5 to 7.4 per cent (compared to 6.1 per cent to 7.0 per cent for men). This would result in an increase of between 24 million and 52 million people unemployed worldwide, of which from 10 million to 22 million would be women.

At the same time, the ILO also projects that the global vulnerable employment rate* would range from 50.5 to 54.7 per cent for women in 2009, and from 47.2 to 51.8 per cent for men, indicating that while the burden of vulnerability is still greater for women, the crisis is pushing

more men into vulnerable employment compared to 2007.

Policy implications and measures

"Women's lower employment rates, weaker control over property and resources, concentration in informal and vulnerable forms of employment with lower earnings, and less social protection, all place women in a weaker position than men to weather crises," said ILO Bureau for Gender Equality Director Jane Hodges, adding that "women may cope by engaging in working longer hours or by taking multiple low-income jobs but still having to maintain unpaid care commitments".

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia said that gender equality should be a key principle in any policy response, as the effects of the economic and financial crisis go beyond the scope of women in the world of work and have an impact on the overall stability of society, considering the various roles that women play.

In a statement issued for International Women's Day, Mr. Somavia said, "Gender inequality in the world of work has long been with us – but it is likely that it will be

exacerbated by the crisis. In times of economic upheaval, women often experience the negative consequences more rapidly and are slower to enjoy the benefits of recovery. And already before the crisis, the majority of working women were in the informal economy with lower earnings and less social protection."

Mr. Somavia cited a number of policy measures that could help rebalance the burden placed on women and address the impact of globalization, such as sustainable and quality jobs open to both men and women, broader social protection including unemployment benefits and insurance schemes that recognize women's vulnerable position in the labour market, and social dialogue with the active inclusion of women in decision-making processes.

* Global vulnerable employment rate: share of unpaid family workers and own-account workers in total employment. These workers are most likely to be characterized by insecure employment, low earnings and low productivity.



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The ILO must keep tracking these trends and also make sure that the recovery packages and policies developed to address the current crisis are gender sensitive. In other words, they must take into account the different employment situations of women and men. In that sense the current crisis may actually be an opportunity for greater gender equality in the world of work instead of a threat or a setback. But we have to be vigilant.

2009 is an important year for the ILO in terms of gender equality: it is the 10th anniversary of its gender equality action plan and in June the ILC features Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work as a general discussion item. How would you assess the ILO's work on advancing gender equality in the world of work?

Jane Hodges: In the past ten years a lot of attention has been paid to mainstreaming gender issues in the ILO's work, through the gender action plan, the promotion of gender equality as a cross-cutting theme, the establishment of a gender network composed of gender focal points in the different units in the Office in Geneva and the field offices, as well as the further development of the Bureau for Gender Equality. The ILO's commitment to gender equality was reconfirmed in the Decent Work Agenda and the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, stating that gender equality and non-discrimination must be considered to be cross-cutting issues in the strategic objectives of the ILO. Gender equality and creating decent work for women and men, providing both women and men with access to rights, employment opportunities, social protection and social dialogue are therefore at the heart of the ILO's work. This year's ILC discussion will help chart a strategic course for the coming years on the activities the ILO needs to develop to further advance gender equality in the world of work.



Last year the Bureau for Gender Equality launched a major awareness-raising campaign on Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work, leading up to the ILC discussion. What are the objectives of the campaign and major achievements so far?

Jane Hodges: The campaign was launched during the 2008 International Labour Conference. During the 12 months leading up to the ILC 2009 general discussion, we have been actively reaching out to the ILO constituents and many other stakeholders on gender equality issues, with several objectives.

First of all, it is a general awareness-raising campaign to increase the understanding of gender equality issues in the world of work, based on the life-cycle approach. We highlight the specific linkages between gender equality and securing decent work for all women and men. The campaign therefore is built around 12 Decent Work themes and each of these themes is looked at through a gender lens, showing how various issues may affect women and men differently in their access to rights, employment, social protection and social dialogue. In addition we are actively promoting the ratification and application of the key ILO gender equality Conventions and we advocate the importance of overcoming existing barriers to gender equality as beneficial for all. It has been a huge undertaking to prepare the campaign materials together with the ILO technical units – but what we realized during this process is that this active collaboration in itself has been a way of further mainstreaming gender issues throughout the organization as well as an opportunity to highlight the gender dimensions of the work of many of our colleagues. The campaign materials have been widely distributed among the constituents and other stakeholders all over the world and used in high-level and grassroots meetings in many parts of the world. The ILO Training Centre in Turin has been actively involved in the campaign.

The ILO has major conventions on gender equality, two of which are among the most highly ratified; still we continue to see many gender inequalities in the world of work all around the world. Do you believe that our work has created the kind of societal and behavioural changes required to make sex-based discrimination a thing of the past?

Jane Hodges: The ILO Conventions – especially the fundamental texts on non-discrimination and on equal pay – are the starting point, as they provide the legal framework for gender equality in the world of work and we continue to advocate for the ratification of these Conventions. When it comes to everyday life, yes, we continue to see a lot of sex discrimination in the world of work, be it in terms of

equal employment opportunities, working conditions or pay. Through our assistance to governments, employers' and workers' organizations, technical cooperation projects, training and communication work, the Bureau contributes to the necessary societal and behavioural changes. However, this is a long-term process, as traditional gender stereotypes are very strong in many parts of the world and change in behaviour always takes time. But we have to be optimistic when we see that over the past 50 years there has been a constant growth in the participation of women in the workforce in all parts of the world, thus increasing women's economic and financial independence and decision-making. And the policy and legal framework is solid across the regions. Given the many challenges still ahead that need to be addressed on the international and national levels, we are confident that the ILC discussion and its conclusions will provide constituents with good guidance.

The ILO is not the only UN agency working on gender equality. What would you say are the competitive advantages of the ILO's gender equality work?

Jane Hodges: The competitive advantages of the ILO are linked to its unique tripartite structure, our way of doing things with actors of the real economy and its focus on decent work for all women and men. Moreover, ILO sets labour standards that apply equally to both women and men, in addition to the four key gender equality Conventions (Nos. 111, 100, 156 and 183). Its employment



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In September 2008 you took up the post of Director of the Bureau for Gender Equality. What are your impressions and priorities after six months in the job?

I'm struck by the seriousness with which Office units handle the gender dimension in their own areas of work, and also by the way that our UN family entities look to the ILO for guidance. But I'm leading at a time of great challenge to gender equality achievements in the world of work. The current financial crisis will adversely affect men's but especially women's hard-won advances for economic and social empowerment. The ILO must keep tracking the employment trends and be ready to provide gender-sensitive policy advice for recovery plans. Ask me this question again at the end of 2009 and we'll see if the Office has made a difference.



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and sustainable enterprises programmes have mainstreamed gender on the policy level and in technical cooperation. We have specific programmes aimed at improving women's employment opportunities and enterprise development in many parts of the world. In terms of social protection, the ILO looks into ways to specifically address the protection of women in the informal economy and in vulnerable employment, like migration and domestic work. And all of this we do together with governments, employers' and workers' organizations.

The ILO Bureau for Gender Equality has developed a participatory gender audit tool that is not only used within the ILO and the constituents, but is also much appreciated within the UN family.

Protecting maternity in Ca

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Photos from the ILO video "Protecting maternity in Cambodia's textile factories". Above right: Ros Kimsreng, also below, and Chong Chin Siong of PCCS Garments

Many women risk losing their jobs when they become pregnant. But most textile factories monitored by the ILO's Better Factories Cambodia programme now offer maternity protection to their employees.

PHNOM PENH – Ros Kimsreng supports her family by working in Cambodia's textile industry.

It's a good job: she earns three times what the average Cambodian brings home each month. But when she knew she was going to have a baby, Ros started to worry. For many women in Cambodia, there's a hard reality: when they get pregnant, they can lose their job.

Ros works in the finishing department at a textile factory in Phnom Penh. For families who depend on working women like her, losing a well-paid job is a catastrophe. But on Cambodia's factory floors, times are changing for working women and mothers.

PCCS Garments, where Ros works, has a daycare centre which is actually part of the fac-

tory premises. Starting when the baby is 18 months old, new mothers can leave their babies here while they work and earn money for their families. "The factory's daycare centre will take care of him while I work, up until he is 3 years old," says Ros.

Companies like PCCS Garments recognize the value of keeping their all-woman workforce productive, and that includes not only keeping women on the job, but offering special benefits during late pregnancy and the first stages of motherhood. The company has a policy of paid maternity leave, which guarantees women workers 50 per cent of their pay for 90 days after giving birth. During pregnancy, the company also has special arrangements in place.

Chong Chin Siong, the Assistant General Manager at PCCS Garments, outlines their policies: "In the months of pregnancy we arrange some light work for the workers, so for a sewing worker we arrange for her to do some trimming work, and then for an ironing worker we arrange for her to do some light packing work, so we try to avoid having pregnant workers doing work that involves vibration or long standing hours. This applies to them also after they come back from maternity leave."

After working women return to PCCS from maternity leave, the company gives them one hour a day, paid, to breastfeed their baby. And most importantly during this special time, the company assigns the women to less strenuous jobs.

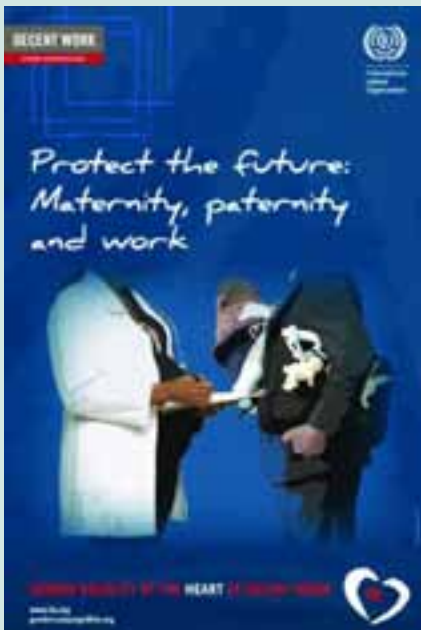
PCCS Garments isn't unique: since 2001 more than four out of five textile factories monitored by the ILO's Better Factories Cambodia programme now have some form of paid maternity leave; three out of four, like PCCS Garments, are in full compliance, meaning they pay their workers half wages during maternity leave, and offer benefits such as breastfeeding breaks and daycare. The hope is that this new atmosphere in the textile industry will inspire other Cambodian businesses to do the same, raising labour standards for everyone.

"We hope to see an increasing attention being paid to motherhood and maternity protection so that the combination of having decent work and a good family and life balance can be assured," says Tuomo Poutiainen of the ILO Better Factories Cambodia programme.



mbodia's textile factories

PROTECTING THE FUTURE: MATERNITY, PATERNITY AND WORK



Maternity protection for employed women is an essential element in equality of opportunity. It seeks to enable women to combine their reproductive and productive roles successfully, and to prevent unequal treatment in employment due to women's reproductive role. Historically, maternity protection has been a central concern of the ILO since its creation: among the first international labour standards to be adopted in 1919 was Convention No. 3 concern-

ing the employment of women before and after childbirth.

The elements of maternity protection covered by the most recent standards concerned with maternity protection, Convention No. 183 and Recommendation No. 191 (2000), are maternity leave (the mother's right to a period of rest in relation to childbirth); cash and medical benefits (the right to cash benefits during absence for maternity); protection of the health of mother and child during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding; the mother's right to breastfeed a child after her return to work; and employment protection and non-discrimination (guaranteeing the woman employment security and the right to return to the same job or an equivalent one with the same pay). Convention No. 183 also broadened the scope of coverage to include women working in the informal economy and in atypical forms of dependent work. These women have often not received any legal protection, and it is their maternal health that is most at risk.

In June 2004, the International Labour Conference adopted a Resolution on Gender Equality, Pay Equity and Maternity Protection, which links maternity protection to non-discrimination.

National laws designed to protect the health of mother and child and the employment rights of working women figure prominently in the legislation of almost every ILO member State. There are, however, significant variations in the scope of coverage, the extent of protection, the complexity of the schemes in force, and the respective responsibilities of the State and of individual employers for the provision of cash benefits.

Paternity leave is seen as an important reconciliation of work and family life for men, as well as an assistance to women. Paternity leave is a short period of leave taken by a father around the time of the birth of his child. Paternity leave provisions are becoming more common around the world, reflecting evolving views of fatherhood and parenting roles and the needs of men as well as women for reconciling work and family life. This shift in relationships and perceptions may herald more gender-balanced approaches to caregiving and unpaid work.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender.

For young women like Ros, their worries about having babies and keeping their jobs end when they take advantage of their company's maternity protection policy. What was a time of uncertainty

for Ros and her family has turned out to be one of joy: a new life to nurture, and the opportunity of keeping a good job to provide for her family's future.



Replacing child lab

© ILO VIDEOS



Photos from the ILO video “Moroccan circus school replaces child labour with education”. Above left: El Bouchtaouia

The links between improving access to education and ending child labour are increasingly recognized. A circus school on the coast of Morocco is one innovative community effort among many to get children out of work and into school.

MOROCCO – Look closely in the vibrant street markets of Rabat or Casablanca, and you’ll find hundreds of children, some as young as years old, working 40 hours or more every week. There are more than 600,000 child labourers in Morocco, 11 per cent of the country’s children. And half of them are girls.

El Bouchtaouia (boook-tah-we’-uh) used to be one of them. “I was working as a domestic labourer in South Morocco for two years. I was working hard. My employers were beating me. Whenever I saw children going to school it reminded me that I could not go to school myself and I was heart-broken.”

With no chance to go to school, El Bouchtaouia and others like her will grow up illiterate, poor, and desperate. But on a cliff edge along the rocky Moroccan shore a sign of hope is rising above the crumbling walls of an old fortress. Inside is another world: not one of desperation, but a world of magic, illusion, excitement, and a chance at a new life.

Here, at the “circus school”, children trapped in the cycle of poverty and child labour can experience a world they never dreamed possible. Thanks to the efforts of a local community group, after free lessons in juggling and trapeze practice, they spend time in a nearby classroom, going to school just like most other girls their age.

Outside the circus tent, the realities in Morocco are slowly changing. Child labour rates have fallen slightly in the past ten years; experts with ILO’s International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour and other organizations say that’s in part due to innovative programs like the “circus school” and to a dramatic rise in school enrolment.

Morocco now offers primary school education to almost all children, with enrolment jumping from 52 per cent in 1991 to 92 per cent today. El Bouchtaouia is one of the success stories. She’s 16 now, and in the 5th year of her primary education. Child labour is part of her past, not her future.

But the risks remain. Sriani Ameratunga-Kring of the ILO’s Bureau for Gender Equality says: “In Morocco, more than 40 per cent of the population are at or below the poverty line. That makes it all the more likely that a death, a divorce, or a disability in the family will mean that children will be sent out to work to replace lost family income.”

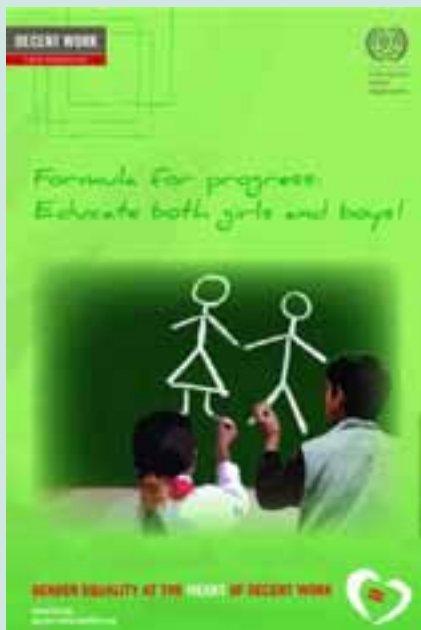
For girls like El Bouchtaouia, the “circus school” is no illusion, it is a dream come true: a unique chance at an education, and the skills to win a paying job, and a better life for herself and her family.



