



FOR GROWTH, PRODUCTIVE JOBS, INCOME, FOOD SECURITY, GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, RIGHTS, VOICE, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CRISIS RESILIENCE



International
Labour
Office

Unleashing the Potential for Rural Development *through* Decent Work

Building on the ILO Rural Work Legacy 1970s - 2011

Loretta de Luca, Marian Fernando, Elise Crunel, Lucy Olivia Smith



Rural Employment and Decent Work Programme

Unleashing the Potential for Rural Development

through Decent Work

Building on the ILO Rural Work Legacy

1970s - 2011

Loretta de Luca, Marian Fernando, Elise Crunel, Lucy Olivia Smith

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to ILO Publications (Rights and Permissions), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland, or by email: pubdroit@ilo.org. The International Labour Office welcomes such applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered with reproduction rights organizations may make copies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose. Visit www.ifrro.org to find the reproduction rights organization in your country.

First published 2012

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

de Luca, Loretta; Fernando, Marian; Crunel, Elise; Smith, Lucy Olivia

Unleashing the potential for rural development through decent work: building on the rural work legacy: 1970s-2011 / Loretta de Luca, Marian Fernando, Elise Crunel, Lucy Olivia Smith ; International Labour Organization. - Geneva: ILO, 2012

1 v.

ISBN: 9789221259442; 9789221259459 (web pdf); 9789221259466 (CD-ROM)

International Labour Organization

rural employment / employment policy / decent work / role of ILO / rural development / developed countries / developing countries

13.01.3

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

ILO publications and electronic products can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or direct from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address, or by email: pubvente@ilo.org

Visit our web site: www.ilo.org/publins

PREFACE

Empowering rural areas is a pressing need, and a timely investment. Attention is to refocus on rural communities' potential to grow, create jobs, give access to food, and contribute to balanced development, prosperity, and social peace. Determination to tackle the challenges that block rural progress is indispensable, as well as developing broad partnerships and integrated approaches that "make a difference". The review aims to stimulate action and collaboration for unleashing that rural potential, and offer an overview of what the ILO can contribute to this joint effort.

Today rural areas host almost half of the world's population, and over 75 per cent of the world's poor. Yet, while images of vast slums nestling up to gleaming skyscrapers, and of jobless youth rioting in cities, have become familiar symbols of destitution, rural poverty and rural voices remain largely ignored by virtue of their setting in remote areas. Consequently, most poverty eradication and development efforts continue to target the more visible urban centres, thus creating potentially destabilizing bottlenecks, as indigent rural people flock to cities or abroad looking for a better life. This trend adds to already strained urban resources and labour markets while robbing rural areas of much needed human and investment resources.

Rural areas were a major focus of development work in the 1970s and '80s. The ILO pioneered a broad range of rural empowerment methods, such as participatory approaches; identification and fulfillment of "basic needs"; strengthening rural workers, producers, women and indigenous populations through association building; community-based training; labour-intensive infrastructure works; and productive micro- and small entrepreneurship. The goal was to build up the structural and human resource capacity of rural communities so that they could become the drivers of their own development and future. While improvements in certain areas were achieved, the advent of structural adjustment programmes and a lack of strong immediate results led aid agencies and governments in the 1990s to re-focus on urban areas.

Today, rural development is again spotlighted, as it is rightly seen at the core of poverty eradication. Indeed, no Millennium Development Goal (MDG) can be achieved (especially MDG 1 and its targets to halve extreme poverty, halve the proportion of hungry people, and achieve full and productive employment for all, including youth and women), if rural stakeholders and communities are not expressly involved. Rural empowerment is also central to other pressing concerns, such as economic growth and crisis resilience, food security and climate change, management of migration flows, and socio-political stability.

We are thus at a particularly propitious juncture to mobilize for unleashing rural potential, and to ensure that the national and global economic growth and development architecture being re-formulated as a result of the food and economic crises –as well as the social upheaval sweeping many countries worldwide– will have a strong "rural" pillar.

Indeed, rural areas hold considerable potential for economic growth, with high returns on investments and prospects for productive, decent jobs and livelihoods. Initiatives in various developing countries and emerging economies indicate that when given proper support,

agriculture and other rural activities can thrive and become engines of growth and innovation. Negative rural stereotypes of backwardness and stagnation need to give way to pro-active behaviour that emphasizes potential and opportunities in order to counter decent work deficits and other structural deficits now blocking that potential.

In June 2008 the ILO passed a Resolution calling for increased agency involvement in rural development and a strategy to promote employment and reduce decent work deficits. This review started as an internal stocktaking exercise to extract lessons from the ILO's extensive past experience in rural development on which to build that strategy. In March 2011 the ILO's Governing Body strongly supported the strategy thus derived, and *Unleashing rural development through productive employment and decent work* became an ILO priority.

While this review does contain internal references, its presentation of human resource-based rural development and the means to achieve it can be of direct interest to a broad audience ranging from national and local authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, to NGOs, other practitioners and development actors, as well as the media and academia. The review also provides transparency and insight into the ILO's operations as well as lessons learned from them, which we hope will encourage others to take on the cause themselves, and which will facilitate partnerships for rural development, as the issue is too vast and multifaceted to be undertaken alone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. M. Salazar X." The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "J" at the beginning and an "X" at the end.

José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs
Executive Director, Employment Sector

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This review is the result of a wide collaborative effort among Officials from several units of ILO's Headquarters, field structure, and the International Training Centre in Turin. Their views, inputs, criticism and consideration have been essential.

Recognitions are first due to the “Privileged Informants”, retired and active ILO Officials, who took the time to share their institutional memory in a professional and friendly manner: Girma Agune, Iftikhar Ahmad, Maurice-Moïse Allal, Azita Berar-Awad, Gus Edgren, Philippe Egger, Dharam Ghai, Elisabeth Goodson, Emilio Klein, Martha Loutfi, Jean Majeres, Philippe Marcadent, Jack Martin, Evy Messel, Mie Osmundsen, Peter Peek, Samir Radwan, Anisur Rahman, Andrea Singh, Terje Tessem, Ng Phan Thuy, Victor Tokman, and Helmut Watzlawick. Their contribution has provided important insights. We would also like to thank Lotta Nycander for conducting many of the interviews and for her help in preparing materials in the early stages of our research, as well as Carla Henry for valuable advice and information on evaluation exercises.

We also sincerely acknowledge all colleagues Office-wide who actively participated in oral and written interviews, sharing their knowledge and experiences of ILO work in rural areas in different periods and on different themes: Kholoud Al Khaldi, Gerd Albracht, Claude Apkokavie, Maria Arteta, José Assalino, Zulum Avila, Gashaw Tsegaye Ayele, Amber Barth, Edward Bernard, Suradee Bhadrasisri, Roy Chacko, Craig Churchill, Yebe Constantin, Antonio Cruciani, Eduardo Daccarett, Gerardo de Cardenas Falcon, Baoshan Deng, Mathieu de Poorter, Mauricio Dierckxens, Riska Efriyanti, Fernando Encarnacao, Julia Faldt, Agnes Fazekas, Valentina Forastieri, Elena Gastaldo, Oxana Gerasimova, Nabeel Goheer, Antonio Graziosi, Martine Giulio, Susan Gunn, Mukesh Gupta, Michael Henriques, Hagen Henry, Ann Herbert, Richard Howard, Peter Hurst, Wiking Husberg, Jenny Ikelberg, Syed Khairul Islam, Christian Jackier, Kavunga Kambale, Raky Kane, Shaun Kennedy, Manzoor Khaliq, Nurunnabi Khan, Wailee Kui, Sophia Lawrence, Rakawin Leechanavanichpan, Siham Lehtihet, Naomi Lintini, Richard Longhurst, Malte Luebker, José Luis Daza Perez, Maria Luz Vega, El Housseynou Ly, Jesus Macasil, Noman Majid, Anaclara Matosas, Susan Maybud, Muce Mochtar, Norjinlkham Mongolmaa, Sam Mshiu, Tauvik Muhamad, Joni Musabayana, Tapera Muzira, Eskedar Nadew, Federico Negro, Nita Neupane, Shengli Niu, Yondonjamts Nyamdavaa, Naoko Otobe, Honorio Palarca, Rajendra Paratian, Debra Perry, Roberto Pes, Hopolang Phororo, Marcus Pilgrim, Peter Poschen, Harivao Rakotoarinia, Gerhard Reinecke, Patricia Richter, Gianni Rosas, Emmanuel Rubayiza, Francis Sanzouago, Harmeet Sarin, Satoshi Sasaki, Reynold Simons, Joni Simpson, Nteba Soumano, Kathaleen Speake, Jittima Srisuknam, Tomas Stenstrom, Patrick Taran, Paola Termine, Ursula Titus, Manuela Tomei, Kees van der Ree, Carlien Van Empel, Annie Van Klaveren, Brandt Wagner, Wolfgang Weinz, Edmundo Werna, James Windell, Tewodros Yilma, Erik Zeballos and Dennis Zulu. Among them we extend a special thanks to those who contributed with important historical and technical writings.

We take this opportunity to commend the interest and effectiveness of colleagues who helped coordinate efforts, particularly: Simel Esim, Florencio Gudiño, Mpenga Kabundi, Philippe Marcadent, Alena Nesporova, Katerina Tsotroudi, and Sandra Yu.

Thanks are also due to peer reviewers who provided us with valuable feedback and insight: Duncan Cambell, Roy Chacko, Carla Henry, Hagen Henry, David Lamotte, Mohammed Mwamadzingo, Naoko Otobe, Joni Simpson, Katerina Tsotroudi, as well as former colleagues Dharam Ghai, Jack Martin and Jean Majeres.

We are grateful to those who prompted this review and encouraged and supported its preparation, particularly Sue Longley, Phil O'Reilly, and José-Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs.

Finally we need to acknowledge the support and patience of colleagues who opened the doors of the ILO's library, archives and documentation centres, and provided precious guidance, particularly Remo Becci, Renée Berthon, Laura Freeman, Yves Gagnière, Ariel Golan, Hiep Nguyen and Annette Schut.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
ACRONYMS	xii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
I.1. A sense of urgency for fast and integrated rural work	2
I.2. Background and objective of the review	3
I.3. Scope and methodology	4
I.4. Structure	5
II. ILO'S RURAL "HEYDAYS" (1970s–1980s)	7
II.1. Antecedents	8
II.2. ILO's rural work approach, institutional set-up and work focuses	9
II.2.1. Context setting	9
II.2.2. Overview of rural work	10
II.2.3. ILO rural work management – a combination of coordination and compartmentalization	11
II.2.3.1. Rural Employment Policies Research Branch (EMP/RU)	11
II.2.3.2. Advisory Committee on Rural Development	12
II.2.3.3. Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development	13
II.2.3.4. EMP/RU and the WEP - Leading rural development work	15
II.2.4. Types of work	16
II.2.4.1. Research	16
II.2.4.2. Basic needs	18
II.2.4.3. Capacity building	19
II.2.4.4. Technical Cooperation	19
II.2.4.5. Policy services	19
II.2.4.6. External relations	21

II.2.5. Focus groups	23
II.2.5.1. Women	23
II.2.5.2. Workers	27
II.2.5.3. Employers	29
II.2.5.4. Indigenous and Tribal Peoples	30
II.2.5.5. Disabled persons	33
II.2.5.6. Youth	34
II.2.5.7. Children	36
II.2.5.8. Migrant Workers	38
II.2.6. Main programmes, technical areas and approaches	39
II.2.6.1. Labour Intensive Works	39
II.2.6.2. Cooperatives	41
II.2.6.3. Entrepreneurship and Enterprises	43
II.2.6.4. Skills	44
II.2.6.5. Occupational Safety and Health and Working Conditions	45
II.2.6.6. Labour Inspection	47
II.2.6.7. Participatory approach	48
II.3. Impact, Legacy and Lessons	49
II.3.1. Impact assessment	49
II.3.2. A rich legacy of cutting-edge concepts and approaches	52
II.3.3. Lessons for today's rural work	56
II.3.3.1. Rural work, an ILO-wide affair	56
II.3.3.2. A strong human resource base	57
II.3.3.3. An overall segmented work organization	58
II.3.3.4. Reaching policy	59
II.3.3.5. Focus	60
II.3.3.6. Integrated approaches	60
II.3.3.7. Broad participatory approaches	61
II.3.3.8. National (and local) ownership	62
II.3.3.9. Partnerships	62
II.3.3.10. Follow-up	63
III. FROM RURAL “MARGINALIZATION” (1990s) TO “REDISCOVERY” (2000s)	65
III.1. Marginalization of the rural dimension in the 1990s	66
III.1.1. Determinants and work re-organization	66
III.1.2. Impact on Units, approaches, and programmes	68
III.1.2.1. Workers' Education	68
III.1.2.2. Labour-intensive works	69

III.1.2.3. Cooperatives	69
III.1.2.4. Entrepreneurship and Enterprises	70
III.1.2.5. Indigenous and Tribal Peoples	71
III.1.2.6. Local Economic Development	72
III.1.2.7. Occupational Safety and Health and Working Conditions	72
III.1.2.8. Social protection	73
III.1.2.9. Women	74
III.1.2.10. Youth	74
III.2. Rediscovery of rural contexts in the 2000s, with a Decent Work perspective	76
III.2.1. Strong “drives” towards rural work	76
III.2.2. Work on priority technical areas and focus groups	77
III.2.2.1. Employment-intensive approach	78
III.2.2.2. Cooperatives	80
III.2.2.3. Entrepreneurship and Enterprises	81
III.2.2.4. Local Economic Development	82
III.2.2.5. Skills	82
III.2.2.6. Occupational Safety and Health and working conditions	83
III.2.2.7. Social Security	84
III.2.2.8. Standards	84
III.2.2.9. Workers	85
III.2.2.10. Child Labour	85
III.2.2.11. Gender	86
III.2.2.12. Youth	88
III.2.2.13. Migrants	88
III.2.3. Sectoral Activities, ITC-Turin and regional rural focus	89
III.2.3.1. Sectoral Activities	89
III.2.3.2. Turin Centre	95
III.2.3.3. Regional trends	96
- Africa	96
- Asia	97
- Latin America and the Caribbean	98
- Europe	99
III.2.4. Partnerships	101

IV. THE 2010s: MOBILIZING FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	105
IV.1. The new rural setting	106
IV.1.1. Key new features	106
IV.1.2. Persisting rural structural gaps	109
IV.1.3. Crisis boosters	110
IV.2. ILO's strong recent mandate	112
IV.2.1. A clear turning point - The ILC 2008	112
IV.2.2. Initial follow-up work	116
IV.3. Towards a strategy for ILO rural work	119
IV.3.1. An ILO-wide vision and strategy for rural work	122
IV.3.2. Type of work	124
IV.3.3. Technical Focus Areas and Groups	126
IV.3.4. Work Organization: An Integrated approach	132
IV.3.5. Working Together	134
IV.3.7. Monitoring progress	139
V. CONCLUSIONS: UNLEASHING RURAL POTENTIAL FOR GLOBAL GROWTH	143

ANNEXES**147**

Annex 1: Methodology of the Review	148
Annex 2: ILO instruments	151
Annex 3: List of ILO Rural-Related Tools	153
Annex 4: Key Approaches	155
Annex 5: Rural Focal Points ILO-wide	169
Annex 6: Examples of rural-related ILO external partnerships	172
Annex 7: Bibliography	175
Annex 8: Timeline of ILO Rural Work	

BOXES

Box 1: Long-term EIIP involvement in Madagascar	79
Box 2: WIND Programmes in Central Asia	91
Box 3: REDTURS: Tourism in indigenous rural communities	100
Box 4: Turning rural assets into business in Nepal	120
Box 5: Good jobs and poverty reduction through productive rural entrepreneurship in Senegal	121

TABLES

Legacy and lessons for today's work	54
Plan of Action for the Office, as outlined in the 2008 ILC Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction	113
Roles of governments, employers and workers in rural work as outlined in the 2008 ILC Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction	115

CHARTS

Regional Labour Conferences	98
-----------------------------	----

ACRONYMS

ACC	United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination
ACOPAM	Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives
ACRD	Advisory Committee on Rural Development
ACT/EMP	Employers' Activities Department
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALIMOND	Alimentation Mondiale
APP	Active Partnership Policy
ARPLA	Asian Regional Programme for Strengthening Labour and Manpower Administration
APSDEP	Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme
ARTEP	Asian Regional Team for Employment Promotion
ASIST	Advisory Support, Information Services and Training
AU	African Union
CBT	Community Based Training for (Self-) Employment and Income Generation
CCLA	Andean Consultative Labour Committee
CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (formerly ACC)
CEEC	Central and Eastern European countries
CEIL	Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour of the International Labour Organization
CFHIMO	Centre de Formation en travaux HIMO
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIADFOR	African Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CINTERFOR	Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (aka Inter-American Research and Documentation Centre on Vocational Training)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
COMAGRI	Elimination of Child Labour in Commercial Agriculture in Eastern Africa
COMUANDE	Coordinadora de Mujeres Trabajadores Andinas, or Andean Women's Workers Coordinating Committee
CONDI/T	Work and Life Conditions Branch
COOP	Cooperatives Branch
COOPAIDS	HIV-AIDS prevention and impact mitigation through cooperatives in selected African countries
COOP ^{AFRICA}	Cooperative Facility for Africa Programme
COOPNET	Inter-regional network programme for the development of human resources in cooperatives

COOPREFORM	Structural reform through improvement of cooperative development policies and legislation
COPAC	Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DECOTEC	Technical Cooperation Department
DEVCOTEC	Development and Technical Cooperation Department
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DW	Decent Work
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programmes
ECC	European Economic Community
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EDUC	Workers' Education Branch, within ACTRAV
EII	Employment-Intensive Investment
EIIP	Employment-Intensive Investment Programme
EMPLOI	Employment and Development Department
EMP/INFRA	Infrastructure and Rural Works Branch
EMP/INVEST	Employment-Intensive Investment Unit
EMP/POLICY	Employment Policy Department
EMP/RU	Rural Employment Policies Research Branch
EMP/TEC	Appropriate Technologies and Employment Branch
EMP/URG	Special Public Work Branch [<i>previously Emergency Employment Schemes Branch (74-86), then EMP/INFRA (87-92), then EIIP (92-99), then EMP/INVEST (99-present)</i>]
E/POPLAN	Employment Planning and Population-related Activities Branch
ERP	Education for Rural People Programme
ESP	Governing Body Committee on Employment and Social Policy
EU	European Union
EURADA	European Association of Development Agencies
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
F/MAN	Management Training Branch
FFS	Farmer Field Schools
FFW	Federation of Free Workers
FORM	Training Department
F/PROF(RU)	Training for Rural Workers Branch
GB	Governing Body of the International Labour Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEA	Global Employment Agenda
GENDER	Bureau for Gender Equality
GENPROM	Gender Promotion Programme
GHS	Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labeling of Chemical
GJP	Global Jobs Pact
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HIMO	Haute Intensité de Main-d'Oeuvre

HKMS	Hind Khet Mazdoor Sabha
HLTF	United Nations High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis
HMIS	Health Micro Insurance Schemes
HOTOUR	Hotel Business and Tourism Branch
HRD	Human Resource Development
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IALI	International Association of Labour Inspection
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICA	International Cooperative Alliance
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICRD	Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IFA	International Framework Agreement
IFAD	United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFAP	International Federation of Agricultural Producers
IFCS	Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety
IFPAAW	International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IFRTD	International Forum for Rural Transport and Development
ILC	International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
INDISCO	Inter-regional Programme to Support Self-Reliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples through Cooperatives and Self-Help Organizations
INDUSTR	Industrial Sector Branch
INTERCOOP	Interregional programme for commercial exchanges among cooperatives
IOMC	Inter-Organization programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
IPCCA	International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture
IPCS	International Programme on Chemical Safety
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IRAP	Integrated Accessibility Planning
IRTP	Integrated Rural Transport Planning
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITC-Turin	International Training Centre in Turin, Italy
ITPs	Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
IUF	International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations
I-WED	Improve Your Work Environment and Business

IYB	Improve Your Business
IYCB	Improve Your Construction Business
IYDP	United Nations International Year of Disabled Persons
IYY	United Nations International Youth Year
JASPA	Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Fields and Life Schools
KAB	Know About Business
LB	Labour-based
LED	Local Economic Development
LEDA _s	Local Economic Development Agencies
MATCOM	Materials and Techniques for the Training of Cooperative Members and Managers
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MNE	Multinational Enterprise
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
M/SMEs	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
MDT _s	Multidisciplinary Teams
NADF RT	National Association of Dekhan Farmers of the Republic of Tajikistan
NATLEX	International Labour Organization Database of National Legislation
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORMES	International Labour Standards Department
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONE UN	One United Nations or "Delivering as One"
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
P&B	Programme and Budget of the International Labour Organization
PAC	Permanent Agriculture Committee
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PEETT	Poverty, Employment and Empowerment Task Team
PIACT	Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment
PoA	Plan of Action
POL/DEV	Development Policies Branch
PORP	Programme on Participatory Organizations of the Rural Poor
PREALC	Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and Caribbean
PRO 169	Programme to Promote ILO Convention No. 169
PRODERE	Development Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees in Central America
PROG/EVAL	Evaluation Unit

PROGRAM	Bureau of Programming and Management
PROMER	Projet d'appui au développement de l'entrepreneuriat et de l'emploi en zone rurale
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
REDTURS	Network of community-based Tourism in Latin America
REL/TRAV	Relations with Workers Branch
REL/PROF	Professional Relations Department
RNFE	Rural Non-Farm Economy
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Initiative
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
SDSR	Skill Development for Self-Reliance Programme
SEC/HYG	Safety and Hygiene at Work Branch
SECTOR	Sectoral Activities Department
SEED	Small and Medium Enterprise Development
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association, India
SFP	Social Finance Programme
SIDA	Sweden International Development Cooperation Agency
SIYB	Start Improve Your Business
EMP/SKILLS	Skills and Employability Department
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SOLVE	Interactive educational programme designed to assist in the development of policy and action to address health promotion issues in the workplace
SPF	Social Protection Floor Initiative
SPWP	Special Public Works Programme
STAT	Bureau of Statistics
STEP	Strategies and Tools against social Exclusion and Poverty Programme
SYNDICOOP	Poverty Reduction among Unprotected Informal Economy Workers through Trade Union-Cooperative Joint Action
SYWRB	Start Your Waste Recycling Business
TC	Technical Cooperation
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TRAVAIL	Département des conditions et du milieu de travail (later called Conditions of Work and Employment Programme)
TREE	Training for Rural Economic Empowerment
TRUGA	Training for Rural Gainful Activities
TUIAfpw	Trade Unions International of Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation Workers
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPPA	United Nations Public-Private Alliance
UNSF	United Nations Special Fund
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USD	United States Dollar
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WB	World Bank
WCARRD	World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
WEC	World Employment Conference
WEDGE	Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality
WEP	World Employment Programme
WFC	World Food Council
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	United Nations World Health Organization
WIND	Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development
WISE	Work Improvement in Small Enterprises
WTO	World Trade Organization
YEN	Youth Employment Network
YEP	Youth Employment Programme



I. INTRODUCTION



© DLewis



© ILO



© ILO

Rural areas have captured the attention of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since its earliest days.¹ Prompted at first by concerns over labour standards, working conditions, social dialogue, as well as employment issues, the rural dimension gained steady momentum from the 1950s onward, peaking in the 1970s and 1980s with all the ILO technical areas involved.

Despite a marked decline in the 1990s, rural development has re-gained attention in recent years with the realization that the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the ILO's basic goal of poverty reduction, clearly established in the Declaration of Philadelphia,² cannot be achieved unless poverty is directly tackled in rural settings where it is the deepest, most widespread and persistent.

I.1. A sense of urgency for fast and integrated rural work

Rural areas today are home to over 75 per cent of the world's poorest, and are beset by a series of structural deficits that impede growth, development and poverty reduction. Decent work deficits are numerous and include higher rates of un- and under-employment (especially among youth and women); an alarming prevalence of child labour (agriculture alone representing 60 per cent of all child labour); a high frequency of precarious work as wage workers are mostly temporary or casual; widespread informal activities; limited social protection; exposure to adverse working conditions due to poor labour standards coverage and monitoring; and little or no unionization.³

Glaring “missed opportunities” abound in rural areas, such as the waste of agricultural produce for lack of proper transportation, local processing, storage, and marketing; an under-utilization of rural human resources due to insufficient and ill-adapted skills and education; lack of physical and social infrastructure; environmentally unfriendly practices; and other inefficiencies. That said, well-developed rural areas hold considerable potential for economic growth with high returns and good, productive jobs and livelihoods, as witnessed in some rural communities where modern, high-productivity and high-value added activities coexist with other less advanced, subsistence-level processes (economically as well as in terms of decent work). Unlocking the potential of rural areas is thus “good business”, as much as it is ethically and socially compelling, because human resources are at the centre of it.

Modern-day challenges posed by environmental concerns, as well as both the food security and economic crises, lend an additional sense of urgency to seek innovative paths and to muster the necessary collective will and resources for action. The multifaceted challenges and potentialities of rural areas also call on development actors to advance in a collaborative and integrated manner, internally as well as externally. The United Nations (UN) High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF) now gathering over 20 international agencies and institutions and directly reaching over 30 countries, and the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)'s

¹ In 1922 ILO's first Director-General, Albert Thomas, obtained a ruling from the Permanent Court of Justice that the Office was to concern itself with workers in agriculture as well as those in industry; and shortly thereafter established an “Agricultural Division”.

² The Declaration of Philadelphia (1944) affirms in particular that, “poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere”; that the ILO has the solemn obligation to further programmes to achieve the objectives of full employment, equity in education and training, raising standards of living, minimum living wages, adequate protection of life and health of workers in all occupations, extension of social security, collective bargaining, child welfare; and that it should promote “the economic and social advancement of the less developed regions of the world”. ILO: *Declaration Concerning the Aims and Purpose of the International Labour Organization* (Declaration of Philadelphia), International Labour Conference, 26th Session, Philadelphia, 1944, Sections III, IV.

³ ILO: *Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction*, Report IV, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008.

initiative to tackle the economic crisis,⁴ where the ILO has a strong presence through its Global Jobs Pact (GJP) and Social Protection Floor (SPF), as well as the MDGs (particularly MDG 1),⁵ the recent “MDG Acceleration Framework”, and the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty that has as a leading theme, “Employment and Decent Work”, are all important opportunities that have salient rural dimensions.⁶ The ILO and other development actors need to deliver concrete, effective approaches and tools as well as experience to translate the Decent Work Agenda into action and results for rural areas at the global level as well as locally.

The ILO is well-placed to tackle the challenges of the “rural workplace” as its mandate and expertise cover multiple complementary and mutually reinforcing facets related to rural human resources and economic activities; and given its extensive prior experience in rural contexts. Accordingly, this stocktaking exercise examines the approaches, tools, work methods, achievements and shortcomings of its rural experience, starting from the heydays of the 1970s, to constitute a solid basis on which to build future initiatives aimed at unleashing the development potential of rural populations and rural economies worldwide.

I.2. Background and objective of the review

At the origin of this exercise are the discussions held at the 2008 International Labour Conference (ILC), which considered a report on *Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction*.⁷ The proceedings revealed a marked consensus among governments, employers and workers on the need for the ILO to engage more decisively in rural areas; and to do so urgently, effectively, and in an integrated manner, mobilizing the whole of its Decent Work Agenda, as well as its whole structure consisting of tripartite national constituents (Governments, Employers’ and Workers’ organizations) and relevant external partners. The unanimously adopted Conclusions established priority areas of intervention, the first of which is to, “... provide to [the ILO] Governing Body (GB) a comprehensive report analysing the impact of prior activities focused on rural employment... to inform future work plans....”⁸

The objective of this review is threefold: Firstly, it is to take stock of the ILO’s considerable rural development work to identify valuable approaches and tools that are or can be updated and adapted to fit current rural contexts and their global environment. Secondly, it is to identify lessons learned and gaps to fill, so as to give the Office, its constituents and partners effective instruments to tackle future work. Lastly, it is to help sharpen the priority areas identified in the Conclusions of ILC 2008 and help shape a strategy and programme of work accordingly.

This review is not a historical narrative but instead uses the ILO’s history of rural work to understand and extract key experiences from past decades that have spelled success or signalled shortfalls, with an eye towards identifying approaches and strategies for more impactful future work in rural development.

⁴ United Nations: *The Global Financial Crisis and Its Impact on the Work of the UN System*, Issue paper, UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

⁵ MDG 1: To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

⁶ See for example ILO mention of “support for rural development” and for “rural employment and community development” among the areas where inputs of different agencies would be especially relevant to implement the Global Jobs Pact. UN: *Recovering from the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact*, Report of the Secretary-General, Economic and Social Council, New York, 2010, Sections 5 and 9.

⁷ Op. Cit., ILO: *Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction* (2008).

⁸ ILO: *Report of the Committee on Rural Employment*, Provisional Record, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008, Section 77. Here “inform” is taken to also mean provide shape, not merely provide information.

This work also does not review in depth the evolving rural context or engage in conceptualizations and broad policy debates about development models for instance. These aspects are addressed in a number of official ILO documents.⁹ Neither does the review attempt to provide exhaustive information about technical areas, but rather to capture their main features, highlights, and evolution over time to allow for extracting lessons.¹⁰ Organizational priorities and processes are given greater emphasis as they are key to determining the intensity of rural work as well as how the various technical facets and units of the Organization articulate their work and their relations.

I.3. Scope and methodology

This review explores the impact of the ILO's work on rural employment and development since the 1970s when such work intensified markedly. Impact is reviewed at “360°” in terms of decent work components, covering job creation and income generation, with special attention to women, youth, and other disadvantaged groups with untapped potential. It addresses issues such as access to skills and employment services, sustainable entrepreneurship, extension of social protection and improved occupational safety and health and working conditions, International Labour Standards, and the need for strengthened rural organization. It includes core processes such as social dialogue, capacity building of constituents and stakeholders, participatory approaches, gender equality and mainstreaming, inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental working arrangements, external partnerships, policy/strategic indenting and sustainability.

Information gathering consisted of the following: reviewing major ILO publications, reports, official documents, internal and external exchanges contained in the ILO archives and elsewhere; interviewing ILO staff, in particular 20 individual, structured interviews with “privileged informants” (defined as present and former staff having worked and driven issues related to rural employment and development since the 1970s);¹¹ over 50 interviews with current specialists and staff in programming and operational activities in oral and written form;¹² a focus group discussion among 13 officials; and feedback from over 40 beneficiaries and partner agencies (also through questionnaires). The review is therefore based mostly on qualitative evidence. However the multiple sources used to gather information have allowed double (and triple) checking, thus strengthening the reliability of its findings. Details about the methodology used, including work arrangements and challenges encountered are available in Annex 1. The challenges themselves provide valuable lessons.

Quantitative data are provided where possible, although it must be noted that this type of information for rural areas remains scarce. Moreover, quantitative data on rural areas must be used with caution due to the fact that there exists (as yet) no standard, accepted definition of “rural”. The use of different measures by different institutions therefore hinders comparative studies as it may result in skewed analyses and policies.

⁹ See particularly reports and discussions leading to the Resolution concerning the contribution of the ILO to the raising of incomes and living conditions in rural communities (ILC, 44th Session, Geneva, 1960); the Resolution concerning rural development (ILC, 60th Session, Geneva, 1975); the Resolution concerning rural employment promotion (ILC, 75th Session, Geneva, 1988); and the Resolution promoting rural employment for poverty reduction (ILC, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008).

¹⁰ Technical specialists may wish to use this as a stepping-stone to undertake a more in-depth stocktaking in their respective areas.

¹¹ The review includes a number of notable quotations from “privileged informants”, as they are particularly vivid expressions of situations and views also found in other documents and interviews.

¹² This was done through questionnaires sent out among the whole ILO structure, including HQ, field, and ITC-Turin units.

For the purpose of this review, the definition of “rural” remains as stated in the ILC 2008 Report on *Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction*:

“... urban areas are often defined as localities with a population of 2,000 or more inhabitants, and rural areas as localities with a population of less than 2,000 inhabitants and sparsely populated areas. For countries where density of settlement is not sufficient to distinguish urban and rural areas, international recommendations propose the use of additional criteria: the percentage of the economically active population employed in agriculture, the general availability of electricity and/or piped water in living quarters, and the ease of access to medical care, schools and recreation facilities, for example. In reality, urban and rural areas form a continuum and are inextricably linked.”¹³

This definition is by no means without limitations, and indeed, we must be mindful of the “gradations” that exist within rural areas, which the World Bank (WB) for example refers to as a “continuum” of rural between the “isolated farm [and] thriving metropolis”,¹⁴ and which the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) distinguishes as “five rural worlds”.¹⁵ The difficulty of arriving at an acceptable definition is itself testament to the complexities of rural areas, as well as the possibilities, which will be discussed in the following pages.

I.4. Structure

The Review is organized chronologically, starting roughly in the 1970s. Within each main time period several key rural focus groups, technical areas and approaches are presented as sections. “Repeating” sections do not imply repeated information, but rather an intentional reiteration to illustrate “continuity” in the ILO’s work on each of these elements over the years, noting adaptations to the opportunities and challenges of the profiled time periods.

The review first provides an overview of the ILO’s work in rural areas in the “heydays” of the 1970s and 1980s. It then moves on to the 1990s, when activities related to rural areas were gradually marginalized to the point of disappearing from the ILO’s list of priorities. The 2000s are approached as a period of growing “rediscovery”. The ILC 2008’s unanimously adopted Resolution on “Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction” constitutes a milestone in its reaffirmation of the ILO’s role to empower rural women and men and indication of specific work expectations for the Office and the ILO tripartite constituents alike.

Building on this past work and an abundant legacy, the review ends with the proposal for a fresher, more dynamic vision for the decade of the 2010s. It calls on the ILO to establish a results-based rural work strategy capable of generating a unifying sense of purpose and responsibility organization-wide.

¹³ Op. Cit., ILO: *Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction* (2008), p. 12.

¹⁴ World Bank: *World Development Indicators 2008*, Washington, D.C., 2008, p. 133.

¹⁵ These are: 1) large-scale commercial agricultural households and enterprises; 2) traditional landholders and enterprises, not internationally competitive; 3) subsistence agricultural households and micro-enterprises; 4) landless rural households and micro-enterprises; and 5) chronically poor rural households, many no longer economically active. For more information read OECD: *Promoting Pro-Poor Growth: Agriculture*, Paris, 2009.

II. ILO'S RURAL "HEYDAYS" (1970s–1980s)



II.1. Antecedents

The ILO has a lengthy history of involvement in rural areas. The 1921 ILC is often referred to as the “Agricultural Session”, given its adoption of agriculture-centred Conventions and Recommendations, including on the prevention of unemployment,¹⁶ right of association,¹⁷ living conditions,¹⁸ and night work of women,¹⁹ children and young persons.²⁰ A year later, the ILO’s first Director-General, Albert Thomas, secured a ruling from the Permanent Court of Justice²¹ stating that the Organization’s mandate also included workers in agriculture (in addition to those in industry).

By 1938 a Permanent Agriculture Committee (PAC) was established as a tripartite forum within which to discuss the ILO’s work on rural affairs,²² followed by the tripartite Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour (CEIL) (1946), and the tripartite Committee on Work on Plantations (1950). By this time rural employment had become a clear ILO priority, prompting among others, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1951 and 1955, which strengthened the ILO’s international mandate in rural contexts and highlighted some core areas for involvement, such as vocational training, cooperatives, rural industries, and migration.

Decolonization starting in the late 1940s prompted the ILO to increase its work on employment, particularly as related to the new developing states. Emphasis was not yet on wholesale development strategies and employment, but on vocational training and modern industry. Such policy reflected a period of full employment experienced by developed countries where the main policy concerns were shortages of skilled and unskilled labour, the modern industrial sector, labour and capital productivity. However, as an increasing number of developing countries joined the ILO the balance tilted towards their concerns.

ILO work priorities changed to reflect the needs of its newest constituents. Accordingly, in 1960 the ILC adopted a Resolution on the “Contribution of the ILO to the Raising of Incomes and Living Conditions in Rural Communities, with Particular Reference to Countries in Process of Development”, which called on the Organization to step up its work to raise incomes and living conditions in rural communities, with special emphasis on developing countries. Work on rural employment was promoted by the adoption of the Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122), which contained a special section (§ 27) on the issue and urged the ILO to pay special attention to the needs of rural economies.

Around this time the ILO established a Rural Development Programme, primarily under the Workers Division, but composed of a variety of Units (Rural Employment, Rural Training, Rural Institutions, and Rural Conditions of Life and Work), with rapidly increasing resources. The ILO’s work was multifaceted, covering a broad range of issues, such as

¹⁶ Unemployment (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 11), now withdrawn.

¹⁷ Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11).

¹⁸ Living Conditions (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 16), now withdrawn.

¹⁹ Night Work of Women (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 13).

²⁰ Night Work of Children and Young Persons (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 14).

²¹ Nowadays, the International Court of Justice.

²² It would be renamed the Advisory Committee on Rural Development (ACRD) in 1974.

employment planning and promotion, training, working conditions, and institution building. In the mid-'60s these Units were attributed to various major Branches and Units, embedding rural issues in all three of the ILO's technical Departments,²³ as well as in two Industrial Committees, [one on Rural Workers (covering non-salaried workers) and the other on Plantations (covering salaried workers)], although with an informal coordination mechanism.

II.2. ILO rural work approach, institutional set-up and work focuses

II.2.1. Context setting

The 1970s were a time of contrasts, with many newly independent states posting solid growth rates, but remaining mainly as agrarian economies and plagued by persistent poverty and lack of jobs, particularly in rural areas. Urban areas, which experienced most of the growth, were unable to absorb the influx of rural labour and provide good jobs and living conditions. Rural economies meanwhile, as a result of long neglect, could not incorporate surplus labour either, which brought into question the development models of the '50s and '60s that advocated for mainly urban economies, viewing rural areas as "reservoirs" to support the expected growth of urban industries.

Around this time, the Green Revolution was gaining force and highlighting the potentialities of rural areas. The Revolution, which was mainly linked to the hybridization of wheat, rice and other crop varieties, caused wheat production in India for example, to soar from 12 to 17 million tons. While the long-term effects, and even "benefits" of the Revolution remain uncertain,²⁴ at the time it was lauded for its variety of positive employment and social repercussions notably: increased demand for labour-intensive farm work such as weeding, mostly carried out by women; and, since the Revolution was "scale neutral", bringing benefits to large- and small-scale farmers alike, thus contributing to poverty reduction.

²³ Human Resource Department (Rural Unit in the Vocational Training Branch, and Rural Employment Unit in the Manpower Planning and Organization Branch); Social Institutions Department (Rural Institutions Section in the Co-operative, Rural and Related Institutions Branch); and Conditions of Work and Life Department (Rural Workers Unit in the General Conditions of Work Branch).

²⁴ "In recent years there has been some controversy about whether or not the Green Revolution has been instrumental in pushing up agricultural wages. A study of 15 districts of the Punjab and Haryana states in India concluded that there was no increase: on the contrary, there was a slight decline...". ILO: *Problems of Rural Workers in Asia and the Pacific*, Report III, 9th Asia Regional Conference, Manila, 1980, p. 17; see also E. Holz-Gimenez and R. Patel: *Food Rebellions! Crisis and the Hunger for Justice* (Oxford, Pambazuka Press, 2009).

II.2.2. Overview of rural work

The ILO's 1960 Resolution highlighted the challenge of rural development, and the Office had already started responding to it by setting up an Office-wide rural-oriented strategy. In 1969, the ILO launched the World Employment Programme (WEP) to develop employment-oriented strategies, with a particular focus on rural areas. Since the vast majority of the poor in developing countries were concentrated in rural areas, with many driven by destitution to swell the ranks of the urban poor, it was felt that eradicating rural poverty, unemployment, and underemployment would strike at the roots of poverty and unemployment in general.²⁵ The Director-General's report introducing the WEP stressed (among others) the need to shift investment from capital-intensive to labour-intensive activities, from physical (i.e. machinery) to human capital, and from urban to rural development.²⁶

The ILO was a pioneer in rural development, preceding the Second UN Development Decade of the '70s, which reflected the shift in emphasis by the international development community from the "modern" industrial sector to rural special needs. The emergence of rural as a priority was further evidenced at the UN World Food Conference (1974),²⁷ which called on the UN to place more emphasis on rural development. It also resulted in the establishment of a Task Force on Rural Development within the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and the creation of an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 1976. Many agencies and donors thus reoriented their work programmes towards direct and rapid help to the rural poor,²⁸ making rural development a universal theme and priority rather than a specific, self-contained activity.

Several key ILO legal instruments of the mid-'70s strengthened its mandate and gave sharper focus to its work, namely the 1975 ILC Resolution on Rural Development (based among others on the first review of the ILO's Rural Development Programme in 1974), which solicited an increase in rural development activities and brought greater focus on rural poverty alleviation; the Rural Workers' Organization Convention, 1975 (No. 141); and the inclusion in the Human Resource Development Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150) of a section on rural areas (§ 33-37) calling for special and specific efforts to achieve equality of opportunity between rural and urban populations. The Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action of the 1976 World Employment Conference (WEC), also deserves special mention. It called for according high priority to the development of rural areas in all its dimensions, from agriculture modernization to development of agro-based industries, including rural crafts, to the provision of physical and social infrastructure, appropriate technology, vocational training, credit facilities and cooperatives (for land use, but also equipment, credit, transportation, marketing, processing and services in general), special efforts to ensure effective

²⁵ One of its main objectives was to "halt and indeed reverse the trend towards ever-growing masses of peasants and slum dwellers who have no part in development." D. A. Morse: "The World Employment Programme", in *International Labour Review* (1968, Issue 6, June), p. 518.

²⁶ ILO: *The World Employment Programme*, Geneva, 1969, pp. 68 and 81.

²⁷ UN: *Resolution II on Priorities for Agricultural and Rural Development*, Fourth Item on the Agenda, Report of the World Food Conference, International Organizations Committee Governing Body, 195th Session, Geneva, 1975, <http://www.eclac.org/cumbres/3/43/FAORLC-41001WorldFoodConference.doc> (accessed on 25 February 2011). These points are also mentioned in the Policy and Programme Coordination Committee of the UN ECOSOC in July 1976.

²⁸ The World Bank for instance, saw the proportion of its lending programme for rural activities climb from 3.2 per cent in the late 1960s to 15.3 per cent at the turn of the 1980s, thus multiplying by 33 times the volume of money at current value. ILO: *Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1983*, First item on the Agenda, Panel of ILO's Advisory Committee on Rural Development, Geneva, 1985.

workers' participation, and agrarian reform including land distribution, to achieve effective national development strategies.²⁹

The ILO's rural "strategy" focused mainly on knowledge building through considerable ground breaking research and analysis; operational interventions; and subsequently policy advice. The ILO's entry point was employment; but to achieve productive employment leading to poverty reduction it developed the concept of "Basic Needs", which incorporated a variety of technical and social issues ranging from technology to trade, macro- and micro-policies, fiscal policies, education and skills, working conditions, health, and participation, resulting in a holistic view that was revolutionary at the time (see part II.2.4.2. for details).

II.2.3. ILO rural work management – a combination of coordination and compartmentalization

The ILO's approach rested on an assumption of shared-responsibility for rural issues within the Organization facilitated by a lead Unit and mechanisms for coordination.³⁰ The weakness of these mechanisms however, combined with the large number of actors, made for a peculiar atmosphere of coordination *and* compartmentalization within the Organization.

Coordination mechanisms included the Advisory Committee on Rural Development (ACRD) at constituent/GB-level, and the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development (ICRD) at Departmental level. The ACRD was to provide overall counsel and direction to the ILO in rural matters, while the ICRD (with the Rural Employment Policies Research Branch as Secretariat) would ensure a coordinated internal response.

II.2.3.1. Rural Employment Policies Research Branch (EMP/RU)

The Rural Employment Policies Research Branch (EMP/RU), set up in 1973,³¹ formed the lead Unit and designated "in-House hub" for rural matters. It constituted the real "engine" of the ILO's rural development strategy through its voluminous and pioneering work. It also provided support to the WEP and its Regional Employment Teams, ARTEP³² in Asia, JASPA³³ in Africa, and PREALC³⁴ in Latin America.

EMP/RU was responsible for spearheading approaches such as the Participatory Organization of the Rural Poor (PORP). It also worked on land reform, rural technology, and women rural workers.

²⁹ ILO: *Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action*, adopted by the Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour, Geneva, 1976. The WEC was broadly attended, gathering Government and Workers' and Employers' delegates from 121 member States (including in addition to the ministries of labour, the ministries of economic planning, employment, trade, foreign affairs, and development assistance), 22 international agencies and 58 NGOs. Also see L. Emmerij and D. Ghai: "The World Employment Conference: preliminary assessments," in *International Labour Review* (1976, Vol. 114, No. 3, Nov-Dec).

³⁰ At its peak in the 1980s, the ILO had over 14 Units at Headquarters engaged in rural development work: Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), Work and Life Conditions (CONDI/T), Cooperatives (COOP), Workers' Education (EDUC), Emergency Employment Schemes (EMP/URG), Rural Employment Policies Research (EMP/RU), Appropriate Technology and Employment (EMP/TEC), Employment planning and population-related activities (E/POPLAN), Management Training (F/MAN), Training for Rural Workers (F/PROF(RU)), Hotel Business and Tourism (HOTOUR), Industrial Sector (INDUSTR), Relations with Workers (REL/TRAV), Safety and Hygiene at Work (SEC/HYG).

³¹ EMP/RU combined the Rural Employment and Rural Institutions Units.

³² Asian Regional Team for Employment Promotion (ARTEP).

³³ Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA).

³⁴ Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC).

II.2.3.2. Advisory Committee on Rural Development

Growing interest in rural matters coupled with explicit requests from the G77 prompted the GB to “revive” the PAC in 1974 as the Advisory Committee on Rural Development (ACRD), signalling a stronger and higher-level commitment to rural work. The ACRD was composed of workers’, employers’ and government representatives with direct knowledge of rural areas, and also benefited from the active participation of other agencies (particularly FAO, WHO, UN and OECD) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The ACRD was mandated to report to the GB on questions related to rural development; to provide advice on the ILO’s action related to agricultural and non-farm activities, as well as on initiatives with other UN agencies, NGOs and donors; and to serve as liaison with the “rural world”.

The 11 sessions it held between 1974 and 1990 considered various rural challenges,³⁵ and reviewed the ILO’s work on rural development every two to five years. Exchanges were animated and frank, identifying strengths, as well as shortcomings, in the ILO’s rural activities, such as the tendency to cover too many fields, resulting in inadequate allocations of time and resources; and preoccupation with research and surveys at the expense of more direct, action-oriented endeavours. Solutions pointed to specific directions for strengthening the ILO’s work, including greater focus on the lowest income groups (i.e. landless rural wage-earners, small farmers, tenants, sharecroppers, women, plantation workers, self-employed and forestry workers),³⁶ to give them the means to achieve productive and gainful employment; more integrated approaches (including multi-purpose, multi-disciplinary projects; and greater linkages with institutions and macroeconomic policies); promotion of rural workers’ organizations and workers’ education, to allow their effective participation in policy-making, programme implementation and self-help; institutional reforms;³⁷ advocacy for fair pricing of agricultural products/primary commodities vis-à-vis pricing of manufactured goods; promotion of appropriate technology; a push in 1974 towards assistance to small-scale, cottage and handicraft industries; rural employment-intensive public works, for instance to tackle the prolonged drought in the Sahelian region; promotion of living and working conditions; and the need to compile information on rural trends, data, facts.

Other valuable inputs from ACRD discussions relevant today include an appeal in 1974 to devise new and improved approaches to rural vocational education and training in developing countries, including non-formal schemes (and their linkage to formal training schemes); targeting skills relevant to the communities where youth live, as well as those that can open possibilities in urban and external labour markets; and ensuring coordination with other technical fields to form fully integrated plans for the development of rural areas.

There were also earnest calls to identify impediments to the integration of rural populations, particularly of small farmers, into the modern economy (such as the absence of farmers’ and rural workers’ organizations to promote their interest; lack of cooperatives and local govern-

³⁵ In particular: *Manpower and Training Needs for Rural Development* (1974); *Incomes of Agricultural Workers, with Particular Reference to Developing Countries* (1974); *Poverty and Employment in Rural Areas of Developing Countries* (1979); *Rural Employers’ and Workers’ Organizations and Participation* (1979); *Promotion of Employment and Incomes for the Rural Poor, Including Rural Women, Through Non-farm Activities* (1983); *Rural Labour Markets and Employment Policies: Issues Relating to Labour Utilization, Remuneration and Other Positions of Women* (1983); *Structural Adjustment and Its Socio-economic Effects in Rural Areas* (1990); *The Socio-Economic Impact of Technical Cooperation Projects Concerning Rural Development* (1990).

³⁶ ILO: *Declaration of Principles and the Programme of Action*, adopted by the World Employment Conference, Geneva, 1976.

³⁷ Debates on Land Reform were particularly “heated” and practically spanned all 16 years of ACRD.

ment bodies for the promotion of economic and social development; hurdles to obtaining credit, transport, marketing and other services). There were also calls to ensure that the three aspects of development (technical, economic and social), proceed simultaneously, including the need for member States to ensure a minimum level of social security and social welfare to their rural populations, so as to prevent distortions and, among others, the migration of rural youth towards urban centres.

Moreover, the ACRD consistently urged the ILO to be more “flexible” and “pragmatic”, encouraging it to be less traditional and bolder in its approaches, for instance by promoting the training of women in non-traditional and management skills, and consciously including women, “... as change agents and beneficiaries in all projects”.³⁸

Regarding internal work organization, the ACRD noted that a central Unit on rural development (like EMP/RU) needed to be complemented by Office-wide dedication to the issue in order to achieve a coordinated response. It also urged for increased external collaboration with other key players, particularly the World Food Programme (WFP), IFAD, FAO, and others such as the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers (IFPAAW), the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), and the Trade Unions International of Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation Workers (TUIAfpw).

Internal reactions to ACRD input are mixed. It was generally recognized as a suitable platform for debate at a high technical level. Its reviews of the ILO’s past work were regarded as constructive, and were occasionally taken into consideration by the Office. However, the several occasions during its 16 years of existence where the ACRD had to “repeat” advice and guidance hint at a weaker overall impact in terms of shaping the ILO’s future rural strategy and work, which was part of the Committee’s mandate. This may have contributed to the GB’s decision in 1990 to relegate the ACRD to a Tripartite Technical Meeting.

II.2.3.3. Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development

In 1976 an Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development (ICRD) was established with EMP/RU as Secretariat³⁹ to maximize in-House coordination. Its mandate was to exchange information on rural development programmes and policies and, “undertake periodic reviews and appraisals of rural development programmes and its constituent elements and make appropriate recommendations...” accordingly. It also issued recommendations about Office-wide policy on rural development, and questions of coordination at departmental levels. The ICRD functioned as a forum and internal advisory panel to inculcate a “rural conscience”⁴⁰ in all departments to ensure that rural dimensions were considered in all aspects of the ILO’s work. As its Secretariat, EMP/RU reviewed programme and project proposals from various Departments as well as Regional Offices, and managed a specific rural development fund (a Regular Budget allocation) averaging USD 900,000 – 1,200,000 per biennium.

³⁸ ILO: *Report of the Advisory Committee on Rural Development*, Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 10th Session, Geneva, 1983, p. 5.

³⁹ The ICRD was chaired by the Deputy Director-General for the Technical Programmes Sector, then the Assistant Director-General in charge of Interdepartmental programmes; it also included the Directors of the Employment and Development Department (EMPLOI), Training Department (FORM), Professional Relations Department (RELPROM), Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR), Département des conditions et du milieu de travail (TRAVAIL, English title: Conditions of Work and Employment Programme), Bureau of Programming and Management (PROGRAM), and Technical Cooperation Department (DECOTEC).

⁴⁰ Jack Martin, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

ICRD's annual meetings were a rich source of mutual information and understanding on matters of common concern in rural development, and provided an excellent forum for discussion and exchange of ideas. Its early years saw the gathering of "Rural Focal Points" from a variety of departments, in addition to regularly scheduled Committee meetings. Rural focal point gatherings allowed participants to discuss programme proposals, budgets, and overall provided an opportunity for greater communication.

While it helped facilitate discussions, ICRD action was lacking on more substantial functions such as: evaluating initiatives; monitoring impact of the rapidly expanding rural-related programmes and extracting lessons; ascertaining whether activities contributed to an effective ILO approach to rural development; and proposing changes in the focus of rural development. In particular, although it did initiate several "review" exercises, these were often prepared by officials working on the initiative in question and failed to provide in-depth, independent analysis of the issues, and served more to inform Committee members about select activities. As a result, the ICRD offered little feedback (in the form of recommendations or even conclusions) about technical work and even less on the ILO's rural development policy. Additionally, there was a noticeable lack of continuity in the Committee's work, which meant that an issue of importance in one session would not receive strong attention in subsequent sessions, and follow-up work was limited.

An examination of ICRD operations in 1987 highlighted these shortcomings and suggested systematic reviews of programmes and TC projects, leading to a first review in 1989 of some 30 projects that was also presented to the ACRD. It was to be followed by an EMP/RU (as ICRD secretariat) - PROG/EVAL (Evaluation Unit) joint evaluation on the socio-economic impact of rural development projects from other Units.⁴¹ The evaluation failed to materialize due to the subsequent dismantling of EMP/RU. At the final ICRD meeting in 1990, there was consensus on the ILO's need to take stock of past work to define future orientations; and on increasing interdepartmental coordination on a number of themes, namely institution-building, integration of ILO standards into TC; and the need to step up work in non-farm employment, but no tangible follow-up materialized.

The Committee fared better in its external functions, mainly as a liaison with other agencies. It maintained a close working relationship with the ACC Task Force on Rural Development, which allowed for broader dissemination of the ILO's rapidly increasing rural knowledge on a more global scale. For instance, the ILO influenced the Programme of Action compiled by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) in 1979. The recommendations of the WCARRD in turn formed the basis for much of FAO's reformed approach to rural development. The ICRD was also effective in promoting and proposing joint ventures with a variety of partners, ranging from funding agencies like IFAD, to trade organizations like the International Trade Centre (ITC).

Internally however, the ICRD also fell short of promoting joint work within the ILO. As a result, ILO rural work was voluminous but scattered, and largely dominated by EMP/RU and the WEP.