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our with education

FORMULA FOR PROGRESS: EDUCATE BOTH GIRLS AND BOYS!



There is universal understanding that education for all is the key to development. Educating girls, in particular, paves the way for wider changes in families, societies and workplaces. Educated girls are more likely to have better income as adults, marry later, have fewer and healthier children and stronger decision-making power within the household. They are also

more likely to ensure that their own children are educated, avoiding future child labour. A number of studies have also made strong links between enhanced educational access for girls and GDP growth.

Yet despite increasing international recognition that the education of girls is one of the most powerful tools for progress, girls suffer from discrimination when it comes to getting an education. Of the 72 million primary school age children out of school, 44 million are girls. Failure to educate girls costs developing countries US\$92 billion a year.

There can be many barriers to girls' access to school. When families have limited resources, they may feel they have to choose between educating their sons or daughters. Decisions may not be based on natural aptitudes, skills, or the motivation levels of either the male or female child. The predetermined gender roles may not necessarily benefit young boys either, and may even be harmful. From a young age they may feel a heavy burden to perform academically – perhaps beyond their capacities – in order to live up to their families' expectations to succeed.

These unequal gender relations propel a vicious cycle of underinvestment in girls from generation to generation, starting at the earliest stages of their lives and continuing throughout their life cycles. Today, over two-thirds of the world's 860 million illiterates are women. Girls take on a great deal of unpaid household work for their families, including childcare, cooking, cleaning, and gathering water and fuel. Many girls in poor communities are expected to contribute to household income. If they are attending school, there is precious little time for study.

Education sows the seeds of gender equality. Because of the direct and indirect discrimination that girls and women experience, it is recommended that specific measures be taken to include facilitating access to education for girls in national plans, policies and programmes. This in turn will facilitate future access to decent work.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

DOMESTIC CHILD LABOUR: KEEPING GIRLS OUT OF SCHOOL AND IN POVERTY

The ILO estimates that more girl children under 16 years of age are working in domestic services than any other category of work or child labour. Suniah was one of them. At 13, she left her Indonesian village to go to Jakarta as a domestic worker, determined to help her family make ends meet. Working from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day, by late evening she had just enough energy left to fall into bed. After a few years Suniah returned to her village, enrolled in catch-up classes and attended non-formal junior high school classes. She is one of the lucky ones – making a better future through government programmes and her own perseverance.



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Jobs for young women

© ILO VIDEOS



Photos from the ILO video "Jobs for young women and men in Kyrgyzstan". Above left: Nasiba Halilova; below: Dilorom Holmatova

When a country has a mismatch between its labour market needs and the education and skills of its young people, what's the answer? Kyrgyzstan is working hard to address this imbalance by training young women and men in job skills that are actually in demand in its transformed economy.

BISHKEK – For years it was the Soviet State that decided the professions and how many young women and men needed to be trained for them. But the transition to a free market economy has revealed a painful reality.

"Kyrgyzstan is overflowing with qualified university graduates who can't get jobs," says Erkinbek Omurov, State Secretary of the Kyrgyz State Vocational Education Agency, Government of Kyrgyz Republic. "Manual labourers can get a job right away."

Thousands, mostly men, have left for jobs in the Russian Federation and the West, their families surviving only on the money they can send back home. Today Kyrgyzstan is becoming a country of "left-behinds" – unemployed women, the elderly and young children, and a workforce limited to only the most basic of jobs.

A Dutch-funded ILO project is helping the Kyrgyz Government revisit the country's youth employment policy by developing strong vocational training programmes that retrain people, especially women, in jobs that match the realities today.

"In Kyrgyzstan, the ILO works on decent employment opportunities for all," says Walter Verhoeven. "We have different components in the project: the promotion of youth employment policies, local and integrated youth employment strategies, providing labour market information and skills training, entrepreneurship training, career guidance."

More young people are interested now in the vocational skills that are in greater demand. The Modular Skills approach developed by the ILO allows young people to gain professional qualifications in a shorter period of time. Suyun Maitikova, Deputy Director of Lyceum 43 Bishkek, explains:

"These young people get three qualifications during their ten months here. The first one is as a plasterer. After another three months they get their second qualification, in laying tile, and then they get their final one as a wood joiner. Thus in ten months' time they get three professions that are in demand now."

Nasiba Halilova has high hopes. Her dream is to open a kindergarten; the ILO seminar showed her how to calculate costs and develop a business plan. "This seminar is very stimulating," she says. "They encourage you to develop an idea and then teach you how to realize it."

Dilorom Holmatova is breaking all the stereotypes: unemployed, no higher education, and living in a city plagued by unemployment and poverty. After going through the ILO training course "Start and Improve Your Business", Dilorom opened the first curtain-making workshop in town. It's been four years now, and it's going so well, she now employs four seamstresses. Dilorom doesn't want it to stop there.

"There are more than 300 single mothers in here. And they have no one to help them. They are not working, because they can't put their children in kindergarten – this is very expensive. If I could get an opportunity to train them I would."

Dilorom is planning to expand her business and

and men in Kyrgyzstan

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT: BREAKING GENDER BARRIERS FOR YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN



One billion people will reach working age within the next decade – the best educated and best trained generation of young men and especially young women ever. But despite great efforts carried out by governments and social partners, the youth unemployment crisis is growing, and the gender barriers have yet to be overcome. We are getting more children to school but we are failing to get them into productive employment and decent work.

For many working-age young people the lack of decent job prospects increases their vulnerability in the transition from childhood to adulthood. The investment of governments in education and training will be lost if young people do not move into productive jobs that enable them to support themselves, contribute to their families' earnings, and pay their public dues. Yet, on average, young women and men are two to three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. This is particularly pronounced for young women, who all too often work unacceptably long hours under informal, intermittent and insecure work arrangements, characterized by low productivity, meagre earnings and reduced labour protection.

Labour force participation rates for young women are lower than for young men. The largest gaps are found in South Asia (35 percentage points) and the Middle East and North Africa (29 percentage points). The gaps mainly reflect differing cultural traditions and the lack of opportunities for women to combine work and family duties – not only in the developing world but also in the industrialized world. The lower value placed on women's economic contributions and prevailing views

that women only generate second or third incomes in households contribute to this reality. They may face discrimination because of the perception that as soon as they marry and have children they will be less productive or will leave their jobs. Many young women wonder whether academic achievement actually leads to access to employment commensurate with their qualifications.

Often unaware of their legal rights and lacking enough role models, women are only slowly penetrating into professions traditionally dominated by men. Improved access to desegregated training opportunities will help increase the employability of young women and improve their future earnings and socio-economic conditions. Efforts should be supplemented by vocational guidance better suited to their capabilities and needs, as well as by gender-sensitive counselling and placement services to enable young women to fulfil their potential.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

will hire more seamstresses. It means new jobs, and new hope, for unemployed women in her town. "Now I can definitely call myself a business woman!" says Dilorom.

The "left-behind" women who once seemed to have no chance are now thriving – inspiring other women, and rebuilding their country's future . . . one stitch at a time.



Working in a “man’s world”:



© ILO PHOTO

Kasanita Seruvatu, former Director of Training in the Fiji Police Force and now Training Advisor to the Samoa Police, has spearheaded initiatives over the last ten years to create a stronger ethnic and gender balance and empower women to take up challenging roles in the police force. Here she explains how discrimination against women at work can be overcome.

SUVA – The deeply entrenched beliefs and stereotyped attitudes towards women in the workplace are major obstacles. Culture, socialization and religion play a role: pre-colonial taboos and norms of the Pacific cultures draw a clear demarcation line between dominant men and subordinate women, while the colonial and Christian value systems later reinforced traditional gender roles. Although these roles have lost importance they continue to influence modern societies in the Pacific region.

Another major obstacle to gender equality is women themselves. Sometimes we live up to the expectations of society – especially our male counterparts – by appearing helpless and non-assertive, even when holding positions of authority and responsibility. Moreover, by accepting certain kinds of jobs women reinforce deeply entrenched beliefs that they are weaker than men and cannot perform the same duties as men.

In 2003 the Fiji Police put measures in place to widen the pool of recruits and to remove certain compulsory selection criteria concerning height, weight, age and chest size of candidates that discrim-

inated against ethnic Indians and Chinese. The same year saw a new policy that gave 35 per cent of places in the police to women and 65 per cent to men. The new human resources policies also promoted a more transparent and fair selection procedure, gave women front line operational roles (including elite units), established networks, and promoted zero tolerance of sexual harassment and positive media coverage of women in the police force.

But joining the higher ranks of the Fiji Police Force is not easy, due to entrenched attitudes and beliefs regarding women in general in policing, not only in Fiji but in the Pacific region as a whole. Only a few years ago there was only one woman holding the rank of an Assistant Superintendent while the next highest ranking woman was a sergeant. There was no woman at the inspectorate level. It’s a man’s world. A significant change came about in 2003 when Commissioner Hughes appointed two women to significant operational positions. However, their work was made harder on the ground when they dealt with male counterparts who had deeply ingrained ideas about gender roles in society. There is a patriarchal attitude towards women in the world of work and sometimes women are given token positions to pacify the strong advocates on women’s issues and to more or less “keep their mouths shut”.

Managers need to make sure that every attempt is made to facilitate the access of women police officers to upper management levels. They need to “walk the talk” instead of merely paying lip service. Women should be encouraged to take up front line operational duties and to move away from performing “administrative duties”. Promotion opportunities and key positions vacancies should be advertised and everyone encouraged to apply and the selection done in a fair and transparent way. Women should stop being ‘mute’, be assertive in their communication with men and dare to question the decisions of superiors.

A gender and ethnically balanced police force reinforces the principle that all law enforcement agencies should be representative of and responsive and accountable to the community they serve. It also reinforces the fact that a police force should recognize and reflect the identity and concerns of

Women in the Fiji Police Force

REMOVE THE OBSTACLES! ON THE RIGHT TRACK TO EQUALITY



More women today are in the formal economy than ever before. There are higher proportions of women in public services, and an increasing number of equal opportunities policies exist globally. However, while women's participation in the formal

labour market has increased remarkably in most parts of the world, women still face multiple forms of discrimination in the labour market. Women almost everywhere still continue to earn less than men for work of equal value; they have fewer opportunities in obtaining better-paid jobs and often bear the unequal burden of family responsibilities. Discriminatory practices based on assumptions about what jobs are "appropriate" for women, or on women's reproductive roles continue to exist in a number of countries.

Fifty years ago, the International Labour Conference adopted what is still considered the most comprehensive dedicated international instrument on non-discrimination and equality in the world of work. The ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) was forward-looking in its time, and remains as relevant now as it was in the late 1950s. The ILO's commitment to the elimination of discrimination in the world of work was reaffirmed in the ILO Declar-

ation on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008, also confirms that gender equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting issues in all the ILO's work.

The principles set out in Convention No. 111 have been almost universally accepted. The progress that has been achieved in the application of the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women and the leading role the Convention has played in the past fifty years should be heralded. Yet the goal of eliminating discrimination in employment and occupation set out in the Convention remains a distant one. To be on the right track to equality, it is time to identify and remove the remaining obstacles.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

every section of the population. When a police force can show the visible presence of members of the minorities and women in prominent positions, it can be a clear indication of its acceptance in the population.

The ILO can and should play a major role in breaking down the barriers of discrimination both at the organizational level as well as at the governmental level: strengthening labour ministries in the

region, facilitating dialogue among the interested parties and providing technical assistance in identified improvement areas. Some concrete ideas for policies promoting gender equality would include: giving scholarships specifically to young women and girls in traditional male jobs such as engineering; reserving places for young women and girls on training courses; and ensuring that all girls and young women have open access to education.



Spinning ancient technology

© ILO VIDEOS



When ancient technologies connect with modern methods, the results can change lives – even in places where hope is hard to come by. In one of the world’s most remote places, reconnecting with the past is showing the way into the future.



Photos from the ILO video “Women’s Cooperative spins ancient technologies into commercial success”.

Above: Eugenia Gutierrez; below: Sara Silveira

ABRA PAMPA – It is one of the most astoundingly beautiful places on earth. This is the high desert of northwestern Argentina . . . untouched by time, and now, reconnecting to an ancient tradition.

For centuries in this windy, desolate place, the indigenous Kolla people have raised llama as pack animals, for food and for wool. Now the time-tested tradition of shearing fleece by hand, and spinning it into high-quality wool, is bringing new hope to a region with chronic unemployment. For women like Eugenia Gutierrez, it all comes naturally. This ancient art is her passion.

“I have been spinning wool ever since I was 6 years old,” says Eugenia. “All my life, I have con-

sidered myself a spinner. I adore spinning. And I am a craftswoman, specializing in spinning thread.”

This is the Punha Cooperative, where women spin wool in the old traditional way. The FORMUJER programme from the ILO Inter-American Centre for Vocational Training CINTERFOR helped make this ancient tradition a commercial success. FORMUJER helps indigenous and non-indigenous women in Bolivia, Costa Rica, and Argentina connect traditional technologies with modern methods of organization, production and distribution.

FORMUJER helped the spinners understand that the high-quality wool they produce is also valuable outside Abra Pampa. Now, the Cooperative’s wool, and the articles made from it, are sold around the region in a network of schools and shops, even on the internet. FORMUJER also changed Eugenia’s life: she became a leader of the cooperative, and its first woman president.

“It changed my vision, from being only a craftswoman to becoming a community leader who thinks about, and understands the needs of others.”

Sara Silveira, the regional coordinator of the FORMUJER program, agrees: “Eugenia is a clear example, across the region, of how it is possible to grow and to transform oneself with support, training and stimulation.”

“Learning how to live with technology and adapt to its imperatives is one of the most pressing global challenges today,” says Jane Hodges, Director of the ILO Bureau for Gender Equality. “We must empower women to overcome cultural barriers which may prevent them from gaining access to the required skills, technologies, resources and markets.”

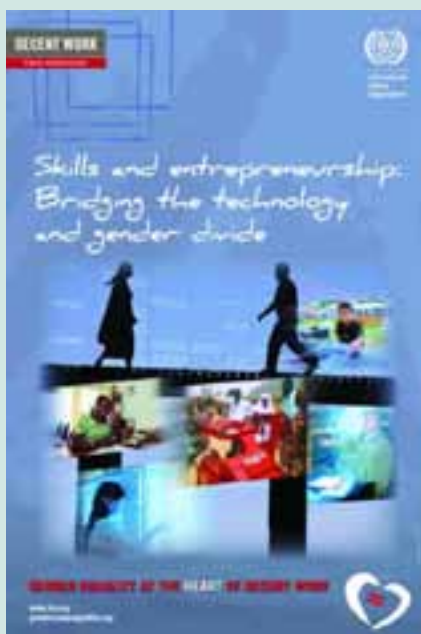
Now the Punha Cooperative is working towards recognition by Argentina’s Ministry of Labour as a vocational training institution, which means new



© ILO PHOTOS

es into commercial success

SKILLS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BRIDGING THE TECHNOLOGY AND GENDER DIVIDE



Almost everywhere women lag behind men either in access to training or in the application of technology. According to the OECD, this is more a question of lack of encouragement, pervasive gender roles and attitudes rather than aptitudes. Girls are far less likely than boys to study engi-

neering or computer or physical sciences.