⁴¹ This joint evaluation was also announced in the ILO Programme and Budget 1992–1993.

II.2.3.4. EMP/RU and the WEP - Leading rural development work

At its peak in the late-'70s, the WEP counted over 90 professionals, two-thirds with advanced degrees, who were “driven” by idealism typical of those years, and who undertook ground-breaking studies. This made for a highly energetic and productive atmosphere that put the ILO in the limelight. This energy, creativity and productivity, coupled with significant financial endowments enabled the production of a large volume of high quality, technical work with a large readership among development practitioners. This in turn strengthened motivation and further attracted the collaboration of global talents such as Hans Singer, Dudley Seers and Richard Jolly, as well as Nobel Prize winners Arthur Lewis, Wassily Leontief, Amartya Sen and Jan Tinbergen, leading to more creative approaches and products that attracted more high-level profiles, attention, and resources.

Unfortunately, the very strengths that allowed EMP/RU to produce superior work and gain international visibility tended to alienate it from constituents and the rest of the Office, endangering its sustainability and the viability of its approaches. EMP/RU was an impressive programme. Nevertheless, its progressive concepts, policies and programmes, and some rigidity on a number of issues, such as agricultural reform and land reform, at times led to “clashes” with traditional ILO stances. The “passion” with which the Unit defended these causes was not tempered by a sense of politics, compromise, and team work. Relatively little attention was paid to political viability, and few efforts were made to train and adapt the many high-powered academics to the Organization, its weights and balances, diplomatic standards and processes, in which they were working. As a result, they somewhat tended to operate in isolation, “sheltered” from the politics of the GB, but also alienated from constituents’ needs. This led to memorable “frank exchanges”, including in the ACRD and GB; and may have contributed to declining favour in the eyes of the GB.

The “strong focus line and fortress mentality”,⁴² combined with the progressive nature of the work undertaken were at times perceived as “arrogance” on the part of the Employment Programme, or at least some of its Units and officials. This caused a number of innovative and successful programmes, such as that on rural women⁴³ and PОРР, to remain rather isolated from the rest of the ILO. Besides missed opportunities for coordination and synergies, this compartmentalization may have caused the disappearance of approaches and programmes altogether, in spite of their intrinsic interest. It was particularly true in cases where approaches and programmes were shouldered and “driven” by one single individual, such as in the case of the PОРР.

“Tensions” also surfaced at times between new concepts and approaches, such the topics of landlessness, poverty, work at village level, and “traditional” ILO work. There were at times “divergences” between constituents and traditional ILO officials on the one hand, and the donor-funded rural research programme that focused on land reform, organizing the poor and women on the other. Although some level of “tension” could be seen as healthy, to stimulate creativity and progress, at times it created blockages and antagonism.

⁴² Jack Martin, Interview, Geneva, August 2009; G. Rodgers, E. Lee, L. Slepston and J. Van Daele: *The International Labour Organization and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009* (Geneva, ILO, 2009), p. 212.

⁴³ In the case of the Programme on Rural Women this was also due to the fact that at the time gender awareness did not yet exist and gender dimensions were rarely included in work.

That said some important synergies are worth noting. For instance EMP/RU's emphasis on "workers' rights" since its inception and then also on workers' organization and education, and community participation, allowed for collaboration with the ILO's Standards Department and Workers' Bureau, which had actually pioneered the ILO's work in rural areas as early as the 1920s.⁴⁴ This led to new and fruitful synergies at a time when the Employment and the Standards Departments had been evolving in parallel.

There were also a few joint projects such as the Appropriate Technologies and Employment Branch (EMP/TEC)'s support for an agro-forestry project in the Philippines that combined Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) with good forestry and agricultural practices to decrease work-related injuries. Such collaboration was rare though, and depended more on "chance", for instance when colleagues happened to know of others working in the same area, rather than through an established system of knowledge sharing.

Thus, while the ICRD served as a professional-grade forum for discussion and information sharing, it could not prevent the compartmentalization that had already set in as a result of individual personalities and the unequal distribution of rural-related work within the ILO.

II.2.4. Types of work

The ILO's rural work at the time involved considerable research and information dissemination, TC projects, and some policy advice. Since the Organization was venturing into previously uncharted rural territories, it had to conduct much of the research and analysis on the areas it wanted to target, to use as basis for its specific programmes and approaches.

II.2.4.1. Research

A major research effort started in the mid-'70s on rural employment and poverty, triggered by the question of why rural poverty was increasing in an age of high-growth. It first identified important problems related to incentive systems favouring the non-agricultural sector (import substitution and industrialization, for instance), to decreasing terms of trade between raw materials and manufactured goods, thus creating a double penalty on the rural poor; and further noted how rural non-agricultural activities were mainly undertaken as a survivalist strategy.

The magnitude, nature, structure, trends and causes of rural poverty, along with policy options to combat it, received special attention. Various determinants of poverty were analysed, such as access to assets, leading to an emphasis on agrarian reform. As these were found to be important but insufficient determinants, studies then focused on labour market conditions and dynamics, patterns of rural employment (i.e. part-time agriculture, the use of child labour, etc.), wages, returns to labour (including women and children), and working conditions, which proved equally important in determining the well-being of rural populations.

A considerable amount of work also focused on a variety of rural employment facets, at macro- as well as micro- level. These included agriculture in development strategies and macroeconomic policies; the patterns of rural development and their impact on employment

⁴⁴ See, for example, the Rights of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11), the Social Insurance (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 17) and the Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1951 (No. 89).

and incomes; basic needs; rural institutions; participation and organization including participatory organizations of the rural poor; the role of community (grass root) involvement in planning, local resource mobilization, migration, cooperatives, rural small-scale industries and self-employment; women's economic participation and role in rural development; the sexual division of labour; and working children and other disadvantaged groups such as youth, indigenous populations and the disabled.

An important volume of work targeted issues related to working conditions, such as occupational safety and health, labour inspection, social security, wages, various employment statuses, including forms of precarious work and informal activities. Research included the impact of key developments in rural contexts, such as technology changes and high-yielding seed varieties. Other valuable research focused on specific agricultural activities (poultry, apiculture, vegetable crops, fisheries, plant nursing, etc.), crops and their processing, storage and marketing (cotton, coffee, tea, rubber, palm oil, sugar cane, fish, meat, etc.), agricultural innovation, and numerous other non-farm activities (e.g. handicrafts, weaving, soap-making, furniture and brick-making). The aim was to promote employment-friendly technological choices in sectoral investment policies and initiatives, improving working conditions and introduce ILO social policy objectives in sectoral economic policies and programmes. In the 1980s, as knowledge increased, analytical work shifted towards policy-related issues.

Also worth noting are the ILO's efforts to gather statistical information, since national statistics in general were usually lacking in rural measurements. Very often existing measurements would not detect intricacies such as the fact that women were actually cultivating the land, while men technically owned it. This discovery for example, significantly altered the approach of training programmes, which then sought to incorporate women. Breakthroughs in measurement reforms included the discovery of interrelationships with information gathered by other agencies,⁴⁵ as was the case when the ILO and the WHO integrated their rural data to reveal a correlation between a baby's weight and a family's economic status.

This impressive research effort left a legacy of publications, reports and other materials.⁴⁶ Its results contributed among others to the all-important paradigm in development indicating that growth itself does not guarantee employment creation and poverty reduction, which the ILO advocates to this day.

⁴⁵ At the initiative of Farhad Mehran (from the ILO Statistics Bureau).

⁴⁶ See, for example, ILO: *Poverty and Landlessness in Rural Asia*, World Employment Programme, Geneva, 1977; M. Allal, G. A. Edmonds, and A. S. Bhalla: *Manual on the planning of labour-intensive road construction* (Geneva, ILO, 1977); W. Bartsch: *Employment and Technology Choice in Asian Agriculture* (NY, Praeger, 1977); A. Bhaduri and A. Rahman (eds): *Studies in Rural Participation* (New Delhi, Oxford & IBH Pub, 1982); A. Bhalla (ed): *Technology and Employment in Industry* (Geneva, ILO, 1974); P. Egger: *Travail et agriculture dans le tiers monde* (Geneva, ILO, 1993); D. Ghai and S. Radwan (eds): *Agrarian policies and rural poverty in Africa* (Geneva, ILO, 1983); D. Ghai, A. Rahman Khan, E. Lee, and T. Alftahan: *The basic-needs approach to development: Some issues regarding concepts and methodology* (Geneva, ILO, 1980); R. Islam (ed): *Rural Industrialization and Employment in Asia* (New Delhi, ILO, 1987); A. Rahman Khan and E. Lee (eds): *Poverty in Rural Asia* (Bangkok, ILO, 1984); A. Sen: *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981); A. Sen: *Employment, Technology and Development* (Oxford, University Press, 1999). Also see footnote 75 for publications on rural women. Many other publications were country-specific and often prepared by local researchers or subject specialists. They were around 30–60 pages long, pragmatic, action-oriented, and thus also accessible to "busy" policy-makers and practitioners. As the publication cost was low, distribution was often free; and the regional employment teams were deeply involved in their production and dissemination, thereby reaching a large audience. Examples include a number of Working Paper series on labour absorption in agriculture, covering in particular Asian countries; agrarian reform; rural poverty and employment, covering Central America in particular; and the socio-economic implications of structural changes in plantations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

II.2.4.2. Basic needs

The basic needs strategy deserves special mention. The idea was conceived by the WEP in the mid-'70s, when it became clear that employment creation is not an end in itself, but serves to fulfil the basic needs of populations. Basic Needs constituted the essence of the ILO's Report for the 1976 World Employment Conference (WEC) and was received with much enthusiasm. The concept was defined as the concrete requirements of families and communities in terms of food, shelter, clothing, health, education and transportation for instance.⁴⁷ Employment was considered a means as well as an end, and participatory approach to decision-making played a key role. At the core of the proposed strategy was a shift to a pattern of economic growth that is more employment-intensive, more equitable, and more effective in reducing poverty.

The approach was revolutionary in many ways. In particular, it placed families and communities and their consumption needs at the centre of employment and development strategies. It also set specific production targets, and derived from them the rate of economic growth needed to achieve those needs, rather than setting projected rates of per capita economic growth as previously done.

The basic needs strategy was also used in a number of ILO Country Employment Strategy Missions, and successfully impacted development work broadly, including that of the World Bank's Policy Planning Staff Group. While its broad, all-encompassing nature rendered the approach attractive, those very characteristics made it difficult for the ILO to manage it alone and required UN-wide participation (which is perhaps starting to happen today, as discussed later).

The WEP gradually moved away from basic needs to concentrate more on labour market issues. The '80s in general saw a gradual waning of the concept as a development strategy, given its requirement of a highly pro-active and interventionist State, while the debt crises of those years, and the first Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were pushing in the opposite direction. Furthermore, its operational use, to formulate practical policy ideas for instance, proved somewhat challenging given the number and complexity of components and the extensive modelling required. The approach is perhaps better known for its contribution to the conceptualization of poverty and development challenges.

The idea of basic needs considerably impacted development thinking and actually lives on in the present. It has been stimulating work and ideas on the impact of specific goods and services on human development. It has been used since the early 1990s by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Human Development Reports in its Human Resource Development (HRD) indices. More recently it inspired the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) approach, which sets specific human needs objectives, such as food, health and education as a means to diminish poverty.⁴⁸ The ILO's own Decent Work Agenda, and particularly its more recent Social Protection Floor Initiative on which it is collaborating with other agencies, contain substantial basic needs elements.

⁴⁷ The concept includes certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter, and clothing, as well as certain household equipment and furniture. It also includes essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport and health, education, and cultural facilities. ILO: *Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One- World Problem*, Report of the Director-General to the World Employment Conference, Geneva, 1976, p. 7.

⁴⁸ R. Jolly, L. Emmerij, D. Ghai and F. Lapeyre: *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*, UN intellectual history project series (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2004).

II.2.4.3. Capacity building

Various capacity-building products were developed from the ILO's early research, such as a whole series on management and technical training in agricultural cooperatives, vocational training, vocational rehabilitation in rural areas, income generation and cash crop agriculture, transportation, irrigation, rural public works, rural electrification and its socio-economic consequences, technology, biotechnology, environment protection, energy and renewable energy technologies, solar drying firewood and charcoal preparation, rural non-farm skills such as food storage, farm equipment needs, youth, forestry training, small-holder agriculture, land reforms, food security, survival strategies after famine and other crises, agricultural credit and banking for the rural poor, and strengthening of rural workers' organizations and NGOs in rural development.⁴⁹ The ILO International Training Centre in Turin (ITC-Turin) developed additional training materials, as well as over 40 different training workshops on various aspects of rural employment, ranging from general topics such as "Rural development projects: design and appraisals", "Management of agricultural enterprises", "Skills development in rural contexts" and "Cooperatives for rural development" to more specific ones focused on "Design of low-cost agricultural machinery", "Conservation, marketing and transportation of agricultural products", "Planning and management of integrated agro-industrial systems", and "Advanced training in animal husbandry" for instance.⁵⁰

II.2.4.4. Technical Cooperation

ILO's analytical and training work was complemented by a steady increase in *operational interventions*. The annual volume of newly approved TC projects grew from less than USD 3 million to over USD 127 million between 1960 and the late-1980s, with rural areas consisting of 60–65 per cent of total work.⁵¹ Topics would range from rural employment promotion, to public works, training schemes, appropriate technology, women participation, cooperatives and small enterprise development. Over half of all projects operated in Africa, some 28 per cent in Asia, and 17 per cent in Latin America.⁵² Also worth noting is a marked trend in the mid to late 1980s from institution building and technical advisory services to direct assistance to populations through income generation, training, and employment projects.

II.2.4.5. Policy services

Advisory services were a fourth major area of ILO rural work in those decades, and were solidly based on research and TC work, and the approaches thus delivered. They were mainly offered within projects or upon *ad hoc* constituent requests.

Advisory services also took the form of Employment Strategy Missions, another unique undertaking by the ILO that targeted some eight countries between 1970 and 1983. These mis-

⁴⁹ The exact volume of work is difficult to gauge, as there is no systematic record of the number of publications, training tools, working papers and seminar papers produced. However, some bibliographies provide a general idea of the type of product, thematic, target group and geographic area focuses. ILO: *Rural Development: An Annotated Bibliography of ILO Publications and Documents, 1983–1990*, Geneva, 1991, is particularly informative, revealing in its 757 entries a clear concentration on analytical work, employment, women, youth and the Africa region.

⁵⁰ ILO: *Director-General's Report on the activities of the Centre*, ILO-ITC 1970–2010, Turin, 2010.

⁵¹ P. Peek, and P. Egger: *ILO Projects for Rural Development: Some Preliminary Evidence on Their Impact*, Report for the 1989 annual meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development, Agenda Item 5, Geneva, ILO, 1989.

⁵² ILO: *Rural Employment Promotion*, Report to the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1988, p. 102.

sions were major multidisciplinary undertakings based on research and technical cooperation to formulate policy advice. The bigger missions, such as those to Colombia (1970) and Kenya (1972) would often take up to three weeks and involve over 20–30 participants, including representatives from FAO, IFAD, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and World Bank (WB) officials. Other missions were more focused and smaller, such as the 1984 mission to reach Afghan refugees in Pakistan; and the 1985 mission to tackle famine in Ethiopia.

The impact of these missions on policy is hard to gauge however, as there was no mechanism to evaluate or follow-up on them. Records indicate that most of them, including those to Pakistan and Ethiopia, managed to identify various TC project opportunities that were then realized through funding by different agencies and bilateral donors. These missions also clearly contributed to advancing the identification and conceptualization of new trends. The Kenya employment mission for instance coined the term “informal economy,” which gradually gained broader attention to become a leading concept in government policy and development work of the 1990s. Employment Strategy Missions also spread concepts such as “using the people” and “peoples’ participation” as a basis for increasing employment, thereby advancing the new paradigm of macro-economic policy changes to stimulate more labour-intensive patterns of development.

The ‘80s witnessed a considerable number of ILO meetings on rural matters, at global and regional levels, in which analytical, operational and policy advocacy work converged. Among the key gatherings were the Panel of the Advisory Committee on Rural Development (Geneva, 1985); the ILO JASPA’s Regional Workshop on Policies and Projects for Rural Employment Promotion in Africa (Addis Ababa, 1985); the International Seminar on Rural Employment Promotion Strategies (Beijing, 1986); and the Workshop on the Interrelationship between Macro-economic Policies and Rural Development (Geneva, 1989).

The 1988 ILC Discussion on Rural Employment Promotion provides another important record of the ILO’s activities. The background Report takes stock of the voluminous amount of work undertaken in the preceding decade and considers the challenges of the 1980s, particularly the prolonged global economic recession, increasing indebtedness of developing countries and ensuing structural adjustment programmes, growing unemployment and underemployment and persistent poverty, to derive a “rural-focused, employment-oriented development strategy”.⁵³ This Strategy aims at greater labour absorption in rural areas through increased linkages between a dynamic non-farm rural economy and an increasingly productive agricultural sector. The Report calls for, “... a shift of emphasis in the work of the ILO ... [towards] strengthening the agriculture/non-agriculture linkages... [and] ... the promotion of employment in the rural non-farm economy... ”.⁵⁴ The ensuing Resolution confirmed this strategy, referring in particular to the conclusions of the 1986 report on the promotion of small- and medium-sized enterprises, and their importance in rural areas; and called to, “...combine research, advisory services and technical cooperation... [to]...shift away from isolated micro projects into more interrelated projects of a coherent programme... ”. In addi-

⁵³ Op. Cit., ILO: *Rural Employment Promotion* (1988), p. 114.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 119.

tion, it called for expanded evaluation and monitoring of the socio-economic impact of TC projects, with priority to activities that support rural women.⁵⁵

II.2.4.6. External relations

External relations and collaboration formed a major element of the ILO's rural work agenda. Prolific and active engagement made the ILO an authority on rural employment and development, including among agencies specialising in rural development. The ILO was a precursor in work to understand rural issues. Its publications had significant impact at the inter-agency level and on the academic world, and at times opened the way for work on rural poverty later undertaken by core agencies such as FAO and WB.

Given the scale of poverty in rural areas, its vast size, and multi-faceted nature, inter-agency collaboration on rural development grew and broadened rapidly since the mid-1970s. The ILO worked mainly through the ACC Task Force on Rural Development (operating from 1975 to 1986),⁵⁶ which made poverty-oriented rural development the unifying concept, reference point and objective of the UN system.⁵⁷ The Task Force was first chaired by the ILO, and then by FAO. After the 1980 assessment of its work, the Task Force agreed that its catalytic role should focus on three specific areas: 1) joint action at the country and regional level; 2) promoting people's participation in rural development; and 3) monitoring and evaluation of rural development.⁵⁸ As a result, a Panel on Promoting People's Rural Participation was set up and led by the ILO; while Monitoring and Evaluation functions were led by IFAD, which rapidly highlighted the need to assess impact and compile lessons learnt. However, the lack of data and the difficulty in fixing a set of standardized performance indicators given the complexity of rural development issues made that task arduous. The Task Force found monitoring and evaluation to be the weak part of operational and advisory exercises.⁵⁹ Interestingly, in the mid-1990s this Panel also called for assessing the “social rate of return” of interventions. That is, not only monitoring income-related benefits, but also those related to strengthening institutions, increased levels of participation, provision of services and satisfaction of beneficiaries.

The ILO's ties with rural development agencies multiplied, and some of them were formalized, in particular with FAO (in 1974) and IFAD (in 1978). The ILO also had particularly

⁵⁵ Ibid., Section 13.

⁵⁶ Recurrent items were: reporting on specialized activities, joint agency action at country level, monitoring and evaluation of rural development, progress in specific issues (e.g., in 1986, people's participation and women's development), publications of interest, major obstacles encountered, coordination and country-level initiatives. A set of subgroups carried out specific work, such as the Working Group on Programme Harmonization, focusing on intra-agency as well as inter-agency coordination mechanisms to avoid conflicting action, synchronize parallel action, take complementary action and formulate common positions.

⁵⁷ UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), followed by the Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) held in 1979, in which the ILO actively participated in, crystallized this, and that the UN system re-orient its programmes to ensure that benefits accrue primarily to the rural poor.

⁵⁸ UN: *Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination Task Force on Rural Development*, 9th Meeting of the ACC, Rome, 1981.

⁵⁹ Some other conclusions of the Task Force related to monitoring and evaluation of rural work are also worth noting, such as the difficulty deciding who is poor, and the need to look beyond income factors; models sometimes imprecise and not sufficiently tolerant of varied cultural and fast-changing situations; too much attention concentrated at the national ministerial level; insufficient strengthening of capacity of national institutions operating in rural development at various levels and of the linkages among them, leading to top-heavy and top-down approaches and not conducive to the involvement and benefit of deprived populations for whom rural programmes were designed, coupled with little attention paid to local institutions, that may be actually weakened by the sending of experts for short periods, that does not allow training of nationals, including for the subsequent taking over of projects. The Task Force further highlighted scanty local resources, linked to overreliance on external resources, as at times donors were “queuing up”; the need for greater linkages among sectors, and for integration of project approaches into national planning mechanisms; and internationally, the need for greater communication, coordination and harmonization in interventions. Among the major positive project results noted are the consciousness-raising of bottom up and self-reliant rural development; the fact that political will and appropriate mandate can determine the success of bottom up rural development; and the importance of “making things move” so even small successes could be built on.

close ties with UNDP, which was a major source of funding for its work. Some notable collaboration included:

- An FAO/UNESCO/ILO Inter-Secretariat Working group on Agricultural Education, Science and Training in the ‘80s;
- ILO-WHO collaboration on living workers’, working and health conditions (within a joint ILO/WHO committee on occupational health);⁶⁰
- A research and action programme in rural development launched with FAO and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD);
- Work with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and WHO on an International Programme on Chemical Safety;
- Work with FAO, UNEP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on alternative technologies for specific agricultural or craft products;
- Functioning as lead agency for the realization of an African network on farm tools and equipment; and
- Cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to develop new approaches for income-generating activities for refugees.

In the mid-1980s the ILO was regularly consulted in the design of WFP projects,⁶¹ and was involved in over 30 evaluation missions a year, while WFP provided input on some of the ILO’s public works initiatives. In the ‘80s and ‘90s a special ILO Unit, “Alimentation Mondiale” (ALIMOND),⁶² was created with WFP funds for the specific purpose of liaising with that agency, the World Food Council (WFC) and IFAD.⁶³

The ILO was also part of many multi-agency missions, particularly frequent in those years, such as the programming mission to Yemen with IFAD in 1979, which led to a large ILO benchmark programme (financed by IFAD) on small farmers’ development based on an integrated approach, and including credit, marketing and a gender focus. The ILO participated in several FAO country missions, for instance to Somalia and Brazil to support agrarian reform. There was at the time a balanced exchange whereby the ILO contributed ideas to FAO and IFAD approaches and initiatives in return for financial support and complementary technical inputs for its employment missions and other activities. Working level contacts with FAO and WFP at Headquarters and in the field were frequent.

Partnerships were also formed with trade unions and NGOs, such as the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), IFPAAW, and TUIAfpw. Meanwhile major programmes such as the ILO’s Cooperatives Branch (COOP) and the Infrastructure and Rural Works Branch (EMP/INFRA) had close working relations of their own with numerous other organizations.

⁶⁰ The joint ILO/WHO Committee, set up in 1950 and operational to date, has been undertaking joint initiatives and has held over 13 major meetings, covering in particular education and training in occupational health, safety and ergonomics; scope and organization of occupational health; reporting on occupational diseases; occupational exposure assessments; establishment of permissible limits; and an integrated approach to health management systems as an essential function of good management.

⁶¹ It would advise particularly on payment systems, work norms, working conditions, labour force composition and distribution of benefits from the initiatives and food aid itself.

⁶² In French: *Alimentation Mondiale* (World Food), ILO Unit responsible for liaising with the World Food Programme.

⁶³ ILO: *Rural Employment Promotion*, Report to the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1988, p. 113.

It appears therefore that the ILO had a major impact on the international policy debate on rural poverty and development. The ILO was sought out to provide consultation on and work with international agencies such as the WB, FAO, IFAD, and WFP to name a few, or with bilateral agencies involved in rural development. As articulated by a privileged informant, “We [the ILO] were a big partner”, and “were everywhere”, prompting policy-makers to focus on rural areas.⁶⁴

This recognition, as well as collaboration, lessened over time. Shifts within the ILO to other priorities, lack of follow-up mechanisms, and loosely integrated work plans concerning rural issues all played a part in its diminishing role. Additionally, issues of leadership sometimes slowed efforts in joint work, as in the case of the attempt to set up a network of agencies (FAO, UNIDO, ILO, and UNDP) to work on agricultural technology in the 1980s. Another concern, voiced by many, was the need to develop a common framework for action and cooperation (also at field level) between UN agencies to prevent wasteful duplication and burden on officials and organizations of member States.⁶⁵

The close policy and financial relations that existed at the time with bilateral development agencies such as CIDA, DANIDA, NORAD, and SIDA, as well as with Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the UK are worth mentioning. They supported and showed keenness for the ILO’s research and operational activities, and took an active part and responsibility in policy debates at national and international levels. This prompted intense contact at working level between the ILO technical staff and staff of these agencies, thus mutually enriching policy choices, research agendas, and programme promotion, and providing networking opportunities with national-level technicians and authorities, both in developed and developing countries.

II.2.5. Focus groups

The ILO’s early research on rural poverty revealed several disadvantaged groups often overlooked in previous rural development efforts. These included women, wage and non-wage workers, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs), and disabled persons. The ILO’s initiatives became increasingly focused on these target groups, resulting in TC projects, programmes, and approaches that actively attempted to include these marginalized sections of the rural population in development schemes. Child Labour and rural youth were also of concern to the ILO, but substantial work on the two topics would not take place till the late-1980s.

II.2.5.1. Women

The ILO was one of the first agencies to treat rural women as a distinct category. Interest in the topic stemmed out of the ILO’s work on growth rates and labour absorption, which prompted questions about productivity, (who actually works the land, and who benefits from it). By 1974 the ILO had set up a Women’s Programme within the WEP, with early studies focusing mostly on the sexual division of labour; the characterisation and delineation of the contributions made by women to rural development; and the nature and operation of

⁶⁴ Peter Peek, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

⁶⁵ This is now reflected to some extent in the Paris Declaration as well as the One UN System.

biases against women in terms of their access to resources (including land) as well as income from their labour.

The World Employment Conference (WEC) in June 1976 pointed out that rural women face the most disadvantages in many developing countries with regard to employment, poverty, education, training, and status overall. The WEC called for action aimed at relieving the work burdens of rural women by improving their living and working conditions.⁶⁶ In 1979, EMP/RU launched the Programme on Rural Women, based on ACRD's recommendation. Faced with inadequate knowledge on the topic, the Programme undertook further research on employment patterns, labour processes, poverty, and organizations related to rural women. It also conducted studies and field research on specific issues, ranging from investigating the role (or potential role) of women in mitigating environmental crises to more specific research on the role of women in individual industries (like carpet weaving, lace making, beedi⁶⁷ manufacturing); to issues confronting female-headed households (especially among poorer social classes); to women as share-croppers; women as petty traders; women's status in rural labour markets; home-based women workers; and the impact of technological changes on women's employment.

The Programme on Rural Women undertook ground breaking research, introduced and worked on various innovative concepts and approaches, from awareness raising, social mobilization and working collectively to solve problems, generating income, and giving women a voice; to increasing women's access to government officials, and awareness raising among employers to women's needs (in terms of health, education, shelter, water and sanitation); to women's capacity building; to micro-finance for income-poor women, which was viewed at the time with suspicion by donors and other stakeholders, but nowadays is broadly accepted and is indeed an important component of development projects.

The general strategy of the Programme was to build a conceptual and informational base that could be widely disseminated through publications and seminars, such as a series of three tripartite regional seminars organized in 1981 for Asia, Africa, and Latin America incorporating the experiences of women from the countries of those respective regions. This information was to be used in developing TC projects, but was not fully utilized as governments and interest groups were eager to see tangible country-level activities stemming from field study missions, and TC projects often developed prematurely, or faster than initially expected.

Most TC projects targeting rural women aimed at promoting income-generating or other forms of remunerative employment; and at empowering women through participatory approaches, to help them decide and implement new initiatives. Creating and strengthening women's organizations were high priorities, stemming from the belief that this was vital to the sustainability of any international effort to improve the lives of rural women. Extensive research and country studies had established that, “[rural] women do not simply take initiative, but act collectively through informal as well as formal organizations promoted and

⁶⁶ Op. Cit., ILO: *Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action Adopted by the Tripartite World Conference* (1976).

⁶⁷ A beedi is a thin South Asian cigarette.

strengthened by projects.”⁶⁸ The promotion of grass-roots level organizations among poor rural women was thus an integral part of many projects.

The Programme on Rural Women often shared tools, projects, and collaborated closely with EDUC, the Workers' Education Branch of the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), in an effort to organize rural workers. The Programme also helped implement Conventions, such as the Rural Workers Organization Convention, 1975 (No. 141), to ensure that they reached rural women. Trade unions at the time were exclusively male-dominated and the Programme helped organize women into rural workers' organizations. A project in India helped some women obtain legal titles to land; in the Philippines it assisted trade unions that were not previously keen on organizing women; and in Bangladesh it worked with women plantation workers. An initiative in Sri Lanka targeting rural women plantation workers already organized into trade unions yielded successful results, with workers reporting several improvements in domestic and working conditions, as well as the promotion of several women to the union hierarchy.

The Programme also helped in the early stages of India's well-renowned SEWA movement⁶⁹ by channelling funds to some of its activities to organize rural women. One such project, in India's Punjab and West Bengal regions, organised women to help them interact with government officials on land rights, land use and related issues, thereby nurturing women's capacity to demand the services they needed. The project involved women workers in jungle areas, and included indigenous people, agricultural labourers, and migrant labour. Rural workshops were set up where women workers could gather and talk to officials about their problems and needs. In addition to project resources for training, the government provided its own funds, which made the initiative sustainable and increased local government's capacity and willingness to provide services to women workers.

Another path-breaking series of projects titled, “Employment Opportunities for Rural Women through Organization”, was launched in India, Mexico and Senegal, and spread rapidly to Nepal and Pakistan.⁷⁰ Their first phase would evaluate on-going rural development projects and programmes, with input from local actors and beneficiaries, to determine their impact on the poorest segments of rural women. Based on these results, a second phase was developed to provide assistance to women's organizations in the re-orientation and promotion of income- and employment-generating projects. The overarching goal was to strengthen women's organizational base, so that they may develop and sustain activities aimed at goals they set for themselves. In West Bengal, a small organization previously numbering 34 women workers participating in the project grew to over 600 members from 20 villages in 18 months.⁷¹ These and other cases demonstrated that once organized even, “...women from very deprived areas ... [can]... gain access to significant resources from gov-

⁶⁸ ILO: *Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1983*, Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 11th Session, Geneva, 1990, p. 19.

⁶⁹ SEWA is now registered as a trade union, with over a million members across India. It operates dozens of cooperatives that market and process agricultural products and provide insurance, health care, education and housing as well as a banking that does mainly microcredit.

⁷⁰ ILO: *Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1979*, Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 10th Session, Geneva, 1983, p. 48.

⁷¹ Z. Ahmad and M. Loutfi: *Women Workers in Rural Development* (Geneva, ILO, 1985), p. 32.

ernment agencies and programmes and from the community which had not previously reached them, involving land, finance, seedlings, technologies, health care, and nutrition.”⁷²

The Programme also launched several projects related to “Energy and Rural Women’s Work”, stemming from earlier studies on rural energy consumption that revealed cooking to be the activity that required most energy and time. While women did nearly all the cooking and most fuel gathering, they often had no voice on rural energy policy.⁷³ Unfortunately the impact of this work at policy level is difficult to gauge due to a lack of documentation.

Efforts were also undertaken to promote participation of women in Special Public Works Programmes (SPWPs). It was noted that due to the nature of most projects, the number of women participants were low;⁷⁴ but rural women stand to benefit from these projects, the jobs created by labour-intensive schemes, as well as the final result, be it improved water supply and sanitation systems, roads, or the construction of rural housing units.

In 1990 alone EMP/RU was overseeing 14 TC projects on rural women distributed throughout Africa and Asia, with nine more projects in the pipeline, in addition to advisory missions to identify needs of rural women and recommend policy action accordingly. The sustainability of several projects has been widely linked to the commitment of national institutions to fund capacity-building and run programmes, often precursors of the integration of the project’s approach into mainstream work. A good example is the Vulnerable Groups Programme in Bangladesh of the early 1980s, which targeted female-headed households for its large capacity building/training components (an unusual target at the time, but chosen because they were among the poorest), and became part of an on-going government programme assisting the poorest women in the country.

While it had much to contribute, links between the Programme and other units of the ILO were not always strong. The Programme encountered several challenges with Regional Employment Teams for instance, who were working on high-level macro-economic and employment issues that did not correspond to those of the Programme on Rural Women.

By 1990, the ILO’s analytical work and practical experience on the role of women in rural development had been synthesized in over 150 working papers, books and conference papers covering a wide range of topics ranging from land tenure, to cooking, to the phenomenon of sex workers.⁷⁵ The Programme had pioneered findings on intra-household division of labour, unpaid work, home work, female hardship and poverty and women’s organization that laid the foundation for the new vision on women in development and gender equality in the world of work.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ E. Cecelski: *The Rural Energy Crisis, Women’s Work and Basic Needs, Perspectives and Approaches to Action* (Geneva, ILO, 1985), p. 2.

⁷⁴ ILO: *Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women in Employment*, Report VII, International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1985, p. 88.

⁷⁵ See M. Loutfy: *Rural Women: Unequal Partners in Development* (Geneva, ILO, 1980) and “Development with women: Action not alibis,” in *International Labour Review* (1987, Vol. 126, No. 1, Jan-Feb), pp. 111–124; Z. Ahmad and M. Loutfy: *Women workers in rural development* (Geneva, ILO, 1985); Z. Ahmad: “Rural women and their work: dependence and alternatives for chance,” in *International Labour Review* (1984, Vol. 123, No. 1, Jan-Feb), pp. 71–86; P. Phongpaichit: *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masses* (Geneva, ILO, 1982); and C. Oppong and K. Abu: *Handbook for data collection and analysis on seven roles and statuses of women* (Geneva, ILO, 1985).

II.2.5.2. Workers

The Workers' Education Programme specifically targeting rural areas, set up in the mid-1970s within the Workers' Education Branch (EDUC) of ACTRAV was also highly innovative. It emerged as a result of strong support from the GB in 1971⁷⁶ and the Rural Workers' Organizations Convention, 1975 (No. 141) and related Recommendation (No. 149), to build up rural workers' capacity to organize and have a proper voice and means to improve their working and living conditions.

EDUC's main goal was to empower the local (rural) unions to help themselves. It would provide occasional support for events organized by workers' organizations, and trainings on a few, specifically identified topics, with the option for follow-up and support.

To that end, it undertook a series of research projects, country studies, and field investigations with the objective of identifying the most appropriate forms of workers' education methods, techniques and materials to use with various categories of rural workers, ranging from plantation workers, subsistence cultivators, landless labourers, to tenant farmers and migrant workers. It also helped to review the administration, activities and services of rural workers' organizations. A number of studies led to practical field projects, while on other occasions, studies could not have practical impact due to difficulties in disseminating results and related information for political, personnel, or other procedural reasons.⁷⁷

In almost twenty years of operation, EDUC launched projects in over 20 countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Despite its small size, EDUC was the authority on matters related to rural workers. Its work appeared regularly in ILO reports to inter-agency groups such as the ACC Task Force on Rural Development and ACC Task Force Panel on People's Participation. EDUC worked closely with other ILO units, particularly EMP/RU and COOP, as well as with the International Labour Standards Department (NORMES), to ensure delivery of well-rounded products.⁷⁸ On an inter-departmental level, EDUC's rural focal point had written agreements with counterparts in POL/DEV and Industrial Sectors Branch (INDUSTR) to meet regularly to facilitate projects' work, minimize overlap, and share funds.

Training courses and projects played a major role in EDUC's efforts to strengthen and develop rural workers' organizations. These targeted specifically trainers, educators and activists, with a special emphasis on women's participation, to enable them to disseminate information to affiliates at the more local, rural levels. These were complemented by workshops and seminars that served as refresher courses or provided information on specific issues. In all such activities, frank and honest discussions played a major role to allow finding a home-grown solution to locally identified issues.

⁷⁶ At its 183rd Session, the GB endorsed the report of a Meeting of Consultants on Workers' Education stressing that, "without a substantial effort on the part of the Office to make intensive efforts to encourage and assist workers' organizations to develop educational institutions and programmes on a scale commensurate with the magnitude of problems in the rural worker field the ILO will have missed a chance to serve the majority of workers in the developing world." ILO: *Technical Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1965 and Suggestions for the Future Orientation of the ILO's Work*, Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 8th Session, Geneva, 1974, p. 42.

⁷⁷ ILO: *Inter-Regional Symposium on Workers' Education for the Strengthening and Development of Rural Workers' Organizations*, Working Paper, Geneva, 1983, p. 2.

⁷⁸ See, for example, the project in the Philippines (1986), where with combined support from EDUC and COOP, the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) collaborated on developing a training programme for cooperative educators, which created a pool of competent cooperative trainers and extension workers.

Regarding operational work, in the early ‘80s EDUC launched the, “Workers’ Education for the Strengthening and Development of Rural Workers’ Organizations in Six Select Countries of Latin America”,⁷⁹ with Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) funding, to put into practice the new concept of “special services”⁸⁰ (see Special Services Approach, Appendix 4). Through the use of participatory methods and special services, the project supported rural workers in: promoting and assisting members of existing (or new) trade unions; developing training activities to help rural workers run these structures effectively; and promoting self-help activities for rural workers. Within two years, the targeted rural workers had developed 128 Plans of Action, of which several were replicated by other worker organizations or groups, bringing the total number of activities to 142.⁸¹ The cost of planned activities varied from USD 3,000 to USD 100,000, and included building local union offices, new workers’ education programmes, and small cooperative stores; various stock- and crop-raising activities; to the building of community health centres, workers’ housing schemes, and a large-scale dairy enterprises. A progress report at the end of 1983 found 57 projects to be fully operational, 41 under way, and another 28 in advanced preliminary stages.⁸² Nearly half the activities cost less than USD 3,000 each, and almost half were entirely financed by the members, their organizations, or federations.⁸³ At the end of the project, in 1986, participating rural workers’ organizations were equipped with several new instruments, notably trade union coordinators, revolving loans, and planning offices to help sustain local trade unions through employment generation programmes.

EDUC used this successful project as a template for other initiatives it launched in Africa and Asia. Among them was a 1983 Training of Trainers (TOT) initiative with the agricultural trade union, Shetkari Shetmajoor Panchayat, in Maharashtra, India.⁸⁴ EDUC helped organizers increase recruitment in their respective districts by “nearly 11,000 paying members among the self-employed, landless and wage workers.”⁸⁵ More importantly, it trained workers to identify problems at village level and take them up with the appropriate authorities. In this case efforts led to the organization of pressure group activities (with minimal advisory support from EDUC) to prompt authorities to provide work under the State’s employment guarantee scheme, thus securing precious work days for male and female members. In a similar project, EDUC worked with another rural workers’ organization, the Hind Khet Mazdoor Sabha (HKMS),⁸⁶ to implement change by motivating villagers to undertake new economic activities in rural areas with greater employment-generation potential.

Other key TC initiatives included the joint EDUC-COOP programme with the Filipino Federation of Free Workers (FFW) to create a local consortium of cooperative trainers and extension workers, effectively combining cooperative principles with union strategy.⁸⁷ In 1985 a project on “Workers’ Education for Women Members of Rural Workers’ Organiza-

⁷⁹ Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras and Panama, besides Venezuela that served as pilot country.

⁸⁰ ILO: *Special Services: A Real Instrument to Strengthen the Economic Basis of the Rural Workers’ Organizations and to Promote People’s Participation*, Geneva, 1986.

⁸¹ J. Giusti: *Resume of EDUC’s Activities Regarding Rural Employment Generation*, Department Minutes, (Geneva, ILO, 1986).

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ ILO project: “Workers’ Education Assistance to Shetkari Shetmajoor Panchayat (SSMP),” India (1981–1985).

⁸⁵ Op. cit., ILO: *Special Services* (1986), p. 4.

⁸⁶ ILO project: “Workers’ Education Assistance to Hint Khet Mazdoor Sabha (HKMS),” India (1985–1989).

⁸⁷ Op. Cit., ILO: *Special Services* (1986).

tions in Ghana, Kenya, and Zimbabwe” was launched to integrate women into traditionally male union structures.⁸⁸ The project devoted a full year to assessing the conditions for women’s activities within several pre-existing rural workers’ organizations. Based on these findings it held several courses for women participants to develop an activist mentality and knowledge on trade unions, agrarian, and labour legislation as well as women’s rights and roles in trade unions. It also developed specialists in women workers’ activities, with curricula consisting of topics such as health and family education, the development of organization-based services and self-help activities for women members, and leadership roles. At its end in 1987, the project achieved its goal of having a team of local women activists competent in improving women’s participation in rural workers’ organizations.⁸⁹

More work on integrating women into trade unions occurred in the 1990s under a series of projects financed by Scandinavian donors titled, “Workers’ Education for Women Members of Rural Workers Organizations”, in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The projects were culturally- and gender-sensitive, with educational materials specifically adapted for each country and situation.

EDUC was thus highly active in promoting and facilitating worker education across the world as a way to promote rural women’s and men’s associations. It sponsored numerous TC projects that targeted an often marginalized sector of the population; held seminars and workshops; published papers; developed teaching materials; and sought to transfer knowledge to local organizations so that the impact would be felt long after the projects were officially closed. EDUC maintained partnerships with Worker constituents and collaborated considerably in-House. While documentation to gauge real, long-term impact is limited, it seems that EDUC’s work did reach national policy levels in a number of cases, and also resulted in increased ratification of Convention 141.⁹⁰

II.2.5.3. Employers

The Employers’ Activities Department (ACT/EMP) never had a specific programme targeting employers in rural areas, and the ILO’s projects benefiting rural entrepreneurs took place on an *ad hoc* basis. This included several round tables and seminars organized by the ILO beginning in 1970, to assist employers’ organizations in Africa (Francophone regions), Latin-America, Asia and Arab countries. Assistance was directed at employers’ associations in all branches of economic activity, including agriculture and related activities. Many participants voiced concerns still valid today, for instance, “... that the living conditions and leisure opportunities in the rural areas should be improved to keep young people away from the lure of the towns.”⁹¹ They also stressed the need to promote industries in rural areas for the processing of agricultural products and to reduce imports of consumer goods that could be produced locally. An increase in the volume of exports was thus identified as one way in which employment in rural areas could be increased.⁹²

⁸⁸ ILO project: “Workers’ Education for Women Members of Rural Workers’ Organizations” (1985–1990).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ 29 out of the 40 countries that have ratified Convention No. 141 did so during the mid-1970s and 1980s, compared to 11 ratifications since 1990. See Ratification Rates for *Convention No. 141*, <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifce.pl?C141> (accessed on 26 September 2011).

⁹¹ ILO: *Report of the Regional Technical Seminar on Industrial Relations for Employers’ Organizations in French-Speaking African Countries*, Geneva, 1977, pp. 5–6.

⁹² Ibid.

ACT/EMP was also involved in the establishment of a regional rural vocational training centre in the Asian and Pacific region.⁹³ The project report highlighted trends and developments in rural vocational training in the region, including the ILO's activities at national, regional and subregional levels. It pointed out that, "...governments, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs and others interested in rural development had undertaken a broad and diverse range of rural vocational training activities and would particularly welcome further ILO support in developing national policies and well-coordinated programmes for rural vocational training."⁹⁴ Although this information may seem anecdotal, it shows ACT/EMP's involvement in a variety of projects while keeping in mind its main mandate: to foster employers' organizations so they can contribute to socio-economic development.

The ILO also reached rural employers' organizations through a project that supported the promotion of small- and medium-size enterprises via the Improve Your Business (IYB) tool (at its embryonic stage at the time).⁹⁵ The project started with a series of seminars for Asian and Pacific Employers' organizations. This was followed by a meeting in Niamey (Niger) in December 1982, and later resulted in DANIDA-funded TC projects promoting IYB in East Africa (1989–93).⁹⁶

II.2.5.4. Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

The ILO's work on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) started with a publication considered the most "complete" study of the subject,⁹⁷ followed by the 1954–72 Programme of Technical Assistance to the Indigenous Populations of the Andean High Plateau action (better known as the Andean Indian Programme), an ILO-led multi-agency initiative⁹⁸ to protect the interests of indigenous peoples.⁹⁹ The Programme was piloted in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, then extended to Colombia (1960), Chile and Argentina (1961), Venezuela (1964), and to Guatemala (mid-'60s). Its main objective was to train indigenous social promoters and peasant leaders to, "...serve as intermediaries in the introduction of modern practices of social and economic organization in their own communities as well as the mobilization of material and human resources of these communities for the improvement of their living and working conditions".¹⁰⁰ The approach reflected the prevalent belief at the time that "modernizing" and assimilating indigenous and tribal systems to the mainstream national system would improve the situation of ITPs.

⁹³ ILO: *Establishment of a Regional Rural Vocational Training Centre in the Asia and Pacific Region*, Governing Body, 225th Session, Committee on Operational Programmes, Geneva, 1984.

⁹⁴ ILO: *Report of the ILO Committee on Operational Programmes*, Governing Body, 219th Session, Geneva, 1982), Section 66.

⁹⁵ ILO project: "Assistance to Employers' Organizations with Special Emphasis on Promoting Small Enterprise Development," via employers' organizations in Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia (1984–1988).

⁹⁶ ILO Project: "Assistance to Employers' Organizations in East Africa with Special Emphasis on Small Enterprises Development" in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe (1989–1995).

⁹⁷ See ILO: *Indigenous Peoples: Living and Working Conditions of Aboriginal Populations in Independent Countries, Studies and Reports*, New Series No. 35, Geneva, 1953.

⁹⁸ The multisectoral nature of this Programme led to participation of FAO, ILO, UN, UNESCO, WHO, and contributions from UNICEF and WFP.

⁹⁹ This initiative was based on the recommendations of the first session of ILO's Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour held in 1951 in La Paz, Bolivia, related to developing vocational training programmes, recruiting of indigenous agricultural labourers and mine workers, extension of social insurance and other social assistance, protection of indigenous home crafts, and safety in industry and mining. ILO: *Report of the Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour*, 1st Session, Geneva, 195, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ ILO: *Appraisal of the Achievements of the Andean Indian Programme*. Agenda Item 2, Panel of Consultants on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, Geneva, 1962, p. 9.

The Programme nevertheless operated on the novel premise that all activities were to have the support of ITPs and be based on their specific needs. It engaged in a variety of activities such as: animal husbandry and agriculture, land settlement, cooperatives (especially for agriculture and cattle production), health and sanitation, community development, housing, social welfare, education, and training. Much work was also devoted to health and cultural adaptation;¹⁰¹ training in new methods of farming and other skills; and also education.¹⁰² With a Regional Office in Lima, each country had several “action bases” equipped with a workshop for practical training in woodwork and mechanics, a clinic or similar type of medical facility, classrooms, and agricultural equipment and supplies, from which local activities were launched. The Programme also functioned through cooperative structures (formal and informal) adapted to the needs of indigenous and tribal groups, through which to provide necessary technical services, especially those related to agriculture and handicraft production. Following the launch of the WEP, the Andean Indian Programme also included trainings for employment creation activities.¹⁰³

Achievements of the Programme were manifold. Groups in Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela experienced increases in agricultural production, along with the introduction of cash crops. Schools were opened in areas where no instruction had been available previously, and adult literacy courses were arranged in a number of countries. Vocational training institutes or workshops were also set up for skilling indigenous workers in carpentry, blacksmithing, mechanics, weaving, masonry and pottery. The programme helped many trainees set up workshops of their own. The medical facilities it established facilitated the launch of health campaigns and improvements in environmental sanitation.¹⁰⁴ An evaluation estimated that 161 communities and 330,000 people had been reached through the various activities undertaken by the Programme;¹⁰⁵ and a final tally recorded the number of direct beneficiaries at 250,000 with double the amount of indirect beneficiaries.¹⁰⁶

A review in the mid-1980s still found its influence on methods and policies, especially its integrated approach that promoted simultaneous and coordinated treatment of the many aspects of the life and work of the beneficiaries, which is now considered a basic requisite of rural development. The Programme also motivated governments, for instance of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, to formulate “National Integration Plans” for their Indigenous populations, prompting special consideration and efforts to address their needs in a variety of technical areas and offering them a practical tool with which they could determine the type of action required.

The initiative was also important for dispelling common misconceptions in those days about ITPs by providing, “...conclusive evidence that the alleged apathy and inertia of the inhabitants disappear and their attitude changes when they are convinced that the assistance offered

¹⁰¹ Some activities gave particular attention to problems involved with the resettlement of Native Communities from the highlands to the lowlands.

¹⁰² One of the problems mentioned with education was that it tended to push those with an education towards developed cities and away from [rural] Native lands. A challenge therefore was to educate people while getting them to stay.

¹⁰³ ILO: *Activities of the ILO 1969*, Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference, 54th Session, Geneva, 1970.

¹⁰⁴ ILO: *Technical Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1965 and Suggestions for the Future Orientation of the ILO's Work*, Item I, Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 8th session, Geneva, 1974, p. 54.

¹⁰⁵ ILO: *Appraisal of the Achievements of the Andean Indian Programme*, Agenda Item 2, Panel of Consultants on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, Geneva, 1962, p. 11.

¹⁰⁶ ILO: *ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (No. 169): A Manual*, Geneva, 2003, p. 3.

them is useful and practical and does not serve as a cover for exploitation”,¹⁰⁷ and thus demonstrating that ITPs, like any other group concerned about its wellbeing, respond favourably to external influences as long as they are respectful of the existing society and their cultural values.

The experience of the Programme served as an important source of knowledge; and succeeding years witnessed an increase in reading materials on ITP conditions worldwide.

The ILO’s direct work with ITPs through the Programme also lead to its adoption of the Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, 1957 (No. 107) and accompanying Recommendation No. 104, covering such topics as land rights, working conditions, health and education, and forming the first international legal treaty on the matter.¹⁰⁸ It was followed up with the establishment of an ILO Indigenous and Tribal Population Service in 1962 to develop a systematic research programme providing informational materials as the basis for operational activities; but also to coordinate the activities of relevant ILO Units and to serve as a channel of communication between these Units and the Andean Indian Programme and similar projects elsewhere. It also ensured a liaison among agencies involved in projects related to ITPs, as well as ILO representation at inter-agency meetings.¹⁰⁹

Between 1975 and 1985 the ILO launched a variety of comprehensive rural TC initiatives targeting ITPs in Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Peru, and direct advisory services to governments, national institutions, and workers’ organizations.¹¹⁰ Other projects studied concerns specific to ITPs, such as the 1982 joint ILO-Inter-American Indian Institute programme researching traditional forms of organization and economic activity in the indigenous Andean environment.¹¹¹

The late-‘80s brought major changes in development thinking and public perceptions of ITPs, leading to a revision of C107 based on the rejection of the “assimilationist” approach that had heretofore influenced work on ITPs. The resulting Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, 1989 (No. 169) included the fundamental concept that, “...the ways of life of indigenous and tribal peoples should and will survive and that these peoples and their traditional organizations should be closely involved in the planning and implementation of development projects which affect them”.¹¹² As stated in its preamble, C169 is grounded on the recognition of indigenous peoples’ aspirations to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development, and to maintain and develop their identities, languages and religions within the framework of the States in which they reside. The principles of consultation and participation therefore repre-

¹⁰⁷ Op. Cit., ILO: *Technical Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1965* (1974), p.54.

¹⁰⁸ *History of ILO’s Work*, ILO, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, <http://www.ilo.org/indigenous/Aboutus/HistoryofILOwork/lang—en/index.htm> (accessed on 26 September 2011).

¹⁰⁹ ILO: *Action Taken to Implement the Recommendations of the Second Session of the Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour*, Panel of Consultants on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, 1st Session, Geneva, 1962, p. 14.

¹¹⁰ They include one on self-supply by vulnerable groups (1979–81), and another on extension and consolidation of rural women’s production associations (1984–85) in Bolivia; one on increasing handicraft and agricultural production (1981 in Costa Rica; one on developing appropriate endogenous technologies for rural areas (1979–93 in Ecuador; and starting in 1985 a wide-ranging subregional project of support to organizations of indigenous workers in Andean countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru). ILO: *Rural Development – Taking Into Account the Problems of Indigenous Populations As Well As the Drift of the Rural Population to the Cities and Its Integration in the Urban Informal Sector*, Report II (Agenda Item 2), 12th Conference of American States, Members of the ILO, Montreal, 1986, pp. 44–51.

¹¹¹ The Indigenous Institutes of Bolivia and Peru and the Directorate of Indigenous Affairs of the Ministry of Social Welfare of Ecuador also participated; and technical meetings were organized in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador to discuss results.

¹¹² ILO: “Ten Years After: A Decade of Progress for Indigenous Peoples,” in *World of Work Magazine* (2004, No. 52, Nov), http://www.ilo.org-wow/Articles/lang—en/WCMS_081337/index.htm (accessed on 25 February 2011).

sent the cornerstone of the Convention that is to this day, “... recognized as the foremost international policy document on indigenous and tribal peoples. It sets minimum international standards, and seeks to bring governments, organizations of indigenous and tribal peoples and other non-governmental organizations together in the same dialogue”.¹¹³

The new approach underlying C169 has important implications with regard to rural development. Its Articles 2 and 33 for instance, require States to “institutionalize” the participation of ITPs in policies that affect them; and Articles 6, 7, and 15 provide the general legal framework with respect to consultation and participation of ITPs. States must ensure that ITPs participate at all levels of decision-making, in elective institutions, administrative bodies and other bodies responsible for policies and programmes that concern them. States must also ensure that ITPs are consulted, through their representative institutions, prior to the adoption of legislative or administrative measures that may affect them directly¹¹⁴. The Convention also affirms ITPs’ rights to decide their own priorities of development, to exercise control, to the extent possible, over their own economic, social and cultural development, and to participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national and regional development plans that may affect them directly.¹¹⁵

II.2.5.5. Disabled persons

Persons with disabilities began receiving significant attention from the ILO in the early-1970s, when assisting them came to be recognized as a special responsibility in social development.¹¹⁶ Initial work consisted mainly of TC projects to set up vocational rehabilitation centres and employment workshops aimed to “shelter” disabled persons in protected environments. The first such project, following a request from Trinidad in 1971 to provide vocational skills training to polio-affected people, saw the ILO set up a workshop and training centre that later became the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, still active today.¹¹⁷ It was followed by TC projects in Kenya (1973) and Uganda (1974) that established in both countries a vocational rehabilitation department within the Ministry (or Department) of Social Welfare.¹¹⁸ It also created vocational skills training centres in urban and rural areas targeting physically disabled persons, including youth, also operational to this day. Many rural rehabilitation centres were established in West and East Africa offering vocational adjustment courses to help the disabled become accustomed to the demands of a full and often exacting rural work life and training in rural daily living.¹¹⁹

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴For a description of the “qualitative elements” that a consultation process should respect in order to comply with the Convention, please see, *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples’ Rights and Practices – A guide to ILO Convention No. 169*, Chapter V.

¹¹⁵“Even where there is some degree of general participation at the national level, and *ad hoc* consultation on certain measures, this may not be sufficient to meet the Convention’s requirements concerning participation in the formulation and implementation of development processes, for example, where the peoples concerned consider agriculture to be the priority, but are only consulted regarding mining exploitation after a development model for the region, giving priority to mining, has been developed.” ILO: *General Observations concerning Convention No. 169*, Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, Geneva, 2009.

¹¹⁶ILO: *The Poor in Asian Development: An ILO Programme*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1975.

¹¹⁷National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, <http://www.ncpdtt.org/> (accessed on 19 November 2010).

¹¹⁸In Kenya the government established the Vocational Rehabilitation Division in the Department of Social services. Ten rural vocational rehabilitation centres were subsequently established nationwide to offer artisan courses such as carpentry, dressmaking and leatherwork. African Union for the Blind: *State of Disabled Peoples Rights in Kenya* (2007), Nairobi, 2007.

¹¹⁹Such as instruction in crop growing, chicken raising, animal husbandry, home economics, hygiene and literacy. On successful completion of the course, graduates were provided with basic hand tools before returning to their home areas; others banded together and formed small rural cooperatives. ILO: *Report of the Director-General*, International Labour Conference, 67th Session, Geneva, 1981.

Activities grew markedly in the 1980s, fuelled by the inclusion of vocational rehabilitation as a main theme in the Director-General's report to the 1981 ILC,¹²⁰ as well as the Programme of Action of the UN Decade of Disabled Persons (1983–92).¹²¹ They multiplied in 1981, with the entire ILO Vocational Rehabilitation Programme¹²² geared to support the objectives of the UN International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP).¹²³ The IYDP played an important role in raising awareness on the topic and considerably increased the volume of requests for ILO TC assistance to disabled workers, a trend that would continue up to the 1990s.

The ILO gradually developed more proactive approaches, emphasising inclusion and community-based rehabilitation services (including training centres in rural areas at regional and provincial level), innovative income-generating activities,¹²⁴ employment creation and self-employment schemes.¹²⁵ Work was carried out in partnership with the various relevant ministries (including ministries of social services, social affairs, and social welfare) and included strengthening governments' capacity to provide services to disabled persons. By 1989 over 60 developing countries were receiving assistance from the ILO for this purpose,¹²⁶ most of which had activities in rural areas. The ILO's work included helping the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to establish and train staff of the African Rehabilitation Institute, which became a new African intergovernmental body in 1986, and remains operational to this day.¹²⁷

II.2.5.6. Youth

The early ILO strategy concerning rural youth employment dealt mostly with the protection of young workers through legislation and regulation that created special measures for these youth. Notable instruments include the Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88), which provides special arrangements for youth, to be initiated and developed within the framework of the employment and vocational guidance services; the Employment Service Recommendation, 1948 (No. 83), which adds that special efforts should be made to encourage young people to register for employment and to attend employment interviews; and the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and its Recommendation (No. 146), which set guidelines for a general minimum age for admission to work.

Promotion of youth employment in rural areas through TC activities began in the 1970s through the WEP. The Programme emphasized vocational and pre-vocational training and education to increase the “employability” of rural youth in a broader scheme to combat un-

¹²⁰ ILO: *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Full Participation and Equality*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1981.

¹²¹ United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disunddp.htm> (accessed on 19 November 2010).

¹²² The programme was part of the Training Department activities.

¹²³ The International Year of Disabled Persons 1981, UN, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disiydp.htm> (accessed on 19 November 2010).

¹²⁴ A successful enterprise in Addis Ababa called the “United Abilities Company”, established under ILO TC arrangements and subsequently developed and expanded under Ethiopian management, was initially launched in an old building as an umbrella assembly workshop employing 18 blind, deaf and physically disabled persons (most of whom had previously relied on begging for a living). In 1981 it was providing well-paid employment for more than 400 severely disabled men and women who, in turn supported some 2,000 dependents. ILO: *Report of the Director-General*, International Labour Conference, 67th Session, Geneva, 1981, p. 19.

¹²⁵ ILO: *Activities of the ILO*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 76th Session, Geneva, 1989.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ African Rehabilitation Institute, <http://www.africanrehab.org.zw/> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

deremployment and unemployment. The WEP was supplemented by the Special Youth Schemes for Development Recommendation, 1970 (No. 136), which promoted “special schemes” to facilitate youth involvement in activities that contribute to the socio-economic empowerment of their community and country, with special attention on incorporating youth in agricultural and rural development schemes conceived as part of overall national development plans. Under this initiative, the ILO carried out pioneering studies on youth and rural development, investigating such issues as how to implement youth employment programmes, and how to increase youth participation through cooperatives. It provided technical assistance to government projects aimed at strengthening and expanding national youth service programmes; and collaborated actively with UNICEF in the field to develop guidelines on training schemes for youth in developing countries.

Vocational guidance and training for youth was promoted further through the adoption of the Human Resources Development Convention and Recommendation, 1975 (No. 142 and No. 150 respectively). Recommendation 150 contains a section devoted to the improvement of rural areas, noting that, “[p]rogrammes for rural areas should aim at achieving full equality of opportunity of the rural and urban populations as regards vocational guidance and vocational training”.¹²⁸

A major initiative of the '70s was the Skills Development for Self-Reliance (SDSR), which included a methodology to promote self-employment, small enterprises, and other income-generating activities in rural areas and generated a number of technical assistance programmes targeting rural youth.¹²⁹ In 1979 the ILO launched a TC project in seven Eastern and Southern African countries to demonstrate its applicability. Ultimate beneficiaries included women, and other marginalized groups in need of new skills or of skill upgrading, as assessed through community surveys, to prepare them for productive employment in rural areas, especially self-employment. Training was provided in carpentry, metalwork, horticulture, home economics, animal husbandry, forestry and business management and demonstrated potential for generating self-reliance among participating communities. The project was extended in 1983 when host governments adopted self-reliance as a policy.¹³⁰

From SDSR, the ILO developed the Training for Rural Gainful Activities (TRUGA) in 1983, which was initially launched in Bangladesh and Nepal. TRUGA targeted, among others, rural youth who had dropped out of school. It aimed to promote self- and wage employment in rural communities, with skills training as an entry point. Its activities usually involved rural non-farm employment, such as food processing, tool-making, fertilizer production, handicrafts and so forth. Based on its initial success, the methodology was also introduced in Indonesia, the Philippines, Somalia, and the Sudan. ITC-Turin was involved in organizing seminars to explain TRUGA's unique methodology and help government representatives draw up project proposals. The concept of self-reliance was central to both SDSR and TRUGA methodologies and involved a highly participatory approach where dialogue with target groups (in this case rural youth) would help design training packages. In the 1990s the approach would come to be known as Community-Based Training for (Self-) Employment and Income Generation (CBT).

¹²⁸ ILO: Human Resources Development Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150), paragraph 34(1).

¹²⁹ See ILO: *Assessment of Selected ILO Projects Concerning Rural Small Industrial Enterprises*, Governing Body, 238th Session, Committee on Operational Programmes, Geneva, 1987.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

In preparation for the International Youth Year (IYY) in 1985 the Office undertook a review of its activities to stimulate youth employment and training. Despite the visibility from the IYY, youth in general was not taken on as a major target, remaining instead as one beneficiary among many. As a result the ILO's work aimed at rural youth remained largely unseen, as in the case of broader ILO initiatives of the '80s such as the "Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives" (ACOPAM), discussed later, and SPWP, both of which counted young rural workers among their beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the approaches, methodologies, and training materials developed by these programmes remain highly relevant for the promotion of employment for young people mired in rural poverty.

ILC discussions in 1988 advised the ILO to strengthen training in agriculture and rural-related skills, partnering with local business owners and providing training in local trades so that youth will not have to travel to urban areas to access such activities, thus discouraging rural-urban migration. They also identified child labour as another challenge to youth employment in rural areas. The report noted that, "[d]espite high levels of youth unemployment and underemployment, the use of child labour is still widely prevalent in rural areas of developing countries",¹³¹ since the opportunity cost of hiring children is perceived as being close to zero, and rural families may see child labour as an immediate solution to economic woes. However, this practice has dire consequences for both children and youth.

While work on rural youth at Headquarters appears to have been limited, it was sustained at field level. JASPA had an extensive programme of work on youth employment in rural areas alongside its urban programmes. PREALC carried out research and analysis examining the impact on rural youth of various structural changes, focusing on population, education and production. ARTEP conducted surveys on the nature and dimensions of rural youth employment in several Asian countries.¹³² The Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR)¹³³ meanwhile, conducted independent research and tested methodologies for "disadvantaged youth" (a term that includes young people from rural localities). It also held regional workshops and meetings on training and employment issues for young workers (rural and urban), and thus greatly contributed to the ILO's literature on the topic.¹³⁴

II.2.5.7. Children

Child labour in rural areas has been an ILO concern from the earliest days, starting with the Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 7), since agriculture is a particularly dangerous sector. It continued to be addressed via standard setting in the '70s and '80s, through the passing of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), which applies particularly to specific sectors including, "...plantations and other agricultural undertakings ... but excluding family and small-scale holdings producing for local consumption and not regularly employing hired workers" (Article 5).¹³⁵

¹³¹ ILO: *Rural Employment Promotion*, Report VII, 75th Session, International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1988, p. 38.

¹³² D. H. Freedman: *Improving Skills and Productivity of Disadvantaged Youth*, Employment Working Paper No. 7 (Geneva, ILO, 2008), pp. 17–18.

¹³³ El Centro Interamericano para el Desarrollo del Conocimiento en la Formación Profesional.

¹³⁴ Op. Cit., Freedman (2008), p. 21.

¹³⁵ Greater emphasis on wage workers has been a recurrent theme in the ILO's work.

II. ILO'S RURAL "HEYDAYS" (1970s–1980s)

The '70s and '80s brought on a marked change in the ILO's approach to the topic of child labour, as it was realized that labour standards alone could not prevent its occurrence. Formulating a more effective strategy to combat child labour thus required a better understanding of the roles of children within the broader economic and social framework that was creating a demand for this type of labour. A major, comprehensive effort was thus launched to analyse the causes and consequences of child labour in rural and urban economies. Research efforts began in earnest in the late-'70s and continued into the '80s, making up part of the ILO's important contribution to the UN International Year of the Child (1979). A series of surveys and studies were undertaken in over 20 countries throughout Africa, South and South-East Asia, and Latin America. Publications were issued on various topics, such as the economic roles of children in low-income countries,¹³⁶ the social division of labour, access to schooling, and urban-rural migration patterns, to name a few.

Work on rural child labour remained particularly problematic given resistance across cultures and regions of the world to the idea that "helping out", particularly on family farms, can qualify as "child labour". Agriculture is typically under-regulated in many countries, so child labour laws, if they exist, are often less stringent than in other industries.¹³⁷ Adding to the challenge is the fact that the work of rural children is often invisible and unacknowledged as it may be carried out on behalf of the family or a third party as piecework or contribution to a quota required of a family on larger tasks.¹³⁸

By the 1980s the ILO was working at the policy level with member States to ensure the adoption and strict enforcement of laws and regulations on minimum age, as well as those prohibiting the employment or work of children in hazardous activities. Nevertheless the ILO's work occurred in an *ad hoc* manner as there was no designated Unit or projects to systematically promote activities to prevent child labour.

Recognizing that child labour would not be eradicated in the near future, even with national policies posing restrictions on the practice, the ILO adopted a secondary approach aimed at mitigating the effects of labour on children by targeting working conditions. As a result, it started promoting policies on occupational safety and health and the improvement of the physical environment in the workplace, based on the idea that, "...long-term development policies can be complemented by immediate measures aimed at regulating and humanising work by children so as to protect them against practices or conditions that jeopardise their normal physical and mental development, deny them the possibility of acquiring knowledge and skills and block their opportunities for the future".¹³⁹

The research and policy work of these decades gradually made child labour a central programmatic issue for the ILO, leading in 1992 to the launching of the Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

¹³⁶ G. Rodgers and G. Standing, "Economic Roles of Children in Low-Income Countries", in *International Labour Review* (1981, Vol. 120, No. 1, Jan-Feb), pp. 41–47.

¹³⁷ ILO: *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*, Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, International Labour Conference, 95th Session, Geneva, 2006.

¹³⁸ Child labour for third parties may be hidden because it is carried out as piecework or contributes to a quota required of a migrant farm-worker family on larger farms or plantations, and labour subcontracting arrangements by agricultural enterprises can disguise the phenomenon and allow employers to disclaim responsibility for any child found working on their farms or plantations.

¹³⁹ ILO: *Child Labour*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 69th Session, Geneva, 1983. The Report recognizes that in most developing countries and in many developed countries as well, child workers are found mainly in rural areas (p. 9); and it analyses the particularities of rural child labour.

II.2.5.8. Migrant Workers

Migration for employment within a country as well as abroad has long been seen by many poor households as a livelihood strategy to cope with economic, social, political or environmental risks. In many countries the lack of employment and difficult working and living conditions combined with disparities in income and human security are perennial causes of out-migration from rural areas.

The ILO has addressed labour migration issues since its inception. It has pioneered several international conventions on migrant workers, developed policy and administrative models and provided advisory services and technical cooperation from its earliest days. While the ILO's labour migration activity has not focused specifically on rural areas, it was always understood that a large portion of international labour migration originates from rural areas. In some cases, migrants from rural areas go abroad directly, while in others it may be a secondary movement following rural to urban migration within countries.

Rural areas have also been a destination for migrants since before the industrial revolution. Migration historically provided for labour needs in agriculture, mining, infrastructure construction and other activities in rural areas worldwide. As noted in a historical compilation of the ILO's work on migration, "... late colonial times witnessed many distinct streams of workers, generally flowing from the rural hinterland to coastal trading towns or mines, such as in Malaysia and South Africa, or to plantations, as in Gabon, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and also in Malaysia. Political independence scarcely impacted on the numbers of migrants, though sometimes on their composition...South-South migration was also an important feature in long-decolonized Latin America and in the Caribbean. For example, Haitians harvested sugar cane in the Dominican Republic...".¹⁴⁰

The reality that most of these migrants worked in jobs with little labour rights or social protection was a motivating factor for the elaboration of international standards by the ILO. The first Migration for Employment Convention (No. 66) was adopted by the ILO in 1939. While its entry into force was hindered by the Second World War, it did provide the backbone for the revised Migration for Employment Convention, (No. 97) in 1949.

Subsequently attention focused on urban destination issues in Western countries, although decolonization in Africa and agriculturally-dependent economies elsewhere also led to some involvement by the ILO in migration situations in rural areas. This work included, for example a Commission of Inquiry appointed in 1981 to examine the observance of a set of international labour Conventions by the Dominican Republic and Haiti regarding Haitian workers in the Dominican sugar cane industry; as well as assistance in the early and mid-1980s with the return of migrants expelled from several African countries.

¹⁴⁰ R. Böhning: *A brief account of the ILO and policies on international migration*, ILO Century Project (Geneva, ILO, 2010).

II.2.6. Main programmes, technical areas and approaches

Several programmes, technical areas, and approaches supported the ILO's rural development work and displayed the Organization's technical expertise. Profiled below are the main ones from that time: the labour-intensive works and cooperatives programmes; the technical areas of enterprises, skills, labour inspection, OSH and working conditions; and the participatory approach.

II.2.6.1. Labour Intensive Works

The Special Public Works Programme (SPWP) was a major component of the ILO's rural work in the '70s and '80s. It rapidly progressed from research, to surveys, to programmes, growing in size to reach over 20 countries, mainly in Saharan Africa, Asia and Central America at its peak in the mid-1980s. Its work accounted for over 50 per cent of ILO TC funds and attracted, in the first ten years of operation alone (1974-1983), over USD 65 million, mostly in the form of grants and funds for technical cooperation activities.¹⁴¹ It established a solid reputation with governments, donors and other agencies alike, and allowed for the ILO to be acknowledged as a technical leader in the field.

SPWPs were “special” in the sense that the investment funds they mobilized for participating countries were “in addition” to investment budgets normally available to Governments. They enabled Government and local populations to test innovative concepts, approaches and programmes for providing basic economic and social infrastructure with and for the people, demonstrate their feasibility and cost-effectiveness, include necessary capacity-building, and influence policy-level decision-making at a larger scale (i.e. in investment programmes funded under normally available investment budgets).

The Programme's dual goals were to help build much needed economic and social infrastructure through cost-effective, technically sound labour-intensive technologies, and in this way constitute a source of employment and income for the poorest. It was initially meant to supplement through visible, short-term aid packages, the long-term strategic research work of other EMPLOI Units, so as to strengthen the credibility of wider EMPLOI approaches in beneficiary countries and, “...supplement regular employment policy measures by assisting governments in the urgent provision of employment for a particular sector of the population through the construction and use of durable assets not initially foreseen in the development plan”.¹⁴²

SPWP activities focused on soil conservation, road work, irrigation and water supply, and social infrastructure. In Burundi (1979-1982) activities involved afforestation, erosion control, and road construction. Activities in Rwanda (1980-1983) helped create a regional network of feeder roads, and contributed to reforestation and erosion control. In the West Bengali region of India (1980-1982) work included irrigation and reforestation.¹⁴³ Initial evaluations yielded encouraging results, often proving the efficiency of labour-intensive methods over capital-intensive methods.

¹⁴¹ J. Gaude, N. Phan-Thuy and C. Van Kempen, “Evaluation of Special Public Works Programmes: Some Policy Conclusions”, in *International Labour Review* (1984, Vol. 123, No. 2, Mar-April), p. 204.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹⁴³ For more details see op. cit., Gaude et al. (1984), Table 1, p. 211.

A number of unique features made the Programme especially attractive. Firstly, activities were executed by governments themselves. The ILO used TC projects to provide technical advice and training to national staff as well as assistance in setting up suitable monitoring systems. Between 1979 and 1984 the Programme had organized 27 national training workshops in 14 countries for over 500 medium- to high-level national staff involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation of programmes.¹⁴⁴ The objective was to build a core group of national planners, technicians, and administrators who would then be able to plan future SPWPs according to the country's socio-economic needs, and progressively introduce relevant policy choices and operational approaches into mainstream investment programmes.

The approach thus allowed for significant impact at national policy level. Secondly, it strongly encouraged the active participation of local target group communities from design to execution and long-term maintenance, with an emphasis on capacity building of staff and institutions at various levels in both the public and private sectors. In a Nepali project (1980) for instance, local committees were formed by beneficiaries to oversee management and distribution of irrigation water and maintenance of the irrigation system;¹⁴⁵ in the United Republic of Tanzania (1980), the village council was actively involved in project identification and selection; and in Rwanda (1980), beneficiaries had a similar involvement and also managed logistics such as recruitment, shifts, and payment. This allowed for developing a national and local network of institutions and supporters for the approach, which proved crucial to overcoming "instabilities" such as changes in regimes and strategy. Thirdly, the Programme was known for its rigorousness and the use of a thorough screening process in the preparation of each project, followed-up by monitoring and evaluations using consistent evaluation tools the SPWP had developed exclusively for its projects.¹⁴⁶

Other agencies viewed the ILO's SPWP as having convincing overall (long-term) policies, technical reliability, and a high quality of services. Frequent contacts and joint activities with the UNDP, WB, Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), WFP, European Economic Community, and Nordic countries in particular, made them aware of the technical qualifications of the ILO SPWP staff, which consisted of a field-Headquarters network that allowed combining theoretical and first-hand expertise, coupled with a critical mass of technical support staff at the centre and in the regions, as well as a stable network of qualified external collaborators and consultants. The ILO was seen as a reliable technical agency available for a wide variety of technical inputs (review missions, training inputs, joint research and publication efforts, project staff inputs, core project management often of multi-donor programmes and so forth). As an evaluator of the Programme put it, "the ILO opened the eyes of the world [to employment-intensive investment]",¹⁴⁷ which is both particularly needed in rural areas and suitable to rural characteristics.

EMP/URG, as well as the programme that replaced it, EMP/INFRA, had strong support from the UNDP inter-regional programme, which provided funding for several experts stationed at

¹⁴⁴ Op. Cit., Gaudé et al. (1984), p. 209.

¹⁴⁵ P. Peek and P. Egger: *Evaluation of Three Special Public Works Programmes: Burundi, Nepal and Sierra Leone, Main Report*, UNDP/ILO Joint Meeting for Support to Special Public Works Programmes, (Geneva, ILO/UNDP, 1986), p. 27.

¹⁴⁶ Three main questions had to be answered before projects were taken up: what is the added value of our involvement, where do we want to be five years later, and what happens after we leave. This implied that wherever possible ILO funded its own preliminary missions to avoid initial dependence on outside donors, who pushed for ILO involvement regardless of feasibility. "Ironically, this 'non-promotion' approach attracted outside interest," per Helmut Watzlawick, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

¹⁴⁷ Ng Phan Thuy, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

the ILO Headquarters for almost 20 years. Scandinavian countries funded (and continue to do so) two regional EMP/INFRA teams in Africa and Asia promoting employment-intensive investment programmes. Being financially autonomous and much in demand in the regions, the SPWP survived the severe funding cuts of the early '90s. Since the mid-'80s EMP/INFRA maintained solid and continuous working relationships with counterparts in the World Bank, which led to the ILO's involvement as technical consultant in WB programmes, as well as to a DANIDA-funded position for an ILO adviser at the WB. The programme also developed strong relations with the WFP's food-for-work schemes that provided support to several large-scale SPWP initiatives in Sudan and Bangladesh for example.

EMP/INFRA appears to have had more contacts outside the ILO, with other agencies and donors, than with other ILO Units. As a result, its initiatives did not attempt to integrate other ILO concerns such as child labour, working conditions, workers' rights and gender, for instance.

In the 1980s, the ILO was faced with a rapidly growing demand for services, but also donor fatigue. The Programme adapted its approach, and large-scale public works were now designed to demonstrate labour-intensive technologies, training programmes and methodologies promoting collaboration among local actors to serve as catalysts for the mainstreaming of those approaches in countries' public works programmes. An important window for the Organization remained in the role it played as specialized consultant, as this allowed for the continuation of policy work from within national programmes.

II.2.6.2. Cooperatives

The ILO has consistently recognized the central role of cooperatives, establishing as early as 1920 a Cooperative Technical Service¹⁴⁸ to collaborate with employers' associations on job creation and with workers' unions on improving working and living conditions, mainly through policy advice and legal consultations. Following the ILO's "Recommendation concerning the Role of Co-operatives in the Economic and Social Development of Developing Countries", 1966 (No. 127), and as the ILO began responding to the development needs of newly independent member States, a Cooperative Branch was formalized with Regional/Subregional Advisors.¹⁴⁹ A major policy paper and action plan were also submitted to the United Nations Special Fund (UNSF, the predecessor of UNDP), to carry out TC programmes in new member States. The ILO and UNDP launched a series of projects spanning some 50 countries in the '70s–'90s,¹⁵⁰ with the ILO coordinating over 100 technical field experts at any one time. The positive results opened the door to a stream of bilateral funding.¹⁵¹

The food crisis of the '70s forced aid strategies for rural areas to address food security and job creation simultaneously. Cooperatives, with their natural link between food production and employment, presented an ideal strategy for bringing relief to poverty- and hunger-stricken

¹⁴⁸ The first Director-General actually proposed that the cooperative movement be institutionally represented in the Organization. As this proposal was not approved, he invited the workers' group to include, whenever relevant, representatives of the cooperative movement in the delegations to ensure their interests would be properly addressed. He also established a Cooperative Technical Service.

¹⁴⁹ The Arab States, Asia, the Caribbean, East Africa, Latin America and West Africa each had a specific cooperative adviser.

¹⁵⁰ Cooperatives for agricultural producers, food banks, handicraft and manufacturing, transport, consumers and saving societies, etc.

¹⁵¹ Funding mainly originated from Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

rural areas, while giving a boost to agriculture and therefore the capacity of rural areas to act as an economic “shock absorber”.

In the face of a serious drought and ensuing famine in the Sahel that was devastating rural as well as urban populations, the ILO and WFP jointly launched a major programme worth USD 44 million sponsored by Norway, called “Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives” (ACOPAM).¹⁵² It operated from 1978 to 1999 and was for many years the ILO’s largest TC programme, assisting grassroots cooperatives in five Sahelian countries to raise agricultural production, improve transportation and storage of food, marketing and finance (see the Cooperatives Approach, Appendix 4).

An official ex-post assessment of ACOPAM¹⁵³ identified many valuable lessons and noted that while the Programme did indeed contribute to the food security of an extended number of beneficiaries through its direct support to 725 select organizations,¹⁵⁴ its coverage was relatively “limited” due to: the intensive time commitments required to ensure viability of grassroots organizations; a tendency to design and have donors fund direct support projects; a multiplication of successful activities on their own rather than through national agencies; and a lack of proper national “anchorage” and partnerships to increase national and other actors’ ownership, knowhow and mastery in the use of ACOPAM methods.¹⁵⁵

Exceptions to the limited coverage were the Programme’s support to national strategies for cereal bank and national cooperative reforms, and its development and dissemination of methodologies and training tools towards the end.

ACOPAM had a major and broad impact on the ILO itself, which replicated the approach in several countries such as Cameroon, Chad and Madagascar. Its lessons were transmitted via several other cooperative initiatives such as COOPREFORM,¹⁵⁶ COOPNET,¹⁵⁷ INTERCOOP¹⁵⁸ and INDISCO. Those lessons also gave rise to the Strategy to Eradicate Poverty (STEP) programme, considered by many to be a follow-up of ACOPAM. The ILO can still glean good practices from ACOPAM, which leaves behind a comprehensive set of training manuals on topics ranging from management of cereal banks to gender and development.¹⁵⁹

In spite of its wide appeal and proven results, ACOPAM was not considered “in line” with mainstream ILO activities until the ‘90s. It remained somewhat “on the margins”, both at Headquarters and at regional and subregional levels. Yet the Programme also contributed greatly to agency goals on poverty alleviation by increasing rural employment and securing social rights; was a strong example on how to gradually strengthen gender sensitivity in pro-

¹⁵² Appui Coopératif au Programme Alimentaire Mondial.

¹⁵³ A. Mossige and E. Whist: *Evaluation of ACOPAM* (Oslo, Scanteam, 2000). ACOPAM’s impact was determined by analysing the degree to which ACOPAM’s performance within its two main objectives (strengthening local organizational capacities and increasing and diversifying the economic activities of local organizations) had an impact on ACOPAM’s overall goal: to improve Sahelian female and male farmers’ self-sufficiency and food security.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁵⁶ Structural Reform through improvement of cooperative development policies and legislation (COOPREFORM).

¹⁵⁷ Inter-regional network program for the development of human resources in cooperatives (COOPNET)

¹⁵⁸ Interregional programme for commercial exchanges among cooperatives (INTERCOOP)

¹⁵⁹ These manuals, developed in 1992–97 and based on acquired experience, include four on management of cereal banks, four on land management, four on functional alphabetization for management of irrigated land, one on export enterprises, one on gender and development and another on gender and organizations of producers. The ILO is now envisaging the use of ACOPAM’s experience in cereal banks and irrigated land, in particular in the arid zones of South Madagascar, following relevant updates and adaptations.

jects, and on how to screen projects for gender sensitization. Evaluators were surprised by the ILO's reluctance to support the continuation of ACOPAM's work, as well as by the limited efforts to make use of its experiences, including its human resources.¹⁶⁰ This reluctance has been attributed to ACOPAM's high level of independence, which resulted in shallow ownership and narrow anchorage within the ILO; ACOPAM's financial autonomy, which made it unnecessary to seek partnerships with other ILO programmes; and to some extent the fact that all documents and training materials were in French, thus limiting broader dissemination of and capitalization on ACOPAM's experiences, including contacts with other parts of the ILO.

The ILO's cooperative work included another major programme, the "Materials and Techniques for the Training of Cooperative Members and Managers" (MATCOM), operating between 1978 and the early'90s, which developed and implemented over 40 trainers' manuals and 60 learning elements – some of which were translated into over forty languages. They were used by different types of cooperatives in several economic sectors, by various target groups and levels of cooperative management. Training manuals targeting consumer and agricultural cooperatives, for instance, offer practical and detailed advice on how to improve business operations, ranging from budgeting practices to storage methods. The high demand for MATCOM training materials prompted an ILO review (in 2008) with an eye towards adaptation to modern-day situations.

In spite of organizational hurdles, these successful programmes demonstrate the capacity of rural cooperatives to support the growing efficiency, competitiveness and capitalization of rural producers. They play a valuable role in identifying the precise way in which coalitions, partnerships and new associations could be constructed in rural societies, with an emphasis on those that strengthen the participation and well-being of the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups. At its peak in the '80s, the ILO's cooperative approach was implemented in over 50 member States, ranging from agricultural producer cooperatives, cooperative food banks, handicraft and manufacturing cooperatives, to transport, housing, consumer and savings societies.¹⁶¹ The cooperative approach and its tools from the '70s and '80s remain highly relevant to this day and have been incorporated into ILO programmes such as those on Social Finance and Enterprises.

II.2.6.3. Entrepreneurship and Enterprises

Since the late '70s the ILO's WEP included a Programme on Appropriate Technologies (EMP/TEC), which aimed at documenting the importance of choices of technology for employment generation and income distribution, with a specific focus on small rural industries. Its work ranged from advising Governments, enterprises and workers, and their institutions, in sectors such as road construction and rehabilitation, cottage industries and handicrafts, combining analytical work with the research-based conception of operational tools and capacity building.¹⁶² The objective was to provide detailed guidance to practitioners on appropriate technology, for example through a series of some 20 short manuals spanning subjects

¹⁶⁰ Op. cit., Mossige and Whist, *Evaluation of ACOPAM* (2000).

¹⁶¹ J. Fazzio: *The ILO and Cooperatives – Ninety Years of Partnership for a More Decent World for Working People*, ILO and Cooperatives, COOP News No. 1, (Geneva, ILO, 2009), pp. 2–3.

¹⁶² See, for example, M. Allal and E. Chuta: *Cottage Industries and Handicrafts: Some Guidelines for Employment Promotion* (Geneva, ILO, 1982).

such as tanning hides, fish processing, maize milling, and solar drying of food, as well as a computerized technological information system. The programme was also involved in the development and diffusion of adapted farm tools and implements, such as inexpensive hand tools and hand-operated and animal-drawn farm equipment. TC projects helped test and refine those technologies. A number of products still remain, such as a handicraft development organization in Madagascar and a project to assist Laotian rural women to produce, market, and now export, textile products.

Another Unit, the ILO Management Development Programme, focused on assisting small-scale enterprises (on issues related to productivity, management, enterprise expansion and creation of productive employment), based on an adaptation of experiences with urban entrepreneurs; and on improving the management of large agricultural and rural development programmes.

Entrepreneurship capacity building was a third area of work that in the ‘80s developed the ILO’s Improve your Business (IYB) tool. The first major TC project using this tool took place in the mid-‘80s, to support employers’ organization in promoting small and medium size enterprises, and targeting, “...rural areas where small enterprises have best potential.”¹⁶³ As mentioned earlier, this initiative began in Asia (1981) and Africa (1982) through a series of seminars. Its success led to its replication in East Africa from 1989 to 1993.

Then Director-General, Francis Blanchard, highlighted the special importance of reaching rural areas that, “...have until now benefited too little from industrialization”.¹⁶⁴ He stressed the need to support small rural enterprises that have an important capacity to create jobs, multiply, and satisfy the basic needs of local populations.

Likewise the Report discussed at the ILC of 1986 on the Promotion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises contained over 200 references to rural enterprises and to their role in rural development, including micro-finance.¹⁶⁵ Conclusions of that discussion noted among others how, “...for developing countries in particular, the promotion of small enterprises in rural areas should command a high priority”, along with assistance to NGOs that play a very useful role in supporting their development.¹⁶⁶ Consequently they foresaw that “...assistance [to] SMEs and entrepreneurship development in the rural sector will be a priority area of the ILO’s action for many years”.

II.2.6.4. Skills

Skills development for employment was a major component of the ILO’s initiatives in the ‘70s and ‘80s, particularly those targeting youth and women. In 1988 alone over 35 rural vocational training projects were operational,¹⁶⁷ assisting rural training institutions to improve effectiveness and efficiency, advising governments in the formulation of national rural vocational training policies and plans; and developing specific technical skills. The ILO’s three

¹⁶³ ILO project: “Assistance to Employers’ Organizations with Special Emphasis on Promoting Small Enterprise Development”, via employers’ organizations in Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia (1984–1996).

¹⁶⁴ ILO: *Speech by the Director-General*, Niamey seminar to launch the IYB tool, Niger, 1982, pp. 3–4.

¹⁶⁵ ILO: *The Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises*, Report VI, 72nd session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1986.

¹⁶⁶ ILO: *Conclusions concerning the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises*, 72nd session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1986, paragraph 19.

¹⁶⁷ ILO: *Rural Employment Promotion*, Report VII, 75th session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1988, p. 55.

regional training programmes,¹⁶⁸ albeit not focused on rural training, also helped provide technical advice and develop new approaches.

In response to the inadequacy of traditional rural vocational training, the ILO started to conceive in the second half of the '70s a new generation of rural skills development programmes primarily concerned with agricultural development. They were based on short courses and demonstration seminars in Farmer Training Centres and agricultural extension services.

As for training for non-farm occupations in rural areas, at the time, it took place in poorly equipped institutions (if offered at all) that were often located in regional or provincial centres, and oriented more towards providing skills better suited to urban labour markets than the countryside.¹⁶⁹ Realizing too that many rural families try to supplement their farm incomes through non-farm activities, that industrial enterprises were scarce in rural areas, and that this resulted in considerable self-employment, the ILO's new rural training methodology was based on relevance of content and delivery methods, as well as on cost-effectiveness, and integrated elements of support to self-employment. It used a systems approach that, while focused on training, took into account surrounding key factors to enable trainees to gain employment and income. Such an approach included identification of employment opportunities matching local needs; self-reliance involving, among others, a highly participatory approach using target groups and other stakeholders in the design of training packages; and post-training assistance, for instance to obtain micro-finance and start a micro-enterprise.

This systemic approach was tested in two main projects over the 1980s. The first, Skills Development for Self Reliance (SDSR) for Eastern and Southern Africa,¹⁷⁰ yielded positive results, with impact evaluations revealing that in spite of difficulties related to specific countries (for instance administrative delays), graduates, especially women, did indeed experience an increase in income.¹⁷¹ The second major project, launched in Asia in 1983,¹⁷² was an adaptation of SDSR, with slightly different instruments and procedures, which formed the Training for Rural Gainful Activities (TRUGA) approach. ITC-Turin was involved in organizing seminars on this methodology, and with helping government representatives draw up project proposals. A Meeting of Experts on Community-based Training, held in 1993 at ILO's ITC-Turin to discuss the experiences with SDSR and TRUGA, led to combining them to form one single approach: the Community-Based Training for (Self-) Employment and Income Generation (CBT) approach, which allowed nonetheless for adaptations to local socio-economic and institutional specificities.

II.2.6.5. Occupational Safety and Health and Working Conditions

Recognizing that agriculture is one of the three most hazardous sectors (after mining and construction), and that many of these workers are exposed to long hours, difficult working

¹⁶⁸ The Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP), the African Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CIADFOR), and the Inter-American Centre for Vocational Training Research and Documentation (CINTERFOR).

¹⁶⁹ A. Gorham and A. Espinoza: *Rural Vocational Training. Recent Experiences and Lessons Learned* (Geneva, ILO/ITC-Turin, 1990); J. Zarraga: *Skills Training Programmes for Rural Workers* (Geneva, ILO, 1986).

¹⁷⁰ Participating countries were: Kenya, Lesotho, Somalia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

¹⁷¹ ILO: *Skills Development for Self-Reliance – Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland and Zambia*, Report of ILO/SIDA evaluation mission, Geneva, 1991.

¹⁷² These types of projects were first implemented in Bangladesh and Nepal, then spread to the Philippines, Belarus, the Russian Federation and some Central Asian Republics, Indonesia, Somalia and the Sudan.

conditions, hazardous machines and chemicals, and situations requiring extreme physical exertion, the ILO first sought to improve conditions through standard setting. However these early efforts did not fully acknowledge the scope of the dangers inherent in agricultural tasks. Both the Conditions of Employment of Plantation Workers Convention, 1958 (No. 110), and its Recommendation (No. 110) merely suggest that, “... Members should take appropriate measures for the prevention of accidents and occupational diseases” (R.110, Art. 45). The Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), supplemented by Recommendation (No. 164), has generic occupational safety and health requirements applicable to all sectors, all the while allowing member States to temporarily exclude branches of economic activity, such as agriculture, from its scope.¹⁷³ Such exclusions have been used in several countries but should be progressively eliminated.¹⁷⁴

Work in the ‘60s to ‘80s also focused on research and capacity building, leading among others to a number of reports, such as *Occupational safety, health and welfare in the wood working industries* (1967), *Occupational safety and health problems in the timber industries* (1981), *Ergonomics applied to forestry* (1983), *Occupational health and rehabilitation of forest workers* (1985), and to a *Code of practice on safety and health in agricultural work* (1965),¹⁷⁵ which provided a set of rules and guidelines for operators. This was followed by a *Guide to safety in agriculture in 1969*, which provided further details on prevention, and by a publication in 1977 on the *Safe use of pesticides*, which explained general principles and safety requirements for various applications, transportation techniques, as well as prevention measures. These were complemented by another code of practice in 1978 on *Safe design and use of chainsaws*, and in 1979 by a *Guide to health and hygiene in agricultural work*, targeting a broad audience, and dealing with the physiology and toxicology of pesticides, as well as with medical surveillance.¹⁷⁶

In the 1980s, the ILO also prepared a set of practical manuals and guides relevant to agriculture within its occupational safety and health series. This included *Safety and health of migrant workers* (1983), *Dermatoses and Professions* (1983), *Safe use of pesticides: guidelines* (1985), *Occupational cancer: prevention and control* (1988), *Maximum weights in load lifting and carrying* (1988), *Organization of first aid in the workplace* (1989), and *Occupational lung diseases: prevention and control* (1991).

In 1988, an ILC Resolution concerning rural employment promotion expressly indicated that workers should be adequately protected against potential occupational hazards (related for example to chemical and biological hazards emerging from new technologies), and called on the ILO to develop strategies for improving the living and working conditions of rural workers and to assist in the establishment of integrated national occupational safety and health programmes. It also called for work on this matter within the Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT),¹⁷⁷ an initiative

¹⁷³ On the conditions specified in its Articles (1), (2), and (3).

¹⁷⁴ See ILO: *General Survey on occupational safety and health*, Geneva, 2009, Sections 34–37 and 45–46.

¹⁷⁵ The Code was meant to implement two ILO Resolutions: an ILC Resolution of 1950 highlighting the need for further study of the safety and health problems associated with mechanization and the use of chemicals in agriculture; and the Resolution adopted in 1955 by the ILO Permanent Agricultural Committee soliciting international safety and health standards for agriculture.

¹⁷⁶ The Guide targets, among others, agricultural extension workers, farm managers, school teachers, primary health-care workers and workers' education leaders, providing advice on living conditions and environmental hygiene (housing, farm buildings, water supply, manure and sewage, environmental health, food sanitation), ergonomics, prevention and management of pesticide poisoning and other occupational diseases, as well as on occupational health services and medical inspection.

¹⁷⁷ Programme International pour l'Amélioration des conditions et du milieu de travail

launched in 1976 in response to the growing attention paid to small enterprises, to help improve working life, including prevention of occupational diseases and accidents, application of ergonomic principles, upgrading of work organization, working time arrangements and conditions of work in general, and greater concern for the human element in the transfer of technology.¹⁷⁸ Although its approach was general, a number of activities did focus on rural areas and issues.¹⁷⁹ The ILO capitalized on the positive experiences of PIACT to develop in the late '80s the Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE) methodology, from which it derived the Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND) in the '90s.

II.2.6.6. Labour Inspection

Labour inspection has been a great concern and major challenge for the ILO.¹⁸⁰ Implementing labour inspection is especially arduous in rural settings where it is hindered by the fragmentation of work, patterns of employment, transparency issues (on the part of inspectors, employers, and workers),¹⁸¹ widespread informal activities, labour migration patterns, forced labour, child labour, and public administration functions related to labour inspection. The task is further complicated by characteristics of rural areas, in particular widely scattered smallholdings;¹⁸² the small number of wage-earning agricultural workers; and the fact that most rural workers are mainly self-employed or family workers, who are not covered by labour laws.¹⁸³ The precarious nature of rural employment and wage systems, combined with shortages of labour inspectors and vehicles for visiting remote rural enterprises, also makes the task especially difficult.¹⁸⁴

In the 1970s the ILO broadened the scope of its labour inspection legal instruments. The Labour Inspection in Agriculture Convention, 1969 (No. 129) and its corollary, Recommendation No. 133, aimed at preventing the exclusion of agricultural enterprises from the national system of labour inspection. These were preceded by the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) and the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110), both of which had an impact on labour inspection in rural settings. The coverage of C129 is broad in terms of "type" of economic activity,¹⁸⁵ and includes, "...undertakings and parts of undertakings engaged in cultivation, animal husbandry including livestock production and care, forestry, horticulture, the primary processing of agricultural products by the operator of the holding or any other form of agricultural activity" (Article 1.1). Nonetheless the scope of Convention No. 129 is somewhat limited by Article 4, which states that in order to be subject to la-

¹⁷⁸ See, for example, J. de Givry: "The ILO and the Quality of Working Life - A New International Programme", in *International Labour Review* (1978, Vol. 117, No.3, May-Jun) pp. 261–272.

¹⁷⁹ See, for example, I. Ahmed: *Improved Working Conditions and Environment in Philippine Forestry*, (Geneva, ILO, 1977).

¹⁸⁰ Even in countries where agriculture is the main activity, where rural workers represent between 60 and 80 per cent of the population, labour inspectors tend to confine their activities to the protection of workers employed by large industrial enterprises in the capital or in the major cities, i.e. to a minority of workers representing between 10 and 20 per cent of the economically active population. See ILO: *General Survey on Labour Inspection*, 3rd Item on the Agenda: Information and reports on the application of Conventions and Recommendations, Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (articles 19, 22 and 35 of the Constitution), International Labour Conference, Report III (Part 1B), 95th Session, Geneva, 2006.

¹⁸¹ The work in Latvia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan, and Bangladesh for example highlighted the transparency issue for labour inspectors. The International Association of Labour Inspection (IALI) created an Ethical Court for Administrators, http://www.iali-aiit.org/iali/download/directions/Code_of_Integrity.pdf (accessed on 25 February 2011).

¹⁸² For more details see also ILO: *Labour Inspection on Plantations*, 3rd Item on the Agenda, Report III, Committee on Work on Plantations, 5th Session, Geneva, 1966, Chapter IV: The staff, its powers and the facilities and cooperation it needs.

¹⁸³ ILO: *Study on Labour Inspection and Precarious Employment in Agriculture and the Food Industry*, Geneva, 1993.

¹⁸⁴ ILO: *Strategies and Practice for Labour Inspection*, Governing Body, Employment and Social Policy Committee, 3rd Item on the Agenda, Geneva, 2006.

¹⁸⁵ It is broader than previous ones, such as that on Conditions of Employment of Plantation workers, 1958 (No. 110) and Related Recommendation (No. 110) that only covered commercial cultivation or production.

bour inspection, an agricultural undertaking must employ wage-earning workers or apprentices, and also excludes holdings on which the work is performed by family members or co-operators. This is partly compensated by Article 5, which invites every member State to extend labour inspection coverage in agriculture to other categories of persons working in agricultural undertakings (that is, tenants who do not engage outside help, share-croppers, members of a cooperative and operator's family members), thus empowering labour inspection systems to extend their activities to all agricultural workers. The adoption of Convention No. 150 and Recommendation No. 158 (1978) on Labour Administration constituted a further advancement as it invited Governments to gradually extend the coverage of labour administration systems to categories of workers who are not "by law" employed persons, such as tenants who do not engage outside help, sharecroppers and similar categories of agricultural workers, members of cooperatives, etc.

II.2.6.7. Participatory approach

Democratization and the development of representative trade unions and rural workers' organizations were leading themes of the '70s and '80s. Besides mainstreaming this dimension in its work, in 1977 the ILO set up a Programme on Participatory Organizations of the Rural Poor (PORP), based on the fact that the landless, sharecroppers, and other groups of rural poor require basic organization and empowerment in order to benefit from other development initiatives. "Participation" was the key concept; and its highly self-motivated originator, Anisur Rahman, went so far as to undertake an unpaid six-month-long self-study in a rural village in Bangladesh, where he lived and worked, as a private citizen, to promote and refine the approach. The end-product was a "revolution" in development work that had heretofore viewed beneficiaries in a passive, receptive role. Its objective was to enable villagers to actively participate in decision-making processes and arrive at solutions that genuinely address their needs and concerns. Moreover, it emphasized the empowerment of beneficiaries to make decisions for themselves beyond the immediate purposes and duration of a project or programme.

Work focused on the conscientization of people to their rights and capacity building (on land tenure, various economic activities, bureaucracy, money lending, etc.). In one initiative, groups of people were given grants to research on their needs, organizations, economic activities, local government, landlords and moneylenders, with help from specialists in the case of more technical and complex matters. In this way, beneficiaries received skills and experience to be used after a project's completion as well as on other matters. Work was initially concentrated in South and South-East Asia. After a model was developed drawing on these experiences, it was extended to Latin America and to Africa by the mid-1980s, eventually reaching over 15 countries.

The Programme involved renowned intellectuals such as the grassroots activist and Nobel laureate, M. Yunus, the well-known promoter of women's organizations and founder of the Grameen Bank, who recognized the approach as relevant and innovative. Attempts also began in the mid-'80s to link this participatory work with established trade unions in development and pressure-group work. However, in the late '80s, following the departure from the Office of its originator, who was the only official managing and mastering the approach, the Programme rapidly "fizzled out". The lessons learned did not reach the policy level envisioned; and the approach was not developed or used further despite its widely-recognized

value. This episode clearly illustrates the danger of a “one-man show”, whereby a single official undertakes a project or approach with little or no mainstreaming with the greater House agenda.

II.3. Impact, Legacy and Lessons

II.3.1. Impact assessment

The decades of the '70s and '80s profiled above generated a prodigious amount of rural initiatives. Regrettably a systematic analysis of their impact is hampered by the lack of necessary documentation. Impact assessments were relatively limited (in number and scope) at the time, mostly for lack of human and financial resources, although the need for more systematic efforts was widely acknowledged. Of the limited number that were undertaken, few remain available for consultation, having been lost during Office restructuring (as in the case of EMP/RU files), or purged in accordance with archival retention guidelines. Some important evaluations of ILO programmes and structures nonetheless did take place periodically, and are still available, namely those within the ACRD, as mentioned in section II.2.3.2.

As concerns the ILO's TC projects, one frequently cited reason for the lack of fully-fledged evaluations was the size of projects, which were usually too small (under USD 500,000) to justify data collection expenses. Potential for assessment was thus predetermined based on size, so project designs for smaller initiatives usually focused more on inputs, activities and outputs, with relatively little attention to general objectives, and even less to the ILO's higher-level objectives (as featured in the ILO's Constitution and relevant Conventions, Recommendations and Resolutions). Even fewer evaluations made provisions for “ex-post” evaluations to gauge impact that could manifest itself months or even years after the end of a project. A notable exception was the SPWP, which appeared relatively more successful at focusing on impact-type issues due in part to the larger size of its interventions, the involvement of external agencies, and thus more rigorous accountability requirements.

The importance of evaluation exercises was demonstrated by an appraisal undertaken in 1973 by an ILO Advisory Working Group on Evaluation of Rural Employment Promotion and Integrated Rural Development Projects. It drew important and astonishingly “modern” lessons such as the need for:

- Full government commitment (in the form of a clearly formulated rural development policy, an effective administrative and coordinating mechanism for national, regional and local activities and resource allocation in terms of materials and personnel inputs);
- International cooperation to fit national frameworks, supporting and supplementing government policies and programmes;
- Careful preparation and planning of integrated rural development;
- Situation-specific integrated rural development programmes;

- Preparation of long-term, well-phased, priority-oriented and flexible projects;
- Work on promoting agriculture *and* non-farm activities;
- Maximum degree of decision-making decentralization and relaxation of rigid administrative rules and procedures; expanded international efforts in integrated rural development and inter-agency coordination mechanisms to avoid duplications and reinforce complementarities;
- Examining difficulties encountered, as justification for continued and increased involvement.¹⁸⁶

Evaluations of select operational activities were often presented to the Governing Body for informational purposes and general discussion. However, results and lessons learned usually focused on project work management.¹⁸⁷

A few *ad hoc* reviews provide more impact-oriented assessments of selected projects and policy implementation.¹⁸⁸ Among their main lessons is the “appeal” of projects with simultaneous action on several fronts (in spite of their complexity involving the coordination of various units and experts); as opposed to those concentrating on a single bottleneck, which are admittedly easier to manage and deliver quicker results. Similarly, it is easier to work with project target groups already active in the trade or craft being developed than with persons not yet employed. Project length and project stages should include time for a preparatory phase (of about a year) to carry out in-depth studies, design a proper (simple) management structure, make choices in collaboration with future beneficiaries and carry out pilot activities to test the various technical solutions (bearing in mind among others, the need to match maintenance costs and modalities to the village capacities).

Rural project designs also need to consider that while structures can be set up in three years (the usual length of a project), it is difficult to achieve the active participation of beneficiaries and creation of the human and organizational resources to manage them within such short period of time. Three years could therefore constitute a pilot phase, concentrating on capacity building of local resources and enlisting the support of the local population, to improve chances of success and the viability of the whole programme. The extended phase would develop possibilities to sustain the programme at a local level, including a permanent unit responsible for promoting and supervising this type of initiative within their normal work programme, and institutional support at the national level. The staggering of objectives over time will also allow experts to become familiar with local potentials and constraints, and to build capacity and provide support to national technical services in related areas. The lessons also ask not to pay too much attention to the “profitability” of pilot projects (which can be modest or uncertain), since they are carried out for demonstration purposes, to introduce new approaches and working methods.

¹⁸⁶ Op. Cit., ILO: *Technical Review of ILO Rural Development Activities since 1965* (1974), pp. 12–13.

¹⁸⁷ Their recurrent findings ranged from unrealistic objectives, plans and expectations, to administrative and logistic delays and other constraints, to staff qualification and transfer of trained staff, to projects operating in parallel to existing governmental structures, with uncertain links to national institutions and chains of command, to constituent's uncertain decision making and changes of priorities.

¹⁸⁸ See, for instance, P. Kilby and P. Bangasser, “Assessing Technical Cooperation: the Case of Rural Industry”, in *International Labour Review* (1978, Vol. 117, No. 3, May–Jun), pp. 343–352; and J. Gaude, A. Guichaoua, B. Martens and S. Miller, “Rural Development and Labour-Intensive Schemes, in *International Labour Review* (1987, Vol. 126, No. 4, Jul-Aug), pp. 423–446.

A larger impact-assessment in 1989 of 30 ILO rural projects,¹⁸⁹ reaches somewhat similar conclusions, using as criteria growth (particularly income-generation), equity (in terms of capacity to reach the poorest), sustainability, and popular participation. Its results tend to favour “multi-purpose” projects, for example those combining technical and entrepreneurship training with post-training assistance in the form of credit and marketing facilities and advisory services. This was the case of a Cottage Industries training Programme, particularly for poor women in Bangladesh, providing instruction in tailoring, processing fibres, knitting, weaving and cane/bamboo production, where 95 per cent of beneficiaries indicated they had experienced a net increase in their incomes.¹⁹⁰

A range of integrated activities, step by step approaches consisting of a sequence of activities to allow developing local capacity gradually are recommended to reduce the higher probability of failure. As for the challenge of maintaining assets and procedures after project completion, direct involvement of beneficiaries in the project and ensuring that they realize the project benefits them directly play a major role. This was seen in a community irrigation project in Nepal where a users’ committee composed of the village chief and representatives of project beneficiaries were given responsibility for asset maintenance and for dividing resource [water] allocation and maintenance responsibility among beneficiaries.¹⁹¹

In terms of equity, these same projects demonstrate the difficulties in ensuring access to and participation of the poorest segments of the target group. In the case of the Nepal irrigation schemes, larger farmers seemed to have benefited the most, although the workers employed to construct the structures were generally from the poorest segments. In the abovementioned Bangladesh example, locale elites found the project attractive as well and took part in it themselves, resulting in a situation where most of the trainees came from semi-urban areas and more economically prosperous background.¹⁹² Another challenge of targeting disadvantaged groups is that since projects are to be economically viable, technical departments, but also donors and national counterparts, tend to select participants who are less “risky”, to be able to demonstrate quicker and bigger returns on the resources invested.

As concerns people’s participation, that same assessment concludes that there exists no one guaranteed method to ensure it. Nevertheless participation needs to feature as an explicit objective in project designs and evaluations as it is a fundamental “basis” that needs to be planned, prepared, and budgeted for. Participation is key to the success of initiatives, as well as their sustainability. The assessment also examined the dimensions of institution building and self-reliance, and found that the most promising approaches “work their way up” from the bottom by building capacity among institution officials to negotiate, bargain, and control particular activities. This process is aided further when coupled with a fundamental basic interest from beneficiary organizations and national authorities.¹⁹³ Another way of promoting sustainability is through self-reliance. To this end the use of locally available resources (skills, materials, technologies, markets, etc.) and upgrading of existing ones is crucial.