Though women earn more than half of the university degrees in the OECD countries, they receive only 30 per cent of degrees in science and technology. The percentage of female graduates advancing to research is even smaller, representing less than 30 per cent of science and technology researchers in most OECD countries and only 12 per cent in countries such as Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Even though women hold more than 60 per cent of IT-related jobs in OECD countries, only 10 to 20 per cent are computer programmers, engineers, systems analysts or designers. The large majority of women are in secretarial, word processing or data-entry positions, requiring rather routine, low-level skills or limited technical training.

Education and skills training increase the ability of women and men to apply new techniques, thus enhancing their employability as well as the productivity and competitiveness of enterprises. Technological "catching up" is also supporting the transition from the informal to the formal econ-

omy. In some countries, the growth in women-owned businesses is greater than for private firms as a whole. Supporting women entrepreneurs to introduce new technologies in their enterprises enhances the potential to increase productivity, create employment, reduce poverty, and promote local development.

Women go into business in a variety of forms, including self-employment, SMEs, social entrepreneurship, cooperatives and many more. But for women to recognize their entrepreneurial potential, it is important to promote role models that coincide with their realities and aspirations. Women also need to overcome other barriers when deciding whether to start a business, such as limited access to credits or traditional patterns preventing women from taking part in income-generating activities or controlling financial resources.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

resources. And Eugenia travels around Argentina, showing how skills development training leads to professionalism, commercial know-how, higher productivity, and better income. The threads of Eugenia's own life have been woven into a new fabric: stronger, more resilient, and aware that she has the power to change her life, and inspire others.

"I have to learn something new every day," she says. "I cannot stick to what I have learned and leave it at that. Day by day I am learning more. Learning does not finish, ever."

IT TRAINING IN TANZANIA

Operating out of the family home, Jane provides computer training to nearly 50 students a day. From three computers in 1998, her business has grown to ten computers and five employees. They train young women and men in how to use computers and software and provide maintenance. Jane participated in the ILO's Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality programme (WEDGE) training activities to increase her business management skills, organize her work effectively and grow her business. As a result of increased demand for IT services in Mbeya Municipality, Jane now hopes to start giving certificate and diploma courses.



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Protecting Filipino nu



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When skilled workers can't make enough money at home, many migrate overseas. But without labour laws that protect migrant workers, the dream of working abroad can quickly turn into a nightmare. Women are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, because they often work in sectors where labour law enforcement is weak. But when laws protecting migrants are effective, the dream becomes reality, with a surprising benefit when these workers return home.

MANILA – The Philippines are famous worldwide for their highly-skilled nurses. Every year thousands of Filipino women and men train for a profession that is increasingly in demand, as the world's population continues to age.

But the country that produces some of the world's most skilled nurses can't pay them what they can earn overseas. Many try their luck working abroad. The exodus of skilled Filipino workers has led to a crisis in the country's health care, with wider implications for the entire society.

"Now, many of our matured and experienced nurses are out of the country," says Leah Primitiva Paquiz of the Philippine Nurses Association.

"We're talking also of families, children growing up without their parents, if both parents are working overseas," says Annie Geron of the Public Service Labor Independent Confederation. "And you have a different kind of culture being developed because of migration."

For some migrants, the dream of finding a new life abroad turns into a nightmare of exploitation, abuse, and hopelessness. Women are particularly vulnerable, especially in sectors where there is little protection under national legislation, such as domestic work and agriculture. Gloria Moreno-Fontes Chammartin, Migration Specialist at the ILO in Geneva, explains: "The issues of migration status are very important – are they going abroad as documented or undocumented? As you know, those who go abroad undocumented are much more vulnerable."

The protection of Filipinos working abroad has been a concern for the Philippines government. For more than 40 years, it has been building bilateral agreements with countries interested in hiring Filipino nurses and other workers. In partnership with overseas governments, the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) regulates recruitment, contracts and employment in destination countries, especially in Saudi Arabia, the destination of three-quarters of Filipino nurses working overseas.

"I think it's a model in Asia," says Hans Caccdac of the POEA, "because as far back as the 1970s there has been a network of administrative protection, a set of guarantees of rights of our migrant workers if and when they do work abroad."

Fernando Urutia is one of those who migrated to Saudi Arabia. The experience was not always easy: "I was crying for three months because number one, the language. You know, in Saudi Arabia they speak Arabic." But thanks to the agreements between the two countries, Fernando Urutia got help and support whenever he needed it from the Philippine Embassy in Saudi Arabia and from his own government back home. The rest was up to him.

"I've learned that when going to one country, you have to embrace their culture as well so that you can stay. That's the reason why I stayed in Saudi Arabia for 15 years."

And it turns out the "brain drain" effect of migration isn't the whole story, as Hans Caccdac explains: "We're also emphasizing the "brain gain" effect. Which is, at some point in time when these nurses return, they have derived a wealth of experi-

Photos from the ILO video "Protecting male and female Filipino nurses migrating abroad". Above left: Annie Geron; below right: Hans Caccdac; below: Fernando Urutia



resses migrating abroad

WOMEN AND MEN MIGRANT WORKERS: MOVING TOWARDS EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



Migrant workers are persons who migrate from one country to another with a view to being employed otherwise than on their own account. All migrant workers, irrespective of sex or other personal attributes, should have the right to treatment no less favourable than that applied to national workers.

Women migrant workers tend to be employed in a restricted range of occupations, including manual work in agriculture, factories or Export Processing Zones (EPZs), but mostly jobs related to stereotypical female roles as caregivers, nurses, domestic workers, and low-status workers in the catering, hotel, and entertainment industries. By the very nature of the work they undertake, women and girls can be particularly vulnerable when employed for work outside their own countries. They may be subject to exploitation and abuse not only because they are outside the legal protection of their country of origin, but also because they often hold jobs for which there is little protection under social legislation. Their situation is often made worse by the lack of autonomy and the strong relationship of subordination that are typical of these jobs. They may be subject to gender-based violence and sexual abuse, especially if they are working as domestics or sex workers. In addition, these women are usually young, poor, and isolated from their families, whom they have left in their countries of origin. They

do not speak the language of the host country, are unaware that they have rights that are being infringed, and usually do not know where to go for help. At worst, they may be victims of coercive recruitment and employment practices or human trafficking. Young women and girls are at particular risk of being trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation.

Because of high and persistent unemployment, many countries have introduced policies to reduce the number of immigrants and are now confronted with the problem of migrant workers who are in an irregular situation and/or illegally employed. Although the statistical evidence is not clear, it can be assumed that a great many of these workers are women. Gender-blind immigration policies in destination countries can have disproportionately negative effects on women immigrants and leave them at higher risk of irregular employment and deportation.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender.

ence abroad, more talent and more skills, and therefore they bring it back here to either reinvest or share the talent and skills that they have acquired abroad.”

Fernando is proof of migration’s “brain gain”. When he came back home from Saudi Arabia, he got a Master’s degree and a job as a professor. Now

he is teaching student nurses who want to try their luck working abroad.

“I want to share my knowledge, I want to share my experiences with these student nurses, because they are the new generation. Nursing is not just about earning dollars. It’s a vocation, it’s a calling.”



When community clean-up ge



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Photos from the ILO video "When community clean-up generates livelihoods for women". Above left: Margueritte Ovempeko Kabore; below right: Salamata Yanogo

"Green jobs" not only clean up the earth's fragile environment, they can also provide innovative new ways to build sustainable jobs. In Burkina Faso, recycling waste is generating new livelihoods for women.

OUAGADOUGOU – Plastic as far as the eye can see: scattered by wind and rain, each year the city of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso produces 20,000 tons of plastic trash. For humans, it's dirty and dangerous. For animals, it's deadly. One third of all the livestock that die here each year choke to death on plastic the animals mistake for food.

But the women of Ouagadougou are turning the plastic plague into prosperity. This starts with the "plastic pickers". Each morning, Salamata Yanogo and her friends pick over the piles of plastic, looking for pickings they can sell to Burkina Faso's first plastic recycling centre.

"If I collect a lot over two weeks I can make 1,500 francs," says Salamata. That's just over 2 euros, a very modest, yet essential income for Ouagadougou's poorest people. Some 2,000 people in the area recycle plastic.

Salamata and her friends bring their pickings to the plastic waste recycling centre founded by Andrea Micconi, an Italian environmental scientist working for an NGO here. After training at the

ILO's International Training Centre in Turin Andrea organized the recycling centre, which is entirely operated by the women of Ouagadougou. Many of the workers come from the poorest sections of the city.

These women have gained experience in conserving, sorting, and recognizing value. Thirty women work at the centre 40 hours a week, earning about 50 euros a month. That's almost double what a teacher earns here.

Margueritte Ovempeko Kabore is President of the centre's Women's Association for the Recycling of Plastic Waste. "We have to spread the word about the centre, so that people bring plastic waste here," she says. "We work hard cleaning and sorting the plastic, recycling four to five tons every month, so we can cover salaries and maintenance costs."

Women are involved in every aspect of the recycling process. First, the plastic is washed by hand. Then it is sorted by colour and by type. The centre provides gloves, aprons, and other protective gear for the women workers. The plastic is then put into machines, which grinds it down to granules which are bagged and sold to local industry at half the price of imported plastic. So far, the centre has sold 50 tons of recycled plastic, worth US\$40,000.

Local companies mold the recycled granules into chairs, plastic tubing, and even affordable ruler kits for local schools. The recycled plastic rulers are cheaper than imported ones. And the schoolchildren are proud of their town when they read the label: "Made from 100% recycled plastic in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso."

Students go on field trips to the recycling centre to see first hand where their rulers came from. It helps them understand more about the impact of environmental pollution, and the important role played by the women at the recycling centre.

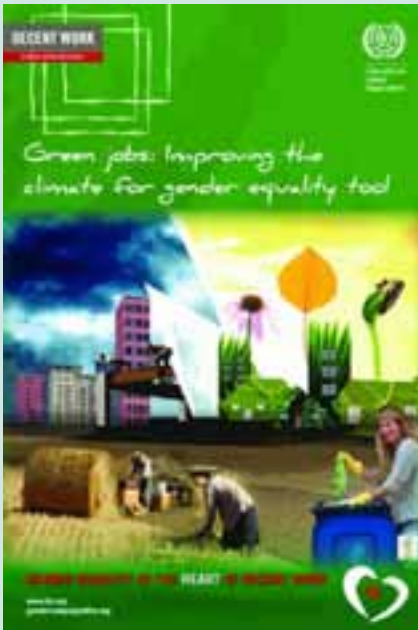
"The world needs greener economies everywhere," says Peter Poschen of the ILO's Green Jobs Initiative. "Green jobs are policies and measures that take care of the environment, are a way towards development and are a way of creating decent jobs for all kinds of people. This applies to a whole range of sectors, from recycling, to renewable energies, to clean transport, to reforestation and many others and it offers opportunities for



© D. Riinaud/ILO

nerates livelihoods for women

GREEN JOBS: IMPROVING THE CLIMATE FOR GENDER EQUALITY



Nearly three-quarters of the world's poorest citizens – those living on less than US \$2 per day – are dependent on the environment for a significant part of their daily livelihood. Climate change is endangering efforts to realize the internationally

agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The current global economic and financial crisis also presents challenges, including growing concern that previous commitments to cap green house gas (GHG) emissions or phasing out polluting factories may be replaced by what one political leader has called “cheap and dirty” economic stimuli.

Women and men working in sectors most dependent on the weather, such as agriculture and tourism, are likely to be most affected. Climate change, moreover, is not gender neutral. Women are increasingly being seen as more vulnerable than men to the effects of climate change because they represent the majority of the world's poor and are proportionally more dependent on threatened natural resources. Women also tend to play a greater role than men in natural resource management – farming, planting, protecting and caring for seedlings and small trees – and in ensuring nutrition and as care providers for their families. Yet, in the

long run, no one – women or men, rich or poor – can remain immune from the challenges and dangers brought on by climate change.

The ILO's Decent Work Agenda provides for green growth including the promotion of green enterprises and green jobs; active labour market policies which combine social security for displaced workers with skills development to help enterprises and workers to adapt and seize opportunities; work that is clean and safe for workers and the environment; and respect for workers' rights that give freedom including to engage in social dialogue which is key to shaping effective responses. Decent green jobs effectively link MDG 1 (End Poverty and Hunger) to MDG 7 (Ensure Environmental Sustainability), making them mutually supportive.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender.

workers across the range, from relatively unskilled to highly, academically trained people.”

For the women who collect and sell plastic waste to the centre, to the women who work there recycling, there is a sense of pride and accomplishment. Lamoussa Kamogo, a member of the Women's Association, says: “I'm very lucky because in Burkina

Faso it's not everyone who can get a job like this.”

Thanks to the women of the recycling centre, today there isn't as much plastic trash blowing around Ouagadougou. The area's livestock is safer, families have a new way of making a dependable income, and the pride in what the women of Ouagadougou have achieved grows deeper every day.



Creating employment oppor



© ILO VIDEOS

Photos from the ILO video “Social dialogue: Creating employment opportunities for Yemeni women”.

Successful social dialogue among government, trade unions, employers, is key when it comes to improving gender equality and changing perceptions about women workers. This can be quite a challenge where gender discrimination runs deep. But things can change, even in very traditional societies.

HADRAMOUT – Yemen is facing a number of development challenges. The poverty rate runs at about 40 per cent. The illiteracy rate is 52 per cent; for women it is over 70 per cent. When a woman tries to find a job, she faces severe pressure to conform to the traditional roles women and men have in this society.

“It’s true I have educated my daughter,” says one father, “but within limits. The boys can work and the girls can read the Quran. They can read and write to be able to distinguish right from wrong. But my aim for her to be either a consultant or a minister or a director, no! This is not her destiny after marriage. God knows!”

And another adds: “All these issues you are talking about are nonsense. I am an educated man and I am responsible for my children. I am in charge of my household and my woman. This talk is nonsense, wrong, wrong, wrong.”

Dr. Amat Alrazza Hommad is the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, one of the few women to

hold a high position in Yemen’s government. “The Yemeni labour law and civil service code are the most equitable within the Arab region regarding women,” she says. “Yemen has also signed most of the international labour conventions, and reflects their provisions in Yemeni national laws.

“But despite this fact, there is a big gap between law and practice concerning equal rights, opportunities for and treatment of women. This is perhaps the biggest challenge of our ministry, and requires raising the awareness of our society. Because our main struggle is not an institutional one in essence, but it is society’s perception of women workers.”

The Directorate General of Women Workers in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour provides training programmes for both women and men workers from the public and private sectors, focusing on workers’ rights, social protection, social dialogue and gender equality. Some of these efforts are supported by the ILO/Netherlands Partnership project “Promoting Decent Work and Gender Equality in Yemen”. These training programmes have been organized throughout Yemen, helping both women and men understand their rights at work and raising their awareness on gender equality.

One of the women trainers was assigned to Hadramout, one of Yemen’s most conservative regions, where many establishments did not even have a single woman worker.

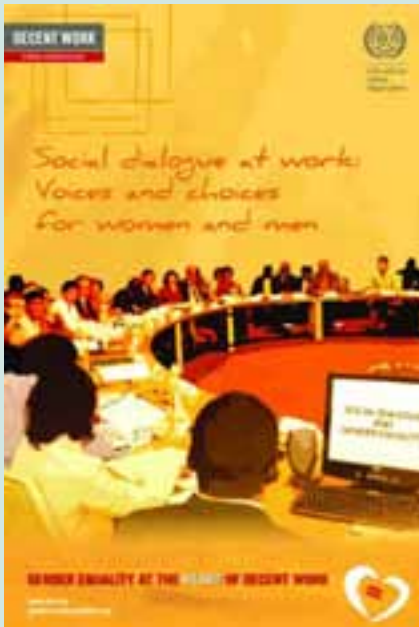
“When we wanted to train there, my colleague said it would be hard,” she says. “To be honest, yes I was scared. Even when I went I did not know how to address the men. But later, when I started to talk, they grew to like the training. Their own perception of women started to change. Even their boss wished they would have a woman like me working with them.”