¹⁸⁹ Opt. cit., Egger and Peek: *ILO Projects for Rural Development: Some Preliminary Evidence on Their Impact* (1989). The review uses qualitative data and a combination of written and oral sources.

¹⁹⁰ S. Kalyanoa and M. Bishayaka Mantranoya: *Final Report on the Evaluation of the Thana-level Cottage Industries Training-cum-Production Centers* (Dhaka, Bangladesh Project Management Institute, 1988).

¹⁹¹ ILO/UNDP: *Evaluation of Three Special Public Works Programmes: Burundi, Nepal and Sierra Leone*, Geneva, 1986.

¹⁹² Op. cit., Kalyanoa and Mantranoya: *Final Report on the Evaluation of the Thana-level Cottage Industries Training-Cum-Production Centers* (1988).

¹⁹³ ILO: *Employment Opportunities for Rural Women through Organization, Phase III (1984–1985)*, Interim evaluation, Geneva, 1985.

Sustainability, which is about ensuring that temporary actions are translated into lasting changes, has been among the concerns least addressed in evaluations; and yet it is perhaps the most fundamental for solid development. For example, in several labour-intensive works programmes that were reviewed, government support during the project was often limited to financial support for maintaining institutions, rather than activities, with even less attention on continuation after the project's end.¹⁹⁴ Few projects in fact seem to seriously address the cost to the government of continuing a particular initiative. The main lesson here is that technical assistance needs to adapt to the institutional absorption capacity and economic and financial situation and priorities of countries. This concern is also mentioned repeatedly in several project evaluation reports submitted to the GB. A project cannot be an entity separate from the local and national contexts, or from the capacities and longer-term involvement of ILO operations in the field. Linked to this idea are two other key principles: that projects need to combine direct assistance to the rural poor with technical and policy advisory services during the project and after its completion; and that they need to be consistent with macro-economic policies.

Available assessments allow us to conclude that the ILO was generally successful at the micro-level, with new approaches and actors, and also impacted the institutional level, for instance through several highly-recognized training centres (some of which still exist). Reaching the national (or macro-) level proved the most challenging. It is uncertain how much the ILO's path-breaking concepts and approaches impacted national policies and strategies as the ILO did not build specific technical advisory services on them, for instance. Nevertheless its employment missions benefited from that new knowledge; and in a number of areas, such as women and EII, there were instances of those novel ideas being "driven into" the thinking, debates and decision-making of key ministries, including technical ministries and ministries of economy and finance. The ILO was particularly incisive in the international policy debate on development and on rural policy through several highly innovative concepts and approaches (See table 1). This calls for developing means to reach national and international policy levels as an important component of rural initiatives.

II.3.2. A rich legacy of cutting-edge concepts and approaches

The rural development work of the ILO in the '70s and '80s presents a wealth of concepts and approaches that the Organization, and the development community at large, can build on today. The ILO was a forerunner, often leading research, and "...was the first one to voice shortcomings"¹⁹⁵ in rural development and on the approaches used to tackle it. Some ILO pioneering concepts that are still viewed as "modern" include: *injecting human resources, popular participation and related social aspects into rural work* (at a time when the WB, IFAD and FAO for instance, concentrated on agricultural production and productivity); introducing *a focus on labour absorption*, rather than production, when considering agriculture and poverty; setting "*poverty*" and its eradication at the core of rural development, and providing keys to grasp its structure, determinants, trends and effects; establishing the concepts of *entitlement* (including the right to food, particularly in difficult circumstances such as poverty and famines); *rights*

¹⁹⁴ ILO: *Sierra Leone Labour-Intensive Rural Works Programme*, Evaluation Report, Geneva, 1988.

¹⁹⁵ Samir Radwan, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

to land and land reform; appropriate (employment-friendly) technological choices, micro-finance, minimum wages and working condition for growth with equity; and growth with equity itself.

The ILO also revealed the phenomenon of *informality* and its basic features and determinants; explained the essential nature and dynamics of *participatory approaches*, and of *workers' and women's mobilization*, and provided methods to achieve them. It demonstrated *women's potential* as protagonists in rural labour markets as well as in the development of their families and communities. More importantly, the ILO developed the means to unlock this potential, for instance through dedicated initiatives that organized women beneficiaries and put them in contact with authorities, but also by ensuring that more general programmes and policies go in that same direction of unlocking women's potential (or at least that they do not go in the opposite direction). Efforts by the EIIP to ensure women's equal access to training and job opportunities and equal wages for work of equal value present a good example of such efforts. Moreover, the ILO promoted *self-empowerment of rural populations* through self-awareness, organization and participation, coupled with training and productive income generation, as a basis for the development of those areas. In a similar vein, it adopted an *enabling approach towards disadvantaged groups* such as ITPs and disabled persons, rather than merely a protective one. The ILO also established the role of *employment intensive works* and of *cooperatives* in combining the economic goals of infrastructure development and productive activities, fundamental in rural areas, with those of job creation, social wellbeing, equitable growth and participatory/democratic processes, all equally important to the creation of growth-oriented rural communities.

Some approaches and tools were abandoned along the way by the ILO, such as the basic needs approach, which had become overly complex and too broad for the ILO's mandate (although as mentioned earlier it did inspire a host of other concepts and approaches within ILO and more broadly, and is still referred to as a major step in rural development). It is encouraging that the World Bank now appears to be "rediscovering" basic needs-based strategies, and the UN too, through the concept of MDGs. Unfortunately some other tools and approaches were discontinued in spite of their proven value and relevance within the ILO mandate. The financial and human resources to use them and keep them up to date dwindled or stopped altogether, such as the case of the MATCOM family of tools, and of workers' organizations, both of which warrant "rediscovery". Other approaches and tools, which were just as promising, such as PIACT and Start Improve Your Business (SIYB), matured in the following years into full-fledged instruments that are among the most successful ones today.

The ILO's impact on rural development in those years is undeniable; and as previously mentioned, a good part of its legacy is "ready for use" today or deserves to be rediscovered and updated. Just as important to helping shape rural development strategy and methodology are the key lessons from those heydays of the ILO's rural work that explain achievements, as well as shortcomings. They include human resources, institutional commitment, work organization, strategy and methodology, external and impact-oriented evaluation, and provide valuable insight for shaping future initiatives.

Table 1. Legacy and lessons for today's work

ILO pioneering concepts and approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth with equity • Rural development central to growth and development • Poverty, and poverty eradication at the core of rural development • Human resource-based rural work • Focus on labour absorption, rather than merely on production • Appropriate (employment-friendly) technology and employment-intensive works • Informality • Small enterprises • Microfinance • Basic needs • Enabling approach towards disadvantaged groups • Entitlement • Right to land and land reform • Minimum wages and working conditions, for growth with equity • Self-empowerment of rural populations • Participatory approaches • Workers' mobilization • Women's mobilization/empowerment • Gender division of labour
Lessons	<p>Organization-wide backing of a rural agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of constituents to set rural dimensions high on the ILO's agenda • Joint vision and responsibility for rural work • Active networking, open communication, joint work, integration, and coordination are indispensable; avoid isolation, false sense of "self-sufficiency" and competition among Units, which leads to waste, sub-optimal impact and uncertain sustainability • Active promotion by top management of coordination mechanisms • ILO constituent commitment to enter rural areas <p>Strong human resource capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical mass of human resources (in number, skill type, "know-how" and drive), befitting work required • Adequate human resources at country level to ensure quality "presence" for rural work • Balance between independent thinking, innovation and sense of political viability

Lessons (cont.)	<p>Reaching policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translating policy advice into programmes and operational work, and vice versa • Tight links between projects and policy from the start • Integrating programmes, their approaches and tools into the ILO's tripartite structure (to impact it and obtain support from it) • Long-lasting projects, to build up national capacity and interest and ensure policy integration • Project tracking and follow-up, to ensure sustainability and policy integration • Focusing, in order to allow time and resources to mainstream approaches into national policy
	<p>Integrated approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthier and more complex, but more effective and sustainable given the multidisciplinary nature and interconnectedness of rural challenges and potentialities • Mutually supporting links to be established at earliest stage • Combined efforts with labour ministries and other relevant ministries, institutions and stakeholders, nationally and locally
	<p>Broad participatory approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects and programmes to involve beneficiaries from conception to follow-up • Building technical, organizational and participatory capacity of disadvantaged groups and institutions • Importance of resource pooling (e.g. through cooperatives) • Key role of employers and workers in organizing rural groups and developing their voice • Post-project guidance and mentoring essential
	<p>National ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of national and local authorities, direct involvement, and ownership • Match absorption capacity of national institutions, and build it up
	<p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vital role of partnerships with international agencies, academics and NGOs complementary to ILO • Vital role of partnerships with donors, ensuring continuous, mutually beneficial dialogue at field level and at Headquarters • Vital role of long-term, organic links with partners
	<p>Follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms to track project continuity, up-scaling and replication, essential for maximum impact • Systematic impact reviews essential to extract lessons and strengthen approaches

II.3.3. Lessons for today's rural work

II.3.3.1. Rural work, an ILO-wide affair

A review of lessons should begin by emphasizing that behind the ILO's achievements stood *the International Labour Office in its entirety, decisively backing rural work*. Indeed almost 80 per cent of the Employment Department's tasks,^{¹⁹⁶} and over 60 per cent of the ILO's technical cooperation work, were dedicated to rural development.^{¹⁹⁷} Organizing itself to reflect this "rural priority" in those days meant setting up a Branch, EMP/RU, committed to conducting and promoting work in rural areas. The work of this Branch was supplemented by numerous "rural" Units within Departments, as well as by Focal Points, who were all coordinated by an internal facilitating body, the ICRD, to ensure a coherent response. At a higher level the ACRD was present to ensure the visibility of rural dimensions among the GB and constituents, guide the Office's work, and also promote linkages with other agencies to strengthen ILO efforts and maximize impact.

This strategy had its weaknesses however, which are themselves important in the lessons they provide. Most apparent is the *need for active networking, open lines of communication, joint work, integration, and coordination*, and the need to discourage marginalization and compartmentalization, which can give rise to a false sense of competition among Units resulting in wasteful practices, sub-optimal impact and uncertain sustainability.

Organizational sustainability of rural work appears as an important challenge. The ILO's integration of rural work and responsibility sharing was done through the interest of its constituents. Rural issues and programmes were not always high on their agenda, and regular budget funds were thus relatively limited compared to the amount of work undertaken. As rural workers and employers are usually not strongly organized, and as main national workers' and employers' organizations have difficulty reaching the countryside and attracting potential affiliates from these areas, ILO constituent commitment or motivation to push the ILO to work in rural areas has varied. Financial partners have played a key role by consistently funding important research and advisory and operational work undertaken, but constituents' strategic commitment to keeping rural dimensions on the ILO's agenda remains essential.

¹⁹⁶ Estimated magnitude of work, mentioned among others, by Jack Martin, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

¹⁹⁷ Op. cit., Egger and Peek (1989).

II.3.3.2. A strong human resource base

The phenomenal amount of initiatives undertaken Office-wide was the result of a large number of high-calibre economic and social researchers and technical specialists.¹⁹⁸ Their work was essential to ensure quality results and credibility vis-à-vis beneficiaries, constituents, financial and other partners alike. The high level of technical knowledge was important in developing effective, efficient and research-based operational tools, and in implementing them. These specialists also constituted strong technical support teams. When coupled with a solid vision (particularly an ability to see how rural areas “fit” development work and the ILO’s overall mission) and high levels of motivation, this constituted the *critical mass of human resources, in number, skill type, “know-how”¹⁹⁹ and drive, befitting the task at hand.*

The ILO also had an *adequate volume of human resources at country level to ensure “presence” for rural work*, be they regular officials or officials linked to projects. Employment regional advisory teams, typically comprising 8 to 10 specialists, worked well and attracted considerable support from the UNDP and Nordic countries in particular. These teams were especially important as field offices often had little knowledge of rural problems and were more focused on urban areas and the organized economy.

Considerable internal, and particularly external resources, were available to support this critical mass of human resources and their work. They could thus engage in cutting edge activities, and as a result at times “placed the ILO ahead of the World Bank and FAO”²⁰⁰ for instance, thereby attracting further internal and external support.

EMP/RU and the Employment Department in general, were staffed by high-level and highly-motivated specialists convinced in the justice of their causes. Such capacity and conviction gave them the *boldness to tackle “unconventional” issues, develop “unusual” and often highly progressive approaches, and venture into unexplored areas.* This calls for renewed interest in innovative paths and readiness to ask “the questions that matter” to keep the rural empowerment debate and practice at a high level.

Simultaneously, the ILO should guard against “pure academics” who may work without much consideration as to the political viability of their aims. Thus, while the work was at times innovative, for instance on land reform, and put the ILO on the map, it also alienated constituents who felt a deep divide between their realities and, as put by one former ILO official, the realities of the “high-powered academics in their ‘ivory tower.’”²⁰¹ In some instances the resulting tense atmosphere discouraged constructive dialogue and blocked progress. *Strong ideological divides need to be tempered by a sense of political viability therefore, and a balance must be found between independent thinking, innovation, and opportune timing, which are indispensable to the ILO’s advancement and continued relevance.*

Those ILO Units that stand out at any given point in time as strongest, most prominent, productive or innovative should be wary of adopting a ‘self-righteous’ or self-sufficient stance as

¹⁹⁸ These officials came from key development think-tanks (e.g. the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex; Institute of Social Studies, The Hague; and Institut d’études en développement économique et social, Paris) and/or with extensive field experience.

¹⁹⁹ Ng Phan Thuy refers to “knowing your stuff”, resulting from expertise and know-how (defined as the essence of lessons learnt and practice that remains in the subconscious).

²⁰⁰ Dharam Ghai, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

²⁰¹ Jack Martin, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

this creates a divide with the rest of the Office that challenges internal work organization and collaboration efforts.

II.3.3.3. An overall segmented work organization

The basic structure of the ‘70s and ‘80s had *various parts of the Office mainstreaming rural dimensions within their own work, while a designated Unit played a catalytic and coordinating role in rural work to ensure, or at least stimulate, monitoring and impact evaluation*. However, it is widely acknowledged that these parts often worked in a compartmentalized way. As noted previously, joint efforts were often “fortuitous”, resulting from personal linkages or coincidences, rather than through an established system of in-house networking and information sharing.

There was a general *tendency for large programmes to isolate themselves from the rest of the Office structure, at Headquarters as well as at country level*, in an attempt to maintain control and secure funds. This is best demonstrated by what a former ILO official called, “the Employment Programme’s strong focus and fortress mentality”²⁰² which, when combined with some jealousy and suspicion on the part of other Units, prompted isolationist tendencies. As a result, “close working relations with other organizations were sometimes stronger than within the ILO or between those organizations and the ILO”,²⁰³ as observed in the case of the COOP and EMP/INFRA Units in particular.

Other programmes, like the initiative on workers’ education and workers’ protection in plantations, came to an end due to their lack of *integration within the tripartite ILO structure*. Collaboration with ITC-Turin was also relatively limited. The Centre was used by the rest of the Office mostly for logistical purposes such as holding courses and meetings. Besides missed opportunities for internal collaboration and synergies based on respective comparative advantages, or at the very least coordination, *isolation puts at stake the viability of and support for a project or programme*. The danger of isolation and discontinuation is even stronger in the case of one-person programmes and projects.

Admittedly it is challenging to have officials and Units, particularly of a high profile, work together. *An entity to spur and maintain a “rural conscience” throughout the ILO and “hold it all together” is an important factor of success*. Inter-departmental committees and focal points may not be enough for the task. *There needs to be an Institutional vision and an overarching strategy jointly “owned” by the different Departments, as well as a jointly owned structure to ensure work coordination along agreed axes*. Arrangements may include networks or teams of officials working together on a particular issue, with a programme manager controlling resources and the other managers forming a steering committee (as was the case in the following decade for specific themes such as gender, privatization and crisis response, for instance). What is also needed is *clear policy direction from top management supporting and promoting a coordination mechanism*. *Constituents have a crucial role too, as their interest in rural issues and support for a well-coordinated work arrangement is vital to ensure its credibility and viability*.

²⁰² Dharam Ghai, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

²⁰³ Helmut Watzlawick, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

II.3.3.4. Reaching policy

Reaching policy level, locally, nationally, regionally and internationally is essential to make a broad, lasting difference. The ILO's main impact was on the international policy debate on rural policy, both at macro-level, through new concepts, and at micro-level, with new approaches and actors, particularly in the areas of employment intensive works and cooperatives. The ILO was also one of the few UN agencies recognized in the field for having a visible impact through its training centres for instance, some of which are still in operation.²⁰⁴ However again, there is general consensus that policy impact was generally more elusive at the national level. In the words of a number of former ILO officials, the ILO was very good at micro (experimental) level; was good at meso- (institutional) level, but relatively less incisive at macro (policy) level.²⁰⁵

It is crucial to *bridge policy and practice*, that is, to link up conceptual work, both research and policy development and implementation, with field work, to anchor it to reality. The ILO generated good approaches and lessons from its TC and analytical initiatives; but they were rarely integrated into mainstream policy, although on many occasions the reasons lay outside the ILO's control.

A number of new concepts and approaches were driven into the thinking, debates and decision-making of key ministries and agencies, but this was limited to specific programmes and countries.²⁰⁶ The large employment missions, particularly those to Kenya and Colombia, seem to have impacted policy, but fell short of expectations, particularly in terms of follow-up policy and programmes, and cost-benefit. Insufficient links to policy makes it difficult to ensure sustainability of specific initiatives. More importantly, it also affects the viability and long-term, broader impact of approaches and programmes that are developed and piloted at a small scale precisely so they may convince policy-level decision makers to integrate them and budget them into mainstream strategies and structures. There needs to be a logical sequence *building up from local expertise to national policy formulation; and tighter links between projects and policy from the start*. Among others, this requires that ILO officials and TC staff stay up-to-date on the latest policy developments in order to identify entry points; as well as to envision how the ILO can then get policy to reach the poorest segments in rural areas.

Projects should also be sufficiently lengthy, *five years or more, in order to establish links, build up national capacity and interest, show results, and support integration into policy*. Sound programmes and projects can have considerable impact. It is therefore worth investing sufficient time and effort to develop a good initiative, with core objectives and results to show impact, which can then be monitored to ensure sustainability, up-scaling, duplicating, and ideally, mainstreaming into national policy. The importance of *tracking projects and follow-up to ensure impact* cannot be emphasized enough.

Projects in rural areas require particular attention to their sustainability in view of geographical remoteness, often “conservative” mentalities and traditions and weaker labour market and other institutions. *Sustainability in rural areas calls for long-term commitment by government*.

²⁰⁴ Girma Agune and Christian Joussein, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

²⁰⁵ For instance, Ng Phan Thuy, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

²⁰⁶ For instance, the adaptation of construction policy in Ghana and Nigeria to allow parcelling out contracts so that small and medium rural enterprises can become involved in public works.

ment (at the level(s) most relevant in a given country, e.g. at national, regional, provincial and village levels), financial assistance providers and implementing agencies, coupled with broad local participation, partnerships and imaginative, context-specific solutions.

Research work should result, among others, in *short, pragmatic and action-oriented policy briefs, guides and other practical materials that are easily accessible to policy-makers and other practitioners.*

TC projects, research and other initiatives need integration into ILO field offices' regular work so that officials at the country level feel ownership and responsibility to support these initiatives and their follow-up, as well as to promote policy-level linkages.

Lastly, reaching policy also means *integrating Programmes and their approaches and tools into the ILO's tripartite structure*, both to impact it and obtain support from it. The task, which was elusive at the time, remains a pivotal challenge.

II.3.3.5. Focus

Insufficient policy impact may also be linked to the ILO tendency to cover too much ground, which would leave little time to work on mainstreaming initiatives and approaches into national policy. In choosing issues and initiatives, there should be *great care to avoid “biting off more than you can chew”*,²⁰⁷ as well as *pursuing too many small initiatives at the expense of having a real impact*. In other words, the ILO should refrain from over-committing its resources, focusing its efforts instead on a few, select interventions.

II.3.3.6. Integrated approaches

In order to achieve strategic policy impact, or even simply to realize a successful rural employment generation scheme, the ILO also needs to *combine working with (and if need be build the capacity of) its counterpart, the labour ministries, other relevant line ministries and logical partners in rural development, namely national agencies and decision-makers who can influence development policies in favour of rural populations, relevant employers' and workers' organizations, well established NGOs and associations of beneficiaries, local experts, and with providers of financial assistance.*

An additional step for the ILO is to successfully promote *a national institutional integrated approach* in which the various relevant national institutions coordinate their work on a specific matter, for example as achieved by several programmes on women's empowerment.

Integrated work in general appears to be the most promising. It is an essential component of the holistic approach that needs to be pursued in rural areas to tackle the complexity and interconnectedness of rural challenges and potentialities. *An integrated programme should cover all the technical and institutional components required for its long-term success* (from institutional development, technology, training, entrepreneurship, marketing, micro-finance, social protection,²⁰⁸ working conditions, child labour, women empowerment, social dialogue, to data and other information management needs, for example), with priority assigned to each component according to local needs. *Mutually supporting links and synergies between components are equally crucial.* At the time, various technical areas of the ILO's work were

²⁰⁷ Jack Martin, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

²⁰⁸ Most resilient projects, for example, were found to be those including some social protection.

successful and even path-breaking, but there is convergence of views that, “all these efforts were never integrated into a coherent, comprehensive strategy”,²⁰⁹ including for example employment and social protection, cooperation with other agencies and institutions supporting each other, and support from major constituents. This compartmentalization limited full impact and contributed to the gradual decline of even highly successful Programmes.

An integrated programme should also include tight links between different types of work (research, advisory services, technical cooperation and capacity building) in mutually supportive ways. A TC programme for instance, needs to be aware of and use results from relevant research and existing capacity-building tools; and in turn it needs to envision how its own results could contribute to advisory services and capacity building.

Rural programmes of the '70s and '80s demonstrate that the integrated approach is not the easiest route, as there is a risk of overburdening a given programme. Nevertheless they also indicate that the approach is the most valuable and efforts need to be made to realize it, for instance by using a step-by-step approach and including capacity-building elements. “It is useful to have one overall framework with a clear idea about its components, linkages and sequencing among them; use whatever entry point is available; then bring in other ILO concerns as needed and opportune; and finally reach policy”.²¹⁰

The resounding message of these decades as noted by many of the officials interviewed can be summed up as: “*Specialize, specialize, specialize*”, and “*Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate*”,²¹¹ with the one complementing the other.

II.3.3.7. Broad participatory approaches

A major lesson from the decades just considered is that: *projects and programmes must come from the people*. Truly participatory approaches starting from project conception and continuing on to ensure sustainability are of the essence, particularly in rural areas. Without the direct involvement of beneficiaries, a project’s true objective needs cannot be conceived, goals cannot be achieved, and results cannot be sustained. For instance, a project may provide training on how to use a machine, but without direct involvement of beneficiaries it may miss the fact that it also has to provide training on how to maintain it. In the '70s and '80s this perspective was revolutionary as authorities tended not to pay much attention to the needs of “little people”,²¹² let alone request their feedback. Usually, “the capital often spoke for the whole country”,²¹³ and sending out a few people to the countryside when developing a project to get feedback was considered sufficient. Meanwhile the ILO approach recognized that initiatives need to be truly demand-driven.

The participatory approach stems from the realization that while rural areas may share some characteristics with each other, such as broad diversity of economic activities and similar situations of labour and poverty, each also has specificities that need to be grasped. This approach calls in particular for a *profiling of disadvantaged groups*, and requires *investment to build up technical, organizational and participatory capacity of disadvantaged groups*,

²⁰⁹ Gus Edgren, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

²¹⁰ Jean Majeres, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

²¹¹ Dharam Ghai, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Girma Agune and Christian Joussein, Interview, Geneva, August 2009.

and *envisaging post-project guidance and mentoring*. This process needs to be combined with linking up with national and local organizations, which can then provide services to the beneficiaries. In rural areas it is essential to *involve locally established NGOs and other actors*, as they are best placed to work and to build up capacities of disadvantaged groups in these areas. This is all the more important since in rural contexts workers and employers are rarely organized. In terms of longer-term sustainability, the main actors of a rural project should be the local collaborators and agents of change remaining on the spot. Their expertise and experience can also enrich the ILO's work, and make donor agencies more confident in a programme's capacity to deliver. Further, they can prove useful for interactions with governments of beneficiary as well as donor countries in helping reach policy, thereby strengthening and increasing the scope of achievements.

Lastly, broad participation also calls on *important work by employers and workers to organize rural groups and help them develop a “voice”* both locally and at higher levels.

II.3.3.8. National (and local) ownership

The commitment of national and local authorities, direct involvement, and “ownership” are vital for “opening doors” and securing human and financial resources to sustain a programme, as well as for policy change. *Plans must be locally and nationally articulated, designed, owned, led, and built in consultation with all stakeholders*. This needs to be coupled with *capacity building of government officials*. A typical TC project includes training officials from relevant government ministries on how to organize and implement a rural programme and its activities, and having them implement as part of training, a number of concrete activities. Locally adapted measures need to be conceived at planning stages in anticipation of possible hurdles, such as officials with low qualifications, lack of motivation and high turnover; but also to ensure that projects and programmes are not over-ambitious and *match the absorption capacity of national institutions*.

II.3.3.9. Partnerships

As mentioned earlier, the complexities and volume of rural work solicited, coupled with the ILO's need to specialize, mean that *external partnerships with international agencies and NGOs complementary to the ILO, as well as with financial assistance providers, are vital*. Joint work with other agencies has proven feasible and mutually useful. The ILO's strategy of very close collaboration also helped impact the policies of other agencies. The ILO developed useful collaboration with the academic world, NGOs and other agencies, for instance during projects, and in broader research and debates. It was good at presenting its work and comparative advantages, and at engaging in mutually reinforcing partnerships. However, particularly where there was no organic link to ILO and relations were linked to a specific individual or project, these tended to disappear with the end of the project.²¹⁴ Mechanisms ensuring continuity of institutional dialogue and partnership are also important elements of long-term success and support.

Financial partners always play a very significant role. In the '70s and '80s multi-bilateral funds financed most of the ILO's rural work. At that time the main progressive financial partners were the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), DANIDA,

²¹⁴ Samir Radwan, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

SIDA, the Netherlands, Germany, DFID, UNDP and WFP. In many cases funds spanned long periods. The longer time span allowed for complex projects that could carry out much needed sensitization, human resource and institutional capacity building. *Continuous dialogue with donors at field and Headquarters level, with mutually beneficial joint work and achievements can cement the ILO-financial partner relationship.*

However, it seems that extra-budgetary resources were not sufficiently “internalized”, in the sense that they fell short of prompting the ILO to develop capacity on its own by allocating more of its regular budget resources, as donors were hoping, to sustain the ILO’s rural work and build up its long-term rural capacity and intervention mechanisms.

II.3.3.10. Follow-up

Lack of *mechanisms to ensure the continuity of projects, their up-scaling and replication* is particularly damaging to rural interventions. Results and impact, particularly those reaching policy level, often take longer than the lifetime of a given initiative and require long-term support.

Systematic evaluations and even more, impact reviews, are also essential in order to build on past experiences, and to refine approaches to rural development. Their scantiness during the past decades impedes the extraction of more specific lessons, thus impacting this very review. What is noted here has been gleaned from extensive interviews with Officials and ex-Officials, “surviving” project documents, as well as through extensive and determined efforts at information gathering.



III. FROM RURAL “MARGINALIZATION” (1990s) TO “REDISCOVERY” (2000s)



III.1. Marginalization of the rural dimension in the 1990s

III.1.1. Determinants and work re-organization

The 1990s saw a widespread decline in interest in rural development. At the international level there was a serious push for policies and work promoting globalization, free markets, competition and modernization. Globalization entailed, among others, substantial increases and shifts in international resource flows, growing speculative capital flows, and important amounts of private investment going to rapidly developing countries. Additionally, poverty in rural areas had not abated despite increased work on them during the two previous decades. These factors presented all the more reason to move on to a different strategy, one that focused on industry and urban areas, increasingly perceived as holding greater potential for economic advancement and modernization. Consequently, by the mid-1990s rural development had fallen somewhat “off the radar” of most policy-makers, analysts, and programme developers, both at national and international levels.

The several “waves” of SAPs in the ‘80s and ‘90s used to tackle the mounting debt incurred by many developing countries further diminished attention to rural development issues. SAP’s emphasis on budget cuts and a reduced role for the State resulted in serious curtailments in infrastructure investment, especially physical and social infrastructure such as health and education, which are the foundations of rural growth. In addition to their emphasis on urban development and commercial agriculture, SAPs also entailed a sudden dismantling of subsidies to factors of production and price stabilization mechanisms, drastic drops in public spending and private financing, including Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). The share of ODA devoted to agriculture, which had climbed steeply since the mid-‘70s to reach a peak of around 17 per cent in 1989, fell precipitously to a mere 3.6 per cent in the early 2000s before the trend would reverse. Simultaneously, the ODA devoted to agriculture increasingly targeted large producers.²¹⁵

The steady decrease in commodity prices coupled with growing difficulties to access the markets of developed countries in the ‘90s rendered investments in agriculture less attractive, compared to those in industry and services, also considered to be more “modern” and promising sectors. Agricultural policy was less aimed at rural income generation and poverty alleviation, and more at securing cheap urban food and cheap urban labour. Rural economies were increasingly viewed as antiquated and unresponsive to development efforts; and it seemed that more impact could be attained in the urban sector, which was already attracting a steady flow of workers from rural areas. The new strategy was to develop the urban economy, with the expectation that it would automatically drive along rural growth.

The ILO mirrored this general change in attitude. There was a sentiment that rural development efforts had led to little tangible progress in increasing rural incomes in most developing

²¹⁵ *Measuring Aid to Agriculture*, OECD-DAC, 2010, www.oecd.org/dac/stats/agriculture (accessed on 26 September 2011).

countries.²¹⁶ The fact that the ILO had long been at the cutting edge of work in this area was viewed more as indicating that the ILO had done “enough” for rural and needed to move on to other areas where impact might be stronger and quicker, and which were more prominent on the international scene and consequently more present in the minds of constituents and financial assistance providers. It could also be said that urban “voices” were becoming more prominent within the ILO, increasingly drowning out those of rural interests and further accelerating the shift in priorities.

In the early ‘90s the ILO underwent an important internal reconfiguration, prompted in part by the new leadership and the Organization’s financial crisis, which further displaced rural work in multiple ways. The most obvious was the dismantling of rural structures throughout the Office set up in the previous two decades. In the process many were made redundant, modified to fit new roles, or merged with other units. The two main consultative bodies for rural matters met similar fates: the ACRD was transformed into a tripartite technical meeting as of 1992 and, while it held on to its advisory role, it no longer concentrated on rural issues; and the ICRD simply ceased to function after 1990. EMP/RU was dismantled shortly thereafter, and most of its elements became part of a new, more general, Development and Technical Cooperation Department (DEVCOTEC), in 1994. It was then dismantled further and merged with other departments; and regrettably its documents and data repositories became scattered throughout the Office. The decision to disband EMP/RU was probably the most damaging, as it meant that rural work lost its main in-House engine and advocate, thus eliminating the possibility of maintaining interest and work in rural areas. Many rural specialists also left the Office for a variety of reasons, or took up other responsibilities.

A review of the ILO’s Programme and Budget (P&B) records reflects this gradual disappearance of the rural dimension from the ILO’s overall work plan, which ceased to list it as a cross-cutting or integrated theme after the 1994–1995 biennium. Previously “rural” activities were first merged with “informal” ones, in light of widespread informality in rural areas, and then replaced all together.²¹⁷ The 2004–05 P&B targets the informal economy as the area most in need of attention in order to make an impact in efforts to reduce poverty.²¹⁸ Additionally, there was not much distinction between *rural* informal and *urban* informal, while increasingly the ILO’s work on the informal economy came to focus more on urban areas. In this way the term “informal” helped to somewhat “transition” the ILO’s work from a rural to a more urban focus. Whenever the term rural was explicitly mentioned, it came to be more in reference to indigenous and tribal peoples’ issues.²¹⁹

A third reorientation that marginalized the rural dimension was the ILO’s Active Partnership Policy (APP),²²⁰ which was a new method of delivery adopted in 1993. It included a move away from analytical and technical cooperation work to advocacy and policy advice,

²¹⁶ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1992-93 Rural Development*, Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development Discussion paper, Geneva, 1990.

²¹⁷ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1994-1995*, Geneva, 1993, see p. 18 - “The Rural and Informal Sectors”; pp. 60 - “Women Workers in the Rural and Informal Sectors.”

²¹⁸ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the biennium 2004-2005*, Geneva, 2003, see “Strategic Objective No. 3.”

²¹⁹ Op. cit., ILO: *Programme and Budget 1994-1995* (1993).

²²⁰ ILO’s Active Partnership Policy was designed to bring the Organization closer to its tripartite constituency in member States and to enhance the coherence and quality of its technical services through Country Objectives, predecessors of today’s DWCPs. These would be prepared by the ILO’s Area Offices, in collaboration with the newly set up Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs), and would identify priority areas for ILO work and specific interventions based on dialogue with constituents.

embodied by the slogan that the “ILO is not a development agency”.²²¹ These changes were accompanied by a move away from the large Units of technical specialists at Headquarters and full regional employment teams, to a scattering of specialists throughout the field. Here again P&B records of the early ‘90s track the trend of rural work being systematically shifted out to regional and country offices. Besides widening the Headquarters-field gap, this change interrupted a mechanism which, however imperfect, had headquarters- and field-work reinforcing each other, with Headquarters proposing innovative concepts and approaches that would be tested in the field, then refining them and developing new ones according to feedback from the field. This cycle of field experience feeding into conceptualization work at Headquarters had until then contributed to new methodologies, stronger programmes (and eventually to sharper policy advice), and had contributed to the success of approaches such as labour-intensive employment, PORP, and Special Services, to name a few.

Internally the ILO faced a new structure of work organization that de-emphasized rural work, resulting in a decreased volume of work on rural issues; scaled-down programmes for rural areas; an interruption of knowledge building and in lack of necessary follow-up to ensure that TC efforts were reaching policy levels.

These events led to disappointment among partner agencies. The dismantling and heavy cuts in some technical programmes related to rural issues, the disappearance of the employment regional teams and dispersion of their technical staff, for instance, led to a marked decrease in relations with the UNDP, the WB and some bilateral financial partners, causing one UNDP official to remark that, “the ILO has left without a forwarding address”.²²²

III.1.2. Impact on Units, approaches, and programmes

Waning interest in rural work affected all technical subjects, some particularly gravely, such as the case of Workers’ Education, labour-intensive works and cooperatives. That said the ILO did not cease to operate in rural areas. Several noteworthy initiatives that thrived during these years, such as Local Economic Development (LED), working conditions, entrepreneurship and enterprise support, women and youth, will be examined in the following pages. However these rural-relevant initiatives remained noticeably low-key when compared to programmes of the previous decades.

III.1.2.1. Workers’ Education

Among the departments experiencing a drastic decline in rural work was ACTRAV, particularly after EDUC was discontinued in the mid-‘90s and its rural post abolished in 1992. ACTRAV’s work on rural issues also took on the trends of the time and came to be increasingly referred to in conjunction with the informal economy (although ACTRAV did make the distinction between *rural* informal and *urban* informal). This was evident in the study, “Trade Unions in the Informal Sector”,²²³ which revealed the stakes and problems that the

²²¹ Helmut Watzlawick, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

²²² As recalled by Helmut Watzlawick, Interview, Geneva, September 2009.

²²³ ILO: “Trade Unions in the Informal sector: Finding Their Bearings, Nine Country Papers (Bulgaria, Columbia, El Salvador, Ghana, Hungary, India, Italy, Kenya, Philippines)”, in *Labour Education 1999/3*, No.116, Geneva, 1993.

complex “informal sector” (urban and rural) poses for the trade union movement, while making only a passing reference to the specific challenges of unionization in agriculture.

III.1.2.2. Labour-intensive works

SPWP was one of the major programmes that survived the restructuring, but with sharp reductions in staffing and financial resources, resulting in a drastic adaptation of its work organization to compensate for the decreased resources, while remaining impactful. It became the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) under EMP/INVEST, and operated within the Employment Policy Department (EMP/POLICY), as part of an inter-disciplinary approach to job creation, which included simultaneous efforts to develop the capacities of central and local governments, training institutions and the local private sector. EIIP saw its activities decrease due in particular to severe staff reductions. Its work was also affected by the changing preferences of its financial partners, who now favoured more “glamorous” themes and initiatives yielding quicker results. In response to these circumstances the Programme adapted its approach by seeking out support from a variety of financial assistance providers; creating project committees so as to limit peer pressure and the risk of sudden unilateral policy change; and by intensifying specialists’ contacts with those providers. It increasingly worked through the Advisory Support, Information Services and Training Programme (ASIST), established in 1990 to serve as “a link between country level activities, subregional backstopping and EMP/INVEST”²²⁴ [soon followed by the creation of an ASIST Africa (1991) and an ASIST Asia-Pacific (1998)], to tackle increasing demands. Meanwhile a biennial international forum, the Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners, was set up in 1990 to provide international support and knowledge sharing.

Also worth noting is EIIP’s participation in the International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD), set up in 1992 with help from NORAD, CIDA, SDC and SIDA, and still operational.²²⁵ This involvement resulted from its earlier research²²⁶ and operational work that marked a new approach towards rural transportation in general and introduced a rural transport planning tool, the Integrated Rural Transport Planning (IRTP), to identify transport patterns and needs of rural households.²²⁷ The ILO’s input contributed significantly to IFRD’s common policy goals, international programmes, training activities and technical reports.

III.1.2.3. Cooperatives

While the Cooperative Branch also faced significant cutbacks in the ‘90s, the growing number of requests and the increasing complexity of its development activities allowed the Branch to continue undertaking impactful work in rural areas. The “Programme for Cooperative Development in Rural Areas” was launched in 1993 in partnership with DANIDA.

²²⁴ ILO: *Employment Intensive Investment Programme – Programme Delivery*, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/delivery/eiipasist.htm> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

As the operational arm of EIIP, ASIST works at the local level to promote and support employment-intensive approaches through four areas: Local Level Planning, Labour Based Technology, Small Scale Contracting, and Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Systems.

²²⁵ It consisted first of a few agencies and donors interested in promoting rural populations’ access to services, then grew rapidly. By the early 2000s, 20 National Forum Groups had come into being, and regional Forums were set up in Asia, East and West Africa and Latin America, staffed with specialists from the countries/regions concerned.

²²⁶ See for example, I. Barwell, G. A. Edmonds, J.D.G.F. Howe and J. de Veen: *Rural Transport in Developing Countries* (London, ILO, 1985).

²²⁷ The IRTP would later become the Integrated Accessibility Planning (IRAP) tool in the early-‘90s, reflecting a wider scope of objectives.

This initiative set up the COOPREFORM Programme to help countries create an enabling climate for autonomous and economically viable cooperatives, especially in the wake of SAPs.²²⁸ Results were impressive, as in less than a decade it had assisted 62 countries; helped draft over 50 cooperative acts, layperson's guides and model by-laws and compose 29 draft cooperative policy papers; issued a brochure on participatory law-making and participatory cooperative policy-making and a checklist on cooperative legislation; and set up NATLEX, a comprehensive database containing, among others, a vast repository of cooperative legislation.²²⁹

COOPREFORM was instrumental to the resurgence of interest in cooperatives and recognition of the economic and social potential of genuine cooperatives. As a result the ILO adopted the Recommendation on the Promotion of Cooperatives, 2002 (No. 193), mandating the Office to further assist constituents and cooperative organizations in cooperative development. Other initiatives that came out of the Programme for Cooperative Development in Rural Areas included COOPNET (1993), a programme to strengthen cooperative management and networking among cooperative training institutions across countries and regions; and INDISCO (1993), a programme to promote business opportunities among Indigenous and Tribal Peoples based on self-reliance and traditional livelihoods.

III.1.2.4. Entrepreneurship and Enterprises

Work on entrepreneurship and enterprise support continued to thrive, albeit with less attention to rural areas and their economic activities, in spite of the fact that farms and related sectors such as food processing, packaging, production of farming tools and implements all constitute enterprises. From the '90s onward, the ILO developed a wide array of management capacity-building tools²³⁰ fitting the various stages of enterprise development (from sensitization, to launching business, performance improvement and expansion), the sizes of enterprises, target groups (including illiterate people) and a variety of trades, from handicrafts to waste management. The most well-known and frequently used are Know About Business (KAB), an entrepreneurial education and business skills package to encourage young men and women to think about entrepreneurship and the role of businesses in economic and social development; SIYB, to help start viable businesses and strengthen performance of existing micro and small enterprises; Improve your Construction Business (IYCB); and the Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED) programme, supporting employment generation by creating an enabling environment and institutional capacity for women entrepreneurs, developing tools and support services for women entrepreneurs and mainstreaming gender into all ILO enterprise interventions²³¹ (see Entrepreneurship Skills Approach, Annex 4). While these tools were not developed for rural areas specifically and were mostly used in urban settings, they proved very useful in rural areas with little or no adaptation.

²²⁸ ILO: *COOPREFORM Structural Reforms through Improved Cooperative Development Policies and Laws*, 10th Progress Report (January–December 2000) and Work Plan (January–December 2001), Geneva, 2000, p. 8.

²²⁹ J. Schmitz: *COOPREFORM 1993–2001: Structural Reform through Improvement of Cooperative Development Policy and Legislation – An Analysis* (Geneva, ILO, 2002), p. 10.

²³⁰ See EMP/ENT Tool List:
<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/empentrp/docs/F156451343/EMP%20ENT%20Tool%20list.doc> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

²³¹ See ILO: *ILO strategy on promoting women's entrepreneurship development*, Governing Body, 301st Session, Committee on Employment and Social Policy, Geneva, 2008, p. 11.

In the late 1980s–1990s, rural-relevant enterprise work also included analytical work on clusters of M/SMEs, focusing in particular on the functioning of industrial districts (for example, in Italy specialized M/SMEs were formed around various stages of a given production process). Their dynamism, mix of competitiveness and collaboration, and ability to drive the growth of an entire geographical area are particularly attractive features.

The 1990s also saw the beginning of more systematic work by the ILO on the functioning of value chains, the vast majority of which are based on agricultural products. These efforts provided the basis for considerable analytical and technical cooperation work on the topic in the following decade.

III.1.2.5. Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

The Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, 1989 (No. 169) paved the way for new programmes and approaches in the 1990s and beyond. Multidisciplinarity, interconnectedness, and mutual stimulation among TC, research, policy work, and standards proved particularly effective for the ILO’s delivery, adaptation, and impact on its constituents and other agencies. With the assistance of DANIDA, the ILO has since launched two major programmes: the Interregional Programme to Support Self-Reliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples through Cooperatives and Self-Help Organizations (INDISCO) in 1993,²³² and the Programme to Promote the ILO’s Convention No. 169 (PRO169) in 1996.

PRO169 is a technical cooperation programme to promote and implement the rights of ITPs on a global scale, as well as to improve their socio-economic situation in compliance with the principles of C169. Its current activities cover 22 countries (11 in Latin America, six in Asia and five in Africa). Most activities supported through PRO169 include a strong element of information dissemination, training and capacity building. The Programme has developed a number of initiatives to address the information, training and capacity-building needs of several very different target groups, ranging from national governments and social partners to indigenous fellows and interns. The strategy covers different levels of intervention (community, local, national, regional and international) as well as a diverse target group, which necessitates a variety of entry points, modalities, tools and languages.

PRO169 also conducts work on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) to document ITPs’ own perceptions of poverty, and to ensure ITPs’ participation in the PRSP process to assist in having their needs, priorities and rights taken into account. Poverty reduction remains a crucial concern for the approximately 350 million ITPs worldwide. While they make up only 5 per cent of the population, they constitute 15 per cent of those living in poverty. Most recently the ILO published a *Practice Guide for Including Indigenous Peoples in Poverty Reduction Strategies* (2008), providing good practices and operational recommendations for a rights-based approach to addressing the multiple facets of poverty as perceived by ITPs themselves.

²³²ILO Programme: 1993–1999 (Phase I); 2000–2003 (Phase II).

III.1.2.6. Local Economic Development

The emergence of Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in the 1990s is a notable exception to an otherwise steady decline in the ILO's rural work. Although not conceived specifically for rural contexts, LED's emphasis on developing strategies for geographical areas, taking into account their specific opportunities and challenges, and on having local private and public stakeholders jointly define strategies and implementation modalities in a broadly representative forum, makes it particularly suitable for rural areas (see Approach on LED, Annex 4).

The ILO developed its LED approach in the inter-agency programme PRODERE (1990-95),²³³ which promoted peace building in Central America through local development based on participation and consensus of local stakeholders as achieved within Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs).²³⁴ The local development strategies they developed swiftly and effectively addressed local needs (in terms of business development, jobs, reconciliation and community building) in an integrated way. The success of LEDAs can be gauged by their continued presence and operation.²³⁵

LED was used in other peace-building processes, such as in Cambodia in the mid-late '90s, where it combined employment intensive works, enterprise development and skills development. The achievements of the approach facilitated its spread from post-crisis areas to a variety of other settings.

III.1.2.7. Occupational Safety and Health and Working Conditions

The decade started with the ILO adopting the Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work Convention, 1990 (No. 177), aimed at reducing illness and injuries at work linked to the widespread use of chemicals in agriculture. Pesticides alone were thought to be poisoning some two million persons annually, of which about 40,000 were fatalities.²³⁶ This was followed by the publication in 1991 of a guide on *Safety and health in the use of agrochemicals*, intended as a training aid in the ILO's TC projects to encourage national action and complement the work of other agencies such as FAO, UNEP and WHO on safe working conditions in agriculture. The work was complemented by support to sectoral work, particularly in agriculture (including plantations) and forestry, for instance in preparing reports on *Occupational Safety and Health in Forestry* (1991), *Wage workers in agriculture: conditions of employment and work* (1996), and *Improving working conditions and increasing profits in Forestry* (1996).

The 1990s also saw the implementation of the ILO's first TC project on occupational safety and health in agriculture that operated in Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama from 1993 to 1998. This project tested a model strategy for the promotion of national policies on the topic in developing countries, comprising a legislative framework and a national policy on occupational safety and health for the sector; a system of classification of agrochemicals; a preventive health surveillance system; national capacity building

²³³ PRODERE, the Development Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees in Central America, was a multi-disciplinary UN programme (involving ILO, UNDP/UNOPS, UNHCR and PAHO) for displaced persons, refugees and returnees in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.

²³⁴ Today the local forum can take many institutional forms: steering committee, ad-hoc consultation group, association, etc.

²³⁵ IDEASS: *Local Economic Development Agencies for Governance and Internationalization of Local Economies, and Human Development*, Rome, 2009. See also UNDP, ILO, UNOPS, EURADA, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Local Economic Development Agencies: International Cooperation for Human Development, Economic Democracy and Poverty Reduction*, Rome, 2000.

²³⁶ ILO: *Safety and health in the use of agrochemicals: A guide*, Geneva, 1991, preface.

and supportive mechanisms; a network of information and training on occupational safety and health in agriculture; and an environmental protection approach. The project was also meant to enrich an International Programme on Safety and Health in Agriculture that the ILO also launched in the 1990s.

An ex-post review of the project indicates that it achieved development of technical and institutional capacity in governmental institutions, workers’ organizations, as well as among agricultural enterprises and self-employed farmers.²³⁷ However, the project lacked time to reach policy levels and to have authorities develop the needed legislative framework and national policy and allocate resources to sustain the initiative over time. The review indicated that to achieve policy impact and sustainability it should have lasted around 10 years. Internationally, the project made important contributions to the formulation of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), and to its follow-up, such as the elaboration and use of a guide for workers’ representatives on the implementation of that Convention. However, the international Programme on Safety and Health in Agriculture disappeared shortly thereafter when the official in charge of it was assigned to other duties.

The WIND methodology launched in 1995 in Viet Nam is another valuable exception in the midst of the ILO’s declining attention to rural areas. WIND is the adaptation to a rural context of the WISE approach first launched in 1988 to reduce workplace hazards by helping small businesses develop safer and healthier working conditions in a cost-effective manner. WIND is unique because it improves both working and living conditions in low-cost ways, through the use of local capacities and building on existing mechanisms. It also ensures joint involvement of village men and women in planning and implementation and fits broader plans of the community for development and empowerment (see WISE and WIND Approaches, Appendix 4).

III.1.2.8. Social protection

Another welcome exception to the ILO’s reduced activity in rural areas was the launching of the STEP programme in 1998, to fight poverty and social exclusion through the extension of social protection and health insurance to unprotected men and women workers in the rural and informal economies. STEP, directly derived from the ACOPAM initiative, provided technical assistance, experience and training to various mutual health organizations on issues such as feasibility, management, follow-up, monitoring, coverage, health packages, law and linkages with national institutions. In the Philippines for instance, it improved the management and services of Health Micro-Insurance Schemes (HMIS) through training at local and national levels and community surveys to assess social protection needs of target communities. It also achieved better response to gender issues such as maternity benefits and preventative health care (including on HIV/AIDS); increased awareness/capacity of local and national government officials on HMIS benefits; and developed and disseminated knowledge on HMIS contribution to poverty reduction and local economic and social development.²³⁸ By the early 2000s STEP had reached over 40 countries of West and Lusophone Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Europe.

²³⁷ D. Rojas Quesada: *Informe de la investigación realizada para determinar el impacto post-ejecución del proyecto « Promoción de la Seguridad y Salud del Trabajo en la Agricultura en América Central, »* (ILO, 1998).

²³⁸ ILO: *Final Report for January 2003 - March 2005 for the project, “Extending Social Protection through Health Micro-Insurance Schemes for Women in the Informal Economy – Philippines”,* Geneva, 2005.

III.1.2.9. Women

By the mid-'90s work on rural women had slowed considerably, especially once EMP/RU's Programme on Rural Women was discontinued. By 1991 the Director-General's annual activity report had stopped making specific references to rural women, including them instead with women informal sector workers.²³⁹ By 1995 rural women were no longer the targets of special initiatives, but were included as one of many beneficiaries in larger initiatives, such as ACOPAM or INDISCO.²⁴⁰

One notable exception at the time was a series of projects entitled "Workers' Education for Women Members of Rural Workers Organizations" (funded mainly by Scandinavian financial partners), launched in Africa, Asia, and Latin America by EDUC just prior to its termination in the mid-'90s. The projects, conducted in partnership with international unions such as the IUF, and national, local unions, were culturally and gender-sensitive, with much attention on the effectiveness of educational materials, which were specifically adapted for each country or situation. They aimed to assist rural workers (particularly women) to develop and manage their own organizations, while also helping set up schemes for developing special services to improve women's capacity to participate in rural and national development. While exact figures are not available, it seems that these projects have had highly positive effects that continue to be felt today. They include the institutionalization of women's posts and committees in unions (to the extent that some unions changed their constitutions to provide permanent positions for women in their executive committees); an increase in the number of women office bearers within their organizations; an increase in the confidence of women members; and an increase in the number of women activists in unions.²⁴¹

In the early '90s women's issues were re-labelled as "gender issues". Nevertheless work on women and rural women continued through the years with a number of TC projects and some research work. It included technical workshops on self-employment, schemes for rural women in South Africa, evaluation missions to Egypt, Zimbabwe, and advisory missions to Bangladesh and Ghana for example. The establishment of a Bureau for Gender Equality in 1999 helped to further incorporate the gender dimension in the ILO's work.

III.1.2.10. Youth

Youth gained increased attention in the mid-'90s as the ILO's strategy shifted from the predominantly labour supply-side focus of the '70s and '80s (i.e., training and education) to include labour demand issues in the '90s. Consequently, an "Action Programme on Youth Unemployment" was initiated in 1996–1997 to increase awareness about problems faced by young workers entering the labour market; promote and better grasp labour market policies and programmes for youth; and improve member States' capacity to design and implement youth employment policies and programmes. The Programme did not specifically target rural youth, but called for a "...comprehensive analysis of the measures that have been implemented in the various countries, based on a series of national assessments and practical

²³⁹ ILO: *Activities of the ILO, 1992*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 80th Session, Geneva, 1993.

²⁴⁰ ILO: *Activities of the ILO, 1994-95*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 83rd Session, Geneva, 1996.

²⁴¹ Sue Longley, Interview, Geneva, March 2010; and documents from the ILO project: "Women's Education for Women Members of Rural Workers' Organizations in Asia" (Phase II started in 1984).

evaluations”,²⁴² including rural initiatives, provided the country had any. While the programme had genuine intentions, not all objectives were met. Several comparative reports on policy experience were produced, particularly on employment and training policies for youth entering the labour force; education, employment, and training policies and programmes for disabled youth; and minimum wage and youth unemployment; but these reports fell short of really addressing the situation of rural youth as they were based on the responses of a few industrialized, transitional, and developed countries.

In 1998–99 an Action Programme, “Strategies to Combat Youth Marginalization and Unemployment” was set up to develop, “... a coherent and systematic method of intervention that can be adapted to national situations and integrated into employment policies with a view to combating youth unemployment and exclusion”.²⁴³ In this case differentiation between rural and urban was made clearer, with documents making special mention of the differences and challenges faced by rural youth versus their urban counterparts in finding gainful employment. The Programme formulated several strategy documents assessing the different types of policies and programmes existing in rural and urban areas of developed and developing countries, and outlining policies accordingly. However it is difficult to ascertain to what extent policies were implemented, as well as their success, for lack of follow-up documents.

In 1998, the ILC adopted the Resolution Concerning Youth Employment that boosted the topic of youth employment throughout the ILO. However, it failed to make specific mention of rural youth, using instead the broader term of “disadvantaged categories of youth”. In spite of this oversight it prompted a tripartite inter-regional symposium in Geneva the following year, to discuss strategies for combating youth marginalization and unemployment.²⁴⁴ The symposium revealed an alarming trend that *under-employment* among rural youth was a major contributing factor to the high rates of *unemployment* among urban youth. It noted that, “[i]t will be hard to solve the problem of urban youth unemployment as this is likely to induce a flow to the cities from the land in countries where the reserve of rural youth labour force is large. Programmes need to be developed to slow the flow from the land and deal with the underemployment of the young in rural areas”.²⁴⁵ The finding was a wake-up call to countries to re-evaluate their strategies on combating youth unemployment in urban areas if there are as many (or more) under-employed youth in rural areas. Subsequently, research went on to demonstrate that under-employment and poverty in agriculture and other subsistence activities in rural areas tend to prompt internal and international migration.

While the ILO’s rural work was no longer a priority and slowed markedly in the 1990s, it did not come to a complete halt, which allowed for the topic to be picked up again in the next decade when international attention gradually shifted back to rural areas.

²⁴² ILO: *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1996-1997*, Governing Body, 264th Session, Programme, Financial, and Administrative Committee, Geneva, 1995, Labour Market Policies (Major Programme 60), Action Programme on Youth Unemployment (Section 60.40).

²⁴³ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1998-1999*, International Labour Conference, 85th Session, Geneva, 1997, Development Policies (Major Programme 125), Action Programme on Strategies to combat youth marginalization and unemployment (Section 125.12).

²⁴⁴ International Symposium on Strategies to Combat Youth Unemployment and Marginalization, Geneva, 1999.

²⁴⁵ ILO: *Employing Youth: Promoting Employment-Intensive Growth*, Report for the Interregional Symposium on Strategies to Combat Youth Unemployment and Marginalization, Geneva, 2000, p. 35.

III.2. Rediscovery of rural contexts in the 2000s, with a Decent Work perspective

III.2.1. Strong “drives” towards rural work

The decade of the 2000s has witnessed a gradual revival of rural issues in the international development agenda, with a steady acceleration since 2007. Commercial agriculture, industrialization, globalization and free trade, which were viewed in the 1990s as engines of development, failed to deliver in terms of growth, but more importantly in terms of employment creation and poverty reduction. Pockets of poverty and even extreme poverty persist, increasingly concentrated in rural areas, with no signs of relief in sight.

This trend was apparent by the mid-1990s. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development, in which the ILO played a leading role, may be viewed as a precursor to the rediscovery of the rural dimension, with its Plan of Action calling for measures to tackle poverty by means of special focus on rural areas.²⁴⁶ The need for a renewed rural focus was again voiced a year later at the World Food Summit and the Meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Rural Development (discussed later).

The MDGs (2000) constitute the first universal indication of renewed commitment to rural areas and populations and indirectly revive the ILO’s mandate on this issue. The first MDG in particular, which calls for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, provides a major entry point for the ILO’s involvement in rural issues, particularly after the addition in 2008 of Target 1B aimed at “Achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”.²⁴⁷ In 2003, the Economic and Social Council considered the theme, “Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development”;²⁴⁸ and the 2005 World Summit for Social Development reaffirmed that, “... rural and agricultural development must be adequately and urgently addressed and [...] should be an integral part of national and international development policies”,²⁴⁹ linking it to poverty eradication and the achievement of the MDGs; and urging that UN member countries, “... resolve to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all including for women and young people, essential objectives of our relevant national and international policies as well as our national development strategies...”²⁵⁰ More recently, in 2009, the UN CEB High Level Committee on Programmes successfully proposed to integrate rural employment into the draft plan of action for poverty eradication as a means to operationalize the General Assembly’s Resolution 63/230 (19 Dec 2008) on the Second Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017) that set “Full employment and decent work for all” as a

²⁴⁶ Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, UN, Copenhagen, 1995, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/pgme_action.html (accessed on 25 February 2011).

²⁴⁷ United Nations Millennium Goals Website, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

²⁴⁸ The theme was discussed by the High-level segment of the 2003 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. UN ECOSOC: *Promoting an Integrated Approach to Rural Development in Developing Countries for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development*, Report of the Secretary-General, Substantive Section, Item 2, Geneva, 2003.

²⁴⁹ UN: *Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, 60/1, World Summit Outcome* (New York, 2005), Section 46.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., Section 47.

theme for that Decade.²⁵¹ These actions all confirm the ILO’s mandate on rural issues and represent urgent calls for ILO action.

Within the ILO rural employment also appears in the Report to the ESP of March 2004 on *Productive employment for poverty reduction and development* (core element 10 of the Global Employment Agenda), which sets as major goals, “to increase incomes, productivity and labour absorption in farm and non-farm sectors”, by improving “... access to productive assets and finance ... the price structure, introducing yield-raising technology, marketing facilities, levels of skills, and strengthening the bargaining power of workers as well as small producers”.²⁵² The ILO received strong support from all three constituents to work on these challenges.

Support is also present in the form of the ILO’s Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, whose “vision of globalization is anchored at the local level”,²⁵³ and calls to expand employment opportunities and raise productivity for the poor, with special reference to agriculture, women and the informal sector. Vital consideration is given to social protection schemes aimed at reaching rural economies. These considerations also feature in a central chapter of the ILO’s 2004–05 *World Employment Report*.²⁵⁴

Discussions around 2005 among the ILO’s Employment Sector management on the need to fight poverty through development and decent work in rural areas were met with resounding support from within the Office, and were echoed by the Employers and Workers alike. This led to proposing “Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction” to the March 2006 Governing Body²⁵⁵ as a topic for the 2008 ILC. The proposal was met with support from both social partners and member States (individually as well as in their regional blocs). The Conclusions of the ILC 2008 Committee on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction, which constitute the foundations for the ILO’s future work and their follow-up, are examined in greater detail in part IV of this Review.

In the late-2000s, the food security and the global financial and economic crises further boosted interest in rural development (discussed in section IV.1.3).

III.2.2. Work on priority technical areas and focus groups

Work of the ILO technical departments gradually reflected the Office’s renewed mandate and keenness towards rural areas. The level of activity increased following the debates of the Committee on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction at the ILC 2008, and its ensuing Plan of Action for the Office. Once again some programmes and Units stand out in their response.

²⁵¹ UN CEB: *Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its Eighteenth Session*, (New York, 2009), pp. 12–13.

²⁵² ILO: *Productive Employment for Poverty Reduction and Development*, Governing Body, 289th Session, Committee on Employment and Social Policy, Second Item on the Agenda, Geneva, 2004, p. 5.

²⁵³ ILO: *World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization: A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*, Geneva, 2005, p. 67.

²⁵⁴ ILO: *World Employment Report 2004–05: Employment, Productivity and Poverty Reduction*, (Geneva, 2004), Chapter 3: “Why agriculture still matters”.

²⁵⁵ ILO: *Agenda of the 97th Session of the ILC*, Governing Body, 295th Session, Geneva, 2006.

III.2.2.1. Employment-intensive approach

The food security and economic crises, as well as growing environmental concerns, have renewed interest in labour-intensive public works to provide quality, local, green jobs. Since 2000, the ILO has been working to promote employment-intensive investment in 52 countries throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as in the Middle East (Iraq), and Central Asia (Azerbaijan).²⁵⁶ Over the past decade the EII approach has been credited with creating over 1 million direct jobs and an estimated 2 million indirect jobs in investment programmes in which the EIIP has been directly involved through demonstration and capacity-building activities.²⁵⁷ The employment-intensive approach has proven ideal for rural development, for instance in Madagascar (see Box 1), as it is designed to maximize use of locally available resources and minimize foreign inputs, making it 30 to 80 per cent less costly while creating 2.5 times more jobs, doubling national income and household consumption, and saving over 30 per cent of foreign currency requirements²⁵⁸ (see the EIIP Approach, Appendix 4).

²⁵⁶ ILO, *Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Strategy for Employment-Intensive Investment (EIIS)*, Governing Body, Programming, Financial, and Administrative Committee, Geneva, 2006, p. 4. See also *Employment Intensive Investment Programme – Countries Covered*, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/countries/index.htm> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

²⁵⁷ R. Islam: *Decent Employment through Labour-Based Technology in Infrastructure*, ACC Network on Rural Development and Food Security, <http://www.rdfs.net/oldsite/en/themes/Employ-e.htm> (accessed on 13 December 2010).

²⁵⁸ *Employment and Investment Policies*, ILO, Employment Intensive Investment Programme, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/areas/policies.htm> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

BOX 1

Example: Long-term Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) involvement in Madagascar

ILO supported the Government of **Madagascar** in implementing a range of EIIPs in rural settings over the last 20 years. A variety of sectoral infrastructure works providing basic services to rural and urban communities (rural road construction and maintenance, irrigation canals, school buildings and other economic and social facilities at villages and communal level) lend themselves well to employment generation and also promote growth through the productive use of these assets (e.g., better marketing of farm produce thanks to new roads). From 1995 to 2005, the share of public investment using labour-based (LB) technologies in local development infrastructure increased from 5 to 15 per cent.

These programmes have promoted private sector implementation of public works, and a wider local resource-based approach promoted and supported by an EIIP training Centre set up in Australia. This training Centre, made fully operational with a core group of professional trainers, has been the central element to arriving at a countrywide application of the EIIP approach. Many projects funded by financial partners, central and decentralized structures can now contract qualified SMEs, consulting engineers and technical staff as well as local organizations all trained by that Training centre. In 2005, the *Centre de Formation Haute Intensité de Main-d’Oeuvre* (CFHIMO) became financially independent, a major achievement in aid-supported programmes. Although the Centre will continue to receive technical support from the ILO, the main challenge has been met to establish it as a “reference centre” on issues such as quality, costs, contract management, employment and conditions of work for both private sector (SME and engineering consultants, local organizations), communal and community-based works of public interest.

In this way the Centre has also contributed to reinforcing good governance through improved contract management.

The success of EIIP, particularly the high quality of work by contractors trained in the EIIP Training Centre, has resulted in requests by the government for additional ILO advice and support for capacity building to implement programmes using a similar labour-based (LB) approach, standards, and implementation and training strategies, sponsored by a variety of financial partners.

A well documented 2007 comparative impact study of the experience in Madagascar shows that the overall impact of investments in rural roads on employment and income is 2.3 times higher with the LB option than with the capital-intensive option, and savings on foreign exchange are 30 per cent higher.¹ Concerning primary schools, the unit construction cost per square meter using local materials is 42 per cent lower than prefabricated schools built with substantial imported materials, while the direct employment effect is 54 per cent higher. Direct and indirect employment/income is nearly three times higher than in prefabricated construction and foreign exchange savings are considerable.² The study reveals further impact as public spending in 2005 on infrastructure using the LB approach resulted in twice the increase in added value, twice the increase in household consumption and income, and twice the number of jobs created, in comparison with capital intensive works.

It is worth noting that the advantages of the LB approach are mainly due to the inter-sectoral links created before and after implementation of works. Overall, two thirds of the positive impact on employment, added value, household income and consumption is due to indirect effects and one third to direct effects of construction itself. LB approaches, based on an optimum use of locally available resources, favour the local market and contribute greatly, via distributed revenue, to a higher level of monetization of the rural economy.

Based on these experiences, the government, with ILO support (mainly funded by Norway), has also developed methodologies and macro-economic models for evaluating actual and potential impact of sectoral infrastructure investments on employment creation. Madagascar's Ministry of Planning worked on linking these methodologies to the planning and programming of resource allocations for public investment, involving joint programming between the Ministry of Planning and the different technical ministries responsible for implementing the public investment budget. The objective was to upscale this LB approach with a view to achieving *structural* changes in the economy. This upscaling requires three conditions: 1) a critical mass of trained small- and medium- size enterprises throughout the whole country providing quality work; 2) access facilitated for local companies to procure contracts, adapting contractual procedures to the capacity and constraints of these businesses; and 3) taking into account, when planning and programming works, different options for the execution of infrastructure projects.

- 1 E.N. Ramilison and J.G. Randrianariso : *Cadrage Macro-économique et Potentiel des Approches Fondées sur l'Emploi et les Ressources Locales* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).
- 2 M. Van Imschoot : *Etude Comparative des Différentes Approches Utilisée pour la Réalisation des Infrastructures de base à Madagascar: Impact sur la Crédit d'Emplois et l'utilisation de Devise* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

III.2.2.2. Cooperatives

The new millennium also signalled renewed interest in the cooperative approach, with the adoption of the ILO's Recommendation on the Promotion of Cooperatives, 2002 (No. 193). The Recommendation re-emphasizes the role of cooperatives in job creation, mobilizing resources, generating investment and growth, while ensuring fullest participation from members. Cooperatives are recognized as a form of solidarity that facilitates a more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization; and specific action is recommended to strengthen them.

The ILO's work continued on a number of initiatives such as COOPREFORM, which set up SYNDICOOP (2004–2006), a poverty alleviation project for unprotected informal economy workers through trade union-cooperative joint action; and COOPAIDS (2004), to meet the needs of cooperative members with HIV/AIDS and their families.

Bolstered by the continued demand for its initiatives, the Cooperative Unit took two strategic steps. The first was to use its accumulated experiences to enter a new phase in 2008, one based on a more community-driven approach that places beneficiaries in the “driver's seat”, and focuses on strengthening existing cooperatives (and institutions supporting cooperatives) to promote independence and self-sustainability. This trend, exemplified by the COOP^{AFRICA} programme, sees the ILO playing more of a supportive role, focusing on promoting an enabling legal framework for cooperatives, providing advice, training, funding, establishing local support networks, and Centres of Competence (see Cooperatives Approach, Appendix 4).

The second was to undertake an updating and revision of MATCOM tools in light of the new contexts, challenges and opportunities faced by today's cooperatives. A general review of those materials in 2008 confirmed that, “MATCOM is an ILO trademark for quality training material in cooperative management [and] certainly the most comprehensive collection

of cooperative training materials”.²⁵⁹ Accordingly revisions have begun, resulting in the updating of several modules.²⁶⁰

To complement the strengthening of cooperatives through traditional TC work, the Unit is now providing policy advisory services based on R193 to support the development of strong national legal frameworks for a broad variety of genuine cooperatives. The Unit has thus assisted over 65 countries in the last 15 years with reforming their cooperative policies and laws, such as the *Ley Marco para las cooperativas de America Latina*; the Uniform Cooperative Act for the *Organisation pour l’Harmonisation en Afrique du Droit des Affaires* (OHADA); and has conducted an implementation assessment of the 2003 European Union Regulation on cooperatives in the 27 EU members and three European Economic Area (EEA) countries.

The ILO’s heightened emphasis on cooperative policy and legislation is accompanied by its call for political dialogue on the economic and social importance of cooperatives; a request for more and better statistics on cooperatives; and support for cooperative-specific education and training, especially in schools, which all contribute to the active promotion of cooperatives as a profitable, sustainable enterprise.

III.2.2.3. Entrepreneurship and Enterprises

Employment and entrepreneurship remain a primary rural work area for the ILO. In many countries, small but productive enterprises, including cooperatives, often provide a means to diversify, modernize and promote employment-intensive rural economic growth. In the 2000s the ILO continued disseminating a large number of approaches and good practice in the areas of entrepreneurship promotion, business management training for small entrepreneurs, local economic development, cooperatives, small enterprise access to financing, and public and private infrastructure investment tenders. Nearly half of the ILO TC projects operating in rural areas in that decade contain one or more enterprise dimensions, including microfinance. It also developed new tools to support small enterprises and employers’ organizations, as well as women and youth entrepreneurs, such as KAB and Women’s Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE).

In 2007, the ILC discussion on the promotion of sustainable enterprises emphasized the importance of rural development,²⁶¹ although its conclusions fall short of highlighting the rural dimension of sustainable enterprise promotion.²⁶² The emerging emphasis in the ILO’s work on value chains (most of which are in agro-businesses) and green jobs, where rural areas and activities are both among the main victims of and contributors to environmental degradation and climate change, stepped up work on rural enterprises through novel dimensions.

²⁵⁹ G. Ullrich: *Review of MATCOM Material* (Geneva, ILO, 2008), unpublished, p. 25.

²⁶⁰ Discussions on MATCOM the following year between ILO officials from HQ and ITC-Turin, external specialists, the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and the NGO Agriterra confirmed a broad interest in MATCOM. A MATCOM Revision Meeting in April 2009 also indicated support for starting the revision process and to using partnerships, “... in the revision phase as well as in the implementation strategy for greater ownership, sustainability and outreach”.

²⁶¹ ILO: *The Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 96th Session, Geneva, 2007, p. v.

²⁶² ILO: *Resolution and Conclusion Concerning the Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises*, International Labour Conference, 96th Session, Geneva, 2007, pp. 94–105.

III.2.2.4. Local Economic Development

LED work accelerated in the first half of the 2000s. Approximately one fifth of ILO TC rural-related projects in Africa and Asia featured it among their technical areas. Also ITC-Turin and Headquarters jointly organized numerous courses and other capacity building based on the LED approach.

LED's continued relevance in post-crisis contexts, confirmed by interventions from post-Tsunami Banda Aceh (Indonesia) in the mid-2000s, to post-conflict Liberia and post-earthquake Haiti in late 2000s, made it a privileged instrument in the ILO's post-crisis work, leading among others to the development of a specific tool on Local Economic Recovery.²⁶³

III.2.2.5. Skills

The important role of skills for social and economic development and decent work was highlighted in a series of ILO discussions and conclusions, with specific references to rural areas, in particular: the Conclusions concerning human resources development (ILC, 2000), Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195), the Global Employment Agenda adopted by the Governing Body in March 2003, the conclusions on promoting pathways to decent work for youth (ILC, 2005), the conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises (ILC, 2007), and the Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140). Although not directly mentioning rural areas, the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (issued in 1977 and amended in 2000 and 2006) is also relevant with respect to opportunities for training.

The 2000s saw the development of the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) approach that promotes local economic and employment opportunities for rural people and disadvantaged groups, including women, youth, disabled persons and the poor. It offers training in a wide variety of technical skills as well as complementary skills such as rural project management, home and family improvements, safety and health, and functional literacy (see the TREE Approach, Appendix 4). This methodology builds strongly on its predecessor, CBT, but differs in organizational layout at national and local levels as TREE involves more actors and facilitates post-training support. TREE has been used in African and Asian countries. Its broad participatory approach, coupled with its response to concrete local skill needs has also proved particularly valuable in sensitive areas such as the north-west Frontier Province of Pakistan, where in 2002–2007 it provided skills to 3,000 youth, women and disabled persons, over 93 per cent of whom used them to secure livelihoods.²⁶⁴

TREE dissemination accelerated in 2009 through the publication of a manual;²⁶⁵ the launching of a pilot programme in Viet Nam in partnership with public and private sector institutions to provide training to the rural poor including on entrepreneurship, and directly contributing to the Ministry of Labour's work to promote economic opportunities for the rural poor; and the launching of a large, Danish-funded five-year project, "Skills for Youth

²⁶³ ILO: *Local Economic Recovery in Post-Conflict: Guidelines*, Geneva, 2010.

²⁶⁴ F.C. Huxley and L. Lazo: *Final Evaluation of TREE Project: Pakistan and the Philippines* (Geneva, ILO/USDOL, 2007). See also ILO: *Evaluation of the InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability*, Governing Body, 291st Session, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee, Geneva, 2004.

²⁶⁵ ILO: *Rural Skills Training: A Generic Manual on TREE*, Geneva, 2009.

Employment and Rural Development in Southern and West Africa”, covering Benin, Burkina Faso, and Zimbabwe.

III.2.2.6. Occupational Safety and Health and working conditions

The new millennium opened with preparations for the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184) and its related Recommendation (No. 192), the first international instruments to address agricultural safety and health hazards in a comprehensive manner. It proposes a framework on which national policies can be developed, together with mechanisms to ensure workers’ and employers’ participation. It also covers preventative and protective measures, and addresses the specific needs of young workers, temporary and seasonal workers, and of women workers before and after childbirth. While ratifications are still limited, Convention No. 184 provides comprehensive guidance to the ILO’s member States and social partners working to improve their national laws and practices. It is also an important reference text for voluntary initiatives such as codes of conduct schemes where occupational safety and health often feature prominently.

These legal instruments were complemented by the issuing of a set of factsheets in 2000 on Safety and health in agriculture presenting, in an accessible way, information on occupational hazards in agriculture; legislation on occupational safety and health in the sector; the impact of difficult working conditions on women’s health; the ILO’s Programme on Occupational Safety and Health in Agriculture; relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations; and the guiding principles for integrated national policy and programmes of safety and health in the sector.

The adoption of the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) and Recommendation (No. 197), while of general application, further strengthened the focus on safety and health matters in rural areas.

Follow-up work included the development of practical guidelines, leading among others in 2007 to the publication of a guide on the *Protection of workers from ultraviolet radiation*; and in 2010 to a *Practical manual on ergonomic checkpoints in agriculture* guidelines; and a *Code of practice on Safety and Health in Agriculture*.

As for the WIND Programme, in the 2000s the ILO facilitated its spread from Viet Nam to Cambodia, the Republic of Korea, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, the Philippines and Thailand, followed by countries in Eastern Europe, Africa,²⁶⁶ Central Asia,²⁶⁷ and finally in Latin America.²⁶⁸ The potential of this approach however goes well beyond OSH. In Central Asia for instance trade unions and employers’ representatives took advantage of the social dialogue created by the approach to address broader issues ranging from access to land and water rights, declining agricultural prices, community-based micro-insurance and micro-finance, unemployment, entrepreneurship training to set up small businesses and income-generating activities, and the organization of cooperatives.²⁶⁹ It also signals potential

²⁶⁶ ILO project : « Améliorer les Conditions de Travail et les Conditions de Vie des Familles et des Enfants dans le Milieu Agricole au Sénégal, Bénin et Mali » (2007–2010).

²⁶⁷ The WIND Programme in Central Asia (2003–2009) covered Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

²⁶⁸ Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

²⁶⁹ As an anecdote, a small farmer was heard declaring that: “This tripartism is for us!”

for broad collaboration ILO-wide²⁷⁰ (see Box 2), as well as for external collaboration with FAO, IFAD and UNDP in particular. The various experiences are well documented, including through videos and a general review in 2010.²⁷¹

III.2.2.7. Social Security

In 2001, the ILC adopted Conclusions and a Resolution on Social Security that renewed the ILO's commitment to the extension of social security coverage and the improvement of the governance, financing and administration of social security, recommending that each country determine a national strategy for working towards social security for all. It set among the ILO's work priorities the launching of, "... a major campaign ... to promote the extension of coverage". This Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All took place between 2002 and 2006 and consisted of an interactive internet platform, relying on inputs from ILO specialists and a broad array of partner institutions, including from UN agencies, academic and training centres, NGOs and financial assistance providers. It also involved knowledge development, technical assistance at country level, advocacy and monitoring and evaluation services.

In the meantime, following up on the recommendations of the 2004 World Commission on Social Dimensions of Globalization,²⁷² the ILO started working on a concept to support social protection systems that would ensure minimum levels of social protection worldwide. The economic crisis revived interest in the fact that some 80 per cent of the global population lack basic social guarantees. The concept was highlighted in the ILO's 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and its 2009 Global Jobs Pact. Shortly thereafter, "A Social Protection Floor" was established by the UN CEB as one of nine joint UN priority initiatives; the ILO and WHO were appointed as joint lead agencies and cooperated with over 15 other UN agencies and the World Bank. The stated goals of this initiative, to provide a minimum income and livelihood security, facilitate access to essential social rights, transfers such as to ensure a minimum income security, services such as water, health care, and education, make it particularly relevant to rural areas, even though official texts do not refer to rural populations as a specific target group. Implementation is taking place rapidly, including the development of a manual for country operations, country-level interventions themselves, South-South exchanges, and series of trainings at various levels, including for national social protection planners.

III.2.2.8. Standards

In addition to the regular monitoring of Convention implementation through the ILO's supervisory system, especially its Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEARC), in 2010 the ILO launched a two-year project to develop a global tool for enhancing the capacity of constituents to promote freedom of association and collective bargaining in rural areas,²⁷³ especially by building on the experience of recent courses at ITC-Turin courses on that subject.

²⁷⁰ Particularly, but not only with SIYB, the TREE approach, IPEC, GENDER, and ACTRAV and ACT/EMP.

²⁷¹ K. Kogi: *International Experiences in Applying WIND* (Geneva, ILO, 2010), unpublished.

²⁷² ILO: *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*, Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, Geneva, 2004, pp. 135–136, 612–622, Annex 1.

²⁷³ ILO project: "Promoting Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining Rights in the Rural and Export Processing Sectors" (2010–2011).

In the related area of labour inspection, which is fundamental to ensure the enforcement of International Labour Standards, provide technical information and advice to help in implementation, and ameliorate national legal provisions and regulations accordingly, the ILO considered a plan of action to prompt ratification and effective implementation of Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) and Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129).²⁷⁴ This was followed in 2011 by the preparation of two ILO capacity-building modules on labour inspection in rural areas (one targeting policy-makers and the other to be used by labour inspectors). These modules provide realistic, cost-effective basic guidance, while taking into account the specific challenges in rural areas as well as existing mechanisms that could be used or adapted to facilitate inspection, including workers’ and employers’ involvement.

III.2.2.9. Workers

Workers’ activities targeting rural areas stepped up in the mid-2000s, primarily following the International Workers’ Symposium, a biennial event that in 2003 focused on “Decent Work in Agriculture”. Among others, it solicited the ILO to, “... seek additional regular budget resources to strengthen activities on the agricultural sector and establish a focal point dedicated to the agricultural and rural sector”.²⁷⁵ A year later the ILO and the IUF produced an agricultural workers manual on health, safety and environment.²⁷⁶ Furthermore, the ILO managed to mainstream agricultural workers into the work of other agencies, particularly through the Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development initiative (2002),²⁷⁷ through policy briefs and brochures presenting the role of agricultural workers and trade unions, decent work and International Labour Standards in sustainable agriculture and rural development.

III.2.2.10. Child Labour

Attention to child labour in rural areas, particularly in agriculture, grew as well, boosted in part by special efforts to ratify and implement the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and related Recommendation (No. 190). This resulted, among other programmes, in time-bound country programmes on the worst forms of child labour in agriculture, and an extensive three-year regional programme (begun in 2002) on prevention, withdrawal, and rehabilitation of children engaged in hazardous work in commercial agriculture (COMAGRI) in Kenya, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The Programme developed and implemented over 40 Action Programmes, and managed to withdraw approximately 15,000 children and prevent about 17,000 more from engaging in child labour. Its work was based on strong social dialogue and institutional capacity-building components.²⁷⁸ Trade unions and employers’ organization were in many

²⁷⁴ ILO: *Ratification and Promotion of Fundamental and Governance ILO Conventions*, Governing Body, 306th Session, Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards, Geneva, 2009, Appendix.

²⁷⁵ ILO: *Conclusions to the International Workers’ Symposium on Decent Work in Agriculture*, Geneva, 2003, p. 4.

²⁷⁶ P. Hurst and P. Kirby: *Health, Safety and Environment: A Series of Trade Union Education Manuals for Agricultural Workers* (Geneva, ILO, 2004).

²⁷⁷ SARD is a multi-stakeholder framework established to support a transition to people-centred sustainable agriculture and rural development. It is led by civil society and international agencies and facilitated by FAO.

²⁷⁸ ILO/USDOL: *Independent Final Evaluation on the Regional Programme on Prevention, Withdrawal and Rehabilitation of Children engaged in Hazardous Work in Commercial Agriculture*, Geneva, 2005.

cases protagonists, such as in Tanzania, where, together, they pressed for safe working conditions and fair pay for 14–18 year-olds working legally on tea and tobacco farms.

The active involvement of social partners on the issue is also to be noted: both the employers' (ACT/EMP) programme and the workers' programme (ACTRAV) focused on child labour in commercial agriculture through research on child labour in specific sectors, such as horticulture in the Republic of Moldova; commercial oil, palm, and rubber plantations in Ghana; and commercial coffee, tea, and tobacco farms in Tanzania.²⁷⁹ In the Latin American region, work has been conducted incorporating new aspects of child labour, particularly those related to migration and indigenous populations.²⁸⁰ Child labour is also being addressed through social initiatives such as conditional cash transfer programmes. In Mexico and Brazil, for instance, such programmes offer financial support to families, conditional on school attendance, coupled with the use of preventive health services and nutrition to reduce the need for child labour. Capacity building experienced a similar boost through guidance materials²⁸¹ and a course on tackling the worst forms of child labour in agriculture, which has featured regularly among ITC-Turin courses since 2007.

The need to reach children in rural areas more quickly and effectively prompted the ILO to seek partnerships with other agencies, and led in particular to a Declaration of Intent on Co-operation on Child Labour in Agriculture between the ILO, FAO, IFAD, IFPRI/CGIAR, IFAP, and IUF,²⁸² targeting plantation workers, small farmers, and children in supply chains. This resulted in the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture,²⁸³ officially launched on World Day against Child Labour 2007, dedicated to agriculture. Concrete joint initiatives began with an FAO-ILO workshop on child labour in fisheries and aquaculture (Rome, April 2010); collaboration to issue a Partnership statement for The Hague Global Child Labour Conference (May 2010); and country-level interventions, starting in Malawi, to support the inclusion of agriculture in child labour national action plans; and a forthcoming handbook for mainstreaming child labour in agriculture in partner agencies and other relevant institutions.

III.2.2.11. Gender

In the first half of the 2000s work on rural women was to some extent part of the Gender Promotion Programme (GENPROM), and targeted rural women in Africa and Asia in particular. It included a major TC project in Bangladesh, “Women’s Empowerment through Employment and Health” (2000–2005), supported by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). The project consisted of elements promoting employment, social protection

²⁷⁹ See, for example, T. Monsen: *Bitter Harvest: Child Labour in Agriculture*, ILO Project Developing National and International Trade Union Strategies to Combat Child Labour, Bureau for Workers’ Activities, Geneva, 2002.

²⁸⁰ See ILO/IPEC: *Action Against Child Labour 2008–2009: IPEC Progress and Future Priorities*, Geneva, 2010. In 2010 a new project in Mexico, entitled: “Stop Child Labour in Agriculture”, contributed to the prevention and elimination of child labour in the agricultural sector, with a special focus on indigenous children and child labour as a result of internal migration.

²⁸¹ In particular, ILO/IPEC: *Training Resource Pack on Child Labour in Agriculture*, Geneva, 2005; and ILO/IPEC: *Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture: Guidance on Policy Making and Practice*, Geneva, 2006.

²⁸² The partnership (signed on 12 June 2007) includes the ILO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations (IUF).

²⁸³ *International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture*, ILO, IPEC, http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/International_Partnership_IPCLA/lang—en/index.htm (accessed 26 September 2011).

as well as fundamental rights for tens of thousands of poor rural women, both self-employed and tea plantation workers.

Efforts to view employment and social protection issues facing women and men through a gender perspective resulted in both internal capacity building and outreach to constituents. ITC-Turin has over two decades worth of products to develop and implement gender training programmes for the ILO’s constituents, development agencies, and other stakeholders, which include rural women issues. The ILO has also conducted primary research on a wide variety of gender equality issues with a rural dimension in the world of work.²⁸⁴ A commitment to gender equality by key ILO financial partners has led to technical cooperation projects and programmes that reach beyond women-specific goals and towards an approach that involves benefits for both sexes. These efforts were reflected in the Governing Body’s decision in 2005 on gender mainstreaming in technical cooperation, which recognized work that extends freedom of association to rural women workers.²⁸⁵

In 2009 the ILC discussed the issue of “Gender equality at the heart of decent work”, offering a timely opportunity to move the discourse to action and guide the Organization’s future aspirations for promoting gender equality, including in rural areas.²⁸⁶ The ensuing ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15 refers to the conclusions of the 2008 ILC Committee on Rural Employment, and calls for governments to strengthen investment in public and community services, including in rural areas, and to enhance rural women’s access to, and control of, productive resources; for workers’ organizations to strengthen women’s role and representation; and for the ILO to implement targeted interventions in rural areas.²⁸⁷

Realizing the need for integrated approaches to develop and effectively use women’s rural potential and aspirations, the ILO joined forces with FAO and IFAD in 2009 to organize a workshop that mobilized ILO officials from a variety of Departments, the field, and ITC-Turin to address the issue. Its rich discussions were followed by the production of a comprehensive analytical publication examining status, trends, and gaps in gender work, along with seven policy briefs to guide decision-makers in select technical areas of intervention.²⁸⁸ The workshop itself, its joint preparation, and follow-up, was a major stepping stone that opened the door for broader joint initiatives.

²⁸⁴ See for instance M. Loutfi (ed): *Women, Gender and Work: What is Equality and How Do We Get There?* (Geneva, ILO, 2001).

²⁸⁵ ILO: *Thematic Evaluation Report: Gender Issues in Technical Cooperation*, Governing Body, 292nd Session, Committee on Technical Cooperation, Geneva, 2005, Section 46. See also, ILO: *Minutes*, 292nd Session, Governing Body, (Geneva, 2005), Section 223.

²⁸⁶ ILO: *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work*, Report of the Committee on Gender Equality, Sixth Item on the Agenda, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, 2009, Section 18.

²⁸⁷ ILO: *Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15; Phase I: Aligned with Programme and Budget 2010–11*, Geneva, 2010, p. 9.

²⁸⁸ FAO-IFAD-ILO: *Gender Dimensions of Agriculture and Rural Employment: Differentiated Pathways Out of Poverty*. Series of Policy Briefs, Rome, 2010. Papers presented at the FAO-IFAD-ILO Workshop on Gaps, trends and current research in gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: differentiated pathways out of poverty, Rome, 31 March – 2 April 2009 (Rome, FAO, 2010). The eight policy briefs cover the areas of Gender and decent work, agriculture feminization, women in employment-intensive works, child labour, skills development, entrepreneurship, value chains and migration.

III.2.2.12. Youth

More recently the ILO has been pursuing an increasingly “comprehensive” strategy towards rural youth, addressing in particular labour supply as well as labour demand issues, and including various technical areas and external partnerships. The ILC 2005 generated an important discussion on youth employment in rural areas. Its background report was “outspoken” on the rural dimension of youth employment,²⁸⁹ openly stating that rural youth should be at the forefront of interventions aimed at reducing poverty, particularly considering the current large-scale migration of young people to urban areas.²⁹⁰

The current technical assistance portfolio on youth employment increasingly includes rural areas. While a 2009 evaluation of the YEP could only report limited instances (e.g. in post-tsunami Banda Aceh, Azerbaijan and Mali), initiatives are now multiplying, particularly in collaboration with FAO and other agencies. Thus, within the framework of the MDG Fund initiative sponsored by Spain, the ILO’s programmes for rural youth are now operating in Albania, Honduras, Malawi, Nepal, Tunisia, Serbia, and Sudan. They are mainly to provide alternatives to migration and provide jobs for youth as part of post-war peace building. Analytical work is also progressing, such as the FAO-ILO-UNESCO study on youth training and employment opportunities in the rural areas of the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.²⁹¹ To strengthen work on rural youth employment, in 2010 the ILO undertook an IFAD-funded exercise to develop a methodology for reviewing rural strategies and projects targeting rural youth through the “decent work lenses”, which was piloted in Egypt, Madagascar, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Senegal.²⁹²

III.2.2.13. Migrants

The Resolution and Plan of Action on Migrant Workers adopted by the 92nd ILC in 2004 revitalized the ILO’s attention to labour migration, including the prioritizing of technical co-operation and capacity building. In mid-2011, the ILO had over 20 TC projects addressing labour migration across Africa, Asia, and the CIS countries. Nearly all of them include components focused on, or significantly addressing migration from, and/or to, rural areas. Notable recent examples include a project funded by Spain in Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal that is essentially about arranging and regulating international mobility for rural employment in Spain;²⁹³ an EU-supported project in Central Asia supporting the enhancement of legislation, institution building and tripartite cooperation with a focus on rural origin migrants from the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, as well as rural employment of migrants in agriculture in Kazakhstan;²⁹⁴ and the Africa “MIGSEC” project on extending social security to migrant workers, covering 13 countries and the East Africa Community, focusing by and large on migrants originating from rural areas and employed in rural areas in destination countries.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁹ ILO: *Youth: Pathways to Decent Work*. Report VI, International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, specifically Sections 127 and 128.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 41.

²⁹¹ FAO-ILO-UNESCO: *Training and Employment Opportunities to Address Poverty Among Rural Youth*, Bangkok, 2009.

²⁹² ILO Project: “Promoting decent and productive employment of young people in rural areas: A review of strategies and programmes” (October 2010 – March 2012).

²⁹³ ILO project: “Labour migration governance and its link to development” (2009–2013).

²⁹⁴ ILO project: “Regulating labour migration as an instrument of development and regional cooperation in Central Asia” (2007–2011).

²⁹⁵ ILO project: “Improvement of regional and national strategies for the extension of social security coverage of African migrant workers” (2008–2011).

III.2.3. Sectoral Activities, ITC-Turin and regional rural focus

III.2.3.1. Sectoral Activities

Significant work on rural areas has also been undertaken within the specific sectors of agriculture (including plantations), forestry, fishing, food and drinks, and tourism. Specific tripartite Sectoral Committees were functioning since the 1930s,²⁹⁶ meeting at various intervals throughout the years. These meetings served as a forum for exchanging information, for discussing and deliberating on given developments and challenges; for reaching agreements that, while not binding, created and sustained institutional frameworks for future engagement, including suggested sectoral action at national and international levels, while constituting an important network for intra-sectoral international exchanges.

Over the years the ILO’s sectoral work and meetings underwent several rounds of reforms in an attempt to adapt their work to the evolving economic, social and technological context.²⁹⁷ A Programme of Industrial Activities was set up in 1970 to give continuity to industrial committees. This Programme evolved into a Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR) in 1975, that was further strengthened in 1981 to ensure its coordination and control of activities, as well as basic resources, and to facilitate arrangements with other departments in the preparation and conduct of sectoral meetings. SECTOR was also to undertake research; provide technical contributions related to specific sectors; collect, analyse and disseminate information; participate in preparatory work on international labour standards; provide technical advisory services; and collaborate with other technical units. The Department came to consist of sectoral specialists, as it was asked to do more than organize and service meetings.

Follow-up to the sectoral meetings has been a long-standing concern, acknowledged as crucial to ensure the impact of committees’ resolutions and conclusions, and to achieve coherence and programmatic integration among the ILO’s Departments. However, there was difficulty in translating those resolutions and conclusions into concrete Programme and Budget proposals in the various technical Departments of the ILO.

The challenge over the years has been to achieve a balanced combination between the multidisciplinarity of the sector-specific perspective and the cross-sectoral, and usually less inter-disciplinary approach of the ILO’s technical Units; and also to ensure linkages, cross-fertilization and synergies between the work of the Sectoral Programme and that of technical Units. At times technical departments resisted direct involvement in preparing and following-up on sectoral meetings and work plans. For instance records indicate that SECTOR was a full and active member of the ICRD, but was less involved in the substantial research and advisory work on agriculture, plantations and land distribution, and other rural issues undertaken within the WEP. Nonetheless, those records also provide encouraging evidence of SECTOR collaboration, particularly with Units dealing with training, industrial relations, and labour administration.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Permanent Agricultural Committee (1938–74), Committee on Work on Plantations (1950–95), Committee on forestry and Wood industries (1985–95), Committee on the Conditions of Work in the Fishing Industry (1954–95), Committee on Food and Drink Industries (1984–95), Hotel, Catering and Tourism Committee (1989–1995)

²⁹⁷ For a detailed historical review, see E. Weisband: *ILO Industrial Committees and sectoral activities*, Working paper for the Sectoral Activities Programme (Geneva, ILO, 1996).

²⁹⁸ See ILO: *Industrial committee-type meetings and implementation of PIACT and the WEC Programme of Action*, Working paper prepared for the Fourth Informal Meeting on Industrial Committee-type Meetings, Geneva, 1977.

In the 1990s there was a call for “unity” by the Director-General. He called for coherence among department work programmes, and encouraged flexible forms of collaboration across the Office, such as interdepartmental programmes. SECTOR participated in a number of these programmes, for instance one on the environment that saw the forestry specialist dispatched to the ILO Office in Santiago for one year.

An extensive review and evaluation of the Sectoral Activities Programme in 1993–95,²⁹⁹ led the Governing Body to confirm that sectoral tripartite meetings would constitute the basis of the ILO’s Programme on Sectoral Activities; but that sectoral committees and their periodic meetings, would be replaced by a single category of meetings decided after tripartite, as well as interdepartmental consultations, to ensure that topics reflected constituents’ priorities and be related to the priorities and work programme of the Office. The GB also called for increased emphasis on follow-up to the decisions of sectoral meetings, implying a strengthening of cooperation between specialists in SECTOR, and those in technical departments, including those in the field.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ ILO: *Evaluation of the Sectoral Activities Programme*, Geneva, 1994; and ILO: *Report of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues*, Geneva, 1994.

³⁰⁰ See ILO document embodying the conclusion of the evaluation exercise: ILO: *Evaluation of the sectoral activities programme*, Geneva, 1995.

BOX 2

Example: Work Improvement in Neighborhood Development Programmes in Central Asia

The **Kyrgyzstan** WIND Programme supported by the ILO has been operating since 2004 to introduce occupational health and safety conditions to rural areas. The initial objective was to spread knowledge of OSH and means of protection to farmers, but its success rapidly prompted the Kyrgyz government to set up OSH structures and dedicate resources at national, regional, and local levels. The Programme is led by the Agro-Industrial Complex Trade Union, with tripartite support country-wide. The first phase (2004–06) focused on translating the WIND manual piloted in Viet Nam into Russian and Kyrgyz while adapting it to national and local context specificities; training 122 trainers, among which were trade union and labour inspection activists, and having them transmit their knowledge through seminars to all 460 municipalities reaching 12,000 farmers. This work led to the inclusion of the WIND approach in the Government’s “Programme on Improving Protection, Safety and Working Conditions in Agriculture” in 2007–2009.

The second phase (2007–09) saw the development of a manual on OSH in the use of agrochemicals; the training of 109 trainers among the Ministry of Agriculture’s specialists in veterinary medicine and agrochemicals; organizing of 358 seminars at municipality level and reaching over 10,000 farmers on WIND, safe work with agrochemicals and on brucellosis prevention. The Ministry of Agriculture set up a unified, vertical, three-stage OSH system, with OSH and WIND responsible persons at municipal, regional and national levels. It also created a new OSH department and allocated resources for long-term WIND implementation. A third phase, in 2010 and 2011, aimed to train responsible persons on OSH at the regional and municipal levels.

These achievements encouraged extending the experience to **Tajikistan**. The National Association of Dekhan Farmers of the Republic of Tajikistan (NADF RT) championed a variant of WIND for honey production, aimed at supporting families of migrants, especially women, to establish small beekeeping businesses. Supported by the Ministry of Labour and in collaboration with local authorities and the ILO, NADF RT established a Bee-Keepers Support Centre in the Tavildara honey valley in 2006. The centres provides vocational training in honey production, including new technologies, training in WIND, OSH and proper labour management combined with SIYB methodology, as well as microfinance, veterinary and bee-house related carpentry services. In two years, over 20 training workshops in “Beekeeping and entrepreneurship” reached over 1,000 new bee-keepers who increased their annual income by an average of USD 1,000. At a honey festival organized by the Programme in the summer of 2009 the Tajik president called to replicate this example in other regions. That same year, the NADF RT built a second Bee-Keepers Support Centre in another part of the honey valley that is larger and provides additional services such as a packaging machine and accommodation for trainees. It also hopes to ensure uniform packaging and proper quality control of the honey that would help exporting it, namely to the EU, thereby increasing their profit margins.

Important products of those two country programmes include (besides regular and dramatized/theatrical seminars, guidance booklets, posters illustrating WIND messages, and other capacity-building tools) UN press trips, articles, interviews, sets of photos, and video clips that allow for sharing experiences broadly.

Another review of the Sectoral Activities Programme, in 2002–03, went a step further towards integrating sectoral activities into the ILO’s mainstream work by launching Action Programmes targeting specific challenges in a few sectors at a time.³⁰¹ They included in 2004–05 one on Decent Work in Agriculture, which focused on improving OSH in agriculture through social dialogue in 9 countries at the national level via improvements in the legal regulatory and policy framework; at enterprise level via large-scale training programmes for safety managers and workers’ safety representatives of agricultural enterprises; and at community level through the WIND methodology. The self-evaluation conducted at the end revealed a number of features that contributed to the Programme’s success, in particular, choosing a theme (occupational safety and health) that lent itself to collaboration among the social partners and governments; the use of pre-existing tripartite structures; the selection of countries based on requests from their constituents; and extensive collaboration between SECTOR’s agriculture specialist and colleagues in all relevant technical and field units of the ILO.³⁰²

Sectoral work has been particularly intense in **agriculture**, the dominant rural sector and one of the most dangerous ones, particularly in developing countries. The Committee of Work on Plantations held 10 sessions between 1950 and 1995, and adopted over 100 conclusions and resolutions on various aspects of working and living conditions in particular. Agriculture tripartite meetings were also held on improving the conditions of employment and work of agricultural wage workers in the context of economic restructuring (1996), and sustainable agriculture in a globalized economy (2000). These were increasingly accompanied by research on select issues such as conditions of employment and work in plantations, with special reference to seasonal workers, women and young workers, and labour relations in plantations and productivity in the 1980s and 1990s; and in the 2000s, on the expanding flower industry.

In recent years, SECTOR increased inputs to other ILO initiatives, such as the International Workers’ Symposium on Decent Work in Agriculture (2003), and the Trade Union Education Manual for Agricultural Workers on Health, Safety and Environment (2004). It increased “joint ventures” with other ILO units, particularly in the case of the International Labour Conference General Discussion on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction (2008); the organization of a Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Food Price Crisis and its Impact on Decent Work (2009), with SECTOR’s subsequent leadership in the ILO’s work on the food security crisis; and an ILO Code of practice on OSH in agriculture, adopted by a Meeting of Experts in 2010.

In **forestry**, work has been fueled by concerns over contract labour, occupational safety and health, ergonomics and working conditions, skills development, and the impact of technological and structural changes. The Forestry and Wood Industries Committee held two sessions between 1985 and 1995. Tripartite sectoral meetings focused on technological change and training in forestry (1991); social and labour issues in the pulp and paper industry (1992); a code of practice on safety and health in forestry work (1997); social and labour dimensions of the forestry and wood industries (2001); and labour inspection in Forestry

³⁰¹ ILO: *Review of the Sectoral Activities Programme: Towards greater flexibility and impact in 2004–05*, Geneva, 2003; and ILO: *Report of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues*, Geneva, 2003.

³⁰² ILO: *Evaluation report: Action Programme on Decent Work in Agriculture*, Geneva, 2007.

(2005). National tripartite workshops were also organized to discuss country-specific decent work deficits in forestry and to recommend action accordingly, for instance in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Peru (in 2007, 2010, and 2011 respectively).

Capacity building has received special attention resulting among others in a *Training manual on fitting the job to forestry workers* (1992), a *Code of practice on occupational safety and health in forestry work* (1998), and *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry* (2006). It has also entailed active promotion of national codes of forest practices and labour inspection, and national skills-testing and certification; and production of technical papers such as *Safety and health in the European forestry sector – the impact of more open market and of increased regulation* (2009).

Collaboration with other parts of the ILO has been steady, namely with the Occupational Safety and Health, and Working Conditions Units, and with the Enterprise Department on forestry-related LED and clusters. External collaboration has also been important, namely within the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, which met every two years from 1954 to 2004.³⁰³ The Committee was replaced by a streamlined Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Forestry Experts Network with almost 300 members from 70 countries, to exchange information and promote cooperation among practitioners and institutions working on forestry workforce issues. The ILO has been particularly active, among other things, in issuing its periodic newsletter, “FORWORKNET”.

Given the often challenging working and living conditions of small-scale fishermen and fishing communities, the ILO’s work in fisheries has focused on improving labour conditions, particularly as concerns recruitment, minimum age, work agreements, training, systems of remuneration, occupational safety and health, and social security, while taking into account structural and technical changes. Work includes various legal instruments directly related to fishers,³⁰⁴ in addition to general instruments and a number of relevant maritime instruments. The Committee on Conditions of Work in the Fishing Industry met four times between 1954 and 1995. Its 1988 meeting is notable for having discussed systems of remuneration and earnings, occupational adaptation to technical changes in the fishing industry, and the social and economic needs of small-scale fishermen and rural fishing communities, including occupational safety and health. Tripartite meetings and other expert meetings subsequently covered the issues of safety and health in the fishing industry (1999), leading to the consolidation of these standards into the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) and Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199).

The ILO work in fisheries has included close collaboration with the FAO and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), producing among others in the 1990s a *Guidance on fishermen’s training and certification*; a *Code of safety for fishermen and fishing vessels*; and *Voluntary guidelines for the design, construction and equipment of small fishing vessels*, updated respectively in 2001 and 2005. In recent years, the FAO, ILO and IMO have produced additional guidance focusing on safety and health issues on even small vessels (below 12 meters in length and undecked), which are more likely to be found in rural areas. Joint UN

³⁰³ For details, see T.J. Peck and E.G. Richards: *The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training*, ILO Sectoral Activities Working Paper No. 220 (Geneva, ILO, 2004).

³⁰⁴ The minimum Age (fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 112), the Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113), the Fishermen’s Articles of Agreement Convention, 1959 (No. 114), the Fishermen’s Competency Certificates Convention, 1966 (No. 125), the Accommodation of Crews (Fishermen) Convention, 1966 (No. 126), the Vocational Training (Fishermen) Recommendation, 1966 (No. 126), and the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) and Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199).

agency work is particularly important bearing in mind that at the national level responsibility for issues related to the working conditions of fishers is often spread among several ministries, departments, or agencies. Another challenge is the need to extend work to address not only those working on vessels but also those involved in the processing and marketing subsectors.

Collaboration within the ILO has also been increasing, in training and advisory services for instance, and to support other ILO initiatives such as the 2010 FAO-ILO workshop on child labour in fisheries and aquaculture. It will be important for SECTOR to work in this same spirit of collaboration with ACT/EMP and ACTRAV to strengthen the presence of employers' and workers' representative organizations in rural areas.

Steady growth of the **food and drink** industry since the 1970s in terms of production as well as employment, particularly in developing countries (where until then only a small part of agricultural products were processed), led the ILO to establish a Food and Drink Industries Committee in 1982. Concerns of the sector included dangerous working conditions, gender discrimination, increasing employment flexibility, adaptation to modern technology, and more recently to value chains and food safety. The **tobacco** industry was added to the food and drink group in the late 1990s as a result of changing industry classification. Tripartite sector meetings focused for instance on technology and employment in the food and drink industries (1998); the future of employment in the tobacco sector, which has been experiencing a decline due to increasingly stringent health regulations (2003); and the impact of global food chains on employment (2007).

Tripartite meeting work has been complemented by research, namely on various forms of employment and on occupational safety and health; and by technical cooperation activities, to deliver training on occupational safety and health in particular. Most recently, the ILO has developed and implemented a management tool called SYMAPRO (System for the Measurement and Enhancement of Productivity) in various Latin American countries.³⁰⁵ It consists of a set of training and evaluation guides to promote the application of decent work principles with an important element of social dialogue, and clearly established decent work and productivity goals.

As for rural **tourism**, the ILO's Hotels and Tourism Branch (HOTOUR) was located in the Enterprise Department until the late 1990s. It worked broadly in advisory services and technical cooperation programmes targeting mainly skills development to match the increasingly diversified and changing needs of the sector, new technology, and management techniques; the development of small tourism enterprises, particularly in collaboration with the ILO's units on small enterprises (using for instance its SYB and IYB tools) and on cooperatives; and assistance to tourism entrepreneur associations in designing and organizing services such as training, management development, and marketing. The ILO also focused on employment and working conditions such as occupational safety and health, wages, working hours, overtime, rest periods and worker-management dialogue, leading to the adoption of the Working Conditions of Hotels and Restaurants Convention, 1991 (No. 172) and Recommendation, 1991 (No. 179).

³⁰⁵ In Chile (fruit, wine, mining, construction); Cuba (sugar); Dominican Republic (sugar, tourism, garment industry); and Mexico (sugar, tourism, automobile industry).

Since the 1970s–80s, rural tourism and eco-tourism has been gradually capturing the ILO’s attention as more people seek out “alternative” vacation experiences as a result of a growing awareness of environmental concerns, and different lifestyles and cultures.

Three tripartite sectoral meetings have been organized on: conditions of work, productivity and training for the first (and only) session of the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Committee (1989); the effects of new technologies on employment and working conditions (1997); and human resource development, employment and globalization (2001). In the 2000s work has included analytical papers on socially responsible human resource and labour relations practices; violence at work; reducing poverty through tourism; and a Guide for social dialogue in the tourism industry. Given the importance of tourism for job creation, development, and poverty reduction, particularly in rural areas, the ILO and the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) signed an agreement in 2008. In 2011 the ILO developed a toolkit on poverty reduction through tourism in rural areas that explains the meaning of and the necessary steps to set up rural tourism businesses based on decent work.

Through the work of SECTOR, the ILO can nowadays count on a considerable body of knowledge, tools, and experience in all economic sectors of relevance to rural development. While the centrepiece of the ILO’s sectoral work remains the cycle of tripartite sectoral meetings, SECTOR’s scope of work has been expanding to cover, in particular, advisory services, technical cooperation, and tools development, as well as collaboration with other parts of the Organization and external partners. The positive results of this joint work are tangible and call for a strengthening of the trend, as well as for ensuring that information about sectoral work is more readily available and better disseminated Organization-wide and externally.

III.2.3.2. Turin Centre

Rural-related activities have featured on the ITC-Turin agenda since its early years. The rural emphasis (in terms of courses fully and explicitly dedicated to rural themes) roughly mirrors trends at Headquarters. The Centre organized over 18 rural courses in the ‘70s; as many as 57 in the ‘80s; 39 in the ‘90s; and 20 in the 2000s. From 1981 to 1993, “Rural Development” constituted one of 8 to 10 ITC Sectors of Activity.

Over the years the topics evolved considerably. The ‘70s focused on vocational training, management of agricultural enterprises, including those processing agricultural products, rural machines, equipment and technology. The ‘80s highlighted agricultural cooperatives, agriculture training institutions, conservation, marketing and transportation of agricultural products and agro-industry systems, issues related to energy, water and meteorology, and the management of rural development projects through multidimensional, integrated approaches. In the 1990s courses were more focused on skills and OSH, and the 2000s dealt with freedom of association, child labour, and OSH in agriculture.

The mid-‘90s, particularly 1993, constitute a major turning point at ITC-Turin as community development, informal economy and particularly local economic development, started to be combined with rural development activities, and then replaced rural issues altogether, particularly on employment-related issues. While these courses directly or indirectly addressed one or a few rural dimensions, they could not systematically address rural specificities, or present an overall view of rural areas and provide guidance about approaches and tools to tackle the challenges and potentialities of rural settings.

III.2.3.3. Regional trends

As revealed by the ILO's Regional Conference documents,³⁰⁶ rural work in the ILO's field structure also by and large mirrors the trends at Headquarters, although attention to rural matters has generally remained higher, particularly in Africa and Asia (see Chart 1).