Thanks to the work of the Women’s Directorate and the partnership between government, employers, and trade unions, thousands of women and men workers across the five governorates have received training in the concepts of decent work and gender equality. The programme itself is now seen as a prime example of good practice for social dialogue across the country. Perceptions concerning working women are slowly starting to evolve.



opportunities for Yemeni women

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AT WORK: VOICES AND CHOICES FOR WOMEN AND MEN



As the past decades have witnessed a steady increase in women entering the workforce, whether as employers or workers, women have also increased their participation in the relevant institutions of social dialogue. However, the participation rates of women remain low. When participating in social dialogue and within their own organizations, women have been more active in bringing gender equality issues to the forefront. Thus an increased involvement of women in social dialogue has resulted in greater attention to gender issues. In a way the participation of women in the institutions of social dialogue is itself a “key to promoting gender equality”. Social dialogue involves participation, dialogue and consensus building based on

principles of freedom of association, free discussion and democratic decision making on issues related to the world of work. It therefore provides a channel for women and men to realize opportunities for decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity. As social dialogue echoes the needs and aspirations of its participants, its relevance depends highly on whether all segments of society can have their voices heard. It is therefore indispensable that women and men are represented in an equitable way to have their voices heard.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

Ali AlHada is an Administrative Assistant. “I would have liked my wife to work out of the house,” he says. “The economic situation is tough, and raising children requires a lot of money. If she had a job, my wife could help with the expenses.”

Even the most conservative of women take pride in their employment and their newly-found voice. Sabah alHindi, the Administrative Coordinator in the Directorate, comments: “My family members are surprised. How is it that our daughter is accomplishing so much? Now even my brothers encourage me. At home, I am the only breadwinner, but I also take care of my mother or other family members when they are sick, I take care of

everything. My mother always says, “My daughter is the man and the woman of the house!”



*Dr. Amat Alrazza Hommad,
Minister of Labour and
Social Affairs*





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From Australia to Zambia there is almost universal recognition that a better balance between work and family life is a vital element in achieving equality in employment. Workers in both industrialized and developing countries are under severe pressure to both earn a decent living and take care of their children, their sick relatives, and their ageing kin.

BEIRUT – “I leave home around 8 a.m. for my paid work and leave work around 3.30 p.m.,” says Nadia, 35 years old. “First, I go to my father’s house nearby. I am the closest to him and the most available among my three siblings. Every day, I make sure that he has eaten and taken his medicines, as he suffers from diabetes. I clean the house. If he has friends over, I prepare coffee for them. It is normal for us both that I come to see him every day. How I wish that he could find a new wife who will take care of him.

“By the time I get to my house at 5 o’clock, my children are already at home. My 17-year-old son picks up my 6-year-old son at school every day. When I come into the house, I say loudly, ‘I am home.’ If they want to see me, they come. I usually spend two to three hours preparing meals and cleaning the house. I receive neighbours and friends sometimes, but I continue working. My husband is no help in this situation.”

In other parts of the world there is growing recognition that equality in employment implies the sharing of family responsibilities. The Employers’ Organization of the Philippines (ECOP) notes, for example, that “the division of labour in the home is evolving for young married couples”. According to ECOP, “employees cannot entirely

Workaholic 0

relegate family issues to the background while at work. Therefore, if work–family issues are not taken seriously, they might cause problems in the workplace that could affect work performance.”

An insurance company in the United States found this to be true when they carried out a work and family needs analysis. Of 7,800 employees, 60 per cent were in dual-career families, 50 per cent had care responsibilities for children or elderly dependants, and 20 per cent anticipated having them within three years. Further, over 30 per cent of the employees leaving the company thought that the decision would help them balance their work and family responsibilities. The study raised concern about the company’s ability to attract and retain staff, and the related costs. There was a business case for putting into place a family-friendly policy that included job-sharing and telecommuting programmes, better suited to employees’ needs.

But workplace culture and expectations concerning the ideal worker who puts job and career concerns over family involvement play a role in discouraging men from taking advantage of the many and increasing entitlements that exist. However, men are beginning to speak up too.

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) is the largest public utility in the United States and a heavily male-dominated workplace (76 per cent). In the 1980s a workplace survey yielded two important findings:

- The employees had critical childcare needs.
- Many of the DWP’s male employees were outraged that they had been excluded from the survey, because they had childcare problems too.

The department now offers a comprehensive set of work–family services that also address the needs of its male staff.

In Spain, Hewlett-Packard (HP) has a comprehensive Work–Life Harmony Programme that is viewed by the company as essential to competitive advantage, and includes time-management courses, a “workaholic” programme to reorganize time for employees who work longer than stipulated, and telecommuting practices benefiting about half the workforce.

Australia’s Department of Industrial Relations has long been convinced of the value of family-

r double day?

WORK AND FAMILY: THE WAY TO CARE IS TO SHARE!



The gendered division of labour that places primary responsibility for maintaining the home and family on women is an important determinant of gender-based inequalities between the sexes and of inequalities among women. Conflict between these family responsibilities and the demands of work contributes significantly to women's disadvantage in the labour market and the sluggish progress

towards equal opportunity and treatment for men and women in employment. While women are forced, or choose, to accept poorly-paid, insecure, part-time, home-based or informal work in order to combine their family responsibilities with their paid employment, difficulties in reconciling the demands of work and family contribute to men's disadvantage in the family and limit their ability to be involved in family matters. Workplace schedules that do not take into account workers' family responsibilities can constitute indirect discrimination in that they force such workers to "underperform" in terms of participation in workplace activities and thus potentially damage their career development prospects.

Harmonizing employment and family commitments for both women and men has emerged as an important labour and social policy theme in a growing number of countries. However, not all work-family measures promote equality. As noted in a recent ILO Global Report: "There is a danger that work/family policies, which are often aimed implicitly or explicitly at women in particular, may end up reinforcing the image of women as 'secondary earners' and accruing to the double burden of working women."

Flexibility in working conditions and in social security should be promoted through:

- the progressive reduction of hours of work and the reduction of the amount of required overtime;
- the introduction of flexible arrangements in working schedules, rest periods and holidays;
- consideration of the place of employment of the spouse and the educational possibilities for children in the case of transfer from one locality to another;
- the regulation and supervision of terms and conditions of employment of part-time workers, workers on temporary contracts and homeworkers: all terms and conditions of employment, including social security should be equivalent to those of full-time and permanent workers;
- consideration of family responsibilities as a valid reason for refusal of an offer of employment (for the purpose of avoiding the loss or suspension of unemployment benefits).

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

friendly policies: "A family-friendly workplace is one where employees feel they are supported in meeting both their work commitments and their family responsibilities. It is one where the employ-

er accepts that family responsibilities will have an impact on employees' working lives and is prepared to accommodate their responsibilities wherever possible."



Never too old

© ILO VIDEOS



Photos from the ILO video “Chaltu: Never too old to change her life”.

The world’s population is ageing, and living longer costs money. Because women live longer than men, they form the majority of older persons. As women age, supporting themselves gets more difficult. But even the most difficult situations can be changed, if there’s an opportunity. A 70-year-old woman at a small village market in Ethiopia is proof that it can be done.

ADDIS ABABA – For millennia, the legendary Ethiopian wine called “Tej” (tey-ya), has been made from honey and organic hops known as “gesho” (gay’-sho) found only in the highlands of Ethiopia.

In a small market in Addis Ababa, 70-year-old Chaltu carries on the tradition, in her new business selling dried gesho leaves. But how Chaltu got here is anything but traditional. Most of her life has been spent on the streets begging. And worse: Chaltu was infected with Hansen’s disease – leprosy,

when she was a girl. The result: she’s been discriminated against, her entire life.

Berke Negatu, General Manager of the Ethiopian National Association of Ex-Leprosy Patients (ENAELP), has seen the social exclusion connected with this disease: “More than anything, victims of leprosy have to fight against becoming isolated from the rest of society. Many people still believe that the disease is a curse from God, that it’s fate or a punishment. This is why life for people with leprosy remains so difficult.”

But it’s not only Chaltu’s disability that was the problem. Like so many women around the world, as Chaltu got older, opportunities to change her situation diminished. The disadvantages and the discrimination pile up as women age: finding a reliable means of support, especially a meaningful job, becomes more difficult.

Chaltu was determined to change her life for the better. The opportunity came a few years ago, when she heard about a new ILO training programme, “Improve Your Business”, supported by the ILO Irish Aid Partnership Programme. Despite her advanced age, she was offered a place on the training programme.

Fantahun Melles, National Coordinator of the Programme, says: “By training entrepreneurs with IYB (Improve your Business) skills, we let them understand effective business management skills, better marketing knowledge, production planning and financial management.

“The training was very important to me,” says Chaltu. “I would have liked to have done even more! It has made a difference to my life. Before I was a beggar, now I am running my own business.”

After the training, Chaltu got a micro-loan to build her business. She started shopping around, getting better prices for gesho, and building up her savings. Within a year she had paid off the loan.

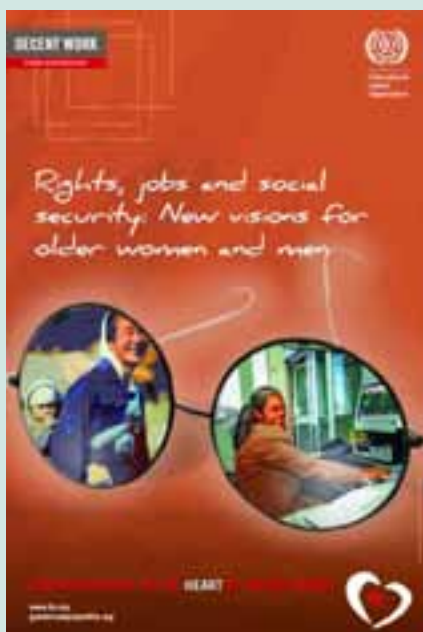
“Chaltu is special,” says Fantahun Melles, “in



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to change

RIGHTS, JOBS AND SOCIAL SECURITY: NEW VISIONS FOR OLDER WOMEN AND MEN



Increases in life expectancy involve changes in the entire life cycle. One fundamental change that has been noted is a shift from three-generation societies to four-generation societies. Many of today's grandparents remain engaged, mobile and active. Traditional characteristics attributed to "seniors" are shifting to an older

age bracket (70s and 80s). But as the majority of the world's population does not have entitlements to any form of old-age pension, for many living longer also means living with scarcity for longer periods of time. Poverty in old age is a key issue of concern.

Because women live longer than men, they form the majority of older persons (55 per cent). Currently, women outnumber men by about 70 million among those aged 60 years or over. In the last 50 years, global life expectancy of women has increased from 48 to 67 years, as compared to 45 to 63 years for men. Poverty in old age has a strong gender dimension. Since life expectancy for women is higher than for men, women may be in poverty for a longer period of their lives. A woman's chance of losing her partner is higher, and women are less likely to remarry than men. Women over 60 who have lost their partners greatly outnumber their male equivalents.

Throughout their life cycles, women accumulate disadvantages that pile up at older ages. Double or triple discrimination is

often amplified as women advance in age. Women are especially vulnerable owing to their high numbers in unpaid, low-paid, part-time, frequently interrupted, or informal economy work. As a result they are less often entitled to any contributory pension benefits in their own right. Even if they are, their pensions are often significantly lower than those of men due to lower earnings and shorter contribution periods. A society for all ages requires rethinking the conventional course of working life. It entails introducing more flexible and tailored working patterns, yet at the same ensuring that people have both the right to continue working if they so wish and the right to retire in an affordable manner if they do not wish to continue an economically active life. There needs to be a shift from competition to solidarity among working age groups and to remove the employment barriers facing older people.

Find out more:

Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign, 2008–2009, at www.ilo.org/gender

that she has broken the shackles of poverty through commitment, hard work and determination. First, she is an ex-beggar, second, she is a disabled woman – an ex-leprosy patient, and third, she is an old woman. But none of these things have deterred her from going into business.”

Late in life, Chaltu has learned something new that has changed everything. Now she eats three meals a day, pays the rent, helps pay for her grandchildren's education, and puts aside some savings for the future. And most importantly for Chaltu, she did it herself.

“I have been saved from being in the street and totally dependent on others,” she says. “Now I can depend on myself. I can sell what I have, and I can live on it.”



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Health insurance for women on low incomes



© M. Crozet/ILO

When women in developing countries fall ill they are often more vulnerable than men since they predominantly work in the informal economy, without any social protection. They earn less than men on average, have little ownership of or control over assets, are more likely to care for children and the elderly, are more likely to live in poverty, and are less likely to have access to health insurance and pension coverage. Sarah Bel looks at how microinsurance schemes can fight back.¹

AHMEDABAD, INDIA – Jaitoonbibi works as an *agarbatti maker*, earning 30 rupees per day rolling incense sticks. She lives in a small ten-by-fifteen foot room with three family members, in a house that has no running water. Under these conditions it was not surprising that Jaitoonbibi contracted typhoid and malaria, nor that she had to spend most of her savings to pay her medical bills

and recover from her illnesses. But Jaitoonbibi was fortunate. She had purchased insurance with VimoSEWA (see sidebar) and was reimbursed within a week.

Jaitoonbibi's story is still an exception in developing countries. Even the most common illnesses can quickly deplete the assets of a family, especially for those living in rural and remote areas. Most health-care systems are urban-based, elite-biased and curative-orientated. Access is limited and cost-prohibitive for low-income families, and risk-protection mechanisms such as insurance, which would enable them to cope, are not yet widely available.

Women's health is particularly at risk, due to the unhealthy environment, long working hours in hazardous conditions and lack of income to invest in prevention. Seventy per cent of the world's poor are female and women face more violence, abuse and exploitation than men. In rural areas, cultivating family plots involves hours of backbreaking toil

¹ This article has been compiled from several sources, particularly "Meeting the special needs of women and children" by Mosleh Ahmed and Gabriele Ramm, in *Protecting the poor: A microinsurance compendium* (ed. Craig Churchill, ILO 2006), pp. 130–44.

for no wage. In urban areas, they often work long hours in unregulated, unhealthy and unsafe conditions without the ability to protest or voice their opinions.

The most significant risks that affect women's health include maternal mortality and complications surrounding pregnancy and childbirth, sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, exposure to waterborne diseases, and respiratory problems and burns from household work. Gender inequality in most developing countries is also a factor. Low social status and harmful traditional practices in some societies (such as female genital mutilation and early marriage) have adverse affects; non-nutritious diet increases proneness to ill health, which can be exacerbated by the fact that women are often a lower priority in receiving medical treatment.

Designing policies: key challenges

If health microinsurance is to become viable in protecting the livelihoods and health of low-income women, its design and delivery has to overcome many challenges.

Despite their essential role in administering family health, women are often not considered as a primary beneficiary of insurance products. Microinsurance providers tend to focus on the (male) breadwinner as the main target for enrolment campaigns and policies. In some cases, when schemes allow the policyholder to choose who will and will not be covered, women and girls are not enrolled because their health is valued less by household decision-makers.