Africa

Rural development has been a persistent theme in the Africa Region throughout the last 40 years. It was clearly the main focus of African Regional Conferences in the '70s and '80s, before being merged with informal and/or urban workforce issues in the '90s and 2000s. As evidenced by the reports presented at the African Regional Conferences, rural issues have always been regarded as crucial. Most recently it is been viewed as an indispensable condition for reaching the MDGs by 2015, as well as for tackling the effects of the ongoing economic crisis. Efforts have consistently focused on international labour standards, employment creation through employment-intensive investment, cooperatives, M/SMEs support, and capacity building of social partners' organizations, women, and youth.

The multiple challenges to rural development have been analysed in-depth, particularly in the '70s and '80s, coupled with continuously sustained levels of policy advice and TC activities. It is somewhat surprising that this strong emphasis on rural development, apparent in most reports presented to the Regional Conferences, and in discussions at the Conferences themselves, fails to be conveyed fully in the conclusions and recommendations, as well as in the plans of action to implement them.

Two recent summits reaffirm Africa's priority commitment to rural development. The first is the 2004 African Union Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa, whose Plan of Action features as its second priority, "... the promotion of the agricultural sector and rural development, sustainable management of the environment for food security and development of support infrastructure".³⁰⁷ More recently, the 2009 First African Decent Work Symposium, "Recovering from the crisis: the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa", established "Promoting rural employment" as the first of eight key elements in the Roadmap agreed to at that meeting, emphasizing a combination of employment-intensive infrastructure investment, improved access to finance, support for farmers and rural MSEs, promotion of agro-processing, support for member-based organizations (cooperatives, farmers' unions), and decentralized and participatory local governance.³⁰⁸

Rural employment was a priority issue at the 12th African Regional Meeting held in 2011. The issue was covered in the Director General's Report prepared for the Meeting, linked among other to food security. It was also the focus of a specific parallel thematic discussion titled, "Rural Employment, Industrial Development and Structural Transformation", and was featured in a dedicated section of the conclusions of the Meeting with the same title. Building on the fact that almost three quarters of the population in Africa lives and works in

³⁰⁶ ILO Regional Conferences take place every four years.

³⁰⁷ African Union: *Plan of Action for Promotion of Employment and Poverty Alleviation*, Assembly of the African Union, 3rd Extraordinary Session on Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Ouagadougou, 2004.

³⁰⁸ ILO: *A Roadmap for the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa*, 1st African Decent Work Symposium, Recovering from the crisis: the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa, Ouagadougou, 2009.

rural areas, this section called for renewed attention to rural employment, comprehensive national programmes providing integrated packages that address the multidimensional aspects involved, and for a dual focus on agriculture as well as on initiatives promoting rural industrialization and broader structural transformation.

Asia

As with Africa, rural issues have constituted a major component of the ILO agenda in Asia from the ‘70s to present, albeit with different emphases. In the late ‘60s and early ‘70s work focused predominantly on data collection and research to gauge negative employment-related trends in rural areas that were becoming apparent in an age of fast growth. As a result, rural issues climbed to the top of the agenda at both the 1971 and 1975 Asian Regional Conferences, which dedicated full reports to rural issues and peasant populations. The 1975 Conference, which focused on mass poverty alleviation, set rural development at the centre of its strategy and emphasized that the “... attack on mass poverty reveals a drastic shift of emphasis in national development policies towards the rural traditional”³⁰⁹.

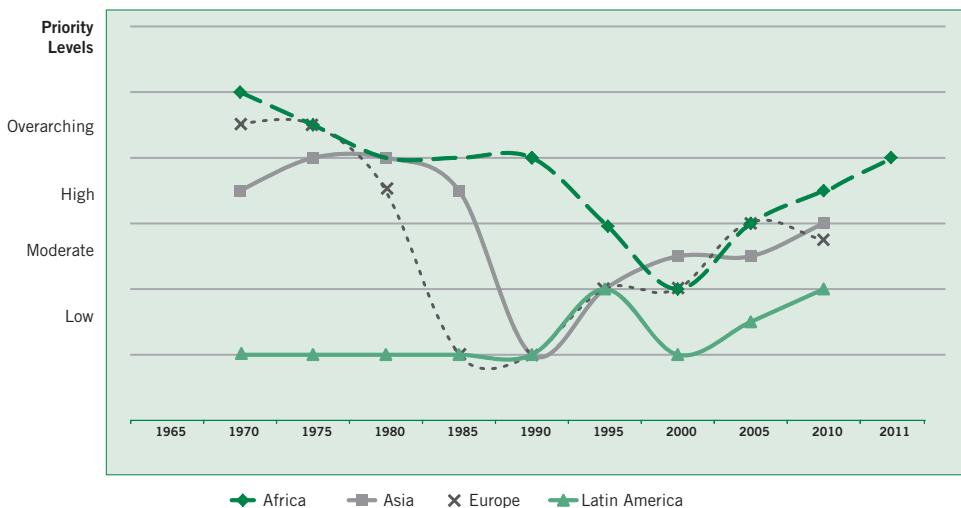
Building on its previous research the ILO developed and implemented numerous programmes focusing in particular on international labour standards, employment creation through employment-intensive investment, cooperatives, M/SMEs support, promoting cooperatives, and capacity building of social partners’ organizations. It also undertook various extensive vocational training programmes that became the backbone of the ILO strategy in the region, many of which specifically targeted women. Furthermore, the Asian Regional Programme for Strengthening Labour and Manpower Administration (ARPLA), supported by the ILO, had a branch working to improve the conditions of work and life for rural women involved in agriculture. The ILO’s technical cooperation rural programmes were particularly significant in Asia, to the extent that despite financial constraints from a UNDP liquidity crisis and withdrawal of US membership in the late ‘70s, the ILO managed to mobilize World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) funds, and actually increased investment in those programmes by 83 per cent between 1975 and 1979.³¹⁰

In the late ‘80s however, emphasis on rural issues waned in Asia too, as evidenced by the fewer rural programmes and decreased attention to the topic in reports presented at the Regional Conferences. The 1985 Conference in Jakarta, for instance, took a reflective posture evaluating the effectiveness of ongoing rural projects, but prepared an agenda that focused predominantly on urban and informal workforce issues. In the ‘90s rural issues were sidelined, and were removed from the agenda altogether following the 1997 Asian financial crisis that pushed the ILO and Asian governments to focus exclusively on fiscal management, macroeconomic development, and extending the ILO Decent Work Agenda.

³⁰⁹ ILO: *The Poor in Asian Development: An ILO Programme*, Report of the Director-General, 1st item on the agenda, ILO Asian Regional Conference, 8th Session, Colombo, 1975, p. 57.

³¹⁰ ILO: *Asian Development in the 1980s: Growth, Employment and Working Conditions*, Report of the Director-General to the Ninth Asian Regional Conference, Report I, Part I, Manila, 1980, p. 64.

Chart 1. Priority of Rural Issues in ILO Regional Labour Conferences



Key: Overarching: Rural is the dominant subject of two or more reports and is central to the focus of the Regional Conference.

High: Rural is the title subject of one or more documents and is an important issue at the Regional Conference

Moderate: Rural is mentioned as a subsection or chapter within reports on other issues

Low: Rural mentioned infrequently or not mentioned at all.

Note: The graph above plots the frequency (and hence, the priority) of rural issues at the ILO Regional Labour Conferences. The “points” on each line correspond to the year a regional conference was held, and the level of importance given to rural issues in documents related to that specific conference.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Americas started targeting rural issues in the early ‘70s, when a global recession created a noticeable rift between a burgeoning modern agricultural sector and an impoverished and stagnant traditional farming sector. As a result, the ILO pushed for land reform and assisted governments in integrating rural development strategies into national legislation.³¹¹ The ILO also developed and ran numerous local education and training projects across the region.

In the ‘80s rural development continued to be a major topic. Discussions at Regional Conferences stressed that rural development is to be based on a set of coordinated measures, both at the national legislative and local level, to increase production, productivity and incomes in rural areas. However, resistance and slow progress on issues such as land reform and budget cuts as a result of the 1980s worldwide recession led the ILO to shift its work in the Americas from

³¹¹ ILO's steadfast pressure to push forward agrarian reform stemmed from the findings of a 1973 FAO study that found 70 per cent of the agricultural population owning 2.5 per cent of the cultivated land while 2 per cent owned 47 per cent of cultivated areas. ILO: *Rural development: Taking into account the problems of the indigenous populations as well as the drift of the rural population to the cities and its integration in the urban informal sector*, 12th Conference of American States, Report II, Montreal, 1986, p. 16.

long-term institution building projects to short-term consultancies. It focused instead on technical assistance to rural communities through a branch of its CINTERFOR programme, and projects aiding cooperatives in 13 countries. In some cases these projects managed to directly influence the formulation of national policies. The focus on rural smallholders, so prominent in the ‘70s, did not exist in the ‘90s, as governments focused on SAPs and macroeconomic reform. In the 2000s rural matters again became a topic of interest. Most recently the Region has embarked on employment generation schemes in rural areas to increase smallholders’ productivity, ensure their access to land and resources, and develop non-farm industry in rural areas to boost employment opportunities, with indigenous populations and youth as important targets. Its 2006–14 Regional Agenda actually includes “Improving the working conditions and productivity of economic activities taking place in rural areas, including work done by indigenous people”.³¹²

Regional Conferences show that special attention was paid to ITPs in the Americas, a focus that sets the ILO’s work in that Region apart from programmes elsewhere. Pioneering work actually started as early as the ‘50s, through the Andean Indian Programme (discussed previously), and continues to this day. More recently, the ILO has been supporting the Andean Women’s Workers Coordinating Committee (COMUANDE)³¹³ and the Andean Consultative Labour Committee (CCLA)³¹⁴ to raise awareness about the ILO’s fundamental Conventions among indigenous rural workers, as well as to help improve working conditions by strengthening rural workers’ organizations and their bargaining capacity in national decision-making bodies. The ILO has also been supporting “Redturs”, a programme to foster new tourism opportunities and jobs in indigenous communities, in which these communities have the decision-making power to plan, operate, and monitor tourism initiatives on their lands (see Box 3).

Rural issues did not feature significantly in the America’s Regional Meeting held in 2010. Rural employment and development were not explicitly mentioned in its conclusions, although rural development was mentioned in relation to informal work, migration, and MSE development in the Director General’s Report.

Europe

Rural development does not appear as a priority on the ILO agenda in Europe and Central Asia, which focuses instead on challenges linked to industrialization and technological change. Agriculture and rural areas were largely viewed throughout the ‘70s and ‘80s as a source of manpower to be used for urban industry and services. National progress was measured by the very transition of populations from agriculture to industrial centres. In the ‘90s, as new States that were primarily agrarian economies emerged from the dismantling of the Soviet Union, attention to rural issues increased somewhat, especially in Central Asia. Recently, the ILO’s rural work in the Region has focused on child labour, human trafficking, and dangerous work, resulting in the effective dissemination of the WIND approach (see Box 2).

³¹² ILO: *Trabajo Decente en las Américas: una Agenda Gemisférica, 2006–15*, XVI Reunión Regional Americana, Brasilia, 2006, Section 4.2.6.

³¹³ In Spanish: *Coordinación de Mujeres Trabajadoras Andinas*.

³¹⁴ In Spanish: *Consejo Consultivo Laboral Andino*.

BOX 3**Example: REDTURS – Tourism in indigenous rural communities**

Redturs is a pioneering network of Latin American indigenous rural communities aimed at harnessing the opportunities of global tourism and based on the inclusion and sovereignty of those communities in decisions regarding the nature, extent, speed and other modalities of tourism in their areas. Launched in 2000, initiatives are under way in 14 countries.¹ The ILO's support for Redturs aims at improving business opportunities, rural employment, and living conditions among indigenous communities.

Redturs members explain that, '*We are aware that tourism can be a source of opportunities, as well as a threat to the social cohesion of our communities, their culture and natural habitat. We are thus encouraging self-management of tourism so that our communities can assume the leadership in its planning, operation, monitoring and development*'.²

Redturs supports the ILO Convention of the Fundamental Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (No. 169). It also parallels the goals of rural employment, sustainable livelihoods, poverty alleviation, gender equality, and sustainable environmental development.

The ILO's support extends to business development services, including training and marketing and promoting information and communication technologies to facilitate information and knowledge sharing between the fourteen Redturs members, which is an important part of Redturs; and to increase access by the international community, particularly Europe, to the Redturs tourist markets. Among others, the ILO helped develop Redturs' 'Portal of Living Cultures', a tourist search engine promoting over 200 community tourist destinations.

National and regional meetings are held frequently, and help develop methodologies to assess community experiences, guidelines for Codes of Conduct, and led in 2003 to a framework for action titled, *Otavalo Declaration on Sustainable and Competitive Community Based Tourism with Cultural Identity*. More recently, Redturs members have emphasized the need for governments to set up policies providing an enabling environment for tourism development, leading to increasing national tourism policies and strategies.

Redturs demonstrates the capacity to combine innovative, productive rural economic initiatives that seize the opportunities of modern society; maintenance of the cultural heritage of indigenous populations and communities; and improved livelihoods and living conditions.

¹ Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru.

² Our Conception of Tourism, Redturs, <http://www.redturs.org/documentos/Trifoliar-English-p1-p2.pdf> (accessed on 17 October 2010).

III.2.4. Partnerships

At the height of its work on rural development, one of the ILO’s strongest assets was its vast network of partnerships with other international organizations. This approach allowed for more comprehensive delivery as various organizations could contribute based on their comparative advantages. External links, of which a few important ones are highlighted below, were vital for the ILO to match the size, complexity, technicalities, and local specificities of rural employment.

Internationally, the 1996 World Food Summit was a precursor of the rural “rediscovery”. It was an eye opener for the international aid community in voicing concern that agriculture and rural development had slipped from national agendas. That same year, the ACC Subcommittee on Rural Development (set up in 1993 to replace the UN Task Force on Rural Development established in 1975), discussed a WB policy paper stating that agency’s aims to reorient its rural development support towards targeting global and national food security, rural income increases and poverty reduction, and sustainable natural resource management.³¹⁵ Discussions focused on the need to support the active participation of all stakeholders, including local interest groups, rural producers and civil society organizations; to build partnerships for strategic interventions in rural development and policy-making processes; to establish the central role of institutions; and to define the “rules of the game” within the new agricultural models emerging from the global wave of political and economic liberalization.³¹⁶ These needs coincided with efforts to help rural organizations and other civil society institutions take part in the transformation and policy-making processes; to ensure that poor and disadvantaged groups would not be marginalized; and to support rural cooperatives, identified as capable of ensuring the growing efficiency, competitiveness, and capitalization of rural producers.

At this very meeting the subcommittee acknowledged various challenges to its effectiveness, particularly the difficulty experienced by some members in drawing attention to rural development and poverty alleviation within their respective organizations, especially to reach senior management and secure resources. The subcommittee also realized its lack of direct interface with an intergovernmental body, making it difficult to identify countries’ demands for its services in order to help them; as well as the need to become task-oriented, and to develop unique value-added products for member countries and agencies. It therefore set up a working group (composed of the FAO, IFAD, ILO, WB, and UNICEF) to examine its future role and modalities of operation. However, in 1997 the Subcommittee was replaced altogether by the ACC Network on Rural Development and Food Security, which was set up to act as a country-level coordination mechanism for inter-agency follow-up to the 1996 World Food Summit and its shared goals of “Food for All”. The Network was later renamed the “UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security”, as it is known today, to reflect its inter-institutional character.

The Network’s mandate is to provide support to governments in implementing the World Food Summit Plan of Action and rural development programmes, and to report on progress.

³¹⁵ WB: *From Vision to Action in the Rural Sector*, Washington, D.C., 1996.

³¹⁶ With characteristics including expanded agriculture, contract agriculture, urban agriculture, multi-functional agriculture, integrated agriculture, associative agriculture, feminized agriculture, flexible agriculture, human capital agriculture, bio-diverse agriculture, and privatized agriculture. UN ACC: *Report of the Subcommittee on Rural Development on Its 24th Session*, Geneva, 1996, Sections 83–85.

It also coordinates work among partners, including non-UN stakeholders; and promotes partnerships and linkages among UN organizations and other stakeholders.³¹⁷ The Network is composed of country level Thematic Groups on rural development and food security. At the international level it consists of a network of 20 UN system partners that provide support to these Thematic Groups. FAO provides the Network Secretariat, in cooperation with IFAD and WFP. Thematic groups were established in 78 countries but only remain active in some 40, a significant but reduced presence that has limited the Network's global impact.³¹⁸ Its integration impact has also been limited, as its member organizations have not back-stopped the Thematic Groups from their HQs, while the Secretariat can only support them through disseminating information. A global virtual network, "EVAK8", set up by IFAD through its web site for sharing knowledge and experiences on rural development and food security in support to the Thematic Groups, has thus far remained an institutional platform mostly consulted by other UN institutions and practitioners from developed countries.

The ILO's involvement has been sporadic. It has been part of Thematic Groups in Pakistan to prepare a paper for the UN community there on *Improving Preparedness and Response to Emergencies, Early Warning and Emergency Mechanism*. It supported the formulation of an integrated rural development project for Turkey's Eastern Anatolia. It also worked on awareness raising of food insecurity and rural development issues, helping formulate World Food Summit follow-up initiatives in Uruguay. And in Brazil it worked on local development and participatory territorial planning for the north-east and southern regions.

Meanwhile, the 2003 Ministerial Declaration of the Economic and Social Council highlighted the importance of promoting partnerships among stakeholders to support rural development, which it considered essential to reduce poverty and achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.³¹⁹

The United Nations Public-Private Alliance (UNPPA) for Rural Development, set up in 2004, was a follow-up to that Declaration. This forum works to link actors within and outside the UN system that focus on the key role of businesses in rural development, as well as to stimulate entrepreneurial capacity-building and encourage investment, trade and related activities. UNPPA's mission is to stimulate replication of business policies and practices that are both profitable and promote the social and economic advancement of rural populations through country-level and other initiatives. To this end it networks with and builds upon a range of existing programmes and concerns, including by the FAO, the World Bank, UNDP, IFAD, UNCTAD, ILO, the UN Global Compact, and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Outside the UN, the network includes a number of business associations such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the International Chamber of Commerce, the Business Council for the United Nations, Rotary Clubs, and the World Agriculture Forum. The UNPPA is active in four countries thus far: Angola, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, and Madagascar.

³¹⁷ See, for example, ACC Network on Rural Development and Food Security: *Guidelines for Thematic Groups*, Rome, 1999, which spells out the Network's mandate in line with its three specific objectives.

³¹⁸ UN: *Report of the Auto-Evaluation of the UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security*, New York, 2005, p. 28.

³¹⁹ UN ECOSOC: *Promoting an Integrated Approach to Rural Development in Developing Countries for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development*, Draft Ministerial Declaration of the High-Level Segment submitted by the President of the Council on the basis of informal conversations, Substantive Session, Geneva, 2003.

The International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCA) mentioned earlier is also worth noting, particularly given its membership with seven major, relevant institutions and its broad objectives spanning laws on child labour, ensuring that children do not engage in hazardous work, promoting rural strategies and programmes to improve rural livelihoods, including child labour concerns in agriculture policy-making, overcoming the urban/rural and gender gap in education, and promoting youth employment opportunities in rural areas.

In the area of cooperatives, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the ICA and the ILO in 2004. Based on this, joint work has been focusing on policy dialogue, decent work in cooperatives, education and training, and cooperative policy and legislation.³²⁰ The ILO is also a member of the Committee for the Promotion and the Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC), which includes FAO, ICA, IFAP and UN, among others. Together with other COPAC members, the ILO is leading the preparations for the UN International Year of Cooperatives declared for 2012.³²¹

Since 2006 the ILO has also been involved in the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) Initiative, a multi-stakeholder framework established to promote people-centred sustainable agriculture and rural development led by civil society, supported by governments and international agencies and facilitated by the FAO. Within it, the ILO highlights the role and specificities of agricultural workers, as well as issues of health, safety, working conditions, social security, child labour, and International Labour Standards, while FAO focuses on agricultural and farming aspects.

Collaboration with the FAO and the IFAD is particularly important, and the ILO has formal framework agreements with both,³²² although collaboration has been relatively scant until recently (despite periodic meetings), mainly due to lack of funds for follow-up (particularly in the case of FAO). Joint FAO-ILO field initiatives have been on the rise since 2000. Notable collaborations include the “Jobs for Peace” programme, taking place within the UN Peace Building Fund for Nepal; and a programme to provide productive alternatives to violence for youth in the post-conflict process, through an integrated approach combining well-established FAO and ILO approaches, such as the SIYB, Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Junior Farmer Fields and Life Schools (JFFLS). More recently joint work has led to an FAO-ECLAC-ILO study on *Labour market policies and rural poverty in Latin America* (2010), and an FAO-ILO joint plan of action signed in early January 2011 to tackle employment, agriculture and rural development in Latin America, and which focused on rural employment and labour market data, policy analyses and recommendations on labour market dynamics and rural poverty, and gender and poverty in rural areas. Also worth mentioning is the FAO-ILO joint web site³²³ and the inclusion of ILO tools such as MATCOM in FAO’s rural finance portal.³²⁴

³²⁰ International Cooperative Alliance, www.ica.coop (accessed on 25 February 2011).

³²¹ Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives, www.copac.coop (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³²² MOU between the ILO and FAO, signed in 2004, www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/leg/agreements/fao3.htm (accessed on 25 February 2011); and an Agreement between the ILO and IFAD, signed in 1978 www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/leg/agreements/ifad.htm (accessed on 25 February 2011).

³²³ Food, Agriculture and Decent Work, ILO-FAO, www.fao-ilo.org/ (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³²⁴ Rural Finance Learning Center, www.ruralfinance.org/ (accessed on 26 September 2011).

The FAO-IFAD-ILO workshop on “Gaps, trends and current research in gender dimensions of agriculture and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty” (March–April 2009), mentioned earlier, presents a solid stepping-stone for future collaboration among the three agencies. Besides ascertaining some genuine interest for the decent work approach by IFAD and FAO, the workshop allowed building and tightening important linkages among several technical representatives of the three agencies (particularly in agriculture, gender, child labour, enterprise and infrastructure). It further enabled a common plan of action comprising of: (a) the development of joint knowledge products (namely enriching the FAO-ILO web site with highlights of the workshop, a publication, and a set of policy briefs on gender issues in rural areas); and (b) joint ventures at local level. The workshop also opened a communication line between the FAO, IFAD and the ILO’s Rural Employment Programme.

Another milestone was the ILO’s participation in an FAO Workshop on the “Food crisis: education and training for rural people at stake” (June 2009). The workshop opened up the possibility for the ILO to join the FAO/UNESCO “Education for Rural People (ERP) flagship programme”³²⁵ and to create links between the FAO’s “Education for Rural People” toolkit³²⁶ and the ILO’s relevant training tools such as the TREE, WIND, MATCOM, KAB, and SIYB family of tools.

An ILO group meeting with IFAD in July 2009 facilitated further understanding of each other’s goals, main axes of work, products and work modalities, and identification of specific areas for collaboration. Youth employment was selected as one such area, leading within months to the IFAD-funded project “Promoting Decent Work and Productive Employment of young people in rural areas: a review of strategies and programmes” (previously discussed).

A similar group meeting with Oxfam in July 2009, preceded by a meeting between the President of Oxfam and the Director-General, served to reveal comparative advantages and priority areas of work for future collaboration.

In July 2009, the ILO joined the High-Level Task Force of the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF). In addition to participating in its exchanges at various levels, the ILO membership prompted the inclusion of employment, social protection, and social dialogue dimensions into the HLTF’s *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*.³²⁷ The ILO also planned for engagement in some of the 30 country interventions in which the HLTF intends to develop an integrated support approach, among others by mobilizing employers’ and workers’ organizations.

³²⁵This 2002 initiative is a partnership among some 330 national and international agencies and NGOs committed to overcoming the urban-rural gap in education, increasing access to and quality of education for rural people, and advocating education for rural people as a crucial step to achieve the MDGs. It concentrates on technical support to countries willing to develop specific strategies as part of national education and rural development plans; on advocating and mobilizing partnerships for education for rural people in strategic global, regional and national events; and on exchanges of good practices.

³²⁶This toolkit provides a large volume of online education and training materials (divided by main topic and education level and type), addressed to all those involved in formal and informal education for rural people, including teachers, instructors, trainers, parents, researchers, and extensionists.

³²⁷Op. Cit., UN HLTF: *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action* (2010).

IV. THE 2010s: MOBILIZING FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

© Fotolia/ant236



© IFAD/Horst Wagner



© ILO/Crozet



There exists today a widespread and accelerating keenness towards rural issues, triggered in turns by environmental concerns, the global food security and economic crises, pressing poverty reduction and job creation goals (particularly MDGs), and greater attention to “social responsibility” among corporations as well as individual consumers. The ILO is riding on this momentum by stepping up its rural initiatives and regaining its rich rural work legacy. The Organization has now included rural employment and decent work as a House Priority;³²⁸ and is ready to prompt a similar trend more globally within the framework of efforts to reshape economic growth strategies.

The rich legacy of approaches, tools, and lessons from decades of the ILO’s work related to rural development provide a solid foundation on which the Organization is building its current and renewed commitment to achieve human resource-based rural development for global growth and poverty reduction.

IV.1. The new rural setting

IV.1.1. Key new features

Rural contexts are changing fast and are increasingly complex. Modern, productive, and high-return agricultural and non-farm rural businesses, small and large, may coexist in the same areas as traditional, subsistence-level activities and chronically poor households. Now more than ever, rural people do not represent a single, undifferentiated group. Livelihoods are far more diversified, blurring distinctions as more small farmers engage in wage work on other farms or in non-farm activities; as contract farming and intermediary categories such as tenants and share-croppers become more frequent; and as challenges faced by men, women, youth, children, and indigenous peoples, as well as those faced by farmers (as opposed to pastoralists or fisher-peoples for instance), differ more widely.

Connectivity to urban and foreign markets is a second major feature that is rapidly changing the situation and lifestyle of rural inhabitants, as well as the role of rural areas. Socio-economic linkages between urban and rural areas have vastly increased as a result of technological advancements, increased migration and trade processes. An oft-cited technological success story is the mobile phone that has revolutionized rural life by giving speedy access to information such as latest crop prices and crop diseases; by reducing the cost of money transfers; and overall transforming communications services for inhabitants of remote, rural localities. Mobile technology has also enabled “M-learning” (learning through mobile phones), which allows awareness raising and training to reach even isolated villages and illiterate groups.

Rural-urban-rural migration has also been intensifying. Traditionally, rural workers would move to urban areas for employment purposes and send remittances back home to rural areas.³²⁹ Now, with improved modes of transportation workers may opt to return home more frequently or in times of crises. Urban companies meanwhile are actively seeking out new locations in rural areas, as a new source of labour, of agricultural and other raw materials, or to

³²⁸ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2010–2011*, Geneva, 2009; ILO: *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2012–2013*, Geneva, 2011.

³²⁹ Although saturation of [urban] destination cities and countries and the ongoing economic crisis have somewhat slowed the process and led to growing return migration.

escape urban overcrowding. These and other processes are facilitating the expansion of peri-urban areas into the countryside.

Value chain connections deserve special attention in light of their potential to open markets to rural activities and to modernize and diversify them. However, the range of possible repercussions posed by these systems requires further examination, as in the case of bargaining power, which seems to be moving into the hands of a few, large global buyers, as opposed to producers.³³⁰ Among the consequences is a downward pressure on production costs, reflected for instance by harsher employment and working conditions. In such an environment, small farmers are increasingly disadvantaged as they face higher transaction costs linked to insufficient communication, storage and other facilities, poor organization, and limited attractiveness for policy-makers who more readily support exporters, all of which limit outreach to local and regional markets that remain underdeveloped. Among the tools proposed to tackle these challenges are farmers' cooperatives and associations, grain boards, marketing arrangements, and public procurement programmes (e.g. Brazil's programme for the Purchase of Food from Family Agriculture). Additional measures include the adaptation of competition laws to protect suppliers against abusive practices by large purchasers, and collaboration among States to allow suppliers from one country to dispute abusive practices by purchasers of another country.

"Fair trade" is also promising and deserves greater attention. While in 2008 it only represented USD 6 billion (less than 1 per cent of worldwide trade), its potential for growth is impressive, supported in particular by rapidly growing corporate and consumer social responsibility.³³¹

Today's rural contexts are further impacted by bio-fuels, so-called "land-grabs", water issues, and climate change. Bio-fuels have been attracting considerable interest in view of their potential as a greener and cheaper substitute for fossil fuels, and thus their capacity to simultaneously address concerns about energy security, oil prices, and climate change. Information and debates about the environmental and economic costs and benefits of bio-fuel crop production, processing, and distribution are growing, but those regarding impact on rural enterprises and the quantity and quality of employment still remain sparse and call for specific research.³³²

Large-scale land acquisitions (often referred to as "land grabs") whereby mainly wealthy food-importing countries and private investors acquire land to farm overseas, are now increasingly frequent and complex. Their scale is unprecedented, and an estimated 15-20 million hectares have been involved in sales and negotiation since 2006, equalling one fifth of all farmland in the European Union (EU).³³³ In 2009 China alone had signed 30 deals covering

³³⁰ Other elements to consider include: an increase in the size and concentration of commodity buyers; vertical integration as global retailers seek to tighten control over suppliers; an expansion of supermarkets and fast-food chains as far as East Asia, East and Southern Africa; and sourcing by large wholesalers and retailers from entire regions or globally, thus intensifying competition among producers. UN: *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter*, Human Rights Council, 13th session, New York, 2009.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² The ILO launched a study on this issue in 2010 to prepare a report providing general guidance based on basic information and best practice worldwide.

³³³ J. von Braun and R. Meinzen-Dick: *Land Grabbing' by Foreign Investors in Developing Countries: Risks and Opportunities*, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) Policy Brief 13, Washington, D.C., 2009.

two million hectares, and had one million Chinese farm labourers working in Africa.³³⁴ Proponents of these large-scale land acquisitions argue that these deals could reduce poverty by bringing much needed rural investment, infrastructure, better access to technology and markets, as well as improved productivity. However, it seems that most of the deals fail to deliver on these opportunities, contributing instead to the displacement of local populations, sales of land below its potential price, and endangerment of environmental and social development.³³⁵

Paradoxically, many countries selling their farmland are themselves food insecure. In Ethiopia for example, Saudi Arabian investors bought USD 100 million worth of land to grow food, 100 per cent of which they are permitted to export. Meanwhile the WFP is to spend a similar amount over 2007–2011 on food aid to 4.6 million Ethiopians.³³⁶ Also worrying is the case of Sudan, the largest recipient of food aid worldwide, that is also selling off its farmland.³³⁷ The consequences for local communities remain ambiguous and call for caution and further investigation. At a minimum, to achieve win-win outcomes, international agencies such as the FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD, and the World Bank should call for an International Code of Conduct emphasizing transparency, land rights, participatory practices, and social and economic sustainability.³³⁸ At present, contracts remain “strikingly short and simple”,³³⁹ and with minimal monitoring.

As for the increasingly reduced availability of water resources, both for human needs and agriculture, and because of climate change, rural areas feature both as contributors, through the unregulated use of pesticides, fertilizers and deforestation practices for instance; as well as victims, due to increasingly frequent and severe weather phenomena, such as droughts and flooding, reduction in crop yields and available land.

The “green jobs” response, which proposes methods to mitigate the impact of climate change on economic activities, as well as new, “greener” practices and economic activities are a valuable approach. Although green jobs cover both rural and urban settings, their relevance to rural areas is noteworthy as they can be an important stimulus for rural economic diversification, modernization, and provide higher value added and productive jobs.

Intervention in rural areas is further prompted by the need to tackle an expanding informal economy. Rural areas are simultaneously host to large numbers of informal activities, as well as a source of migratory flows that mostly join and swell the urban informal economy. These, combined with the related phenomenon of saturation in cities and countries receiving migrants, are an additional impetus for creating productive, attractive livelihoods and centres of growth in rural areas.

³³⁴ “Outsourcing’s Third Wave,” in *Economist* (May 2009), www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13692889 (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³³⁵ WB: *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* Washington, D.C., 2010.

³³⁶ M. Kugelman and S. Levenstein (EDS): *Land Grab? The Race for the World’s Farmland* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Asia Program: 2009), p. 10.

³³⁷ Ibid.; Additionally, a *New York Times* article reported that this land is being used, among other uses, to grow, wheat for Saudi Arabia, tomatoes for the Jordanian Army, and sorghum (a Sudanese staple) for camels in the United Arab Emirates.

³³⁸ Op. Cit., WB: *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* (2010), p. ix. Also see UN: *Large Scale Land Acquisitions and Leases: A Set of Minimum Principles and Measures to Address the Human Rights Challenge*, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Olivier de Schutter, New York, 2009.

³³⁹ C.L. Vermeulen, R.S. Leonard, and J. Keeley: *Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural Investment and International Land Deals in Africa* (Rome, FAO-IFAD-IIED, 2009).

In light of these and other major developments the “new” rural of the 21st century warrants a change in perception as well as strategy. Firstly there has to be a fundamental change in the view that equates rural with “backwardness”, “out datedness”, and “immobility”. Secondly, rural areas call for increased policy support, and for context-specific interventions to address the local mix of challenges and potentialities.

Increasingly, many developed countries associate “rural” with positive connotations, as it suggests leisure, nature, healthy foods, and generally an alternative to the stresses of urban living. Notable examples of appreciation for rural activities and acknowledgement of their productivity and creativity are emerging in developing countries too, through initiatives such as “*Terra Madre*”, an international network of food producers, cooks, educators and activists from over 150 countries founded in 2004. This worldwide network supports innovative production and marketing solutions aimed at ensuring quality food, sustainable livelihoods for small-scale producers, and a place and voice for them in the global economy. These and similar initiatives merit attention by national policy-makers and the international development community alike.

IV.1.2. Persisting rural structural gaps

“Traditional” rural-specific structural challenges such as low productivity, poverty, and development gaps persist in rural economies of many developing countries to this day. They are widely acknowledged as being linked to factors such as inequitable access to land and other assets; insufficient credit, investment, and incentives; low levels of technology; poor economic infrastructure; weak support to agricultural prices and local industries linked to agriculture; and in general, a lack of vision and strategy for rural areas and their integration into national development strategies. Consequently, inefficiency, wastage, and lack of capacity are perpetuated in a vicious cycle of “missed opportunities” further entrenching rural areas in poverty.

Important decent work deficits exacerbate these conditions by stifling opportunities for positive change. These deficits include poorly developed or ill-adapted labour market institutions; limited access to education and training; high unemployment, underemployment and unpaid work, especially among youth and women; traditional gender divisions of labour that limit women’s access to productive jobs and entrepreneurship; high rates of child labour in dangerous agricultural occupations (that further endanger skills acquisition by these children); high incidences of disability; difficulty in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment; widespread work in temporary and casual wage jobs in informal and small survival-type activities; and poor working and living conditions, including exiguous social security coverage. Many groups also fall outside the scope of national labour laws due to their employment status, the economic sector or small size of the enterprise where they operate. Furthermore, those protected in theory may not be in practice due to weak implementation of rural labour inspection, among other factors. Lastly, rural workers’ and farmers’ organizations are generally weak; and national social partners lack rural outreach, making it difficult to defend local interests and sway national strategic decision-making (and resource allocation) towards rural areas. This adds to the difficulties experienced by rural men and women to express their potential, and to allow their communities and countries to break out of the low productivity, poverty, and vulnerability trap.³⁴⁰

³⁴⁰ These gaps are well captured in, ILO: *Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction*, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008, and were confirmed by persons interviewed for this review.

Rural areas and labour markets are thus undoubtedly more complex, harder to access physically (and in some cases culturally and linguistically), and have more profound problems, which explain why national and international actors seeking quick returns are more inclined to target urban areas. Nevertheless, rural areas host vast masses lacking purchasing power, since half of the world's population and three quarters of the world's poor are concentrated there; as well as largely underused and underdeveloped capital and human resources. This presents a possibility for expanding the domestic market and boosting economic growth through increased use of locally available resources and strengthening of agriculture and other rural production, processing and service activities. Consequently, *rural areas possess the greatest potential for returns, and this is where investment can "make a difference", for local rural communities, as well as nationally and globally.*

IV.1.3. Crisis boosters

The major global food security and economic crises that started in the late 2000s are boosting interest in rural development. Rural areas are among the hardest-hit victims of these crises;³⁴¹ but there is also a growing realization that they can play a protagonist's role in the solution. The first of these, the food crisis starting in 2007–2008, led the UN to create a High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis (HLTF) to coordinate the international response. Shortly thereafter, the ILO convened a Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Global Food Price Crisis³⁴² and its Impact on Decent Work (5–6 March 2009).³⁴³ Its discussions, enriched by the participation of various agencies, the HLTF management, and scholars,³⁴⁴ highlighted some major shortcomings that needed to be addressed, among which are: insufficient investment in rural areas; lack of employment and social protection programmes to provide rural populations sufficient income to access food; and insufficient social dialogue to give rural employers and workers a "voice".³⁴⁵ Discussions also highlighted the keenness among the ILO's constituents and others for the Organization to join the HLTF (which it did that same year, see section IV.2.4.) and contribute to its work in, "... areas where [the ILO's] unique mandate and specific expertise can strengthen existing UN efforts",³⁴⁶ such as job creation, entrepreneurship, occupational safety and health, child labour, and gender issues, in collaboration with the ILO's network of employers' and workers' organizations at international and national levels.³⁴⁷

³⁴¹ Paradoxically, over three quarters of the one billion food insecure people are directly involved in food production: over 500 million are from smallholder farming households, 200 million are landless, and 100 million are pastoralists, fisherfolk and forest users. UN General Assembly: *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food: Agribusiness and the Right to Food*, 13th Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, 2009.

³⁴² Per the FAO Food Price Index, from March 2007 to March 2008 the price of staple foods surged, with rice increasing by 74 per cent, corn by 87 per cent, and wheat by 130 per cent. While the food price index then declined due to the global economic crisis, food prices increased again to surpass their 2008 peak by early 2011.

³⁴³ At the request of ILO: *Resolution Concerning ILO's and Tripartite Constituents' Role in Addressing the Global Food Crisis*, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008.

³⁴⁴ Key participants included Dr David Nabarro, UN Coordinator of the HLTF, Dr Olivier de Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, and representatives of FAO, OCHA, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WB, WFP, WTO and ITC.

³⁴⁵ Employment, social protection and social dialogue in particular now feature in the HLTF's *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action* (2010).

³⁴⁶ The Tripartite Technical Workshop agreed in particular that "The ILO has a range of expertise in the world of work in areas such as employment creation, occupational safety and health, entrepreneurship, child labour and gender issues which will clearly contribute to improved food security". ILO: *Report on the Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Global Food Price Crisis and its Impact on Decent Work*, Geneva, 2009, p. 10.

³⁴⁷ UN: *Outline of Progress against the July 2008 CFA*, HLTF Draft Report, New York, 2009, p. 8. That same month the L'Aquila joint statement on Global Food Security confirmed the urgency for action and for a comprehensive approach to food security that includes among others, expansion of employment and decent work opportunities, knowledge and training, increased trade flows and support for good governance and policy reform. See, "L'Aquila Joint Statement on Global Food Security (*L'Aquila Food Security Initiative*)", G8 Summit, 2009.

The global economic crisis declared in mid- to late-2008 is providing a second unlikely boost to rural work by showcasing the resilience of rural areas in the face of adversity. In this case too, rural inhabitants have suffered from the crisis, particularly in terms of reduced remittances, coupled with increased numbers of unemployed migrants returning to their rural communities from cities and abroad due to a lack of work. Nevertheless rural areas are emerging as potential sources of livelihoods, producers of food, and overall engines of growth. Support to rural farm and non-farm activities, to invest in more effective and profitable crops and farming techniques, and to build local economic and social infrastructure (including social protection, skills development, and enterprise services), and to local development in general, are viewed as important parts of a solution to the crisis. The role of rural areas as “shock absorbers” is increasingly acknowledged, whether in crises of food insecurity, economic downturns, or wars and natural disasters. Focusing on rural areas to prompt integrated and participatory reconstruction offers the greatest chances of reviving economies, restoring the social fabric, and ensuring sustainable and resilient livelihoods and development.

Accordingly, the Director-General’s Report to the 2009 ILC on tackling the global jobs crisis calls for “Investing in food security and rural development”.³⁴⁸ The ensuing Global Jobs Pact (GJP) features the rural dimension in its call for job-rich infrastructure projects, cooperatives and public employment guarantee schemes, for instance. It also calls for addressing a set of structural challenges exacerbating the global recession, among which is the need to “... recognize the value of agriculture in developing economies and the need for rural infrastructure, industry, and employment”.³⁴⁹ The ILO has pointed to “rural employment and community development” as one of the areas of the UN CEB Global Jobs Pact Initiative where inputs from various agencies would be especially relevant.³⁵⁰

These crises should serve as a stimulus for re-thinking strategies, re-orienting policies, and mustering the global political will and resources to implement new frameworks. The “crisis” context offers opportunities to set employment and decent work as integral parts of macro-economic policies (as opposed to being their derivatives). This point has been actively advocated by the Director-General in key international forums responsible for shaping the new economic growth architecture. Similarly, and in a complementary way, the current crisis context could also be an opportunity to set rural areas as a strategic component of the new economic growth architecture; and to dedicate to rural areas the focused, sustained political attention and resources needed to tackle its chronic challenges as well as new ones, and thereby unleash the potential of these areas and their populations.

It is now also openly acknowledged that governments in developed countries of North America and Europe (as well as some transition economies)³⁵¹ that actively supported selected rural industries as a growth strategy for their economy (and not only as a survival strat-

³⁴⁸ ILO: *Tackling the Global Jobs Crisis: Recovery through Decent Work Policies*. Report I (A) of the Director General to International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, 2009, pp. 17–18 and Chapter III.

³⁴⁹ Op. Cit., ILO, *Recovering From the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact* (2009).

³⁵⁰ *Global Financial and Economic Crisis*, UN System Joint Crisis Initiatives, CEB for Coordination, 2009, <http://www.undg.org/docs/10783/UN-System-Joint-Crisis-Initiatives,-16-Sept-2009.pdf> (accessed on 25 February 2011).

³⁵¹ Economies in the process of moving away from being a controlled economy to an open one are called “Transition economies” and include Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs), the Balkans, Baltic States, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

egy for their rural poor), succeeded in curbing poverty in their rural areas and in setting off a process of modernization and growth.³⁵²

Today's governance trends are increasingly pushing in this direction, driven by a greater acceptance of government involvement to regulate and stimulate economic growth (compared to the '90s). Consequently this allows for much needed State support and active policies and investment to pursue rural poverty reduction and development; to empower rural areas through social-economic infrastructure, institutional development, subsidies and other stimuli to promising sectors and groups; and to develop individual capacities and opportunities. The current trend towards political democratization, entailing decentralization in governance, greater local voice in national decision-making, and broad inclusion of civil society in local economic development, are important complementary developments.

IV.2. ILO's strong recent mandate

IV.2.1. A clear turning point - The ILC 2008

Debates at the ILC 2008 Committee on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction, and particularly the ensuing Plan of Action for the Office, approved unanimously as part of the Conclusions,³⁵³ constitute a major turning point. They set a clear mandate, as well as guidelines for the ILO's rural work in the present context. The Plan of Action (synthesized in Table 2a) identifies a set of priority areas of intervention spanning all four of the ILO's strategic objectives. Equally important, it spells out the type of work needed: a mutually reinforcing combination of analytical, TC, policy advice, capacity building and advocacy work. It also indicates an appropriate work methodology, one based on select interventions in the ILO's areas of comparative advantage, rapid reaction and practical interventions, with coordination Office-wide, as well as externally with relevant international agencies. That Plan of Action is complemented by recommendations addressed to governments, employers, and workers (see Table 2b), to share responsibility by maintaining the rural debated alive within the ILO and nationally, strengthening their presence in rural areas, and helping the voices of rural stakeholders reach national and international decision-making forums.

The ILO's current rural work mandate also solidly builds on the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), which calls for policy coherence and integrated action among the ILO's technical fields throughout its structure as well as with outside actors. It calls for the ILO's constituents to be in the "driver's seat" of development work in their countries and establish capacity building as a strong component of initiatives. Further support is found in the Declaration of Philadelphia (1944), which affirms that "poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere"; and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), as decent work gaps in terms of freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, forced labour, child labour, employment and occupational discrimination are particularly manifest in rural areas, stifling progress and entrenching people in poverty.

³⁵² See, for example, J. Davis: "Rural non-farm livelihoods in transition economies: emerging issues and policies," in *Journal of Agricultural and Development Economics* (2006, Vol. 3, No. 2), pp. 180–224.

³⁵³ Op. Cit., ILO: *Report of the Committee on Rural Employment* (2008).

Table 2.a. Plan of Action for the Office, as outlined in the 2008 ILC Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction

Employment-related action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a comprehensive report analysing the impact of prior ILO rural employment work • Ensure that national employment policies and Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) include the promotion of productive employment in rural areas in accordance with ILC 2008 Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction • Encourage countries to adopt gender- and family-sensitive national rural employment policies • Promote entrepreneurship and sustainable MSEs, cooperatives and other community-based organizations, along the lines of the ILC 2007 Conclusions on the Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises, with special attention to smallholders, youth, women and indigenous peoples • Strengthen rural data-collection systems • Study the employment implications of bio-fuel production • Identify employment strategies that have been helpful in creating decent rural employment • Promote effective labour market institutions, and employment programmes for rural workers, such as employment guarantee schemes • Develop territorial approaches to employment and poverty reduction • Help extend and make accessible education, training and retraining matching the local economy
Standards-related action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international standards in rural areas • Promote the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work • Promote the ratification and implementation of relevant International Labour Standards • Promote the extension of national labour laws to all rural workers
Social Protection-related action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the extension of social protection to all, and explore the concept of a global social floor • Promote Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in rural enterprises and communities • Promote adequately staffed and resourced labour inspection to ensure OSH in rural enterprises • Promote the ILO Code of Practice on <i>HIV/AIDS and the world of work</i> in rural areas

Social Dialogue-related action

- Support the development and strengthen rural employers' and workers' organizations
- Encourage links between rural employers' and workers' organizations and their national and international counterparts
- Promote effective social dialogue in rural areas
- Build the capacity of labour administration in rural areas, including labour inspection

Means of delivery

- Use and articulate analytical work, TC, policy advice, capacity building, advocacy

Work methodology

- Focus on select interventions within the ILO's core mandate and comparative advantage
- Take action rapidly and efficiently
- Focus on practical interventions
- Operate in a coordinated manner as concerns the various Units involved
- Cooperate with the relevant international bodies at national and international level

Table 2.b. Roles of governments, employers and workers in rural work, as outlined in the 2008 ILC Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction

Governments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include rural employment in national development policies • Encourage a coherent and integrated approach to employment promotion and poverty reduction in rural areas, among all relevant government ministries and agencies, at all levels of Government • Consult representative organizations of rural employers and workers at national and local levels to in formulating and implementing national and local rural development policies • Invest adequately in agriculture and rural development • Support skills development for farm and non-farm activities • Create an enabling environment for sustainable rural enterprises • Promote the formalization of work in rural areas • Encourage the effective use of public-private partnerships • Develop social protection for all • Review legislation with a view to extending employment and labour rights to all • Ensure national legislation guarantees and defends the freedom of workers and employers • Better inform employers and workers of their rights and responsibilities at work, OSH, HIV/AIDS at the workplace, and fundamental principles and rights at work • Promote gender equality and women's empowerment • Improve access to basic services in rural areas, including on health, education, energy, transport, technology and communication • Ensure adequately staffed and resourced labour inspection • Collect and make available reliable, gender-disaggregated data on rural livelihoods
Employers' organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for effective rural economic and social development policies that produce an enabling environment for enterprises • Extend representation to rural areas to gain the benefits of cooperative action • Act as a coordinator or broker among value chain actors from rural and urban areas • Provide direct services to help rural enterprises develop • Promote training to improve productivity and good enterprise practices • Ensure adequate attention to rural employment and poverty reduction at all stages of Decent Work Country Programmes
Workers' organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and represent rural workers, including at the sectoral level • Extend representation to rural areas, including in the informal economy • Assist workers with information services and education • Strengthen participation of women and youth in workers' organizations in rural areas • Promote youth employment • Promote OSH in rural enterprises and communities • Ensure adequate attention to rural employment and poverty reduction at all stages of Decent Work Country Programmes

IV.2.2. Initial follow-up work

The ILO's rural work has stepped up markedly since the ILC 2008 Discussion on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction. Efforts were led by the Director-General to establish rural work as an "emerging area" in the P&B 2010–11, allocating regular budget seed resources to launch activities, and soliciting work in basic areas such as rural statistics. In that same P&B, rural work is set as first priority for the Africa Region, and it also features, as such or in terms of local development, in a variety of outcomes and indicators. In the P&B 2012–2013, the Organization redeployed resources to strengthen technical capacity, actions and policy work on rural employment, at Headquarters as well as in the Regions, particularly Africa.

Strong support for the ILO's work in rural areas also comes from the General Survey on employment instruments (2010),³⁵⁴ in which the CEACR highlighted the importance of rural employment when national authorities prepare, adopt and implement national employment plans and poverty reduction strategies in view of the concentration of unemployment, underemployment and poverty in those areas. Based on reports from 108 governments, the CEACR pointed to three policy options: 1) identify and adopt measures to increase the labour intensity of economic growth; 2) devote increased attention to employment promotion in rural areas; and 3) encourage entrepreneurship among youth and women.

Similarly, at the 2010 ILC Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Employment, governments, employers, and workers alike called for increased support from the ILO for work in rural areas.³⁵⁵ A year later, the Chairperson of the ILC Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection, as well as various delegates, underscored the importance of reaching the rural population with the extension of social security, "... as poverty [is] the most severe and social protection the weakest in rural areas".³⁵⁶

A post dedicated to ensure proper follow-up Office-wide was established in 2009 which, coupled with seed resources, allowed setting up a Rural Employment and Decent Work Programme, composed of a small core team and a network of over 70 rural focal points in all ILO key Units and Field Offices, to facilitate communication and coordination. The Programme also established mechanisms to ensure systematic monitoring of follow-up to the Conclusions of the abovementioned ILC 2008 discussion; stimulated rural initiatives and rural components in on-going work; and prepared knowledge sharing and capacity-building tools such as this stocktaking review itself, a set of some 30 policy briefs targeting rural-relevant technical areas, economic sectors and target groups;³⁵⁷ a package of informational flyers synthesizing the main characteristics of over 50 ILO rural-relevant tools to help constituents, practitioners, ILO partners and ILO officials themselves grasp the vast array of available instruments, as well as training modules on labour inspection; and developed external partnerships and "joint ventures".

³⁵⁴ ILO: *General Survey concerning instruments in light of the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 99th Session, Geneva, 2010.

³⁵⁵ ILO: *Report of the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Employment*, Provisional Record, ILC, 99th Session, Geneva, 2010.

³⁵⁶ ILO: *Report of the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on the Strategic Objective of Social Protection (Social Security)*, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011, paragraph 17.

³⁵⁷ Each policy briefs sketches potentialities and challenges, appropriate policies, the ILO work approach, main initiatives and tools, and illustrations of good practice in each topic.

Rural-related work at Headquarters on the select rural priorities featured in the ILC's 2008 Plan of Action for the Office (see table 2.a), has included major meetings, such as the 2009 Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Global Food Price Crisis and its Impact on Decent Work (previously mentioned), which led to ILO joining the HTLF that same year and developing an ILO field work on ILO food crisis programme in 2011.

Other noteworthy ILO events included two tripartite meetings in 2009 and 2010 leading to the adoption of an ILO Code of practice on Safety and Health in Agriculture, and an international conference in Kyrgyzstan in 2008 to compare experiences among WIND programmes in Africa, Asia, Central Asia, and Latin America. The conference resulted in strong support for that methodology and for developing and implementing a "WIND Plus" approach that also includes complementary areas and tools, such as SIYB, cooperatives, microfinance, vocational training, youth employment, social security, and child labour, in an integrated package promoting rural development and employment.

Knowledge development activities also intensified. They have seen a compilation of available rural data,³⁵⁸ and the decision to collect core labour statistics from ILO member States by rural and urban areas;³⁵⁹ the launch of a report on the impact of bio-fuels on enterprises and employment to become a reference for decision-makers and practitioners. They also include inter-agency work, such as an FAO-IFAD-ILO workshop in 2009 leading to an analytical publication and policy briefs on gender in rural areas to guide decision-makers (previously mentioned); a IFAD-ILO initiative in 2010–2011 to review youth rural programmes through the lens of decent work; an FAO-ECLAC-ILO study in 2010 on labour market policies and rural poverty in Latin America,³⁶⁰ leading among others FAO and ILO Regional Offices to sign an agreement including a collaboration strategy around the axes of statistical data on rural labour markets, policy analysis and recommendations on labour market dynamics and rural poverty, and gender and poverty in rural areas; and an FAO workshop in 2010 on child labour in fisheries and aquaculture with ILO technical support, that allowed the outlining of a joint FAO-ILO strategy in those sectors.

The last three years have also seen ILO finalize valuable capacity-building tools for rural work, in particular a Generic Manual on Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) in 2009 accompanied by the launch of projects in Benin, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe using this approach; a guide entitled *Value chain development for decent work* in 2010; and in 2011, a *Code of practice on safety and health in agriculture*; a *Practical manual on ergonomic checkpoints in agriculture*; and two modules on labour inspection in rural areas. The year 2011 has also seen the development of a tool to enhance the capacity of the ILO's constituents to promote freedom of association and collective bargaining in rural areas, including a review of gaps in law and practice in those fundamental rights; and the publication of a manual on freedom of association and collective bargaining rights for women workers in rural areas.

Rural components also appear in policy advisory work, for instance when supporting employment policy development and implementation, employment-intensive investment

³⁵⁸ Work started with employment and unemployment data, and should extend progressively to include income, working time, informal employment, and related variables.

³⁵⁹ Through the Annual ILO Questionnaires sent to National Statistical Offices and Ministries of Labour, for publication in the Yearbook of Labour Statistics and dissemination on ILO's web site.

³⁶⁰ This joint ILO-FAO-ECLAC study covers Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, and Peru.

methodologies in public works and community-based infrastructure programmes, policies and programmes related to occupational safety and health, extension of social security, and child labour.

External partnerships and joint ventures are also rapidly growing. Besides those previously mentioned, they range from taking part, and in some cases leading, major endeavours, for instance integrating rural areas into the Global Jobs Pact and Social Protection Floor Initiatives; injecting Decent Work Agenda components into HLTF documents and activities; and UN-wide joint work in rural areas within the framework of the MDG Spanish Fund initiative launched in 2008, particularly projects related to gender equality and women's empowerment, youth, heritage sites, post-conflict work and economic development. The strengthening of partnerships with FAO and IFAD is advancing particularly fast, namely in terms of an ever-richer FAO-ILO web site; and the abovementioned FAO-IFAD-ILO workshop and its follow-up, and IFAD-ILO work on rural youth programmes. An ILO-supported FAO tool, *Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities*, issued in 2010, will help expand FAO-ILO cooperation in the field.

More recently, an inter-agency technical meeting between the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the ILO, held in late 2010, on "Building Employment and Decent Work into Sustainable Recovery and Development", included sessions on rural initiatives, particularly targeting youth, led by the FAO, IFAD and the ILO. The interest raised by these sessions led UNDESA and ILO, with support from FAO and IFAD, to co-organize an inter-agency technical meeting in late 2011 on, "Broadening coherence and collaboration for rural development through employment and decent work". Participants also include the EU, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO, World Tourism Organization, the World Bank, the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as representatives of workers', employers' and farmers' organizations, NGOs, and the media. The results of discussions and agreements to join forces on such critical issues as, giving a voice to rural stakeholders; using multisectoral, integrated approaches; ensuring synergy of policies and initiatives; and ensuring that successful approaches reach policy level to become an integral part of national strategies and programmes, are to feed into the work plan of the UN Second Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017).

At country level the need for rural interventions has been particularly apparent. Currently 60 per cent of the ILO's DWCPs feature rural dimensions and over 60 TC projects wholly or partially target rural areas, mostly in Africa and Asia. The ILO's rural-relevant projects support in particular entrepreneurship, including cooperatives, skills development, employment intensive investment, local economic development, youth and women employment, occupational safety and health, child labour, and to some extent empowerment of workers and employers. Projects still usually emerge on an ad hoc basis, mainly as requests from individual constituents, or as opportunities offered by financial assistance providers, other agencies or programmes, and tend to develop "independently", though they increasingly remain within the major programming frameworks such as UNDAFs and DWCPs.

The ILO's TC rural initiatives typically involve one main decent work technical area, complemented by aspects from one or more other areas. Discussing a project in its early stages in group meetings with colleagues from all potentially relevant technical Units, for example, to identify logical links and synergies with existing tools, experiences and other initiatives is

not, however, a systematic practice. Inclusion of other technical areas is more often the result of an official's personal contacts. Likewise, good experiences or setbacks in a given initiative are not shared very broadly, particularly among different regions.

Analytical work and advisory services, to help develop employment policies or social security systems for example, while technically solid in their specific areas, tend to follow a similar pattern of "missed linkages" that may limit overall effectiveness. This pattern of "missed linkages and synergies" is probably common to other agencies, as well as among national actors and the development community. *Yet, interconnectivity Office-wide is a prerequisite and a priority to support the new role the ILO intends to and is otherwise equipped to play, to unleash rural potential.*

Follow-up work has thus been substantial, but there was a realization that it could be strengthened by a more specific strategy.

IV.3. Towards a strategy for ILO rural work

A strategy for the ILO's work in rural areas has now taken shape, based on the 2008 ILO Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction, the ILO's Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization of that same year, and the findings of this stocktaking exercise. It was presented at the March 2011 session of the Government Body's Employment and Social Policy Committee.³⁶¹ Committee members displayed, "... distinct consensus on the need for the ILO to address rural issues and for the Office to move decisively on them, given such strong support".³⁶² They called for work on all four components of the Decent Work Agenda, from employment creation and enterprise support, to the extension of social protection and of labour standard coverage and effective implementation, to social dialogue, starting with freedom of association; and for focusing on "practical actions", "real outcomes", "impact", and "things that work".

³⁶¹ ILO: *Report of the Committee on Employment and Social Policy*, Employment and Social Policy Committee of the Governing Body, 310th Session, Geneva, 2011, paragraphs 1–30.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

BOX 4**Example: Turning rural assets into business in Nepal**

The Employment Creation and Peace Building through Local Economic Development (EmPLED) project in rural Nepal (2007–2010) is an innovative attempt to promote peace through economic growth and job creation. The project targets two relatively poor agricultural districts (Danusha and Ramechhap) that had long suffered from conflict, had significant shares of landless and other marginalized groups, extensive emigration, and weak capacity for planning, coordination and implementation of pro-poor development initiatives.

EmPLED tackled these challenges with a locally-driven, participatory and integrated approach consisting mainly of:

- First helping establish an inclusive Local Economic Development (LED) Forum in each district that would champion a local public-private dialogue to design, coordinate, facilitate and monitor a pro-poor strategy and initiatives implementing it;
- Skills development for targeted beneficiaries to participate in social dialogue and to access productive jobs;
- Developing and maintaining productive local infrastructure, among others to facilitate market access; and
- Establishing and institutionalizing effective market linkages for local tourism and agriculture enterprises.

Coordination among stakeholders, social inclusion, empowerment of women (who constitute 40 per cent of beneficiaries) and other previously excluded groups, and mutually reinforcing interventions have been key aspects. Those interventions include:

- The development of two community-based tourism trails, for which the project created 27 home-stays, organized cultural festivals, and strengthened 10 Village Tourism Committees to help maintain shared infrastructure and coordinate joint marketing activities;
- Infrastructure works that created temporary jobs for 1,500 persons and nearly 90,000 paid workdays; and that have delivered improved transportation infrastructure now providing all-weather accessibility and lower transportation costs. Better rural-rural and urban-rural linkages have resulted in greater business opportunities in agriculture and tourism and increased agricultural output;
- Wetland and water catchment protection, agriculture irrigation, and solid waste management initiatives that help preserve the local environment for eco-tourism and sustainable agriculture;
- Strengthening of local business service providers, which has led to improved business development services to micro and small enterprises; and
- Holistic value chain upgrading that have improved value chain effectiveness in different sectors (tourism, various crops, and traditional art), and have benefited hundreds of entrepreneurs and workers. Training to enhance cultivation and storage practices, for instance, have improved crop yields and quality, resulting in higher overall market prices.

Close work with the Ministry of Local Development and a range of district stakeholders, and the creation of strong public-private partnerships, allow continued collaboration between residents, the private sector and local government. They also allow developing and implementing an integrated approach to local development. Together, these elements largely explain the success of this project, and its positive results in terms of profits for enterprises, socially responsible business behaviour, quality jobs and improved socio-economic conditions for the communities.

BOX 5

Example: Good jobs and poverty reduction through productive rural entrepreneurship in Senegal

The Rural Entrepreneurship Promotion project (PROMER II)¹ launched in 2006 is using a well integrated approach to generate more and better jobs in rural areas. Its support to non-farm processing and service activities creates practical, income-generating alternatives, especially for young people and for women (who constitute 50 per cent of beneficiaries), thereby decreasing rural out-migration and increasing opportunities to engage in productive and high-return activities and acquire new knowledge and skills.

PROMER's main objective is to combat rural poverty through the creation and/or consolidation of non-farm micro- and small enterprises, leading to productive, sustainable jobs that increase and diversify incomes. The project uses ILO enterprise management capacity-building tools such as "Know about Business" (KAB), "Generate Your Business Idea" (GYBI)² and "Start and Improve your Business" (SIYB)³, as well as PACTE, a package that develops the capacity of professional organizations, from internal management to marketing, lobbying, and servicing affiliates in general.

The project has thus far reached over 15 value chains (including cereals, textiles, agriculture, milk, mechanics and woodwork) in eight provinces. Its achievements range from training over 80 enterprise advisors (two-thirds of whom are youth); to helping to create or consolidate over 1100 MSEs (two-thirds of which are owned or managed by youth); helping some 300 existing micro-enterprises increase their turnover by over 60 per cent (on average); facilitating the creation or consolidation of 3000 jobs (60 per cent of which are for youth); supporting some 30 professional organizations (half of which led by women); helping set up and build capacity to use two electronic databases on markets and equipment; to signing protocols with local and regional radio networks to exchange information on entrepreneurship opportunities; and the formulation of the "Sectoral MSE Policy Letter", a document allowing to better address MSE development constraints in rural areas.

The novelty of the PROMER approach is its emphasis on synergies with a variety of ILO tools and approaches to achieve a stronger and more sustainable impact on target beneficiaries and local economic (and social) development. The project includes support to training and apprenticeship; access to social protection; micro-finance; and tripartite social dialogue systems for enhanced support to rural micro- and small enterprises. It also links up with: the Women Entrepreneurship Development (WED) programme to build SIYB trainers' capacity to support rural women entrepreneurs; IPEC, to help socio-economic integration of apprentices and to prepare qualified master craft workers for professional training centres; the STEP programme, to help develop health micro-insurance, and to improve professional organizations' capacity to offer social protection services to members; the WIND programme; the PRODIAF programme (promotion of social dialogue in francophone Africa), to build producer organizations' ability to position themselves in public debate; and the ADMITRA programme (for the modernization of the labour administration and inspectorate) to sensitize tax inspectors to the special needs of rural enterprises and to build the SIYB trainers' skills in diverse national and international tax laws. Furthermore, PROMER integrates sensitization of local actors to crosscutting issues such as gender equality, child labour and HIV/AIDS. This comprehensive approach reinforces capacities and opportunities of Senegalese rural entrepreneurs and local actors to realize in-depth rural socio-economic development, affording capacities that go well beyond the mere enterprise sphere.

¹ In French: *Projet d'appui au développement de l'entrepreneuriat et de l'emploi en zone rurale* (2006–2010).

² In French: TRIE (*Trouvez votre Idée d'Entreprise*).

³ In French : GERME (*Gérez Mieux votre Entreprise*).

IV.3.1. An ILO-wide vision and strategy for rural work

The ILO's rural strategy is led by a strong *view of rural women, men, and communities as potential engines of growth and resilience*. Investing in them to counter decent work and other structural shortcomings, and empowering them to fulfil their potential, is morally, as well as economically, sound. Equating rural areas with backwardness and unattractiveness needs to change. As previously mentioned, developed countries are increasingly associating the concept of "rural" with positive economic and social connotations; and various emerging economies, particularly in Asia, have also based their development model on targeted investments upgrades and modernized their rural regions. It is encouraging that the NEPAD's Rural Futures programme (launched in 2010) to promote rural transformation across Africa, rests on considering, "... rural activities as a motor to human well-being, national development and global sustainability ..." and underscores how, "... greater attention to opportunity might help to minimize pessimism and create affirmative prospects for [rural] development".³⁶³

Proper rural identity is also important. In particular, we need to avoid making broad generalizations of rural settings based on a few stereotypical features, approaches, technical components, or sectors associated with such areas. Thus, there needs to be a clear distinction between the concepts of "informal" and "rural" economies. Although informality is widespread in rural areas, it is only one facet of the rural economy. Formalizing the informal sector, for instance, will not solve decent work deficits in rural areas, address the food security crisis, or help develop rural socio-economic infrastructure, appropriate skills, and productive employment alternatives for youth. A similar reasoning holds for some other approaches, particularly Local Economic Development (LED), which consists of enabling local stakeholders to jointly decide on and implement a development strategy adapted to the comparative advantages of their area, as well as the more recent concept of green jobs, which holds promises for more and higher value added, environmentally-friendly jobs. While both LED and green jobs are highly relevant to rural development, they do not address the different dimensions of rural areas mentioned earlier. Solely using agriculture to represent rural areas is equally damaging, particularly as it overshadows other opportunities and potential to diversify, modernize, and offer alternatives to rural populations, such as non-farm work. Thus, although all four concepts have important roles in rural areas, and linkages between them and rural work are essential, the ILO's work on rural areas is to be treated as a distinct category, not to be confused or overshadowed by other concepts.

The vision, or ultimate goal, of this ILO-wide rural strategy is to make "*Unleashing rural development through productive employment and decent work*" an integral part of development strategies, in recognition of their potential as an engine for growth, development, poverty reduction, and social stability. The ILO's initiatives and their results and impact should therefore be measured against this goal. The strategy is to *combine direct, country-level interventions and capacity building, while planning and remaining alert for policy impact*.

The ILO's rural strategy needs to "walk on two legs", by combining farm and non-farm initiatives. Policies should undoubtedly increase support to agricultural productivity and modernization, and should no longer consider farmers as simple "peasants" (as in the 1970s), but as "agrarian entrepreneurs". Policies should also target non-farm activities more decisively. The

³⁶³ I.A. Mayaki: *The Rural Futures Programme: Rural Transformation across the African Continent* (Johannesburg, AU/NEPAD, 2010).

ability to diversify out of farming into productive, higher value-added manufacturing and service work is increasingly important for household earnings as well as for economic growth, modernization, sustained development and poverty reduction. Calls for rural industrialization are not new,³⁶⁴ but there is now a stronger impetus for a dual approach from agencies like the FAO, IFAD and the World Bank among others.³⁶⁵ Across the developing world, non-farm activities already represent 35–50 per cent of rural residents' income.³⁶⁶ Farming households may engage in non-farm activities as purely a survival strategy, to complement income, diversify risk, finance agricultural ventures, or as buffer against seasonal income fluctuations. However they may be used, non-farm activities are becoming increasingly important productive business alternatives to farming.³⁶⁷

In countries successfully shifting away from agriculture, policy-makers view the rural non-farm economy as a sector that can productively absorb growing rural demographic pressures on limited land; as well as provide a livelihood to those agricultural workers and small farmers squeezed out of agriculture by an advancing commercialized and capital-intensive type of farming. The usually low rates of capital investment required for rural non-farm activities help make it an accessible path out of unemployment, under-employment and poverty, and into industrialization and diversification. Logically many such activities develop along the agribusiness chain, such as producing and distributing seeds, tools and other agricultural inputs; and processing and marketing agriculture produce. Currently, with an estimated one third of agricultural produce going to waste in some developing countries due to a lack of proper local processing, storage, and transportation infrastructure, “missed opportunities” in this area are quite strong.

New policies need to support the agriculture-industrial-service link and the mutually enhancing role of the three components. Opportunities stemming from the new context will also need to be seized in sectors such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), tourism, energy production (e.g. solar energy), energy-saving equipment, reforestation and water management, for instance. Stimulating non-farm businesses also facilitates the development of a local entrepreneurial, self-reliant mentality that is an essential part of a vibrant and innovation-oriented rural community. As past work by the ILO demonstrates, a sense of independence can inspire communities to look for local solutions to traditional problems, such as limited access to services, water management, poor transport infrastructure, or lack of proper, affordable housing.

Mindful of capacity and capability, the ILO's rural work portfolio is to be limited and focused. The objective is to focus on select initiatives where the ILO can “make a difference” for bene-

³⁶⁴ ILO already indicated in the 1980s that the main thrust of a rural-focused employment-oriented development strategy would focus on “... the promotion of growth linkages between a dynamic non-farm rural economy and an agricultural sector experiencing rapid productivity growth due to the adoption of innovative and appropriate technology”, in ILO: *Rural employment promotion*, Report VII, International Labour Conference, 75th Session, Geneva, 1988, p. 116. See also R. Islam: *Rural industrialization and employment in Asia* (New Delhi, ILO-ARTEP, 1987), and P. Egger: *Travail et agriculture dans le tiers monde- pour une politique active de l'emploi rural* (Geneva, ILO, 1993).

³⁶⁵ See, for instance, WB: *Implementing Agriculture for Development- Action Plan FY2010-12*, Washington D.C., 2009; IFAD: *Rural Poverty Report*, Rome, 2010; and FAO: *FAO Rural Employment Strategy 2010-2014*, Rome, (forthcoming).

³⁶⁶ S. Haggblade, P.B.R. Hazell, and T. Reardon: *Transforming the Rural Non-Farm Economy: Opportunities and Threats in the Developing World*, Issue Brief 58 (Washington, D.C., IFPRI, 2009).

³⁶⁷ See, for example, S. Dercon: “Rural Poverty: Old Challenges in New Contexts,” in *The World Bank Research Observer* (2009, Vol. 24, No. 1, February), pp.1-28, which states that, while agricultural growth is likely to be essential for land-locked and resource-poor economies, others, particularly those with good locations for engagement into, or resource-rich ones, agriculture is not the crucial constraint. In them, transformation into a higher-income and low-poverty economy is achieved through entrepreneurship and with some farmers and farm labourers becoming employees in industry and services; and the highest returns are to be achieved from health, education and skills.

ficiaries and that continue to build up the ILO's expertise, teamwork and confidence on rural work. External partnerships and support are vital; and concrete achievements will then allow for expanding work as needed, attracting further support, and in particular, impacting policy. The leading principles of this strategy are: focus, pragmatism, results, speed, strategic internal and external linkages, shared responsibility and cooperation Organization-wide, and visibility. Some general strategy components are indicated below, although regional, national and local specificities will call for adaptation.

IV.3.2. Type of work

Capacity building is to be a central part of the strategy, reflecting the ILO's 2008 Declaration, and its Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15³⁶⁸ and Programme and Budget 2010–11.³⁶⁹ Most former and present ILO officials interviewed for this review emphasized the importance of rebuilding and re-discovering technical expertise in rural work, given the 20-year gap on the topic. Many voiced the need for a stable critical mass/cadre of ILO technically specialized, committed and experienced professionals with “knowledge” and “know how”, a combination of HQ and field experience, as well as capacity to communicate across regions to share experiences and advancements. Such expertise is essential to working effectively, to being convincing and being accepted as reliable by the ILO's constituents, and external partners. This capacity building also targets the ILO's constituents, and more broadly its potential partners. Attention should also focus on emerging approaches, such as the concept of “capabilities”, at the level of individuals, enterprises and societies to carry out structural change in rural areas and create a virtuous cycle of sustained growth and economic performance.³⁷⁰

Work is to focus on developing and updating practical and user-friendly guidance and capacity-building instruments, from “How to” manuals and guides to action-oriented fact-sheets on specific technical areas, groups, and sectors and contexts. One example is a practical methodology to identify potentialities and binding constraints to inclusive rural growth in specific contexts to guide analytical work preceding ILO interventions. This work could be complemented by a (course-type) instrument on employment and decent work-based rural development, prepared and delivered with ITC-Turin, field Offices, sectors and constituents, to ensure broad ownership and take into account particular needs, specificities, experience and lessons.

Knowledge building and sharing is a second major type of work and should focus first on “re-appropriating” the ILO's vast knowledge and experience in rural areas. This stocktaking exercise itself is a much needed preliminary step and points to the existence of a number of potentially valuable tools (see Annex 3). Responsibility for adapting them (if needed) to present-day rural settings and using them rests with the relevant technical Units, who should

³⁶⁸ “Capacity development of constituents will be a central component of all outcome strategies over the planning period”, in ILO: *Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15: Making Decent Work Happen*, Governing Body, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee, 304th Session, Geneva, 2009, section 76.

³⁶⁹ This also reflects the UN Development Group (UNDG)'s initiative that started in 2006 on emphasizing Capacity development of constituents, considered to be critical for achieving the MDGs, as well as sustainability, real behavioural changes and true development. *Enhancing the UN's contribution to National Capacity Development: A UNDG Position Statement*, UNDG, 2006, http://www.un.org/esa/cdo/documents/UNDG_PositionPaperCD_21_Dec_2006.pdf (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³⁷⁰ I. Nübler: *Capabilities for Productive Transformation: The Way Forward in Rural Development* (Geneva, ILO, forthcoming).

also share them and integrate them throughout the Organization, and maintain key information in an easily accessible manner. Research is to be used selectively, to address information gaps that hinder action or to address acute concerns, such as the studies under way in 2010-11 on rural poverty and the scope for labour market policies to combat poverty situations in select Latin American countries; and studies on the impact of the rapidly expanding bio-fuel industry on enterprises and employment, mentioned earlier. An additional issue for research is the exploration of means to provide rural producers a stronger and more effective voice in global trade negotiations and stronger bargaining power in local and global supply chains. The emphasis in all cases should be on “turning words into action”, that is, translating research results into practical guidance, TC projects, policy advice and advocacy, capacity building, and other practical instruments.

Technical cooperation is to continue its main role of testing approaches and proving their practical value, while strengthening its role as a “stepping stone” to policy. The size and duration of the ILO’s initiatives remain a big challenge as most projects are typically below USD 500,000 and last between 2 and 4 years. The time and resource constraints create a gap between expectations in terms of results and capacity to reach rural areas and ensuring long-term sustainability. This gap has continued to widen as international agencies, national authorities, and financial assistance providers look for initiatives that can yield quicker results. Nevertheless, more time and resources to achieve results and impact are particularly important for projects in rural areas, where institutional, social and economic infrastructure are less developed, the knowledge base is poorer, and target groups are particularly disadvantaged.

Longer time-frames are also vital for technical cooperation to reach policy level, which is essential to ensure national and local ownership and thus sustainability of the project through up-scaling and replication. More importantly, it is essential to have national policy itself internalize the approach, which is the ultimate achievement and measure of success. This calls for strong and continuous links with national policy-makers, as well as with local authorities. The ILO’s pilot rural initiatives also need to link up to higher, international levels through mechanisms, such as the ONE UN, UNDAFs, PRSPs and the process driving Decent Work to become a UN and even broader approach, so as to facilitate reaching policy level among agencies, thereby strengthening policy at the country level itself.

A capacity-building instrument could be envisaged to provide guidance to rural TC activities, presenting specificities of rural settings, organizational structures and processes, explaining interconnectedness among technical areas, means to reach policy level, and revealing links between appropriate approaches and tools. It could indicate, among other issues, how to achieve a balance between immediate results, particularly in times of crisis for instance, and longer-term, structural results. It could also elaborate on the variety of tasks that necessitate longer time horizons,³⁷¹ such as building confidence among rural stakeholders, training future agents of change, and developing capacity of existing structures and institutions (in technical areas as well as soft-skills such as capacity to listen to local actors), as well as “building capacity to build capacity”, developing motivation among local/national actions, and promoting structures that permit inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary connections. A check-list-type module, for instance, could provide quick pointers/reminders as to the key steps and dimensions to be addressed at the various project stages, and their sequence.

³⁷¹ Interviewees’ indication of the average project length ranges from 4–5 to 10 years.

Following the same logic, *policy advice and advocacy* are to be prominent. Rural-focused check-lists and similar guidance instruments can be developed, and used in policy development or reviews related to employment, education and training, social security, labour inspection or social dialogue for instance. These instruments would also allow ILO to speak with one voice, giving its messages strength and coherence. Among the key messages to include is ensuring that rural-relevant ministries and other national and local institutions and groups are consulted, that macro-level decision-makers such as ministries of finance and planning participate, and facilitating linkages among them. Advocacy work should also include facilitating rural-related South–South collaboration and exchanges of experience, a phenomenon that is rapidly expanding.

IV.3.3. Technical Focus Areas and Groups

Rural labour market and decent work data are the basis of all other work, yet still notably scanty. The Office proposes pursuing a three-pronged approach, combining provision of technical support to national statistical systems of selected countries with high concentrations of rural poverty; expanding the LABORSTA database to include short-term and annual indicators for key decent work indicators disaggregated by rural/urban areas; and working with selected Labour Ministries and national training centres to produce data on skills needs and development which can assist rural populations and employers engage in productive relationships.

Rural employment policies need to be a special focus in ILO employment policy works; indeed a leading focus in the case of many countries in Africa and South Asia, in particular.

Local Economic Development calls for particular support, as it is the approach best suited to take into account the specificities of a given rural context. It is also the approach that best synthesizes the decent work objectives, being centred on peoples' needs, aspirations and potential, their capacity to decide on the best strategy to address them, and to share benefits accordingly. Furthermore, it allows/requires integrated work, organized around that strategy, in which multiple decent work dimensions can operate in a mutually supportive way.

Employment intensive investment is another technical area particularly suited for rural needs, in terms of the end result, the socio-economic infrastructure itself, as well as the approach itself, which is employment-intensive, maximises the use of local resources, creates direct and indirect jobs, and increases household consumption while stimulating local entrepreneurship, as well as local dialogue and decision-making. The strategic interest of the ILO's EII approach is even more noteworthy, namely its ability to reach policy levels that decide on investment priorities and technologies, providing them with a capacity to ascertain the employment and other social impacts of those investments and technologies through social budgeting-type exercises. That strategic policy move is nowadays facilitated by the widespread recognition of infrastructure as a bottleneck for rural development and the need to create jobs in rural areas, combined with an already generalized use of public works to tackle the on-going economic crisis that testifies acknowledgement of their value.

Entrepreneurship, including micro-finance, is another essential element to transform rural areas into hubs of modernity, economic diversification and job-rich growth. It is a privileged

entry point in rural areas, as M/SMEs are best suited to bridge the gap between agricultural and non-agricultural rural sectors. Nonetheless, considerable work is needed to move from entrepreneurship as a survivalist strategy to one geared towards productive and profitable results. The ILO has a vast array of tools adapted and adaptable to specific sizes of rural enterprises, economic activities and groups. The first step, as mentioned earlier, is to consider farmers as “agrarian entrepreneurs” and to help them set up a variety of business services addressing their needs, including on microfinance adapted to rural areas, clustering, value-chain link ups and cost-effective OSH and working conditions, to allow them to operate a profitable, growth-oriented enterprise. At the same time, the ILO is to encourage and support productive non-farm business for the local and global markets, including support for identifying niches and creating a more enabling business environment in rural areas. This also includes greater attention to informal rural activities, grasping their specificities and dynamics so they can be eased, realistically and productively, into the formal economy.

Cooperatives also deserve special emphasis as they are particularly adapted to take advantage of opportunities and compensate for shortcomings of rural socio-economic contexts while ensuring equitable, inclusive growth. The on-going food security and economic crises are also demonstrating the greater resilience of cooperatives compared to capital-centred enterprises, across all sectors and regions – as indicated by a lower number of bankruptcies and greater longevity.³⁷² Consequently cooperatives are gaining more credibility and attention as a productive, viable business model and shock absorber in rural communities. In light of the reliable track record of cooperatives, the ILO should give priority to re-discovering, updating and using the vast mine of cooperative tools available within MATCOM.

Marketable skills development, including technical skills as well as business skills and life skills, is where the ILO could make a qualitative jump. The TREE approach, tailor-made to provide basic skills needed locally, could be easily complemented by quality apprenticeship systems. Perhaps more importantly though is accrued attention to ensure that national vocational training systems (many of which are currently under review in order to be upgraded) do reach rural areas, and that they are adapted to fit the specific needs of those areas in terms of content, including skills needed for the diversification and revival and modernization of rural economies, as well as modalities of delivery. The combination of the ILO Headquarters and field expertise in national vocational training systems and ITC-Turin expertise in tailor-made training delivery systems could be particularly successful. Special care should be taken to address the specificities of disadvantaged or minority groups such as persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, refugees, migrants and nomads, to ensure their full inclusion and contribution in the community.

Career guidance is an emerging area, tightly related to the ones discussed above. It is particularly valuable in today’s rural context, which needs to diversify and modernize, and where youth are to “discover” and engage in new types of businesses and occupations and be guided and supported accordingly. This includes initiatives to change stereotypical images of rural areas, to highlight their potential to be modern, success stories, and the role of young men and women as engines and beneficiaries of this renewal. Rural girls need particular attention in terms of career guidance to overcome specific disadvantages linked to a gender division of labour that is particularly strict and persistent in rural areas. It is also particularly valuable in

³⁷² J. Birchall and L.H. Ketilson: *Resilience of the Cooperative Business Model in Times of Crisis* (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

the case of disadvantaged and minority groups at risk of marginalization (such as disabled persons), to help translate their potential and aspirations into prospects for productive livelihoods. The ILO's work should include, for career guidance as well as for skills development, facilitating a broad dialogue that involves the authorities, the private sector, and youth groups, both at the local level and nationally.

Rural migration and its various patterns and facets also deserve attention. It can be national and international, seasonal or more long-term. It impacts family members left behind as well as national economies, namely through the size and use of remittances, and return migration. In light of the numerous dimensions of rural migration and the ILO's limited work, links with relevant agencies and institutions are indispensable in order to focus work on select issues such as the productive use of remittances to finance skills development and entrepreneurship.

OSH and working conditions in rural areas are sometimes lower priorities among authorities and the development community, but are nonetheless crucial. The ILO can already count on considerable in-House expertise in this area. Awareness raising may need to be combined with practical, cost-effective approaches to implement basic rules and safe set-ups. And these approaches should contain methods to prove that OSH and working conditions are indeed productive elements. This includes incorporating HIV/AIDS prevention and coping dimensions, based on a variety of existing ILO tools that show, for example, how affected persons can remain active economic and community members with proper treatment. The ILO is also working for a more extensive and systematic use of WISE and WIND-type tools, particularly adapted to micro- and small enterprises and rural contexts, which it could update on a regular basis to incorporate the latest in ergonomics as well as safety and health practices.

Basic social coverage is a pivotal element of the ILO's rural strategy. Greater risks and vulnerabilities in rural areas, linked to weather, dangerous jobs, already high poverty, widespread informality, and precarious employment conditions mean that persons are less likely to take risks and "venture" into novel productive activities and processes. The ILO has a solid base, namely its STEP experience, which can help develop and implement basic social coverage for rural areas. The biggest challenge remains, especially in less developed countries, to make these mechanisms manageable in terms of cost and institutional capacity and thus sustainable. Long-term continuity is essential because the effectiveness of social protection in reducing poverty depends on its reliability. The ILO needs to show the link between basic social coverage and productivity and growth, such as its stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation by diminishing risk aversion. It also needs to establish the link of mutual support with wider, growth, and development policies. The ILO can take advantage of a number of already well-publicized and analysed success stories such as Brazil, whose social security system currently covers 92 per cent of its population; and the rural national guarantee schemes in Nepal and India, which the ILO is now evaluating to assess impact. As mentioned earlier, the ILO is already deeply engaged in co-leading the Social Protection Floor Initiative,³⁷³ which is mobilizing national and international attention.

³⁷³ *The Role of Social Security in Crisis Response and Recovery, and Beyond, ILO-UN Social Protection Floor Initiative*, ILO News, 2010, http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Feature_stories/lang--en/WCMS_141818/index.htm (accessed on 15 November 2010).

International Labour Standards receive specific attention in the ILO's rural strategy and work is to intensify and to link more strongly with other ILO technical areas and initiatives in order to integrate relevant standards and sensitization components in these initiatives in a way that is mutually supporting. The guidance provided by international labour standards and CEACR's views on the gaps in their proper implementation, are also to serve as tools to ensure that technical assistance and cooperation on the ground are as targeted and effective as possible, while promoting ratification and improved implementation of standards. Explicitly stating links with specific international labour standards that are the foundation for a given TC project or policy advice, and the active involvement of the ILO's relevant Department deserves special attention, for this can provide a special impetus as member States are reminded of their legal obligations, thereby facilitating work and mainstreaming of the approach suggested at policy level.

There will be continued focus on the Fundamental Standards - Freedom of Association (C.11, C.87 and C.141), Collective Bargaining (C.98), Forced Labour (C.29 and C.105), including trafficking and bonded labour; Child Labour (C.138 and 182), particularly as children's most hazardous work is in agriculture; and equality of opportunity and treatment (C.111 and C.100). Work will also focus on the governance Conventions, especially Conventions No. 122 on employment policy and promotion and No. 81 and No. 129 on labour inspection, which are intended to ensure application of other ratified Conventions. Labour inspection systems must be progressively extended to rural zones in practice and not just in law, including through education, awareness raising and capacity building. In November 2009, the Director-General launched a campaign for the ratification and implementation of these instruments, and the Governing Body adopted a plan of action for their promotion.³⁷⁴

Emphasis also needs to be on discovering practical ways to reach out to rural areas where communication and monitoring are physically more difficult, to ensure that rural populations have ready access to information and institutions that can help them defend their rights. Innovative advocacy and sensitization campaigns may be envisaged using modern ICT technology as well as language, visual and other forms adapted to local contexts. These initiatives are to be coupled with assistance in setting up effective and sustainable labour inspection mobilizing locally available public and private actors (if needed).

Social dialogue, and particularly organization and mobilization of workers and employers, is a keystone of the ILO's rural strategy. It is through social dialogue that the real protagonists of rural economic life have a "voice" and the capacity to express needs, make choices, develop strategies, establish a rural presence, and bargain in national and international decision-making. Social dialogue is also part of the ILO's very identity and where it has the clearest comparative advantages. Relatively little work in this area has targeted rural areas in recent years, and the ILO's rural strategy thus puts considerable emphasis on it. In the case of workers this calls for re-discovering the considerable volume of work and expertise from the '70s and '80s. For employers, it calls for grasping the business potential of rural areas and realizing that creating there an enabling rural business environment requires a vibrant local business community as well as strengthening local entrepreneurs and their associations, while developing two-way links between them and with national and international employers' organizations.

³⁷⁴ See document GB.306/LIIS/6(&Corr.).

Trade issues are nowadays integral components of rural work. The ILO needs to grasp how to help the most vulnerable cope with the global economy. In particular, it should help disadvantaged rural groups participate and be influential negotiators in national and international trade discussions. It is important that the ILO supports rural groups and communities to help them adapt to the changing environment and demands requirements, for instance by facilitating small farmers' access to world markets through value chains and other means. At a higher level, the ILO needs to strengthen knowledge about the impact of WTO rules on the livelihoods of farmers and other rural producers of developing countries, to inform negotiations and help arrive at more balanced and sustainable trade rules.

Youth and women are to receive priority attention. This includes child labour dimensions, which are tightly linked to the employment and decent work prospects of both groups. Convincing youth of a future in rural areas requires a proactive, comprehensive and integrated approach, including investments, to stimulate and support entrepreneurship, particularly among women; to raise productivity, modernity, dynamism, diversification and worker-friendliness of farm and non-farm activities; to improve occupational safety and health and social protection coverage; to provide quality training for high value added occupations; to provide economic and social infrastructure; to improve the image and social status of those working and living in rural areas; to involve young women and men in planning and implementing community development strategies; and to use gender-sensitive and women-enabling approaches.

Rural youth are now increasingly reluctant to be involved in agriculture because of a variety of factors such as harsh living and working conditions, meagre returns, and the drudgery and occupational hazards involved in farm work. Rural communities can usually only offer limited non-farm alternatives, most often in low-skilled occupations with poor working conditions and limited prospects of advancement. Agriculture, agro-business, and related services need to be updated, and opportunities in other rural-relevant sectors need to be created, so they may provide better lives, working conditions, better incomes and broader opportunities to attract dynamic young women and men, who can thus be convinced to remain in, return to rural communities and be a force for growth.

Such a change requires a proactive, comprehensive, and integrated approach (including interventions tackling child labour) conceived and implemented through a youth perspective. It entails in particular investment in rural communities to raise the productivity, modernity, dynamism, diversification, and worker-friendliness of agriculture and non-farm activities through occupational safety and health and adapted, sustainable social protection coverage. This needs to be coupled with locally-adapted career guidance and quality training for high value-added occupations (in both farm and non-farm activities); developing economic and social rural infrastructure, with an eye to making it youth-, gender-, and family-friendly, by including recreational and kindergartens facilities, for instance; and improving the image and social status of working and living in rural areas, currently stigmatized as being "backwards", "dirty" and "not modern". It also requires recognizing the role and voice of young women and men, and fully involving them in planning and implementing strategies to develop their communities.

Rural women, who represent some 50 per cent of agricultural workers and produce and provide over 80 per cent of labour required for food processing,³⁷⁵ continue to face multiple drawbacks, mainly related to traditional gender-based divisions of labour that are particularly rigid and persistent in rural areas. Disadvantages range from limited access to land-ownership, financial and other assets, lower earnings compared to men, limited access to technology, information on employment opportunities and markets, as a result of low education levels and limited mobility; to “time poverty”, owing to women’s and girls’ traditional role as family care takers that is particularly demanding in rural areas since socio-economic infrastructure such as water wells, health clinics, child care and markets are scarcer and more difficult to reach.

Rural women’s lack of voice, in households, communities and in workers’ and professional organizations perpetuates these limitations. Some reforms have been attempted and good practices do exist that should be implemented accordingly. They range from laws, administrative rules, economic support and advocacy, preferably applied in conjunction with each other, to give access to land, credit, technology and other productive resources; to officially recognize the economic function of unpaid activities and promote gender balance in house-work; to actively support education and training adapted to the needs of girls and women, which can give them access to employment opportunities and entrepreneurship, for instance women cooperatives; to invest in economic and social infrastructure, involving women in decision making to identify priority services and their location; and to adopt gender-sensitive budgeting.

Unleashing the potential of rural women also calls for integrated response packages.³⁷⁶ The ILO has started moving in this direction through the FAO-IFAD-ILO 2009 initiative on walking out of rural poverty through a gender-based approach, which is providing useful insights to guide its work; and it can count on the considerable volume of work on rural women it has carried out in past decades, starting perhaps with an ex-post stocktaking of strategic projects and programmes to gauge their long-term outcome and lessons.³⁷⁷

Concerning *child labour*, the ILO’s work in rural areas is to increase and diversify. Until recently the proportion of IPEC projects and action programmes focusing specifically on agriculture was less than 15 per cent.³⁷⁸ Having contributed to substantial child labour reduction in many other sectors however, IPEC is now in a better position to direct its resources at the large and complex task of eliminating hazardous child labour in agriculture. IPEC’s work is also increasingly spanning other rural occupations and rural communities specifically, as that is where situations favouring child labour are most deeply rooted. The ILO rural strategy emphasizes the child labour and youth employment link, which calls for solutions that can improve children’s employment and earning prospects as young adults, and thus constitute a

³⁷⁵ UN: *Economic Advancement of Women*, Report of the Secretary-General, Commission on the Status of Women, 50th Session, Economic and Social Council, New York, 2005.

³⁷⁶ See, for example, N. Otobe et al.: *Gender Equitable Decent Work to Reduce Rural Poverty and Boost Economic Growth*, Policy Brief 1 (of seven in the series *Gender Dimensions of Agriculture and Rural Employment: Differentiated Pathways Out of Poverty*) (Rome, FAO-IFAD-ILO, 2010). www.fao-ilo.org/more/workshop/en (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³⁷⁷ See, for example, the programme on Workers’ Education for Rural Women, which ended some 10 years ago. A stocktaking exercise would allow to ascertain to what extent women have risen in rank; what structures have been established; what issues have now been integrated; what strategies identified and used earlier proved effective and viable; how participating organizations mainstreamed the ILO messages; and if and how the perspective on gender has changed.

³⁷⁸ ILO: *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*, Global Report under follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, International Labour Conference, 95th Session, Report 1 (B), Geneva, 2006.

“good investment” for families and communities. Gender dimensions are also to receive specific attention as rural girls tend to accumulate lack of schooling and other disadvantages at an early age that impact their whole economic and social development and help transmit poverty to the next generations.³⁷⁹

IV.3.4. Work Organization: An Integrated approach

The multifaceted nature of rural work calls for integrated approaches combining multiple technical areas, types of work, intervention levels (including supply/demand, rural/urban and national/international links), and actors both internal and external to the ILO. It requires shared responsibility, coupled with coordination and synergies.

“Integration” itself has various components: *multidisciplinarity* is one. This requires a synchronized application of the ILO’s four strategic objectives – promotion of fundamental rights, employment creation, social protection and social dialogue – and a mobilization of their respective technical areas, tools and officials. Among the areas with the most evident potential for integrated work is youth employment since, as mentioned earlier, inducing youth to remain in rural areas requires a combination of job opportunities in diversified, productive and modern economic activities, training to match those opportunities, including entrepreneurship, but also attractive local wages, OSH and working conditions in general, as well as practical and attractive local physical and social infrastructure, to create returns that “compete” with the attractiveness of cities and work abroad.

There are already various examples of multi-sectoral initiatives, particularly in programmes related to crisis response and to local development, as shown in Nepal’s “Employment creation and peace building through LED” 2007–10 project (Box 4), which applies an integrated approach linking infrastructure, enterprise support and skills development to the same key economic sectors and areas, to increase access to productive assets, inputs and markets based on value chains. Another integrated project (Box 5) is the Support to entrepreneurship and employment development in rural areas project (PROMER) in Senegal that started by using SIYB adapted to rural settings as a main entry point, then complemented it with elements of micro-finance, micro-insurance (STEP), working and living conditions (WIND), HIV/AIDS, social dialogue and child labour (IPEC). Various ILO tools often include, or are likely to include, components from others, such as the TREE, which mainstreams disability and gender issues and has the potential to “host” entrepreneurship and other tools.

Labour inspection work is another area that potentially includes many overlaps.³⁸⁰ The ILO is today promoting an approach³⁸¹ that links labour inspection to technical issues such as

³⁷⁹ See, for example, Paola Termine et al.: *Breaking the Rural Poverty Cycle: Getting Girls and Boys Out of Work and Into School*, Policy Brief 7, (of seven in the series *Gender Dimensions of Agriculture and Rural Employment: Differentiated Pathways Out of Poverty*) (Rome, FAO-IFAD-ILO, 2010), www.fao-il.org/more/workshop/en (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³⁸⁰ As the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) 2010 puts it bluntly, “... however advanced it may be, a country’s labour legislation is liable to remain a dead letter if there is no system of labour inspection to enforce it, not only in law, but also in practice.” ILO: *General Observation on Labour Inspection Convention 1947 (No. 81) and Labour Convention (Agriculture) Convention 1969 (No. 129)*, Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), Report III (Part 1A), International Labour Conference, Geneva, 2010, pp. 484–185. Even in countries where agriculture is the main activity and rural workers represent the large majority of the population, labour inspectors tend to confine their activities to big industrial enterprises in the capital or the major cities, sometimes representing a mere 10–20 per cent of the economically active population. Op. cit., ILO: *General Survey on Labour Inspection* (2006). ILO: *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (articles 19, 22 and 35 of the Constitution)*, International Labour Conference, 95th Session, Report III (Part 1B), Geneva, 2006.

³⁸¹ G. Albracht: “Integrated Labour Inspection Systems”, in *Labour Education* (2005, No. 140 and 141), pp. 67–73.

forced labour, child labour, employment relations, social security, gender equality and discrimination, illegal employment, prevention, as well as OSH management and working conditions,³⁸² and encourages cooperation between labour inspectorates, trade unions and employers' organizations as an important and cost-effective means of strengthening compliance in rural areas.

In the field, where the natural multidisciplinarity of rural work is directly evident, interventions combining complementary technical areas are more frequent, as confirmed by the number of recent MDG Spanish Fund projects focusing on rural contexts that feature multiple ILO technical areas, within and outside the employment sector.

Integration also means linking up and *simultaneously addressing supply and demand*. In the case of skills development therefore, youth employment prospects are tightly linked to the type and quality of their education and training on the supply side, as well as to market needs on the demand side. In the case of entrepreneurship, high rates of small business failure are often related to lack of connection with larger enterprises and national and international market.

Integration includes ensuring *urban-rural, national-international incorporation*, with link-ups via supply chains. It also means vertical integration, to *link up ILO initiatives at micro- (experimental), meso- (institutional), and macro- (policy) levels*, which is equally essential for maximum impact.

Integration further means *establishing a logical sequence of support initiatives* involving analytical and data gathering/analytical work, TC, capacity building and policy advice. This includes achieving the support of officials and institutions responsible for the relevant areas, so as to achieve broader, programmatic and strategic goals. Firstly, this helps to avoid the tendency for TC projects to become “an empire within an empire”, with individuals reluctant to give up “their” projects or refusing to take over those of others. Secondly, it helps to avoid TC-to-TC jumping between stand-alone projects. Such processes are fully in line with the ILO’s recent policy of ensuring that projects are well integrated into the work strategy and programme of a given Office, particularly through its DWCP. Taking it a step further, *Offices (with the support of the relevant technical units) are to ensure support and follow-up even years after their finalization*, to monitor progress, identify and tackle hurdles which may slow progress and even cause regression, and help upscale or replicate the approach and, as much as possible, make it reach policy levels and become integrated into main strategies, policies and programmes. *Local governmental and social partners’ counterparts should be equally involved and responsible*. This calls for a proper system of information storage and transmission (e.g. through proper maintenance of files with hard and soft copies of the main documents and oral briefings).

An interesting example of a sequence of activities building on each other is the one that saw the 2001 Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention (No. 184) and Recommendation

³⁸²The importance of these complementarities was discussed in-depth during at ILO-IALI Conference “Implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards Globally” and IALI – ILO workshop, Dusseldorf, 3–6 November 2009, <http://www.ilosafetyconference2009.org/> and http://www.ilo.org/labadmin/what/events/lang—en/docName—WCMS_118143/index.htm. The conference highlighted that in 2007 only 5 ILO DWCPs had a concrete Labour Inspection in Occupational Safety and Health activity, http://www.iali-aii.org/iali/event_docs/IALI_ILO_DWCP-Workshop_summary_report.pdf. Mr Albracht highlighted during the interview that there is little work really done together between the different ILO units working on these issues. He called for the ILO to come out of “department thinking”.

(No. 192) that lead to the International Workers' Symposium on Decent Work in Agriculture (2003). This in turn resulted in a manual on Health, Safety and Environment for agricultural workers (2004), which provided a boost to WIND, and to raising awareness in the ILO about agriculture and rural areas. Heightened interest in-House helped promote discussion of the issue at the ILC 2008 and led to the ILO preparing and adopting in 2010 a *Code of practice on safety and health in agriculture*. The next step could be to inject its main elements into tools and activities ILO-wide (e.g. in TREE, EII, COOP and SIYB-type tools).

Linked to the above concepts is *continuity*, another important facet of integration. Continuity is what keeps the ILO mandate "alive". The ILO has been running various projects/programmes in rural areas, but it is not easy to keep track of them when there is no continuous programme or department overseeing such work. As a former ILO official put it, there is a tendency to "sow seeds", without provisions to keep track of where they fall, how they grow, bear fruit, and multiply, and the ILO needs "gardeners" to keep track of projects/programmes and other initiatives and follow-up on them.³⁸³ It also needs support from local and national social partners who are on the ground and thus in a better position to provide support and use existing structures at strategic points in the life of an initiative to create continuity. This is complemented by support from social partners' international federations, which enjoy a wide overview of international policy, and can impact it too.

Ensuring a longer-term and broader impact requires *integrating into the process two "logical partners"*: *providers of financial assistance*, so they may grasp the need for sustained, longer-term strategic support (as opposed to short projects); *and local and national agencies and decision makers* who can influence future development policies in favour of rural populations. Undoubtedly the most important factors that trigger rural development and combat rural poverty are changes in national policies, in particular the redirection of investment streams, and the recognition and removal of barriers. Even large-scale programmes aimed at direct income generation tend to create only temporary islands of growth and reduced poverty. Furthermore, because the concept of rural development is so broad, and no single institution can cover every aspect and every dimension of the rural development process, special steps are required to mobilize all relevant institutions and to establish bridges and coordination mechanisms among them. This ensures *integration in terms of other major initiatives*, for example National Development and National Employment Policies.

IV.3.5. Working Together

The ILO's rural strategy puts considerable emphasis on coordination and synergies in-House, as well as at global, national and local levels with international agencies and associations that have mandates related to rural work. These internal and external links are critical to enable the ILO to cope with the size, complexity, technicalities, and local specificities of rural employment and decent work.

Internally, there is to be *a combination of ILO-wide shared responsibility and coordination*. The first principle, and the first challenge, is to mainstream rural work throughout the Organization, starting with the Office, its technical Units, country and regional Offices, ITC-Turin,

³⁸³ Elisabeth Goodson, Interview, Geneva, November 2009.

and the ILO constituents. The rural perspective needs to be explicitly integrated into their work, at all levels. It cannot be an afterthought in programming work and specific initiatives, with the assumption that work will also, somehow, cover rural areas, or that the results of regular work will eventually trickle down to rural areas. As the ILO's experience clearly shows, the keenness for quick and easy solutions lead regular work to focus *on* urban settings, which logically leads to developing results *for* urban settings. Similarly, "token" approaches constitute another danger. They consist of thinking that once a given activity in a technical field has targeted rural areas, enough attention has been paid to those areas, thus neglecting to develop a strategic approach within that technical field in rural settings, and to check whether other major bottlenecks warrant tackling to achieve impact.

The second principle, and the second challenge, for the ILO's future work on rural employment is achieving and articulating *cooperation among Office structures*. The mid-2000s saw an attempt among COOP, GENPROM, EMPINVEST, SKILLS, LED, SEED and SFP to form a Poverty, Employment and Empowerment Task Team (PEETT). Its objective was to develop and work jointly on an integrated strategy for local development to reduce poverty through decent employment and income-generation opportunities for women and men. This strategy was used in a few TC initiatives, in Angola, Mozambique, Somalia, and South Africa. However, insecurities regarding identity and leadership impeded advancement. Working together requires convincing Units involved that such articulation does not detract from their freedom, authority, or resources, but rather adds impact and efficiency to their respective work, as well as present new work opportunities and increase their attractiveness to external partners; and establishing basic checks to ensure a fair share of investment and returns.

The ILO rural strategy couples ILO-wide responsibility with mechanisms stimulating coordination and synergies—a major lesson from the 1970s and 1980s. One of them is a team, the ILO Rural Employment and Decent Work Programme, which shoulders central tasks as maintaining an ILO vision and general direction; prompting action, coordination and delivery; building linkages with external actors; helping to deliver, disseminate and advocate specific products and approaches; and monitoring progress. While the core rural team is intentionally limited, as previously mentioned it can count on over 70 Rural Focal Points ILO-wide, and also relies on the principle of shared responsibility, whereby rural work on specific technical areas, groups and countries is carried out by the respective Unit and/or field Office, with *ad hoc* support from the core rural team.

The other mechanism envisaged in the ILO rural strategy is working on thematic clusters that prompt the ILO to focus on specific themes warranting attention, while stimulating synergies. This mechanism does not entail "more work", but "working differently". The strategy has initially selected eight thematic clusters, trying to achieve a balance between job quantity and quality concerns. The themes have been chosen in view of their interdisciplinarity, as well as their potential as engines of job-rich rural development, their responding to a current market opportunity or to a serious decent work gap requiring specific ILO attention. The themes are also among those where the ILO has solid comparative advantage and the means to make a difference:

- *Rural-friendly agribusiness value chains*, with a special focus on the creation and strengthening of rural enterprises, ensuring a voice and good returns to local producers

including small farmers and the local economy; on the role and responsibilities of large firms as organizers or flagships of value chains; on cooperatives; and on youth and women's entrepreneurship.

- *Career guidance and relevant skills acquisition in rural contexts*, to facilitate the transition of youth into rural labour markets through career orientation supported by practical labour market information and effective skills training, including technical and business skills as well as core and life skills. The ILO work is to include facilitating a broad dialogue involving the authorities and the private sector (both employers and workers) as well as youth groups, both at local level and nationally.
- *Tourism in rural areas*, less developed rural areas, based on local communities' choice of objectives and modalities, and with returns benefiting mainly them. Work is to build on the ILO's experience in tourism among Latin American indigenous populations and elsewhere, and to be conducted in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- *Food security*, with special support to HLTF's initiatives in ILO comparative advantage areas, such as building the social partners' capacity to play an active role and to dialogue with government on food security, and ensuring that employment and decent work dimensions feature solidly in HLTF's planning, advocacy and operational instruments.
- *Social protection floor*, to promote basic social security transfers and services and income security, thereby empowering rural disadvantaged groups to step out of poverty and find decent jobs. Work is to take place within the frameworks of the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor Initiative, contributing health and other basic coverage and employment guarantee schemes.
- *A culture of rural occupational safety and health*, promoting cost-effective and sustainable practices; voluntary, participatory and action-oriented actions; and incorporating rural OSH culture in community development and primary health care. Work is to use ILO/OSH instruments and practical tools such as WIND, Better Work, the ILO codes of practice on safety and health in agriculture and on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, and the practical manual on ergonomic checkpoints in agriculture, to improve the working and living conditions of rural people.
- *International labour standards rural coverage*, particularly focusing on labour inspection Conventions No. 81 and No. 129, which are a means of ensuring application of all other Conventions. Work is to include a review of ratification and implementation gaps, and identify means of tackling them.
- *Reaching and giving a voice to rural employers and workers*, including casual wage workers, to enable them to organize, be aware of and use their rights, and acquire the skills and means to be impactful in national and international forums. Work is to include support to and strategic linkages with local-level associations of farm, non-farm and informal activities.

Admittedly, intra-organizational coordination and collaboration on rural work is not an easy task, a fact made apparent even in the heydays of ILO rural work; and yet it remains key. A *clear policy and "messages" from management* are indispensable to support the process.

ILO constituents (governments, workers and employers) are also called to share the responsibility by *keeping the rural debate alive in ILO forums*, as well as in their own work.³⁸⁴ The ILO's strength lies in its ability to have the views of governments, employers and workers converge, for instance to produce major documents, such as the ILC 2008 Conclusions on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction. As previously mentioned, those conclusions also set explicit priorities for follow-up by ILO constituents (Box 2b) that are essential in their own rights, as being an indispensable support to the Office's work. The challenge however is to follow-up on those priorities in the countries³⁸⁵ and also to make them relevant at the local, grassroots level in order to translate the mandate into action. One possibility is to organize workshops with relevant national and local organizations, to allow discussing and deciding on one policy and work plan, and monitor its implementation.

Workers and employers are also called to “reach out to rural areas”, finding ways to attract new members from those areas, including workers and employers operating in the informal economy, to provide them with the services they need most, and to establish partnerships with rural associations. They should also make room for rural member representation in central decision-making forums so that the rural perspective is present and supported in national and international debates. Good practices abounded in the '70s and '80s, but can also be found in the present context. In Nepal for instance, trade unions are successfully organizing rural workers from the valleys and mountains by helping them organize into cooperatives for agricultural and other income generation activities. Another type of support, fitting the contemporary context, are International Framework Agreement (IFAs) between large companies and international federations of trade unions (e.g. Danone-IUF in 1988 and Chiquita-IUF in 2001), to protect the ability of local trade unions to bargain effectively over working conditions for instance, and limit competition between workers of the same group. The next step for IFAs is to protect workers' basic rights throughout the entire supply chain, by including not only direct employees of the multinational company but also suppliers, contract growers or joint venture partners, thereby ensuring that all workers are covered and know the content of the IFA so they can take appropriate action in the case of a violation. The process should also include provisions to help suppliers comply with the terms of the IFA.³⁸⁶

Externally, working in coordination, according to respective comparative advantages and avoiding duplication is indispensable to make an impact, given the volume, multifaceted nature, technicalities of rural work as well as the requirement for local presence and the overall diminishing resources. The ILO's rural strategy thus calls for partnerships with other agencies and local NGOs, as well as social economy enterprises and organizations. Also particularly valuable are partnerships with financial support providers, with whom longer-term interventions need to be negotiated and broader relations established going beyond specific projects, to include mutually enriching rural knowledge development, advocacy and capacity-building work; thereby creating with them true partnerships for rural development.