To overcome this issue, l'Union des Mutuelles de Santé de Guinée Forestière (UMSGF) – a network

of mutual health organizations (MHO) in Guinea – designed a family product that gives incentives to the breadwinner to register his spouse. Membership in an MHO is family-based and all dependants must be registered. Group leaders are responsible for ensuring that no household members are excluded from coverage, which is also a good way of mitigating adverse selection. To ease their task, MHOs offer free coverage for children born during the budget year. In polygamous households, which are numerous in some areas, family registration is carried out separately for each spouse and her dependants. One membership card is issued for each mother and her children.

Financial incentives can definitely encourage certain behaviours. For example, VimoSEWA successfully offers a Rs. 20 (US\$0.45) discount to members who enrol their whole families.

Designing a gender-relevant product is another issue. Microinsurers need to cover women's specific health concerns, especially those related to pregnancy, delivery, maternity, and gynaecological diseases. However, some commercial schemes shy away from offering maternity benefits because, unlike in the case of illness or accidents, women have (some) control over whether or not they get pregnant. Consequently, pregnancy is not a risk that can be risk-pooled in a pure insurance sense.

For example, because of the high risk of death during childbirth, Delta Life in Bangladesh excludes women in their first pregnancy from taking out a policy. There is also a significant adverse selection risk of women who know they are pregnant (but not yet showing) who then enrol in a health insurance scheme. The First Microinsurance Agency in Pakistan and ASSEF in Benin both experienced abnormally high rates of pregnancy and childbirth in their voluntary schemes.

A better way to include women's concerns in policy design has been experimented through community-based health schemes, especially in Africa. These health mutuals are social and professional groupings in which members freely choose to join and pay their contributions regularly, thus enabling them to cover their healthcare expenses. However, their efforts to improve access to healthcare and extend social protection to vulnerable groups, including women, often involve only a small portion of the population in developing countries and many mutuals lack the resources to sustain their activities.

As low-income women are predominantly casual and seasonal workers, regular monthly premium



© VIMOSEWA



VIMOSEWA

SEWA is a trade union of 1.1 million poor, self-employed women workers in India. Established in 1972, its main goals are to organize women for full employment and self-reliance. VimoSEWA is SEWA's insurance unit in which the workers themselves are the users and managers of all services. It was developed in 1992 in response to members' needs for protection. VimoSEWA promotes an integrated insurance product of life, health, accident and asset coverage for poor workers and their families.





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>> payments can be difficult to pay, but a large annual lump sum may not be suitable either. Flexible arrangements are most appropriate to increase microinsurance access to low-income women. Microinsurers should offer a range of premium payment options, such as a grace period of several months or a flexible payment schedule that allows for irregular premium payments according to the particular financial situation of women.

FINCA Uganda and Microcare Health Ltd are partnering to provide voluntary health insurance to informal sector workers and their families through an affordable financing mechanism. FINCA currently offers a special loan to finance the premium (at lower interest) for clients who cannot pay upfront, and will now experiment with a special savings account to enable clients to accumulate the premium during the course of the year, which will broaden the range of available financing options.

Eventually, “women-friendly” products and delivery channels are expected to make a great difference in expanding health protection among low-income women in developing countries. To overcome financial illiteracy that prevents women from understanding the concept of insurance, and to increase relations of trust between insurer and client, direct and regular contact is necessary. The field staff of grassroots organizations, such as trade unions, NGOs and MFIs, committed to reduce the likelihood of misleading sales practices and confu-

sion about insurance contracts, are the best change agents. In fact, savings and credit groups – essentially composed and administered by women – remain one of the most widespread mechanisms for distributing insurance to low-income households.

Collateral damage

A disease often involves more than a cure. “Women, more often than not, are the family’s primary caregiver. During a health event, there’s more than just medical expenses – lost wages, childcare, even transportation to and from the hospital all add pressure on that household during a tough time,” says Mary Ellen Iskenderian, CEO of Women’s World Banking.

Microinsurance products would be more efficient if they covered these collateral implications of an accident or an illness, which can have catastrophic consequences. For example, according to the Director of the Yomou Hospital in Guinea, one poor woman, “Madame Seni Pohomou, from Yalakpalé village, was in labour for 3 days. There was no transportation at night and the family had to wait until the next midday to find a taxi. When they arrived at the hospital, we operated on her but the baby had already passed away.”

Products would also have a greater impact if they included illness prevention strategies. Voluntary health microinsurance schemes worldwide face difficulty in retaining their clients. One reason for this is because most clients make no claim in a given year, and thus see no tangible benefit in the health insurance product. Calcutta Kids, an Indian-based NGO working in slum areas, aims to create value for non-claimants through an “outpatient counselling service” – an additional service that seeks to enhance prevention and avoid hospitalization. Similarly, Microcare distributes insecticide-treated bednets at subsidized rates to its policyholders so that they can see a tangible benefit of their insurance coverage even if they do not make a claim – and which has the added advantage of reducing incidences of malaria.

Improving the strategic situation of women

But while several practical needs can be taken up through improved product design at the micro level and improved operations at the meso level, other strategic interests require long-term changes in labour policy and the status of women in society.

It is sometimes assumed that grassroots organizations working towards the empowerment of women will automatically consider the gender per-



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spective in their microinsurance operations – but this is not always the case. Greater attention to gender-specific needs and risk-management instruments is required. Additionally, community-based risk-pooling mechanisms are particularly vulnerable because of their limited financial resources. Catastrophic losses, repeated idiosyncratic risks and poor controls may deplete their resource pools and lead to their collapse. When these schemes fail, poor women are likely to suffer more than men because of their lower earning capacity and limited assets.

However successful microinsurance might be, it will never be in a position to provide full protection. Private mechanisms have a supplementary role – comprehensive social protection is the responsibility of the State. Recognizing this responsibility, the state-run microinsurance schemes in Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay all started by focusing on the most important epidemiological needs of maternity – risks that private insurers are less likely to address.

Women's participation in the monitoring, management and planning of government programmes such as healthcare centres would also increase the likelihood that these services meet the needs of women.

Experience has revealed the need for customized insurance products reflecting the characteristics and preferences of women. But even when products are jointly developed with female clients, their needs are not necessarily addressed; insurance providers often exclude benefits such as gynaecological diseases and treatment related to pregnancy, as we have seen. In these cases, other risk-management instruments such as preventive measures or microfinance can complement microinsurance products.

Above all, private microinsurance should be seen as complementary to the social protection responsibilities of the State. In most cases, microinsurance can only address the symptoms of health risks, such as providing treatment to those who are ill, but it cannot solve the root causes.

For microinsurance to be effective, there is a need for strategic changes towards gender equality in society. Structural causes of gender discrimination, such as legal, social and economic policies, have to be addressed to improve the position of women in society and their capacity to benefit from health insurance. While some risks can be addressed through appropriate products, changes in the institutions involved, through gender main-

streaming and gender participation, are also required. Eventually, microinsurance can only reach its maximum impact if improvements in the status of women in society are achieved through macro-level policy interventions.

THE MICROINSURANCE INNOVATION FACILITY

Many of the microinsurers described in this article, including VimoSEWA, Finca and Microcare, UMSFG and Calcutta Kids, are grantees of the ILO's Microinsurance Innovation Facility. Founded in 2008 thanks to a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the ILO's Microinsurance Innovation Facility seeks to increase the availability of quality insurance for the developing world's low-income families to help them guard against risk and overcome poverty. For more information, see www.ilo.org/microinsurance



Refused treatment in Mumbai

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Globalization, flexicurity and the financial crisis



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With production in industrialized countries increasingly outsourced to low-wage countries, unskilled workers are particularly hard hit – and many of them are women. Anne Mette Skipper looks at how the Danes are using their well-developed flexicurity policies to adapt in a time of financial crisis.

BILLUND – Pia Cramon Jensen, 36 years old, is a happy, good-looking young woman who has lived all her life in this rural south-western part of Denmark. When I meet her on a grey spring day at Billund airport, Denmark’s second largest, she tells me how her world nearly fell apart after more than 12 years as an unskilled worker at the Lego factory.

In 2006 Lego, by far the largest employer in the region, announced that due to production restruc-

turing many hundreds of jobs would be lost in the coming years. In fact, Lego was later able to change this decision and did not lay off its workers – its latest 2008 results are good in spite of the international financial crisis. But the FITS (From Industry To Service) project was set in motion then, and has since been developed in the region with support from the European Union, among others.

Pia remembers: “We were called to a meeting and told that in view of our uncertain job future we were invited to participate in a competence assessment course lasting one week. I decided to give it a try. I never had my competence tested before.

“First we visited potential employers in the region. There aren’t many. Besides Lego and Legoland (an amusement park), there is the airport and Lalandia (a large water park and holiday resort). I was fascinated by the airport but never

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thought I would have a chance to work there. Well, when tested, it turned out that my knowledge of English and German was better than I had thought. That gave me courage to apply for a job in the security service at the airport. What they wanted to know was basically if I was flexible with working hours. I said yes and got the job. It has come at a price, I often start working at 2.15 a.m. . . . but I have a car so that is OK.”

Pia likes her job. Instead of painting faces on Lego bricks, she now studies the faces passing through the airport security system. Summing up her working life, she says, “When I left school after ten years of compulsory schooling I started cleaning in the slaughterhouse in Grindsted. When the cleaning company changed owner I was 21 years old and decided to apply for a job at Lego. All they asked me then was if I was colourblind. The training was two or three weeks of following a person around, and then various functions in production.”

The FITS project started out of a fruitful combination of desire and necessity. Lego wanted to help its workers in case they had to be laid off. Lalandia and the airport were looking for low-skilled personnel. The job centre in Esbjerg had both people who wanted to find employment and at the same time a need for employees in the communal service sector.

JobinVest was created to develop a project to bring the interested parties together. One obvious idea was to develop a method to test workers’ skills and see to what degree they would match what employers were looking for.



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As Arvid Stück, managing director of JobinVest, explains: “In many of the jobs in the service sector personal traits such as personality, cooperation and perception are important, and they are rarely documented. We sometimes have surprises, like a 39-year-old mother of two who had worked for years

FLEXICURITY: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Flexicurity is a hybrid of the words “flexibility” and “security”. In the labour market it has three main components:

- Flexibility in hiring and firing
- A social welfare system which provides income security and health care
- An active employment policy

Special features of the flexicurity model in Denmark include:

- A high level of mobility. Almost one-quarter of the Danish workforce change jobs each year
- Pension contributions are paid into a fund and follow the person wherever he/she works
- A high level of ongoing training of the workforce
- Low level of unemployment (2.6 per cent in March 2009)
- Few industrial disputes
- High taxes



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in the iron industry. When she came to a competence assessment course she found out that she would like to work with the care of elderly people instead of producing radiators. So now she is in training to become a healthcare assistant.”

The FITS components of the project have been further developed by partners in Spain, Germany, France and Italy to meet different needs. In Germany, for instance, there is special interest in helping young people who have not completed vocational training to find a professional field of interest.

For historical reasons Denmark may be well placed to take initiatives in labour market adjustments. In the 1960s and 70s there was a change from agriculture to industry. Before this period the low-skilled labour force mainly worked in agriculture; then came the significant change, with labour going into the industrial sector. It was not all painless: 20 years ago Denmark had over 10 per cent unemployment, so the social partners (employers and trade unions) decided to work together to improve the situation.

Now the trend is changing again, with production being outsourced to low-wage countries and automation of production facilities. This development towards a knowledge-based society also has its costs, especially for unskilled workers. However, at the same time there is a need for more people in service-related jobs.





© LEGO

>> While the threat of mass layoffs from Lego led to a regional initiative to try to match people with new jobs available in a region with a relatively small population and few employers, the approach was different in the area north of Copenhagen.

Coloplast, one of the world's leading producers of intimate healthcare products, had to fire 142 workers in January 2009. The process started last year: because production is being moved to low-cost countries some 500 out of 7,500 jobs have been cut.

So how do you tell people in times of financial crisis that their job, in a company that is doing very well, has gone?

Carsten Bentzen, 42 years old, has been a shop steward at Coloplast for 12 years out of the 14 he has worked there. He is a warehouseman and represents some 1,000 unskilled workers. "When someone loses a job it's dramatic," he says, "even in Denmark where there is no social stigma connected with being fired and where the social security system makes sure that basic economic needs are met. The job and the colleagues are important parts of a person's life.

"This is the first time at Coloplast that so many people have to lose their jobs. We are used to job security – meaning that if your job disappears you are offered another one in the company."

"Who gets fired is the responsibility of the employer. We, the shop stewards, are consulted and there are certain rules concerning whom you can fire," he explains. "It's definitely not the principle 'last in first out'. For instance, if you are a single parent you do not get fired; if your spouse has just lost his or her job or is unemployed you do not get fired either."

"As trade union representatives, we have negotiated hard to get the best possible conditions for

those laid off. It is obvious to all parties that in being generous the company gains by avoiding costly conflicts. It is also important for the motivation among those workers who stay that they know they will be treated decently if their job is moved abroad. For instance, the moment you are fired you do not need to come to work any more. You get full salary for 4-6 months, even if you find another job during this time. Also every person who loses his job will have a capital of 30,000 kroner (US\$5,500 approx.) to use for coaching, job training or other measures that can help find a new job. At present, we know that several people are in training to become bus drivers. One woman, who was among 37 women fired in Thisted in the north of Jutland, wants to become a horse coach (horsewhisperer...). She will be able to use the funds available for this training."



Coloplast

The UN Global Compact is an initiative asking companies to embrace, support, and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. It is the largest global corporate citizenship network and involves UN agencies, companies, governments, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs, and academic institutions.

Coloplast is one of the ten Danish companies that are members of the UN Global Compact (see sidebar), with internationally recognized high ethical standards. "It may make a difference that the founding family still owns 60 per cent of the company shares," says Carsten Bentzen. "We feel a personal bond between the owner and the workers. We also have a company culture of constantly upgrading the skills of employees. Every year each unskilled worker at Coloplast participates in a two-week training course and we work on having a good working environment."

As for the 142 people fired in January, some 20 per cent had found work one month later.

"How do you know that?" I ask.

"They tell me," answers Carsten Bentzen. "I have asked them to keep me informed. They should know that they are not just dumped. We care for them. In a situation like this, it may make just a little difference."

Crossing the gender divide:

Women and men in non-traditional work roles

According to recent reports from the United Kingdom, women should be going into engineering and men into childcare.

There is a national shortage of engineers and scientists, and women make up a very small number of those employed although more girls than boys achieve the top grades in maths, science and technology in school. But in 2008 five times more men than women achieved a degree in engineering and women make up just 18.7 per cent of the overall SET (science, engineering and technology) workforce. The National Skills Forum says: "Schools need to do much more to encourage girls to work in traditionally male-dominated industries."

On the other hand, men are being urged to take jobs in nurseries after a survey by the Children's Workforce Development Council has found that 17 per cent of children have fewer than



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two hours of contact time per week with a male adult, and 39 per cent have less than six hours a week. The CWDC is calling for more men to consider working in early years settings. They say it is crucial for children under the age of five to have contact with a responsible male adult. Thom Crabbe, the council's

national development manager, said the career could bring great rewards. But, "Traditionally, it's not been seen as a job for men, and we need to challenge that," he said.

The trade union Voice – which represents nursery nurses and other childcare and education staff across the UK – said children needed male as well as female role models. "However, unless more is done to improve the pay, working conditions, training, career development and status of nursery staff, men – and, increasingly, women – will not be attracted to childcare as a profession."

These voices from the United Kingdom are not alone. Women and men all over the world are breaking the gender barriers and working in all kinds of "non-traditional" jobs. The following pages illustrate some of them.



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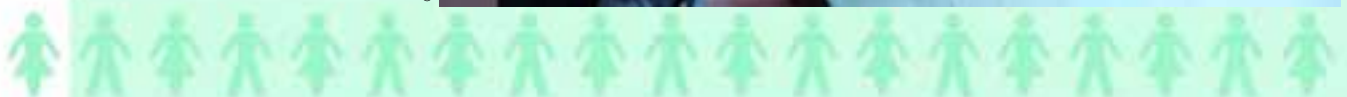
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Workplace solutions for childcare



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Many parents cannot rely on family support networks to look after children while they work. Care by persons from outside the family takes many forms, from live-in nannies to community childcare centres. As most of these arrangements involve a payment, parents in both developing and industrialized countries who work or would like to work are struggling to find childcare that is affordable, convenient and of a reliable quality.

GENEVA – A new book from the ILO focuses on ways of helping parents to access non-family care through workplace programmes. By reviewing national childcare frameworks and presenting examples, *Workplace solutions for childcare*¹ provides insight into why and how different partners have come together to develop solutions to help workers with childcare needs.

The first part of the book provides an overview of workplace programmes, setting them in their national policy contexts and considering the diversity of initiatives which have been taken, going beyond the traditional workplace crèche to look at other options, not only for pre-school children but also for school-age children. Partnership is a key theme since it is mainly through combining resources and capabilities and establishing collaboration among such actors as employers, trade unions, national governments, municipalities and various types of childcare providers that effective programmes for childcare support have emerged in workplace settings.

The second part of the book presents case studies from ten countries chosen to reflect a variety of national contexts: four industrialized countries (France, Hungary, United Kingdom and the United States) and six developing countries (Brazil, Chile, India, Kenya, South Africa and Thailand). For each country, a national overview is presented on policies and facilities for childcare and the implications for working parents, followed by case studies of specific workplaces. The case studies provide detail on why the childcare support was started, how it is funded and managed, how various partners are involved, and the perspectives of workers and employers on the support provided.

Reach of government support

Workplace programmes for childcare are situated in and adapted to national and local contexts. Government approaches to childcare differ greatly. A few countries, such as France and Hungary, view childcare as a public entitlement and government responsibility. In contrast, many governments leave parents to pay for non-family care from a private provider such as a nanny or local childcare centre. As these are costly, some governments have systems to help very low-income parents.

Evidence suggests that facilities available for children of different ages often fall short of workers' needs. For parents with children under age 3, there

¹ *Workplace solutions for childcare*, by Catherine Hein and Naomi Cassirer, Geneva, ILO (forthcoming in 2009).

is a serious lack of affordable, quality childcare facilities in most countries. Pre-primary schooling (3-5 year-olds) is becoming more common in many countries but daily hours are often limited and coverage is far from complete. For school-age children, out-of-school care is not well developed or affordable except in the few countries where childcare is seen as a public responsibility. Government support in both developing and developed countries has focused mainly on pre-school education for children about to start school but has tended to overlook the needs of working parents.

Workplace partners: employers, trade unions, NGOs

While the role of the employer is often important, other partners such as trade unions, NGOs and organizations specialized in childcare as well as government departments and municipalities are increasingly becoming involved in workplace-related programmes.

Governments have tried to encourage workplace programmes in some countries whereas in others, with no specific encouragement from government, workplace initiatives have occurred, although to a lesser extent.

Partnership is a key component of many workplace childcare programmes. Employers who have childcare programmes report a number of benefits including high retention level of employees, reduced turnover, increased productivity, and low levels of employee stress.

Workplace solutions for different needs

There are four main types of childcare programmes that are linked to the parents' workplace:

- on- or off-site company childcare centre;
- facility in the community which is linked to the workplace;
- some form of financial support (childcare vouchers, funds or subsidies); and
- advice and referral services to help find facilities and support.

Care for young children until the start of formal schooling is probably the most obvious need and workplace assistance for this age group is the most common. Nevertheless, care for school-age children before and after school and during holidays can be a major problem for parents; workplace help for this age group does exist and tends to be highly appreciated.

While in the past, childcare support has been mainly aimed at helping parents to access reliable

childcare on a regular basis, it is becoming increasingly common, particularly in industrialized countries, to help parents access emergency "back-up" care which can be used when the regular childcare arrangement breaks down. Each workplace situation requires careful assessment of workers' needs and the local possibilities in order to determine what kinds of solutions would be appropriate.

Ensuring viability of quality childcare

Throughout the case studies, a common theme in parents' reactions to childcare programmes is their concern about the quality of the care their children are receiving.

Since quality depends highly on the childcare workers, a major issue is how to ensure that in trying to make childcare affordable, the earnings of childcare workers do not suffer. Ensuring standards while maintaining affordability for parents is difficult and at least for low-income parents, some form of government financial support is needed.

Childcare support at the workplace is more common in large organizations such as banks, IT companies or academic institutions that are concerned with retaining highly skilled employees than in those where most workers are in lower paid, less skilled jobs. Yet the examples of programmes for low-income workers in this book suggest that employer gains can be considerable.

By showing how support for childcare has been organized and funded in a variety of workplaces and the diversity of the partnerships which have evolved in both developing and industrialized countries, as well as the limitations and challenges they face, this book should be helpful to policy-makers and workplace partners who are concerned to find practical solutions for helping working parents with their childcare needs.



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PLANET WORK

A REVIEW OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN LABOUR ISSUES

Financial crisis: The gender dimension

While the sectors that initially bore the brunt of the global financial crisis were those dominated by male workers – finance, insurance and real estate, construction and manufacturing – the crisis is now hitting service-orientated sectors and wholesale retail trade, which in many industrialized economies are dominated by females. There is also concern for women in the developing world who have no social protection. This issue of Planet Work looks at what the press is saying about the effect of the crisis on the gender gap.



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■ In Asia, it is mostly women who are employed in export-oriented industries, non-regular employment, low-skilled jobs, and with low pay-levels. Judging from the 1997 Asian financial crisis and on emerging trends under the current global crisis, non-regular, low-paid and low-skilled workers will be among the first to lose their jobs. In the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, the most affected industries include: garment, electronics, tourism, leather, cars and auto parts, and construction. These first three industries account for substantial percentages of women's total employment in the three countries. Men's employment will also decline considerably because of the decline in construction. In times of

financial hardship, and especially among low-income and poor families, women are often obliged to provide a safety net through informal paid work and unpaid work. (*The Manila Times International*, 22 Feb. 2009)

■ But according to the United Kingdom's Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) women are "definitely not" suffering more than men from job cuts and rising unemployment. "It's a truism that more women will lose jobs in this recession than in previous recessions – there are simply lots more women in the workforce," says John Philpott, the group's chief economist. "Yet while one can't yet entirely rule out the possibility that women will lose out relative to men in the jobs stakes as the recession unfolds, this is categorically not true of the jobs downturn to date." He acknowledged that women who lost their jobs might need tailored help to enable them to cope with unemployment and returning to work – including income pressure on lone parents and childcare issues. But more men had so far lost their jobs during the recession. (www.bbc.co.uk, 6 Mar. 2009)

■ However, just one month later the British press was reporting a different view: "The current downturn threatens women's employment as never before. In past recessions in the UK and the US, female incomes have insulated

families because male-dominated industries were worst hit, but not this time: sectors such as retail, which have a predominantly female workforce, are in the frontline. There is also likely to be a second wave of job losses in the public sector – a major employer of women – later on in the recession, as the state and local government are forced to cut costs." (*The Observer*, 5 Apr. 2009)

■ US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke at the Women's Leadership Forum in Beijing, China on the urgency for action to achieve equality between men and women. Addressing an audience composed of academics



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and leaders in the business, legal, media and non-profit sectors, she said: "If women are not full participants in society, the society does not advance the way that it could." The challenges brought about by the financial crisis also presented opportunities for women in the workplace, said Feng Cui, Vice-President of the China Association of Women Entrepreneurs. Considering that 20 per cent of entrepreneurs in China are women, Feng also highlighted the importance for women to show solidarity during the financial crisis. (*China Daily*, 23 Feb. 2009)

■ Ernst & Young has highlighted in a report the significant and proven contributions women make towards business and economic growth. The report, released during the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and presented by Beth Brooke, Global Vice Chair, promotes the role women can play during this period of economic turmoil. Ernst & Young conducted in-depth interviews and gained insights from leading thinkers in business, government and academia. The research demonstrates that the increased participation of women in the world economy could significantly enhance global growth. (*Accountancy Age*, 30 Jan. 2009)



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■ After Iceland's banks collapsed along with the exchange rates last fall, the IMF was called in to provide lending and the government resigned in January. Iceland's women have stepped into positions of power in order to take control of the worst economic crisis any country has experienced in peacetime. Iceland's largely male-dominated banking and business culture has been restructured to reflect more "feminine" values, aiming for a more balanced economy and emphasizing sustainable growth. Iceland's new Prime Minister, Johanna Sigurdardóttir, has pledged to lead a government that works with the people during this turmoil. Other prominent women in power are Halla Tómasdóttir and Kristin Petursdóttir, the founders of Audur Capital, who have teamed up with the singer Björk to set up an investment fund to boost the ravaged economy by investing in green technology. (*The Observer*, 22 Feb. 2009)

■ *The Guardian* newspaper organized a round-table discussion between women from the world of business and finance to discuss whether the crisis could have been avoided if there had been a better gender balance at high-level banking. Dr. Ros Altmann, independent investment banking and pen-

sions expert and Governor and Non-Executive Director of the London School of Economics, expressed the view that *machismo*, the drive to always have to beat your rivals, is a significant factor. She said, "There was not the cooperative thinking that there would be in a female environment." However, other women, such as Cary Marsh, Chief Executive of Mydeo.com and Emma Howard Boyd, Director of Jupiter Asset Management, believe that it is not a question of gender, but about a diversity of attitudes present in high-level banking. (*The Guardian*, *The Observer*, 15 Feb. 2009)

■ Choice Credit Group, a firm in the Detroit area of the United States has launched an exclusive "Bailout for Women" programme that helps women reduce or eliminate their financial debt through debt settlement. Like US President Obama's economic stimulus package to help Americans hit by the financial crisis, "Bailout for Women" is designed to help women who are homeowners and struggling to pay mortgages, single mothers not in receipt of child support, and thousands of other women to settle and alleviate their debt. (*MSNBC* (Microsoft and NBC), 24 Feb. 2009)

Global financial crisis

Global Employment Trends 2009:

Unemployment, working poor and vulnerable employment to increase dramatically due to global economic crisis



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The global economic crisis is expected to lead to a dramatic increase in the number of people joining the ranks of the unemployed, working poor and those in vulnerable employment, according to the annual *Global Employment Trends* report (GET) 2009. The report said global unemployment in 2009 could increase over 2007 by a range of 30 million to more than 50 million workers if the situation continues to deteriorate. The ILO report also said that in this last scenario some 200 million workers, mostly in developing economies, could be pushed into extreme poverty.

Director-General Juan Somavia said, “The ILO message is realistic, not alarmist. We are now facing a global jobs crisis. Many governments are aware and acting, but more decisive

and coordinated international action is needed to avert a global social recession. Progress in poverty reduction is unravelling and middle classes worldwide are weakening. The political and security implications are daunting.”

Mr. Somavia said the crisis underscored “the relevance of the ILO Decent Work Agenda. We find many elements of this Agenda in current measures to promote job creation, deepening and expanding social protection and more use of social dialogue.”

The new report updates a preliminary estimate released last October indicating that the global financial crisis could increase unemployment by between 15 to 20 million people by 2009. Its key conclusions are as follows:

- Based on November 2008 IMF forecasts, the global unemployment rate would rise to 6.1 per cent in 2009 compared to 5.7 per cent in 2007, resulting in an increase of the number of unemployed by 18 million people in 2009 in comparison with 2007.
- If the economic outlook deteriorates beyond what was envisaged in November 2008, which is likely, the global unemployment rate could rise to 6.5 per cent, corresponding to an increase of the global number of unemployed by 30 million people in comparison with 2007.
- In a current worst-case scenario, the global unemployment rate could rise to 7.1 per cent and result in an increase in the global number of unemployed of more than 50 million people.
- The number of working poor – people who are unable to earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US\$2 per person, per day, poverty line, may rise up to 1.4 billion, or 45 per cent of all the world’s employed.
- In 2009, the proportion of people in vulnerable employment – either contributing family work-

ers or own-account workers who are less likely to benefit from safety nets that guard against loss of incomes during economic hardship – could rise considerably in the worst-case scenario to reach a level of 53 per cent of the employed population.

The ILO report notes that in 2008, North Africa and the Middle East still had the highest unemployment rates at 10.3 and 9.4 per cent respectively, followed by Central & South Eastern Europe (non EU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) at 8.8 per cent, sub-Saharan Africa at 7.9 per cent and Latin America at 7.3 per cent.

The lowest unemployment rate was once again observed in East Asia at 3.8 per cent, followed by South Asia and South-East Asia & the Pacific where respectively 5.4 and 5.7 per cent of the labour force was unemployed in 2008.

The report shows that the three Asian regions – South Asia, South-East Asia & the Pacific and East Asia – accounted for 57 per cent of global employment creation in 2008. In the Developed Economies & European Union region, on the other hand, net employment creation in 2008 was negative, minus 900,000, which explains in part the low global employment creation in this year.

Compared with 2007, the largest increase in a regional unemployment rate was observed in the Developed Economies & European Union region, from 5.7 to 6.4 per cent. The number of unemployed in the region jumped by 3.5 million in one year, reaching 32.3 million in 2008.

According to the study, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia stand out as regions with extremely harsh labour market conditions and with the highest shares of working poor of all regions. Although the trend has been declining over the past ten years, around four-fifths of the employed were still classified as working poor in these regions in 2007.

Policy measures

The economic crisis of 2008 has deepened the concern over the social impacts of globalization which the ILO had previously raised. Stressing the need to take measures to support vulnerable groups in the labour market, such as youth and women, the ILO report observes that a huge labour potential remains untapped worldwide. Economic growth and development could be much higher if people are given the chance of a

decent job through productive investment and active labour market policies.

“The Decent Work Agenda is an appropriate policy framework to confront the crisis. There is a powerful message that tripartite dialogue with employers and workers organizations should play a central role in addressing the economic crisis, and in developing policy responses,” Mr. Somavia said.

The report lists a number of ILO-recommended policy measures being applied by many governments, as discussed by the ILO Governing Body in November 2008, namely:

- wider coverage of unemployment benefits and insurance schemes, re-skilling redundant workers and protecting pensions from devastating declines in financial markets;
- public investment in infrastructure and housing, community infrastructure and green jobs, including through emergency public works;
- support to small and medium enterprises
- social dialogue at enterprise, sectoral and national levels.

If a large number of countries, using their own accumulated reserves, emergency IMF loans and stronger aid mechanisms, put in place coordinated policies in line with the ILO Decent Work Agenda, then the effects of the downturn on enterprises, workers and their families could be cushioned and the recovery better prepared.



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WOMEN'S DAY EVENT FOCUSES ON IMPACT OF FINANCIAL CRISIS ON WORK AND FAMILY



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The ILO marked International Women's Day 2009 with a panel discussion on the impact of the financial crisis on the sharing of work and household responsibilities between women and men. The tripartite panel discussion on the theme *Work and family: The way to care is to share!* also examined good practices by countries and workers' and employers' organizations in addressing the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men. Work and family was also the March theme of the Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work Campaign (<http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/Campaign2008-2009/lang-en/index.htm>) launched in June 2008 to increase general awareness and understanding of gender equality issues in the world of work (see above, pages 24-25).

Speakers included Ms Bibata Niandou Barry (Minister of Women's Promotion and Child Protection – and recipient of the MDG3 Torch, Niger); Mr. David Loughman (Managing Director of A/S Norske Shell, Norway); and Ms Francisca Jiménez (Vice-chair of the Women's Committee of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA), Dominican Republic).



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Asia: Economic crisis response must prioritize jobs, SMEs, vulnerable sectors

Delegates representing workers, employers and ministries of finance, planning and labour from Asia and the Pacific, meeting in Manila on 18–20 February, suggested policies and measures to be urgently put in place to mitigate the expected severe impact of the global financial and economic crisis on economies in the region, and to stimulate a more rapid, more equitable and sustainable recovery.

The three-day, high-level regional forum in Manila looked at the global downturn and identified critical policy responses and practical measures. Officials from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), other UN agencies, academics and foreign diplomats also attended. Of concern for countries were sectors dependent on exports and remittances and the knock-on effect of decline for other economic sectors and on the most vulnerable and poorest. The potential loss of jobs and threats to decent work affecting many millions in the region was the central preoccupation of forum participants. Capacity to address this through stimulus packages was particularly worrying in countries with limited fiscal space or reserves to call upon.

An effective response to the unfolding large-scale crisis requires a global financial system guaranteeing stability, security and fairness for all. Participants highlighted that governmental and international action had to be coordinated and coherent. Economic stimulus packages needed to be comprehensive and target job preservation and creation and social protection as central to sustainable recovery and growth. Practical measures called for included:

- Protecting and supporting decent jobs
- Collective bargaining and social dialogue particularly in negotiating flexible hours, wages, temporary lay-offs and severance packages
- Rolling out quickly infrastructure and labour-

intensive public works projects, to keep men and women in work, particularly those retrenched

- Enterprise support measures including access to credit to focus particularly on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs
- Targeting support to specific sectors such as the rural and agricultural economy, and for vulnerable groups of workers – international and internal migrants, informal sector workers, women and young people
- Social security and social protection systems to be expanded to support vulnerable groups and increase disposable income levels
- International and regional support to include funding for developing countries and easing of conditionality in funding from international financial institutions
- The ILO to help mobilize development partners and actors to support the above priority measures, to strengthen regional cooperation in responding to the crisis and reduce barriers to trade and commerce, and to build capacities for national, regional and international policy coherence for growth, employment and decent work

“A strong message came from the meeting that national, regional and international responses must be coherent and co-coordinated, and that they must take into account social factors as well as economic factors,” said Sachiko Yamamoto, ILO Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific. “The crisis is severe and we haven’t seen the worst of it. The poorest and most vulnerable could be severely hit by its brutality as it spreads. To be effective, we must ensure that assistance reaches all levels of society and economies.”

“This is the first major crisis in the era of globalization and it needs a global response; the ILO has an important role to play in developing that response,” she added. “The Decent Work Agenda and social dialogue in particular have never been more important. We must keep talking and not compound our problems by relinquishing gains that have been made, such as the minimum wage and fundamental rights and standards.”

The high-level forum, “Responding to the Eco-

conomic Crisis – Coherent Policies for Growth, Employment and Decent Work in Asia and the Pacific”, was convened by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to discuss the effect the crisis is having on countries and their workers.

The forum was organized with the collabor-

ation of the ADB and the Department of Labour and Employment of the Philippines, and with the support of the Government of Norway. It is one of a series of regional events whose outcomes feed into a high-level meeting on the economic crisis, called by the ILO’s Governing Body.

Europe: ILO Regional Meeting calls for coordinated response to economic crisis

The 8th European Regional Meeting of the ILO concluded on 13 February with calls for a coordinated effort to maintain employment and restore economic growth amid “the most serious economic crisis to hit Europe for 60 years”. Delegates said it was vital to ensure that “coordinated stimulus packages are designed to expand aggregate demand, avoid deflationary spirals and maintain employment and decent work opportunities” and that “reformed finance markets supply the capital needed by sustainable enterprises for productive investment and decent work”.



social exclusion in the form of race and religious hatred, discrimination against immigrants or ethnic minorities, victimization of union representatives and protectionist economic policies that would aggravate the crisis”.

“This time it was not ‘business as usual,’” said Petra Ulshoefer, Director of the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia of the ILO in her closing statement. “Consensus and solidarity are needed now more than ever. Despite the great diversity of country situations, many similarities have become evident in the approaches of governments to tackle the crisis. We have seen a strong consensus among constituents of all countries that the Decent Work Agenda is guiding the way towards mitigating the social impacts of the crisis.”

In the conclusions, government, worker and employer delegates said that “the severity of the economic crisis is affecting a large number of workers on the labour market, including many who had secure jobs... Until more normal conditions return to credit markets, the threat of wage cuts, further lay-offs and rising unemployment will remain.”

The conclusions of the meeting also stressed



Representatives of governments, workers and employers from European and Central Asian member States of the ILO called for protection for the most vulnerable members of the population so that they do not become separated from the labour market or become working poor and stressed “the urgent need for effective social dialogue and collective bargaining due to the gravity of the crisis”.

They urged “greater policy coherence at national, regional and global levels” as a way to “avoid protectionism in all its forms, which can only exacerbate the effects of the crisis in the longer term”.

ILO constituents also pledged to “remain extremely vigilant of the risks of a resurgence of political reactions to rising unemployment and

>> that fundamental principles and rights at work should be safeguarded, international labour standards promoted, skills development and training increased and institutions for social dialogue fully utilized. They also stated that fundamental principles and rights at work are “an important defence against the risk that recession may lead to an increase in worker exploitation”.

“We should also stimulate close cooperation at the regional level, through European institutions, UN agencies and regional networks of governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations,” Ms Ulshoefer said. “And we must not forget

that the European and Central Asian region must play a leading role in fostering policy coherence at the global level, without losing sight of the need to forge a sustainable development path.”

The meeting also called for the increased participation of constituents in Decent Work Country Programmes, which have become a valuable means for the ILO and its constituents in the region to develop integrated approaches to the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda.

The ILO European and Central Asian member States meet every four years to forge policies and set priorities for the area.

ILO marks first World Day of Social Justice

The ILO marked the first World Day of Social Justice on 20 February with a debate on the theme “The crisis: threat or opportunity for social justice?”. The World Day was established by the UN General Assembly in November 2007, to be observed annually on 20 February. The ILO event brought together representatives from academia, the financial sector, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the world of work for an exchange on international policies coming into effect in the context of the global crisis and their implications for the pursuit of social justice.



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Panellists included ILO Director-General Juan Somavia; Raymond Torres, Director of the ILO’s International Institute for Labour Studies; Khalid Janahi, Chairman of Ithmaar Bank, co-chair of the World Economic Forum’s Middle Eastern debates and Group Chief Executive of Dar al-Maal al-Islami Trust (DMI); Jack Lowe, President of Blue Orchard Finance; Anita Normark, General Secretary, Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI); Rick Samans, Managing Director of the World Economic Forum; and Karen Tse, Founder and CEO of International Bridges to Justice.

For more information about the World Day of Social Justice, please visit the special web page at www.ilo.org/socialjustice or contact the ILO Department of Communication and Public Information at +4122/799-7912/7353 or communication@ilo.org.

GOVERNING BODY: ILO MEMBERS DISCUSS RESPONSE TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS

The Governing Body met from 5–27 March to examine urgent new policies and measures to mitigate the severe impact of the global financial and economic crisis on the world of work and to stimulate a sustainable economic recovery. Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Prize laureate and ILO Decent Work Prize laureate in 2008, addressed the Governing Body during a special sitting on 12 March 2009. On 23 March 2009, a High-level Tripartite Meeting on the Current Global Financial and Economic Crisis discussed effective responses to the crisis based on a report covering 40 countries worldwide. Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, addressed the meeting, among others. The Committee on Social and Employment Policy examined the ILO response to the crisis.



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Financial sector: ILO calls for urgent new policy measures to address growing job losses in the financial sector

Worker, employer and government representatives called for urgent new policies and measures to mitigate the severe impact of the global financial and economic crisis on the more than 20 million financial sector workers worldwide and to stimulate a sustainable economic recovery. A two-day Global Dialogue Forum on the Impact of the Financial Crisis on Finance Sector Workers held at the ILO said that an effective response to the unfolding employment crunch in the financial sector should balance economic and regulatory needs with the impact on jobs, working conditions, skills requirements and social protection in the sector.



tion between management, unions and workers' representatives;

- ensuring workers' employability through skills enhancement, life-long learning and active labour market policies to support adjustment;
- maintaining advances in equity policies, especially for the large number of women working in the sector;
- treating workers in atypical employment fairly;
- coordinating measures to avoid protectionist policies that would aggravate the crisis.

A report issued for the forum said that some 325,000 workers in the sector had lost their jobs since August 2007, 40 per cent of them since October 2008. It said that the figure was probably an underestimate, and that the number of job losses in the sector could accelerate in the coming months as and when the recession deepens and spreads to other countries.

The conclusions of the Forum called for dialogue between employers, unions and workers' representatives, and urged that layoffs be used only as a "last resort" after other alternatives had been exhausted.

The conclusions also highlighted practical measures that could be taken to mitigate the social impact of the crisis, including:

- taking account of fundamental principles and rights at work, including freedom of association, the right to organize and collective bargaining, and involving the social partners in the reform process in so far as the labour and social dimension is concerned;
- basing restructuring on dialogue and consulta-

The conclusions also referred to the ILO's Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the 2007 International Labour Conference conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises as key to the policy responses to be developed.

Finally, the conclusions called on the ILO to continue monitoring the impact of the crisis and the reforms on employment and on the social and labour dimension in the sector, develop an action plan on these issues in cooperation with governments and the social partners, and assist governments and the social partners to address the social and labour dimension of the financial crisis and the reform process.

FOOD: TRIPARTITE TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON THE IMPACT OF THE FOOD PRICE CRISIS ON DECENT WORK

The ILO held a two-day workshop on 5–6 March 2009 on the global food crisis and its impact on decent work. The meeting recommended measures to achieve global food security and to involve networks of employers' and workers' organizations in the development and delivery of national plans to do so. ILO will be working in partnership with the UN High Level Task Force on the Food Security Crisis to ensure that decent work is an integral part of the global response.

Other news

Panama, Norway the latest major maritime States to come on board and ratify ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

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Panama ratifies the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

Panama and Norway deposited instruments of ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 with the ILO in February. This means that seafarers working on more than 40 per cent of the world's merchant fleet (by gross tonnage) will be covered by the decent work requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 when it enters into force.

Panama, the largest flag State in the world, with nearly 22 per cent of the world's merchant fleet flying its flag, is the fourth major shipping country in the world to ratify the Convention, adopted by the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva in February 2006.

Panama's ratification is especially significant because, combined with the previous ratifications by other key flag States, Liberia, the Republic of Marshall Islands and the Bahamas (the next three largest States), it means that one of the two requirements for entry into force (at least 33 per cent of the world gross tonnage of ships) is more than achieved. Progress in many other countries indicates that the second requirement for entry into force, ratification by at least 30 countries, can be expected by 2011.

Norwegian State Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry Ms Rikke Lind stressed the importance of strengthening seafarers' rights globally, to which ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, would be an essential contributing factor. Norway played a leadership role throughout more than five years of preparation leading to the adoption of the Convention in 2006. The then Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry of Norway, Ms Karin Yrvin, was a special guest speaker at the International Labour Conference in February 2006, the Conference that adopted the Convention.

Norway also played a key role in developing the international guidelines for flag State inspections and port State control officers carrying out inspections under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, that were adopted in September 2008 by a tripartite meeting of experts. Norway's ratification sends a strong signal to other European countries many of which, along other major maritime States, have already made significant progress in this direction.

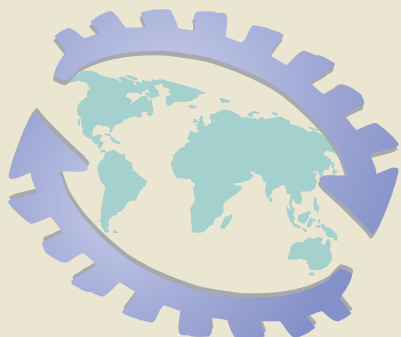
"Super Convention"

The adoption of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, sometimes called the "super convention", saw governments, shipowners and seafarers agree on comprehensive international requirements for seafarers' working and living conditions that also promote a level playing field for quality shipping in the maritime sector.

The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, besides providing for a "level playing field" for shipowners, sets out a seafarers' "bill of rights" and is intended to be the "fourth pillar" in the international shipping regulation complementing major maritime Conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on environmental protection and ship safety and security. It establishes a strong compliance and enforcement mechanism based on flag State inspection and certification of seafarers' working and living conditions. This is supported by port State inspection of ships to ensure ongoing compliance between inspections. The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 also contains provisions allowing it to keep in step with the needs of the industry and help secure universal application and enforcement. It is a comprehensive Convention bringing together and updating 37 existing ILO Conventions and covers the minimum requirements for seafarers to work on a ship, conditions of employment, hours of work and rest, wages, leave, repatriation, accommodation, recreational facilities, food and catering, occupational safety and health protection, medical care, welfare and social security protection.

AROUND THE CONTINENTS

A REGULAR REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION AND ILO-RELATED ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS TAKING PLACE AROUND THE WORLD



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New guide against child trafficking

■ The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) launched a new resource guide on child trafficking and sexual exploitation at the third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, which took place in Rio de Janeiro from 25 to 28 November 2008. The guide, titled *Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation: A resource kit for policy-makers and practitioners*, captures over ten years of work by IPEC and its partners and makes the Programme's experiences and knowledge available to those who design, implement and improve policy and programming to fight child trafficking. The ILO considers the sexual exploitation of children one of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL), a

crime similar to slavery and forced labour. All 182 member States of the ILO have committed themselves to eliminate all WFCL by 2016.

For more information, please contact the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) at ipecc@ilo.org

New guide for business on labour principles

■ "The Labour Principles of the United Nations Global Compact. A Guide for Business" was launched at a meeting of the Labour Working Group of the UN Global Compact, in the presence of leading representatives of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and business leaders. In a question and answer format, the Guide provides a brief description of each of the four Global Compact labour principles: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. It also contains an inventory of key ILO resources concerning these principles. The Labour Working Group was established at the initiative of the IOE and ITUC to give more visibility to the labour principles, promote a common understanding and help ensure a consistent approach to their implementation.

For more information, please contact the Multinational Enterprises Programme at multi@ilo.org

Brazil becomes first donor from the South

■ The Government of the Federal Republic of Brazil will contribute US\$300,000 to the ILO's Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA), becoming the first donor country from the South to do so. Brazil's contribution will support field programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean promoting fundamental principles and rights at work. In line with its growing international prominence Brazil is supporting international development efforts through South-South cooperation. The ILO, in accordance with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, has been encouraging member countries with the possibility to do so to make additional voluntary contributions through the ILO's Regular Budget Supplementary Account. Brazil has made important advances in recent years in economic, labour market and social policies in line with the ILO Decent Work Agenda. Through its voluntary contribution to the ILO Supplementary Account Brazil will disseminate successful experiences and good practices while strengthening ownership of recipient countries.

For more information, please contact Donor Relations, Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation at codev@ilo.org

New guidelines to prevent HIV infection

■ A new set of joint guidelines presented last December by the ILO and the World Health Organization



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(WHO) strongly urges national authorities to provide HIV post-exposure prophylaxis as part as their national HIV policy. Post-exposure prophylaxis to HIV is the only way of reducing the risk of development of HIV infection in an individual who has been exposed to the virus. Each day thousands of workers, especially healthcare workers – but also emergency rescue staff, waste-disposal workers, law enforcement personnel, firefighters and others – may be exposed to infected blood and other body fluids while performing their work duties. The Joint WHO-ILO Guidelines on post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to prevent HIV infection focus on how to provide PEP, a short-term antiretroviral treatment that reduces the likelihood of HIV infection after possible exposure.

For more information, please contact the ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work at iloaids@ilo.org

ILO, Germany sign new agreements

■ Last November, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) signed two supplementary agreements to promote the ILO's Decent Work Country Programmes

and the Global Labour University in South Africa. Under the agreements, Germany will support specific thematic areas of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda by contributing 3 million euros in 2009–2010 for combating child labour, creating youth employment and supporting the Better Work Programme, as well as providing €180,000 for the Global Labour University in South Africa. The Federal Republic of Germany is a long-time partner of the ILO in the field of technical cooperation, contributing more than US\$17 million since 2001 in projects such as small and medium enterprise promotion in Africa and social security in Asia.

For more information, please contact Donor Relations, Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation at codev@ilo.org

ILO, Luxembourg sign long-term agreement

■ Last December, the government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, represented by its ministry in charge of development cooperation, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) signed a long-term general framework agreement to promote the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and finance ILO projects and programmes in different countries. Under the agreement, Luxembourg will support specific thematic areas of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda by contributing each year at least the same amount it provided in 2008: US\$1.46 million (€900,000). Both parties will jointly identify the thematic areas. Luxembourg has also agreed to consider financing ILO projects and programmes at the national level, especially in countries that enjoy partner status with the Luxembourg development cooperation. Luxembourg is a long-time partner of the ILO in the field of technical cooperation, contributing

more than US\$11 million since 2002 in projects such as labour-intensive employment in Africa, small and medium enterprise promotion, also in Africa, and social security in Asia.

For more information, please contact Donor Relations, Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation at codev@ilo.org

Belgium continues partnership with ILO

■ On 9 December 2008, the Minister of Development Cooperation of Belgium, Mr. Charles Michel, signed an agreement with the International Labour Office (ILO) for a new grant of €6 million and €2.4 respectively to extend social security to vulnerable populations and promote social dialogue in French-speaking Africa. Through its Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGCD), the Government of Belgium will continue to promote two major ILO technical cooperation programmes, including the third phases of the STEP (*Stratégies et techniques de lutte contre la pauvreté*) and PRODIAP (*Programme de promotion du dialogue social en Afrique francophone*) programmes from 2009 to 2012.

For more information, please contact Donor Relations, Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation at codev@ilo.org

Promoting youth employment in West Africa

■ On 1 December 2008, the Youth Employment Network (YEN) launched a competitive grant scheme



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for youth-led organizations in the Mano River Union (MRU: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). Applicants can apply for grants between US\$2,000 and 50,000. The MRU countries have experienced violent conflicts resulting in major challenges for the societies in preparing their young workforce for employment as well as creating decent work for youth. The scheme will serve as a laboratory to identify and implement innovative projects with potential to provide employment opportunities for young people. It also provides an opportunity to actively engage youth organizations, demonstrating the potential of youth as active participants in development.

The Youth Employment Network (YEN), a partnership among the United Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank, brings together policy-makers, employers' and workers' organizations, young people and other stakeholders to pool skills, experience and knowledge so as to propose policies and programmes addressing the youth employment challenge.

For more information, please contact the YEN Secretariat in Geneva at yennetwork@ilo.org

Measuring the world of work

■ Last December, the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians ended at ILO headquarters in

Geneva with the adoption of new international statistical standards on child labour and working time as well as recommendations for further work on the measurement of decent work, labour underutilization and volunteer work. Among others, the 250 Conference participants from more than 120 countries supported a resolution calling for a set of "labour underutilization indicators" that are complementary to the traditional indicator of unemployment and more fully reflect today's reality in the world of work, including labour slack, low earnings and skills mismatch. In recognition of the importance of the work of volunteers, the Conference suggested new methods to measure more completely their importance for the economy and society as a whole. The Conference also adopted standards on working time and child labour statistics, which are key components of assessing decent work.

For more information, please contact the ILO Bureau of Statistics at stat@ilo.org



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ILO, World Scout Movement fight child labour

■ Last December, Michele Jankanish, Director of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and Luc Panisod, Acting Secretary-General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), signed a new



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Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to extend their cooperation in the fight against child labour for a further three years. The cooperation between the two organizations will be based on a shared vision in pursuing social justice and peace, the empowerment of young people, and promoting the social dimensions of globalization. Over the last three years, the enthusiastic and vibrant participation of youth in jointly planned ILO-WOSM initiatives and events created local and global interest and developed new networks involving IPEC field offices and National Scout Organizations.

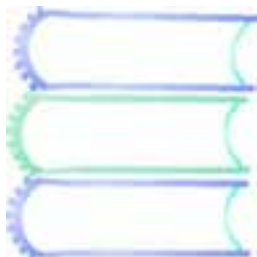
For more information, please contact the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) at ipec@ilo.org

Worldwide letter-writing competition on decent work

■ The theme of the Universal Postal Union's 2009 letter-writing competition for children around the world is "Write a letter to someone to explain how decent working conditions can lead to a better life". This theme was chosen in coordination with the International Labour Organization (ILO), which is currently launching a worldwide campaign on the importance of decent work and is celebrating its 90th anniversary. The results will be announced later in the year.

For more information, visit http://www.upu.int/letter_writing/en/index.shtml

MEDIA SHELF



■ **Ageing: Managing diversity and equality at the workplace**

CD-ROM. ISBN 978-92-2-121017-7. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$40; £25; €25; 40 Swiss francs. Trilingual English/French/Spanish

This training package is primarily designed for employers' organizations and enterprises to assist them in developing programmes and policies that create decent and productive conditions of work and employment that address older age workers in the workplace. The retention and recruitment of older workers can be an integral part of competitive and productive enterprise management. With a user-friendly structure delivering a range of information, activities, examples of good practices and other resources, this package can be used for both self-study and reference.



■ **Asian Decent Work Decade resource kit**

6 booklets + CD-ROM. ISBN 978-92-2-121200-3. Bangkok, ILO, 2008. US\$35; UK£18; €23; 35 Swiss francs

Brings together the ILO's expertise, knowledge and tools as they relate to the goals of the Asian Decent Work Decade (2006–2015) in a single, accessible package. The kit provides state-of-the-art knowledge on topics such as competitiveness, productivity and jobs; labour market governance; local development for decent work; protection of migrant workers; and the youth employment challenge. It has been created to help workers, employers, governments and other interested parties learn more about these priority areas, the key challenges and the resources available to meet them.



■ **Child labour statistics**

Eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 2008, Report III
ISBN 978-92-2-121623-0. Geneva, ILO, 2008. US\$20; UK£10; €13; 20

Swiss francs. Also available in French and Spanish

There is a worldwide perception that at least the most unacceptable forms of child labour must be and can be eradicated within a short time frame, setting in motion an irreversible process leading to the total elimination of all forms of child labour. This report aims at setting standards of good practice on the collection, compilation and analysis of national child labour statistics, guiding countries to update their existing statistical systems in this field or to establish a new one where necessary.



■ **Cooperating out of poverty: The renaissance of the African cooperative movement**

Patrick Develtere, Ignace Pollet and Frederick Wanyama (eds.)

ISBN 978-92-2-120722-1. Dar es Salaam, ILO, 2008. US\$35; UK£18; €23; 35 Swiss francs

Successful and economically viable cooperatives create economic opportunities, provide a basic level of social protection and security, and provide their members with voice and representation. This book offers an objective analysis of the state of affairs of the cooperative sector in Africa since the liberalization of the economy in the early 1990s. It contains a historical overview of cooperative development in the continent; in-depth country studies illustrating the structure and operation of the cooperative sector; and an analysis of the major strengths and weaknesses of various cooperative undertakings. It aims to alert governments, donors and researchers to a fragmented, dispersed movement and make a case for cooperatives in Africa.



■ **Edward Phelan and the ILO: Life and views of an international social actor**

ISBN 978-92-2-121983-5. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$50; UK£35; €35; 50 Swiss francs

One of a small group of people who mapped out the design of the ILO in the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 and one of the principal authors of the ILO Constitution, Edward Phelan became the ILO's fourth Director in 1941 until his retirement in 1948. His personal memoirs, long unpublished, are brought together in one volume along with a biographical essay by labour historian Emmet O'Connor, texts by Brian Cowen TD, Seán Lemass TD and former ILO Director-General Wilfred Jenks, and a selection of Phelan's lesser-known writings on the ILO's later development.



■ **Forced labour and human trafficking: Handbook for labour inspectors**

ISBN 978-92-2-121321-5. Geneva, ILO, 2008. US\$25; UK£12; €16; 25 Swiss francs

Bonded labour, forced child labour, forced labour linked to migration, and organized criminal trafficking in the sex industry are all forms of forced labour. This handbook highlights how labour inspectors can play an active role in the global fight against forced labour and human trafficking. It is designed for use in training seminars and as a reference book for policy development. It includes two adaptable training modules and a CD-ROM containing relevant training materials.



■ **Guidelines for flag State inspections under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006**

ISBN 978-92-2-121741-1. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$15; UK£10; €10; 15 Swiss francs. Also available in

French and Spanish

Adopted by the ILO in September 2008, the guidelines provide practical advice to competent authorities in flag States, and to flag State inspectors or recognized organizations, on how to carry out ship inspections and certifications to verify compliance with the requirements of the MLC, 2006 as implemented nationally. The book provides an overview of the special features of the MLC, 2006; an overview of the procedures for ship inspection and certification, including areas of national flexibility, and processes for responding to complaints; the basic requirements to be complied with; a list of items showing how to check the basic requirements and examples of deficiencies; and guidance on actions to be taken when deficiencies are found and when a ship may have to be detained.



■ **Guidelines for port State control officers carrying out inspections under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006**

ISBN 978-92-2-121743-5. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$15; UK£10; €10; 15 Swiss francs. Also available in French and Spanish

Adopted by the ILO in September 2008, these guidelines provide practical advice to port State control officers (PSCOs) verifying compliance of foreign ships with the requirements of the MLC, 2006. The book includes an overview of the MLC, 2006; the required profile of PSCOs; the required review of

documents in ships that carry MLC certification; explains when a more detailed inspection may be carried out; indicates the basic requirements to be complied with, sources of information for checking compliance and examples of deficiencies, in the 14 areas of working and living conditions that are mainly concerned; provides guidance when deficiencies are found and when a ship may have to be detained in port; and relates to the handling of onshore complaints by seafarers.



■ **International Labour Standards Electronic Library – ILSE 2009**

CD-ROM. ISSN 1020-9972. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$25; UK£16; €16; 25 Swiss francs.

Trilingual English/French/Spanish

ILSE is an electronic reference library of basic International Labour Standards documents, including ILO Conventions, Recommendations, Constitution, Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference, General Surveys, the Digest of Decisions of the Committee on Freedom of Association, the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Global Reports, and the recent publications on international labour standards. A selection of further texts is available in Arabic, Chinese, German, Portuguese and Russian.



■ **Labour and social trends in ASEAN 2008: Driving competitiveness and prosperity with decent work**

ISBN 978-92-2-121694-0. Bangkok, ILO, 2008. US\$25; UK£13; €17;

25 Swiss francs

This report highlights major trends in employment and social conditions in the dynamic ASEAN region. It analyses the key factors that underpin long-term competitiveness and productivity, and the policy challenges that lie ahead if growth and prosperity are to be maintained – including encouraging innovation and progressive workplace practices, raising the quality of the workforce, strengthening social dialogue and cohesion, and tackling vulnerability. It aims to advance the development of internationally comparable, gender- and age-specific labour market statistics across the ASEAN region and beyond.



■ **Promoting equity: Gender-neutral job evaluation for equal pay** A step-by-step guide

ISBN 978-92-2-121538-735. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$30; UK£18; €23; 35 Swiss francs. Also available in

French and Spanish

Significant gender disparities in pay are amongst the most resilient features of labour markets. This has many causes, including sex discrimination in remuneration. This step-by-step guide sets out the various methodological components of the evaluation process and explains the criteria to be met in order to avoid discriminatory practices. It can be adapted to different economic and organizational contexts and to large and small enterprises, and will be of use to workers' and employers' organizations, officers of Equal Opportunity Bodies, human resource managers, gender specialists and pay equity practitioners responsible for implementing a pay equity programme.



■ **Social protection expenditure and performance review and social budget: Tanzania mainland**

ISBN 978-92-2-121265-2. Geneva, ILO, 2008. US\$40; UK£20; €25; 40 Swiss francs

Tanzania mainland is susceptible to many factors present in the demographic, labour market and economic environment that could challenge the social protection system. The ILO-DFID funded project indicates that a global minimum social protection package would substantially reduce the poverty headcount, close the shortfall in consumption and be economically sustainable. This report builds on this work to analyse and provide the foundation for future analysis of policy options regarding social protection as means of reducing poverty in the region. It takes into account demographic and macroeconomic information specific to mainland Tanzania and makes projections from a baseline year based on the two types of social protection schemes, contributory and non-contributory.

■ **Social protection expenditure and performance review and social budget: Zambia**

ISBN 978-92-2-121251-5. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$40; UK£20; €25; 40 Swiss francs



In recent years, Zambia has witnessed economic expansion, a fall in inflation rates and lower external vulnerability. In particular, the ILO-DFID project to extend social protection and coverage as

means of poverty reduction has yielded favourable results. This review of the output of the first year's work examines the objective of extending social protection coverage in the country. It focuses on five key issues: living conditions of households; working conditions and patterns of informality in the labour market; coverage and performance of existing public social protection interventions; resource allocations to social protection; and future trends in the Zambian social budget. The assessments presented will be useful for the ongoing work in Zambia, implemented by different sectoral ministries, Sectoral Advisory Groups (SAGs), cooperating partners and other actors involved.

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION AND THE QUEST FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, 1919-2009



■ **Gerry Rodgers, Lee Swepston, Eddy Lee and Jasmien van Daele**

ISBN 978-92-2-121955-2. Ithaca, ILR Press, Cornell University; Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$50; UK£35; €35;

50 Swiss francs

This book tells the story of the ILO, founded in 1919 in the belief that universal and lasting peace goes hand in hand with social justice. Since then the ILO has contributed to the protection of the vulnerable, the fight against unemployment, the promotion of human rights, the development of democratic institutions and the improvement of the working lives of women and men everywhere. The authors explore some of the main ideas that the ILO has developed and championed: rights at work, the quality of employment, income protection, employment and poverty reduction, a fair globalization and today's overriding goal of decent work for all in a world where the present economic crisis underlines the urgency of global action for social justice.

ILO publications for sale can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or directly from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, 4 route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Tel: +4122/799-7828, fax: +4122/799-6938, email: pubvente@ilo.org, web site: <http://www.ilo.org/publns>. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address. The ILO Publications Center in North America can be contacted by phone: +613/745 2665, fax: +613/745 7660, email: order.dept@renoufbooks.com. Customers from developing countries can benefit from special discounts on the regular prices indicated in this magazine and may be able to pay in local currency through an ILO field office. For more information, email us at pubvente@ilo.org.

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- Monthly bulletin on selected employment, unemployment and consumer price indicators
- ILO tools and good practices to help develop employment strategies



No. 65, April 2009

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The ILO's Decent Work Agenda provides the policy framework to tackle the crisis.