³⁸⁴ ILO and its social partners are in a two-way relationship. Social partners need ILO authority to make governments, the other partner and their own members more receptive to "progressive" messages (for instance the 1982 Protocol to the Plantation Convention, 1958 (No. 110) gave legitimacy to trade unions to launch a revolutionary programme for women); and this partnership reinforces ILO's mandate.

³⁸⁵ An element of complexity is that constituents who participate in the formulation of those documents typically come from higher levels of society, while conclusions and recommendations may relate to ground level concerns and action.

³⁸⁶ UN: *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food*, Olivier De Schutter, Human Rights Council, 13th Session, New York, 2009.

The One-UN and other joint development platforms are nowadays important windows of opportunity. The ILO rural strategy calls to harness especially the collective momentum generated by the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor Initiative and through its participation in G20 meetings and collaboration with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as in the UN HLTF and its initiatives. It could also harness the MDG Acceleration Framework (2010–15) and the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–17) whose central theme is employment and decent work.

The ILO is to continue *expanding and intensifying rural-related partnerships*, particularly:

- The *International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCA)* existing since 2007, among ILO, FAO, IFAD, IFPRI, IFAP, and IUF, aimed at ensuring children do not carry out hazardous work in agriculture, while promoting rural strategies and programmes to improve rural livelihoods, bring child labour concerns into agricultural policy making, overcome the urban/rural and gender gap in education, and promote youth employment opportunities in agriculture and rural areas.
- Two partnerships related to cooperatives, one with the ICA, with which ILO established a Memorandum of Understanding in 2004, emphasising joint work on policy dialogue, decent work in cooperatives, education and training and cooperative policy and legislation;³⁸⁷ and ILO membership in the *Committee on the Advancement and Promotion of Cooperatives (COPAC)*, also involving FAO, ICA, IFAP and UN, and leading role within it in the UN International Year of Cooperatives in 2011 or 2012.³⁸⁸
- The *Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) Initiative*, aimed at promoting people-centred sustainable agriculture and rural development, in which ILO is participating since 2006.
- The *High-Level Task Force of the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF)*, to which ILO is contributing inputs related to employment, social protection, child labour, labour standards and social dialogue, at global and country levels.

Collaboration with FAO and IFAD deserves special attention, and is rapidly advancing as mentioned in various parts of this review.

Partnership with *UNDP*, formally established in 2007,³⁸⁹ is also promising, as it would combine the UNDP's outreach and presence in villages and local communities, its role as facilitator among different stakeholders, and capacity for development advocacy, with the ILO's capacity in key technical areas and ability to mobilize the private sector through linkages with employers and workers. This partnership is further strengthened by a request in early 2010 to the ILO and UNDP field structures to collaborate in giving priority to the recom-

³⁸⁷ *International Cooperative Alliance*, www.ica.coop (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³⁸⁸ *Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives*, www.copac.coop (accessed on 26 September 2011).

³⁸⁹ The agreement is designed to promote inclusive economic growth with social development to benefit the bottom 20 to 40 per cent of the population, and bolster UN efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The agreement is a direct follow-up to the 2006 UN Economic and Social Council Ministerial Declaration on decent work and full employment and a practical step towards the implementation of UN system efforts to "deliver as one". UN ECOSOC: *The Role of the United Nations System in Promoting Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All*, Report of the Secretary-General, Substantive Session, Geneva 2007; UN ECOSOC: *Draft Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment Submitted by the President of the Council on the Basis of Informal Consultations*, Agenda item 2: Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development, Substantive Session, Geneva, 2006.

mendations in the Global Jobs Pact,³⁹⁰ in which support to rural development is an indispensable structural component. The conclusions of a joint ILO-UNDP technical meeting in 2010 on employment, the crisis and MDG acceleration, further indicated rural areas as deserving special and concerted efforts, among others on entrepreneurship and value chains.³⁹¹

Collaboration with the European Union, which fully integrated the Decent Work Agenda into its work,³⁹² is also well under way. The most recent step is the ILO's support in the preparation of a guidance document to help its officials incorporate decent work elements into its TC work.

NGOs are increasingly valuable partners to reach out to rural areas. They are now in great numbers and have been acquiring considerable capacity. A group meeting with Oxfam in July 2009, for instance, resulted in the identification of meaningful complementary assets to establish a set of priority areas for further collaboration which include: agriculture (biofuels, small-scale farmers in relation to waged agricultural workers); social protection (rural employment guarantee schemes, social protection in Niger, promoting the global social protection floor); and general information sharing.

As mentioned earlier, *dialogue with existing and potential financial partners is to be strengthened and broadened* and should proceed well beyond discussions of funds to include possibilities for creative partnerships and learning. The ILO already provides feedback on some strategic donor documents, such as DFID's consultation document in 2009 on *Eliminating World Poverty*³⁹³ in which the ILO suggested strengthening various rural dimensions. The ILO could also join rural-relevant international donor forums, such as the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development,³⁹⁴ set up in 2003 to strengthen the impact of aid in agriculture and rural development that already counts FAO, IFAD, and the WB among its members.

Overall, the ILO should focus its rural work partnerships on actors that most closely share the ILO's values and principles and that possess complementary comparative advantages (see Annex 5). To that end the ILO is engaging in broad discussion with various existing and potential partners and is also establishing a mapping, sketching the respective vision, goals, strategies, and strengths related to rural development as a basis for more in-depth relations.

IV.3.7. Monitoring progress

Systematic monitoring of results and impact of specific initiatives on the ILO's rural work in general is another key feature of the ILO's rural strategy. The objective is to understand and communicate where we stand, identify shortcomings, obstacles, and seek solutions for them.

³⁹⁰ Based on ECOSOC's request to UNDP to give priority to the recommendations of the Global Jobs Pact (adopted by the ILC in June 2009), and the UNDP Board's request that UNDP mainstream it in its work and collaborate with ILO in its implementation, in April 2010, ILO's Director-General, Mr Somavía and UNDP's General Administrator, Ms Helen Clark transmitted a joint letter to their respective field structure to that end.

³⁹¹ ILO-UNDP Technical Meeting on Employment, the Crisis and MDG Acceleration, Geneva, 2010.

³⁹² Commission of the European Communities: *Promoting Decent Work for All: the EU Contribution to the Implementation of the Decent Work Agenda in the World*, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 2006.

³⁹³ DFID: *Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future*, London, 2009.

³⁹⁴ Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, www.donorplatform.org (accessed on 26 September 2011).

It is important that the ILO remains flexible and gives itself the means to (re)organize approaches and linkages as needed, and extract lessons for subsequent work.

The '70s and '80s saw some stock-taking attempts of the ILO rural development work to assess impact, extract lessons and orient future work: for example, the in-depth review of rural development in 1977,³⁹⁵ and a paper reviewing selected ILO projects for rural development.³⁹⁶ In those years both the ICRD and ACRD were to function as monitoring bodies for rural matters, but did so in a relatively limited manner. In general,³⁹⁷ systematic reviews of rural projects and tools have not been taking place, particularly ex-post evaluations some years after closure of projects. In the past, projects were not evaluated because of budgetary limitations, lack of time, lack of personnel, or other constraints. In some cases where assessments were performed, the ILO did not maintain sufficient records.

Systematic stocktaking focused on impact and lessons learned must be an integral procedure across all four types of work, particularly TC, capacity-building and policy advice. Examining the impact of technical assistance, for instance, requires examination of their wider, deeper and longer-term effects. In particular, TC projects and other initiatives need to be "revisited" at regular intervals, including several years after their end, to evaluate long term impact; and if impact is judged insufficient, the cause(s) should be identified along with the necessary corrections (if still applicable) to improve strategies of on-going and future projects accordingly.

This requires *developing indicators for impact, as opposed to merely focusing on results*, an area needing investigative work by itself; better quality data; and more comprehensive discussions, going beyond the specific project itself. This also requires dedicated resources and time, for instance to collect base-line data and final data (particularly important given the present dearth of data on rural areas).³⁹⁸ To make data gathering more feasible, projects need to be close to the strategic interests of countries so that at least part of the base-line information is already available. The ILO's current move to ensure coherence and mutual sustainability among all its operations (RB and TC; operational, analytical, and policy advice; and across all four dimensions the Decent Work Agenda), and to fit them more closely to member States' real priorities, augurs well to be able to collect or find already available the information needed to carry out impact reviews.

In the new set up, rural initiatives are to be reviewed at critical stages of their development, as well as ex-post. Both results and impact need to be followed closely. Impact should relate to the main objective of the strategy; that is, reaching and impacting national and international policy levels, and at least sustainability of the approach. It should also be related to key ILO goals such as employment creation, social protection coverage, labour inspection progress and child labour reduction; and important processes such as participatory approaches, workers' and employers' organization and participation in decision-making, gender mainstreaming, integrated approaches and inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental working arrangements (including Headquarters-field-ITC-Turin collaboration), external part-

³⁹⁵ ILO: *In-depth Review of ILO's Role and Activities in Rural Development*, Governing Body, 202nd Session, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee, Geneva, 1977. ILO had taken part a year earlier in a UN ACC exercise to map and evaluate UN agencies' existing and planned rural development programmes, as a basis for joint programming.

³⁹⁶ Opt. Cit., Egger and Peek (1989).

³⁹⁷ Except for EMP/INFRA projects, the evaluation of ACOPAM some three years after its closure, and to some extent the more recent evaluation of TREE in some 10 countries and WIND in 20 countries.

³⁹⁸ One challenge emerging from ILO technical cooperation records is the fact that at any point in time only 100 out of the some 500 ILO ongoing TC project are over one million USD.

nerships, and capacity building of constituents. A set of impact indicators related specifically to rural settings could be developed and presented in a user-friendly checklist table (adaptable to context specificities), for instance.

Institutional memory is also to be part of ILO's rural work structure. It needs strengthening to ensure that monitoring and assessment exercises are duly processed and kept in an accessible manner. Such information is vital to allow the Organization to build on past experience and strengthen its future approach.

The current global context that is especially receptive to new patterns and frameworks of growth, particularly job-rich growth; coupled with an increasing and broadening acceptance of the DW agenda in the development community, and a renewed keenness on rural interventions are opening an important window of opportunity for ILO contributions. The ILO has indeed a rich legacy of rural approaches and experience to offer, is mobilizing Organization-wide to translate that legacy into action and achievements, and to join forces for maximum impact.



V. CONCLUSIONS: UNLEASHING RURAL POTENTIAL FOR GLOBAL GROWTH

© IFAD/Mwanza Millings



© ILO/Faïsса



© ILO/Crozet



The time for unleashing the growth and development potential of rural areas is now. The “MDG acceleration” framework, along with the food security and economic crises, and environmental challenges, all point to rural areas as an integral part of a more solid and resilient economic growth and development “architecture”. Indeed, rural areas contain considerable underdeveloped and underused resources, ranging from large numbers of unemployed and under-employed men and women; to child labourers missing out on valuable skills acquisition; to wastage of crops for lack of processing, storage, and transportation capacity; to environmental degradation. The current context presents a momentous opportunity for the ILO to set human resource-based rural development as central to the new economic growth and development architecture that is taking shape.

Targeting rural localities first calls for recognition that these areas, their populations, and communities can be engines of growth and resilience. Investing in them, in an integrated and sustained manner, to fill their decent work and other structural gaps and build up their ability to fulfil their potential is not just morally correct, but also a sound business decision. *Investing in rural areas, through a human resource-based, decent work approach is in the best interest of all; and it is also the responsibility of all.*

Rural development remains a wide and complex topic; one that requires actions that go beyond general prescriptions or “blanket policies”. Several events in the new millennium have shed light on the shortcomings of addressing rural development as a side-note. Rural development requires explicit political commitment and investment to overcome traditional biases that favour urban areas. It also calls for a positive attitude that views rural areas as potentially vibrant economies, and for measures aimed at “empowering” them. Meaningful rural policies will have to be innovative, yet informed by past failures and successes, to address the array of interdependent challenges of the current rural context. Without a doubt this effort demands unprecedented coordination: among technical areas, between farm and non-farm, rural and urban activities, local, national, and international levels of intervention, and among a diversity of private and public, local, national, and global actors, to capitalize on each other’s expertise and experience in order to implement articulated, mutually supporting approaches.

This stocktaking review has shown that the ILO clearly has the tools, the knowledge, and the experience from lessons reaped over more than four decades to make a real impact on rural development. These ILO assets need to be acknowledged, re-appropriated, adapted if necessary, and actively applied within the new rural context. The ILO also has a strong mandate and commitment from the Organization as a whole to take action and achieve results that “make a difference”, based most recently, on the ILC 2008 Conclusions on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction; and the GB’s unanimous support of the Office’s strategy for “Unleashing rural development through productive employment and decent work”, in early 2011. It can also count on the powerful framework of Decent Work, involving all four of the ILO’s strategic objectives in a complementary and mutually supportive manner, the whole Office, and the whole Organization. The decent work concept and its agenda are now also widely accepted nationally, throughout the international development community, and has become the key means of delivery of the UN Second Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017).

Besides revealing the ILO's important legacy of approaches, tools and rich experiences related to rural development, this review has unearthed strengths, achievements; and invariably, limitations in certain of the ILO's initiatives. This information will allow for sharpening the ILO's rural work in the years ahead. It can also provide useful insights more broadly, to the development community, and hopefully open the door to effective partnerships.

The main, three-fold objective guiding the ILO's future rural work is to set rural empowerment, and particularly its employment and other decent work dimensions, as integral parts (and possibly priorities) of development strategies; to make available successful tools and best practice for translating strategies and policies into practical, impactful action on the ground; and to join forces with like-minded national and international actors to multiply impact.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁹ More than a “specialization” in rural development, the idea is to stress that development policies cannot be successful without proper inclusion of rural areas into national strategies and planning, through closer attention to rural potential, needs, and specificities.



ANNEXES



Annex 1: Methodology of the Review

Objective

This stocktaking of ILO's rural development work is to serve as a "trampoline" for future work. In particular, it is meant to:

- Identify valuable approaches and tools that fit (or can be easily adapted to) current rural contexts and their global environment;
- Extract lessons learned to give the Office, as well as its constituents and partners, effective instruments;
- Identify gaps and find mechanisms to bridge them;
- Provide broad knowledge and a "common language" on the ILO's rural approaches, tools, and lessons to facilitate collaboration ILO-wide and encourage joint ventures;
- Identify comparative advantages to stimulate external partnerships;
- Ascertain work priorities (beginning with those identified in the Conclusions of the 2008 ILC Committee on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction); and
- Help shape a rural employment and decent work strategy and programme for work.

Methodology

Scope

This review explores the impact of the ILO's initiatives on rural employment and development since the 1970s, when work in this area intensified markedly. Special attention is also given to the current context; to recent and ongoing work, as well as to the needs, challenges, and opportunities in the coming years.

Impact is reviewed at 360 degrees as concerns the ILO's strategic objectives.⁴⁰⁰ It thus covers job creation and income generation, with an emphasis on women, youth and disadvantaged groups, access to skills, sustainable entrepreneurship, extension of social protection, and improved occupational safety and health and working conditions, basic labour standards,⁴⁰¹ strengthened rural organizations, rural voice and social dialogue.

The concept of "impact" has broadened in recent years, as international agencies strive to promote project ownership and build up country capacity. Within this context, the ILO understands its impact to be at multiple levels, ranging from projects to national institutions, global knowledge, policies and agenda setting (e.g. decent work). It also recognizes as part of impact-specific processes (e.g. broad participation, social dialogue) and modalities for ILO support (e.g. integrated approaches, advisory versus direct action, multi-sectoral work).⁴⁰² This study seeks as much as possible to review evidence of impact at these different levels.

The structures, working arrangements and processes considered in this review are those particularly prized nowadays; namely in ILO's Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Conclusions of the 2008 ILC Committee on Rural Employment. They include putting countries as well as local authorities and social partners in the driver's seat (including strengthening rural organizations); participatory approaches; capacity building of constituents and stakeholders; gender equality and mainstreaming; inter-disciplinary, inter-depart-

⁴⁰⁰ This comprehensive scope reflects the IIMS principle calling on the ILO to view its four strategic objectives – employment, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work – as Inseparable, Interrelated and Mutually Supportive; spelled out in the ILO: *Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation*, Geneva, 2008, as well as the Conclusions of the 2008 ILC Committee on Rural Employment.

⁴⁰¹ A report dedicated to analyzing the gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards in rural areas is to be presented separately.

⁴⁰² For a discussion about impact, see F. Leeu and J. Vaessen: *Impact Evaluations and Development, NONIE Guidance on Impact Evaluation*, Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE), (Washington D.C., World Bank, 2009).

mental and Field-HQ-Turin Centre coordination for mutual reinforcement; external partnerships, in areas where the ILO does not have leadership but that are complementary to the ILO's work; policy/strategic indenting; and sustainability.

Although this is not an impact assessment as such,⁴⁰³ it does consider impact at these different levels to the extent possible, in order to identify good practice and lessons. This will aid in developing realistic, strategic priorities, and make available to ILO, its constituents and partners a set of effective approaches and tools.

Challenges

A number of challenges encountered are worth noting:

- Locating impact evidence has at times been arduous. In many cases evaluations did not exist. Data from a base-line survey and surveys at project completion are usually exceptional, as the ILO projects were generally too small to justify such data collection costs. Employment Intensive Investment projects are those where impact calculations have been the most developed, in terms of increase in income, volume of employment created, and economic rates of return.
- In some instances impact cannot be measured as certain dimensions were not considered worth measuring at the time, or dimensions were less tangible, such as a change in attitude.
- A second challenge has been that full impact of rural initiatives may only appear well after the completion of the project, but ex-post evaluations are even rarer.
- Furthermore, even when impact evaluations existed, as in the case of technical cooperation projects, they followed established guidelines and were mainly concerned with determining whether individual projects had been carried out as planned and had met the objectives indicated in the project document. They typically missed the deeper and wider question of the socio-economic impact of the initiative, in terms of the ILO's larger goals, which constitutes the focus of this review.
- Reviews of work in certain documents came closer to descriptions of activities and products, than to analyses from which to extract lessons.
- An even more basic challenge has been in some cases a limited oral and written “memory” for initiatives conducted in the past, including 10–15 years ago. This necessitated resorting to various means and sources to gather needed information on specific initiatives, and even more on their results, impact, follow-up and lessons learned, and to “tell a story”.

Work arrangements

This stocktaking is the result of an Office-wide mobilization. A small team at HQ conceived and coordinated the exercise, supplied with information from a variety of ILO materials, often dating back several decades, developed and administered questionnaires, and prepared the review itself. However, it was able to count on the support and active collaboration of many colleagues and ex-colleagues, including over 30 rural focal points in the ILO's Units at HQ, the Field Structure and the Turin Centre, who in turn mobilized relevant colleagues and external respondents for various parts of the exercise.

The review was preceded by the preparation of a “Thinkpiece” on the ILO's rural work, aimed at gathering basic information about technical areas, programmatic priorities, structures and processes. This preliminary document identified the main axes of inquiry and priorities of the review; and provided impetus for a network of rural focal points and informants Office-wide.

Regular meetings and exchanges with Workers' and Employers' representatives at critical points of the exercise allowed reflecting their main concerns and expectations.

⁴⁰³ A thorough impact assessment of ILO's rural employment promotion work since the 1970s would require a large set of human and financial resources. It would also require other investigative methods and processes, including extensive field visits, and thorough consultations with ILO constituents, stakeholders and beneficiaries at country level.

Information gathering

Information was collected using qualitative methods, and draws heavily on secondary sources such as available ILO materials from past years and other relevant documents and data. The primary sources of information were former ILO colleagues who held key positions during the periods under review and ILO officials with specific technical knowledge and direct experience. Beneficiaries and officials from other organizations were consulted to the extent possible. The variety of sources has allowed for double and triple checking results when necessary.

The principal means used to obtain information were:

- Reviewing ILO current and past publications
- Drawing out information from ILO department and programme files,⁴⁰⁴ files of the ICRD and ACRD,⁴⁰⁵ ILO Programmes and Budgets (P&Bs), Strategic Policy Frameworks (SPFs), ILC and GB documents, Regional Labour Conferences documents, World Employment Report and Global Employment Trends issues, DWCPs, Departmental and Technical Cooperation Evaluation reports, Assessment Reports, Reviews, Project and Programme Documents, Progress Reports and Evaluations, Agreements with other organizations such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), guidelines, manuals and training packages, and recent reports;⁴⁰⁶
- Holding extensive interviews with 20 “Privileged Informants”; that is, present and former ILO senior staff selected on the basis of having worked, researched and/or driven issues related to rural development during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, hence named “privileged”. These interviews used a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions to minimize “influence” and bias on the part of the interviewer/s.⁴⁰⁷
- Consulting and interviewing over 30 ILO Rural Focal Points, as well as Programme Officers and technical specialists/experts, with specific experience and knowledge about rural development programmes or issues.
- A field survey among some 50 ILO Programme Officers and Technical Experts; and two others involving some 40 beneficiaries (organizations/stakeholders and target groups) of ILO projects/programmes, and technical experts of other relevant organizations, selected on the basis of having worked extensively with ILO on rural employment/development.⁴⁰⁸
- A Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) involving 13 select ILO technical specialists/experts at Headquarters.⁴⁰⁹

Questions in oral and written consultations:

- Covered to the extent possible impact related to multiple fields of employment promotion, social protection, international labour standards, and social dialogue, as well as multidisciplinarity itself.
- Focused on past achievements, impact, challenges encountered and lessons learned from the ILO’s past work.
- Attempted to capture interviewees’ vision for the future, especially regarding how the ILO can effectively tackle rural employment, including ILO-wide collaboration and partnerships with relevant stakeholders.
- Treated gender mainstreaming and gender equality concerns as a crosscutting theme, as well as issues related to youth employment, child labour, disabled persons, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups.

Although this review is based on qualitative evidence, the use of set issues in surveys, interviews and document analyses, coupled with a triangular approach, allowed for double and triple verification, thus strengthening the reliability of its results.

⁴⁰⁴ Documentation/files from, for example, the former units EMP/RU, PROG/EVAL, COMBI (later named CODEV, and currently PARDEV), EMP/INFRA, EMP/INVEST, and Bureau for Gender Equality (GENDER) among others will be located and scrutinized.

⁴⁰⁵ Considerable information was extracted from the reports presented and discussed at the ACRD, set up to advise the Governing Body of the ILO on major trends and problems in rural contexts to help the Office deploy its financial and human resources in the most effective way, that carried out various reviews of ILO rural development activities.

⁴⁰⁶ Op. Cit., ILO: *Report of the Committee on Rural Employment* (2008); ILO: *World employment report 2004-05: employment, productivity and poverty reduction*, Geneva, 2004); and ILO: *Report of the Committee on Rural Employment*, Provisional Record, International Labour Conference, 75th Session, Geneva, 1988; and the Report discussed by that Committee, ILO: *Rural Employment Promotion*, Report to the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1988.

⁴⁰⁷ Questionnaire available upon request.

⁴⁰⁸ Questionnaire available upon request.

⁴⁰⁹ Questionnaire available upon request.

Annex 2: ILO instruments

ILO instruments relevant to Rural Development through Decent Work

I. Core Conventions

- ◆ Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); **174⁴¹⁰**
- ◆ Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); **150**
- ◆ Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); **160**
- ◆ Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); **168**
- ◆ Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); **169**
- ◆ Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); **169**
- ◆ Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); **157**
- ◆ Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); **173**

II. Priority Conventions

- ◆ Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81); **141**
- ◆ Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122); **104**
- ◆ Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129); **50**
- ◆ Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144); **128**

III. Other relevant instruments

A. *Conventions*

- ◆ Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11); **122**
- ◆ Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26); **103**
- ◆ Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95); **96**
- ◆ Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97); **49**
- ◆ Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99); **52**
- ◆ Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102); **46**
- ◆ Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110); **10**
- ◆ Protocol of 1982 to the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110); **2**
- ◆ Minimum Age (fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 112); **8**
- ◆ Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113); **29**
- ◆ Fishermen's Articles of Agreement Convention, 1959 (No. 114); **22**
- ◆ Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118); **37**
- ◆ Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121); **24**
- ◆ Fishermen's Competency Certificates Convention, 1966 (No. 125); **10**
- ◆ Accommodation of Crews (Fishermen) Convention, 1966 (No. 126); **22**
- ◆ Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128); **16**
- ◆ Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130); **15**
- ◆ Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131); **51**
- ◆ Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141); **40**
- ◆ Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142); **67**
- ◆ Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143); **23**
- ◆ Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150); **70**

⁴¹⁰Text in bold indicates number of ratifications.

- ◆ Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); **41**
- ◆ Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159); **82**
- ◆ Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168); **7**
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169); **22**
- ◆ Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177); **7**
- ◆ Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183); **18**
- ◆ Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184); **13**
- ◆ Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187); **16**
- ◆ Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188); **1**

Conventions with interim status

- ◆ Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11); **122**
- ◆ Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26); **103**
- ◆ Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47); **14**
- ◆ Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99); **52**
- ◆ Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132); **36**

B. Recommendations

- ◆ Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)
- ◆ Equal Remuneration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 90)
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Populations Recommendation, 1957 (No. 104)
- ◆ Plantations Recommendation, 1958 (No. 110)
- ◆ Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 111)
- ◆ Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122)
- ◆ Vocational Training (Fishermen) Recommendation, 1966 (No. 126)
- ◆ Tenants and Share-croppers Recommendation, 1968 (No. 132)
- ◆ Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1969 (No. 133)
- ◆ Rural Workers' Organisations Recommendation, 1975 (No. 149)
- ◆ Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151)
- ◆ Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976 (No. 152)
- ◆ Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation, 1981 (No. 165)
- ◆ Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Recommendation, 1983 (No. 168)
- ◆ Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
- ◆ Home Work Recommendation, 1996 (No. 184)
- ◆ Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
- ◆ Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191)
- ◆ Safety and Health in Agriculture Recommendation, 2001 (No. 192)
- ◆ Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
- ◆ Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
- ◆ Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 2006 (No. 197)
- ◆ Work in Fishing Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199)

Recommendations with interim status⁴¹¹

- ◆ Social Insurance (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 17)
- ◆ Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1951 (No. 89)

⁴¹¹ Interim Status refers to a category of instruments that are no longer fully up to date, but which remain relevant in certain aspects.

Annex 3:

List of ILO's main Rural-Related Tools

- **Crisis**

- ◆ ILO's Role in Conflict and Disaster Settings
- ◆ Local Economic Recovery in Post-Conflict Guidelines
- ◆ Socio-Economic Reintegration of Ex-Combatants Guidelines
- ◆ The Livelihood Assessment Toolkit

- **Employment-Intensive Investment**

- ◆ Community Contracts
- ◆ Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) Guidelines

- **Enterprises**

- ◆ *Desarrollo Económico Local y Empleo: Material Para Promotores*
- ◆ Gender Mainstreaming in Local Economic Development Strategies: A Guide
- ◆ Know About Business (KAB)
- ◆ Let's Organize! A SYNDICOOP Handbook for Trade Unions and Cooperatives about Organizing Workers in the Informal Economy
- ◆ Local Development and Decent Work Resource Kit
- ◆ Local Economic Development Sensitizing Package
- ◆ MATCOM – Training for the Management of Cooperatives
- ◆ My.Coop
- ◆ Operational Guide to Local value-Chain Development
- ◆ Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB family of tools)
- ◆ Value-Chain Development for Decent Work

- **Skills and Career Guidance**

- ◆ Career Guidance: a Resource Book for Low and Middle-Income Countries
- ◆ Guiding youth Careers: Handbook for Those who Help Young Job-seekers
- ◆ Minute Guide for Young Job-seekers
- ◆ Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

- **Social Finance**

- ◆ Business Group Formation: Empowering Women and Men in Developing Communities: Trainers' Manual
- ◆ Financial Education: Trainers' Manual
- ◆ Rural Microfinance
- ◆ Village Banking and the Ledger Guide

- **Social Protection**

- ◆ Ergonomic Checkpoints in Agriculture
- ◆ Extending Social Security to All: A Guide through Challenges and Options
- ◆ Health, Safety and Environment: A Series of Trade Union Education Manuals for Agricultural Workers
- ◆ Safety and Health in the Use of Agrochemicals
- ◆ Set of Tools of Health Micro-insurance

- ◆ Social Protection Floor Initiative Manual
- ◆ Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)
- ◆ Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE)

● Children

- ◆ Guidelines on the Formation of Self-Help Groups – For Families of Working Children
- ◆ How-to Guide on Economic Re-integration of Child Soldiers
- ◆ Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)
- ◆ Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture
- ◆ Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour

● Disabled Persons

- ◆ Count Us In! How to Make Sure that Women with Disabilities can Participate Effectively in Mainstream Women's Entrepreneurship Development Activities
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace
- ◆ Replicating Success Toolkit
- ◆ Skills Development through Community-Based Rehabilitation: A Good Practice Guide
- ◆ HIV/AIDS affected Persons
- ◆ Card Game *Mieux Connaitre les IST-VIH-SIDA*
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Behaviour Change Communication Toolkit for the Workplace
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Education and Counselling Manual in Cooperatives and Informal Sector Economy
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Peer Education Manual
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice in HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

● Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

- ◆ Guidelines for Combating Child Labour among Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights in Practice: A Guide to ILO Convention 169

● Women

- ◆ Gender and Entrepreneurship Together: GET-Ahead for Women in Enterprise Training Package and Resource Kit
- ◆ Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstreaming Gender Analysis in Value-Chain Development

● Youth

- ◆ Biz-up Self Employment Skills for Young People, Facilitator's Guide and Toolkit/User's Guide
- ◆ Guidelines for the Preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment
- ◆ Juventud y Empleo: Guía Sindical
- ◆ Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work: A Guide to Youth Employment
- ◆ Meeting the Youth Employment Challenge: A Guide for Employers
- ◆ Youth Employment: Making it Happen! An Electronic Resource Tool for Employers

- ◆ Social Protection Floor Initiative Manual
- ◆ Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)
- ◆ Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE)

● Children

- ◆ Guidelines on the Formation of Self-Help Groups – For Families of Working Children
- ◆ How-to Guide on Economic Re-integration of Child Soldiers
- ◆ Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)
- ◆ Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture
- ◆ Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour

● Disabled Persons

- ◆ Count Us In! How to Make Sure that Women with Disabilities can Participate Effectively in Mainstream Women's Entrepreneurship Development Activities
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace
- ◆ Replicating Success Toolkit
- ◆ Skills Development through Community-Based Rehabilitation: A Good Practice Guide
- ◆ HIV/AIDS affected Persons
- ◆ Card Game *Mieux Connaitre les IST-VIH-SIDA*
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Behaviour Change Communication Toolkit for the Workplace
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Education and Counselling Manual in Cooperatives and Informal Sector Economy
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Peer Education Manual
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice in HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

● Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

- ◆ Guidelines for Combating Child Labour among Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights in Practice: A Guide to ILO Convention 169

● Women

- ◆ Gender and Entrepreneurship Together: GET-Ahead for Women in Enterprise Training Package and Resource Kit
- ◆ Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstreaming Gender Analysis in Value-Chain Development

● Youth

- ◆ Biz-up Self Employment Skills for Young People, Facilitator's Guide and Toolkit/User's Guide
- ◆ Guidelines for the Preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment
- ◆ Juventud y Empleo: Guía Sindical
- ◆ Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work: A Guide to Youth Employment
- ◆ Meeting the Youth Employment Challenge: A Guide for Employers
- ◆ Youth Employment: Making it Happen! An Electronic Resource Tool for Employers

- ◆ Social Protection Floor Initiative Manual
- ◆ Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)
- ◆ Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE)

● Children

- ◆ Guidelines on the Formation of Self-Help Groups – For Families of Working Children
- ◆ How-to Guide on Economic Re-integration of Child Soldiers
- ◆ Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)
- ◆ Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture
- ◆ Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour

● Disabled Persons

- ◆ Count Us In! How to Make Sure that Women with Disabilities can Participate Effectively in Mainstream Women's Entrepreneurship Development Activities
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace
- ◆ Replicating Success Toolkit
- ◆ Skills Development through Community-Based Rehabilitation: A Good Practice Guide
- ◆ HIV/AIDS affected Persons
- ◆ Card Game *Mieux Connaitre les IST-VIH-SIDA*
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Behaviour Change Communication Toolkit for the Workplace
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Education and Counselling Manual in Cooperatives and Informal Sector Economy
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Peer Education Manual
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice in HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

● Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

- ◆ Guidelines for Combating Child Labour among Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights in Practice: A Guide to ILO Convention 169

● Women

- ◆ Gender and Entrepreneurship Together: GET-Ahead for Women in Enterprise Training Package and Resource Kit
- ◆ Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstreaming Gender Analysis in Value-Chain Development

● Youth

- ◆ Biz-up Self Employment Skills for Young People, Facilitator's Guide and Toolkit/User's Guide
- ◆ Guidelines for the Preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment
- ◆ Juventud y Empleo: Guía Sindical
- ◆ Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work: A Guide to Youth Employment
- ◆ Meeting the Youth Employment Challenge: A Guide for Employers
- ◆ Youth Employment: Making it Happen! An Electronic Resource Tool for Employers

- ◆ Social Protection Floor Initiative Manual
- ◆ Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)
- ◆ Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE)

● Children

- ◆ Guidelines on the Formation of Self-Help Groups – For Families of Working Children
- ◆ How-to Guide on Economic Re-integration of Child Soldiers
- ◆ Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)
- ◆ Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture
- ◆ Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour

● Disabled Persons

- ◆ Count Us In! How to Make Sure that Women with Disabilities can Participate Effectively in Mainstream Women's Entrepreneurship Development Activities
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace
- ◆ Replicating Success Toolkit
- ◆ Skills Development through Community-Based Rehabilitation: A Good Practice Guide
- ◆ HIV/AIDS affected Persons
- ◆ Card Game *Mieux Connaitre les IST-VIH-SIDA*
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Behaviour Change Communication Toolkit for the Workplace
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Education and Counselling Manual in Cooperatives and Informal Sector Economy
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Peer Education Manual
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice in HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

● Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

- ◆ Guidelines for Combating Child Labour among Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights in Practice: A Guide to ILO Convention 169

● Women

- ◆ Gender and Entrepreneurship Together: GET-Ahead for Women in Enterprise Training Package and Resource Kit
- ◆ Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstreaming Gender Analysis in Value-Chain Development

● Youth

- ◆ Biz-up Self Employment Skills for Young People, Facilitator's Guide and Toolkit/User's Guide
- ◆ Guidelines for the Preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment
- ◆ Juventud y Empleo: Guía Sindical
- ◆ Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work: A Guide to Youth Employment
- ◆ Meeting the Youth Employment Challenge: A Guide for Employers
- ◆ Youth Employment: Making it Happen! An Electronic Resource Tool for Employers

- ◆ Social Protection Floor Initiative Manual
- ◆ Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)
- ◆ Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE)

● Children

- ◆ Guidelines on the Formation of Self-Help Groups – For Families of Working Children
- ◆ How-to Guide on Economic Re-integration of Child Soldiers
- ◆ Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)
- ◆ Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture
- ◆ Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour

● Disabled Persons

- ◆ Count Us In! How to Make Sure that Women with Disabilities can Participate Effectively in Mainstream Women's Entrepreneurship Development Activities
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace
- ◆ Replicating Success Toolkit
- ◆ Skills Development through Community-Based Rehabilitation: A Good Practice Guide
- ◆ HIV/AIDS affected Persons
- ◆ Card Game *Mieux Connaitre les IST-VIH-SIDA*
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Behaviour Change Communication Toolkit for the Workplace
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Education and Counselling Manual in Cooperatives and Informal Sector Economy
- ◆ HIV/AIDS Peer Education Manual
- ◆ ILO Code of Practice in HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

● Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

- ◆ Guidelines for Combating Child Labour among Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
- ◆ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights in Practice: A Guide to ILO Convention 169

● Women

- ◆ Gender and Entrepreneurship Together: GET-Ahead for Women in Enterprise Training Package and Resource Kit
- ◆ Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstreaming Gender Analysis in Value-Chain Development

● Youth

- ◆ Biz-up Self Employment Skills for Young People, Facilitator's Guide and Toolkit/User's Guide
- ◆ Guidelines for the Preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment
- ◆ Juventud y Empleo: Guía Sindical
- ◆ Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work: A Guide to Youth Employment
- ◆ Meeting the Youth Employment Challenge: A Guide for Employers
- ◆ Youth Employment: Making it Happen! An Electronic Resource Tool for Employers

Annex 4: Key Approaches

Special Services for Workers' (and Employers') Organizations

Rural workers remain the least organized, and consequently the most disadvantaged labourers. The 1975 Rural Workers' Organizations Convention (No. 141) and Recommendation (No. 149), "affirmed [the rural workers' right] to freedom of association, set out the conditions necessary for the development of their organizations, outlined the roles that they might undertake, and suggested ways and means by which their development might be furthered."¹

Guided by these two legal instruments, in the mid-1970s the rural activities section of the ILO Workers' Education Programme (EDUC) initiated a sub-programme for strengthening and developing rural workers' organizations via the provision of "special services" to groups of workers. These services complement traditional union initiatives such as negotiation, pressure-group activities and representation, by providing:

- Home-grown solutions to locally identified problems;
- Employment generation possibilities and thereby income for beneficiaries;
- Support to the organization's economic and social foundations;
- A voice to beneficiaries, including with local government; and
- A stronger participatory approach to union operations with emphasis on self-identification of needs and self-reliance.²

The dual objectives of this approach are to: 1) assist rural workers' organizations and groups in fulfilling the immediate needs of their members; and 2) in the longer run provide socio-economic empowerment for members, while helping workers' organizations strengthen ties with their affiliates and increase membership. Special services are primarily intended for trade union members, but can also be provided to more informal groups, to help them resolve a problem and/or achieve a goal collectively; the expectation being that once people experience the empowerment of working together, they will seek membership with an organization, or formalize their own.

In the late 1970s EDUC launched a variety of experimental projects throughout Central America³ to observe the effects of special services. The adaptability of these services allowed them to be used for a variety of needs, ranging from legal services, child care centres, health care schemes, education services, technical agrarian services, community development, housing schemes, consumer cooperative schemes, purchasing and marketing schemes, to savings and loan schemes.⁴ Working in conjunction with several international trade union organizations,⁵ EDUC was able to introduce the approach to smaller affiliates located in rural areas. Evaluation missions confirmed that participating rural workers' organizations became better equipped to implement solutions to problems they themselves had identified.⁶

This initial success led in the 1980s to replications in Asia and Africa via seminars and projects organized by EDUC. Several agricultural trade unions in India participated in training of trainer sessions, which enabled them to increase membership in their respective villages while helping identify and resolve problems such as setting up cooperative schemes to give poorer farmers access to fertilizers, forming local quality control centers for agricultural produce and setting up vocational training centers for union members' children.⁷ In Africa, special services projects also aimed at increasing rural women's participation in workers' organizations. Various training of trainer courses in Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Ghana, for instance, trained women on their rights and roles within trade unions. Trainers would then work in their respective regions to sensitize unions to the needs of their women constituents. In one instance, women from a local trade union created a communal farm whose produce was sold to raise money to build a child-care center, which they had identified as a necessity to work more effectively and efficiently.⁸

This direct, participatory approach is especially well-suited for rural contexts characterized by physical or psychological barriers to the creation of formal workers' groups such as low literacy rates, lack of resources, large distances and lack of reliable access routes, which make it harder to, for instance, organize regular union gatherings. With little resources, little voice, and no real form of assistance, the dire situation of many rural workers could worsen. The *ad hoc* nature of special services provides a simple yet effective means to identify and satisfy collectively pressing needs while encouraging organization.

The special services approach waned in the mid-1990s as ILO switched focus from rural to other priorities. Its two decades of operation however indicates capacity to enable rural workers everywhere to identify and tackle as a group their specific needs and be protagonists in social and economic development. It is also a valuable entry point for the Decent Work Agenda, since it can be easily combined with other "rural-ready" ILO tools and approaches like micro-insurance schemes, cooperatives, occupational safety and health, working conditions, training and business skills.

The added appeal of special services is its usability by employers' organizations to help strengthen and develop rural affiliates.

¹ ILO: *Special services of rural workers' organizations. A workers' education manual*, Second Edition, Geneva, 1994, p. v.

² J. Giusti: *Special Services: A Real Instrument to Strengthen the Economic Basis of the Rural Workers' Organizations and to Promote Peoples' Participation* (Geneva, ILO, 1987), pp. 1-8.

³ Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, and Panama were some of the earliest targets.

⁴ ILO: *Special services of rural workers' organizations. A workers' education manual*, First edition, Geneva, 1978.

⁵ Such as the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco, and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) previously known as the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural, and Allied Workers (IFPAAW), and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

⁶ Op. cit., Giusti (1987), p. 3.

⁷ Op. cit., *Special Service of rural workers' organizations* (1994), pp. 7-16.

⁸ Ibid., 30.

Cooperatives

Today's cooperative enterprises provide over 100 million jobs and rural areas are host to the vast majority of these owing to the fact that such organizations are more common in the agricultural sector.¹ Their organizational model, characterized by division of risk, pooling of resources, and member-ownership, embody and disseminate the very values of the Decent Work paradigm, namely: secure jobs, fair wages, social protection, voice, participation, and equality of opportunity and can integrate a variety of ILO concerns, from HIV/AIDS to child labour. Being managed by the same people who benefit from their services, they empower members and communities and grow *with them*.

Cooperatives play an important self-help role in rural areas, especially where private businesses hesitate to go and public authorities do not develop basic services. They provide productive employment in agriculture, but also in manufacturing, marketing, tourism, infrastructure building, utility services, financial organizations and other economic activities; while offering a asset of enabling services to their members and the communities where they operate, from health care, education, roads, water and sanitation, to giving rural groups a “voice”.

In recognition of the economic and social impact of genuine cooperatives, the ILO's Recommendation 193 on the Promotion of Cooperatives (2002) mandates the Office to assist with their development. Early work concentrated mainly on legal issues and policy advice, while economic and social aspects were addressed as the ILO began responding to the development needs of newly independent member States, particularly following the food security crisis of the 1970s.

It was in this context that ILO launched the ACOPAM² programme in five countries³ of the drought-stricken Sahel region, to help prevent the spread of famine and improve the impact and effectiveness of food aid. ACOPAM aimed to improve the self-sufficiency of Sahelian men and women farmers and increase food security by: 1) enhancing the organizational capacities of grassroots organizations; and 2) helping diversify economic activities of local organizations and constituent members. Main areas of intervention included: cereal banks, small-scale irrigation, gender and micro-finance, land management, and cotton marketing. ACOPAM activities also spawned health mutual benefit schemes, further demonstrating the multidisciplinary reach of the programme. When the programme ended in 2000, after 21 years in operation, it left behind a variety of important tools and a network of 188 programme partners in 8 countries that to this day are fully operational.

At its peak, in the 1980s and early-1990s, the ILO's cooperative approach inspired various projects in over 50 ILO member States, ranging from the development of agricultural producer cooperatives, cooperative food banks, handicraft and manufacturing cooperatives, to transport, housing, consumer and savings societies. Around this time ILO launched MATCOM,⁴ an ILO multi-regional programme, developing and implementing over 40 trainers' manuals and 60 learning elements—some of which were translated into over forty languages—to be used by different types of cooperatives in several economic sectors, by various target groups and levels of cooperative management. Training manuals targeting consumer and agricultural cooperatives, for instance, offer practical and detailed advice on how to improve business operations, ranging from budgeting practices to storage methods. The high demand for MATCOM training materials for instance, prompted an ILO review (in 2008) of their relevance with an eye towards adaptation to the current context.

Cooperative initiatives and tools from the 1970s and '80s remain relevant and have also been incorporated into ILO programmes such as Social Finance and Enterprise. The concept of health mutual benefit schemes started under ACOPAM provided the basis in 1998 for the STEP⁵ programme aimed at fighting poverty and social exclusion through the extension of social protection and health to unprotected men and women workers. STEP achieves this by providing technical assistance, experience and training to various mutual health organizations on issues such as feasibility, management, follow-up, monitoring, coverage, health packages, law and linkages with national institutions, in over 40 countries in the regions of West and Lusophone Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Europe. STEP initiatives funded by Portugal, for instance, have provided assistance to over 131,000 individuals.

ILO's cooperative WORK has entered a new phase, based on a more community-driven approach that puts beneficiaries in the "driver's seat", and focusing on strengthening existing cooperatives (and institutions supporting cooperatives) so they may reach self-help and self-sustainability. This trend, exemplified by the COOP^{AFRICA} programme, has the ILO playing more of a supportive role, focusing on promoting an enabling legal framework for cooperatives, providing advice, training, funding, establishing local support networks, and "centers of competence." The new strategy is based on the promotion of R193 to create a strong legal environment for genuine cooperatives. In the last 15 years the Unit has assisted over 65 countries to reform their cooperative policies and laws. These include the *Ley Marco par las cooperativas de America Latina*; the Uniform Cooperative Act for the *Organisation pour l'Harmonisation en Afrique du Droit des Affaires* (OHADA); and conducting an implementation assessment of the 2003 European Union Regulation on cooperatives in 27 EU member states and three European Economic Area (EEA) countries.

The on-going food security and economic crises are demonstrating that cooperatives across all sectors and regions are more resilient than capital-centered enterprises — as indicated by a lower number of bankruptcies and relative longevity.⁶ Cooperatives are emerging as real enterprises, presenting opportunities for linkages between ILO cooperative and enterprise tools (such as KAB⁷). Their high success rates and capacity for innovation allows adaptation to an increasingly globalized economy and society.

¹ ILO: *Cooperatives & Rural Employment*, COOP Fact Sheet No. 1, Geneva, 2007.

² Appui Coopératif au Programme Alimentaire Mondial (ACOPAM), in English "Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives"

³ For the full program period ACOPAM worked in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal. ACOPAM also briefly conducted activities in The Gambia and Cap Verde.

⁴ Materials and Techniques for the Training of Cooperative Members and Managers (MATCOM)

⁵ Strategies and Tools against Social Exclusion and Poverty (STEP)

⁶ J. Birchall and L. Hammond Ketilson: *Resilience of the Cooperative Business Model in Times of Crisis* (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

⁷ Know About Business (KAB).

Entrepreneurship Skills

Entrepreneurship has been an integral part of the ILO's work since the 1970s. In rural areas farms themselves are agricultural enterprises, and enterprises in related sectors such as food processing, packaging, production of agricultural tools and inputs, as well as others involved in rural economic and social infrastructure complement and support them, allowing for a more diversified and sustainable economy. Entrepreneurs' *ability*, combined with a conducive business environment, is the basis of success.

The ILO has been developing a wide array of management capacity building tools¹ to support the various stages of entrepreneurship (from sensitization, to business launching, performance improvement and expansion); size of enterprises; target groups, including illiterate people; and a variety of trades, from handicraft to waste management. All these tools are applicable to rural areas with little or no adaptation; but three are particularly relevant:

Know About Business (KAB) – This package provides entrepreneurial education and business skills to stimulate young men and women to think about entrepreneurship and the role of businesses in economic and social development. Participants also learn about how to be an enterprising person, a core skill for a variety of work life situations. The KAB programme has been translated into 22 languages and has been introduced to vocational, secondary and higher education in 50 countries of which 17 already integrated it in their national curriculum. Some 4,500 education institutions have tested and have been offering KAB through some 11,000 KAB teachers to over 500,000 trainees and students.²

Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) – This methodology helps start viable businesses and strengthen performance of existing micro and small enterprises. It consists of three joint packages: Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI), Start Your Business (SYB) and Improve Your Business (IYB) – complemented by Enlarge Your Business (EYB), to help small enterprises' growth strategy. SIYB was developed in the 1990s and is today implemented in over 95 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America.³ It has developed and licensed almost 300 Master Trainers globally, and evaluations carried out in 2003, 2004 and 2007 indicate that these have in turn trained over 6,000 trainers from 850 partner organisations.⁴ It is estimated that the SIYB programme has trained over 1,200,000 entrepreneurs globally, creating over 300,000 businesses and over 1,400,000 jobs in the last 15 years.⁵ Outreach and impact are particularly notable in China, where in 2003-2004 alone trainings yielded some 116 master trainers, 2,400 trainers, 760,000 potential and existing entrepreneurs, leading to 240,000 business start-ups and 1,200,000 new jobs.⁶

Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) – This programme aims to support women's entrepreneurship and employment creation potential, still largely untapped, particularly in rural areas.⁷ It has developed twelve tools,⁸ from generic ones such as Get Ahead, for low-income women engaged in or wishing to start a small business, to specific tools such as Improve your Exhibiting Skills (IYES) and the Women Entrepreneurs' Association Capacity Building Guide.

The ILO's three-pronged WED strategy⁹ rests on creating an enabling environment for WED; increasing institutional capacity in WED; and developing tools and approaches targeted at women entrepreneurs and their service providers. The programme also mainstreamed disability and HIV and AIDS into all of its tools and approaches. In 2008-09 alone, the programme reached nearly 10,000 entrepreneurs,¹⁰ and since its inception, in 2002, it has expanded operations to 24 countries through various projects, 14 of which are in Africa.¹¹

These tools offer several key advantages as they are:

- **Diverse**, which allows targeting a variety of groups, trades, enterprise sizes and local realities.
- **Adaptable** to local contexts, through a systematic tailoring of the generic version of the tools to the language and specificities of the country using it.
- **Flexible**, being composed of modules, so trainers can pick the most relevant ones for the local trainees and contexts. They can also add modules on environment, occupational safety and health and working conditions in general, child labour, HIV-AIDS and other situation-specific topics as well as create new ones such as the Improve Your Work Environment and Business (I-WED) tool for micro-entrepreneurs.

- Set within existing institutions (schools, universities, training centers, business development service institutions, entrepreneurs' associations, public agencies, institutions, etc.), which formalizes business training and sustains outreach.¹²
- Based on “training of trainers”, to assist in capacity building.
- Using highly interactive approaches during training as well as subsequently, giving voice to trainees and getting instant feedback from them.
- Capable of ensuring follow-up, through an international network of former trainees as well as follow-up mechanisms such as group or individual counseling.

Entrepreneurship and enterprise capacity building has considerable potential to boost Decent Work in rural areas. The ILO's management skills tools can be easily combined with other ILO tools and products to form an integrated approach to productive and job creating entrepreneurship. The ILO-IFAD “PROMER” project supporting rural entrepreneurship and employment in Senegal since 2006 (see Box 5), shows the feasibility and effectiveness of an entrepreneurship support basis combining KAB, SIYB, WEDGE and PACTE (a package to strengthen small entrepreneur associations' key functions and member services) with linkages to WIND, STEP, IPEC, HIV/AIDS, COOP, Social Finance and Social Dialogue tools. In East Africa, the 2010-14 “Unleashing African Entrepreneurship” project is using USD 23 million Danish funds to boost entrepreneurship among young men and women in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, using a combination of KAB, SIYB and Get Ahead as well as inputs from ILO social finance, social protection and training tools (TREE) among others. In Lao PDR and Cambodia, WEDGE projects are combining Gender Equality, IPEC, Social finance and WED tools and approaches to improve the livelihoods of rural families, while working to remove systemic gender-based barriers.

¹ ILO: *Sustainable Enterprise Development Programme, Inventory of commonly used tools and resources List*, Geneva, 2009.

² ILO: *Supporting Entrepreneurship Education, A Report on the Global Outreach of the ILO Know About Business Programme*, Geneva 2009.

³ ILO: *SIYB Factsheet*, Geneva, 2009.

⁴ ILO: *Promotion of sustainable enterprises*, Integrated Think Piece, EMP/ENT, Geneva, 2009. See also ILO: *SIYB Global Outreach Report 2003* and ILO: *SIYB China, Evaluation Report 2004-2007*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ ILO: *SIYB Final project evaluation, 2005*.

⁷ An evaluation conducted in 2007 showed that the design and implementation of projects targeting women entrepreneurs require specialized, dedicated approaches and tools. ILO: *Women's entrepreneurship and the Promotion of Decent Work: A thematic evaluation*, Governing Body, 298th Session, Geneva, Mar. 2007, GB.298/TC/1.

⁸ WEDGE Tools Chart, ILO, 2009, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_emp/-emp_ent/-ifp_seed/documents/genericdocument/wcms_111366.pdf

⁹ ILO: *Strategy on promoting women's entrepreneurship and development*, Governing Body, 301st Session, Geneva, Mar. 2008, GB.301/ESP/4. Also available at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_norm/-relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_090565.pdf

¹⁰ ILO: *Implementation Report EMP/ENT Intermediate Outcome – Sustainable enterprises generate productive jobs, Women's entrepreneurship development*, Geneva, 2009.

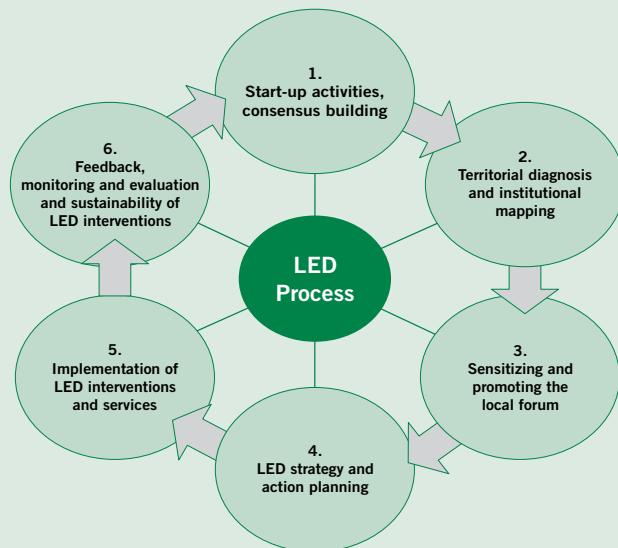
¹¹ Despite the accrued importance of supporting women entrepreneurship as stipulated in the ILO strategy (see ILO: *Strategy on promoting women's entrepreneurship development*, Governing Body, 301st Session, Geneva, Mar. 2008, GB.301/ESP/4, paragraph 41), the required substantial increases in human and financial resources has yet to take place.

¹² Management guidelines for SIYB are available on how to choose these institutions and help their managers. The ILO establishes a MOU with these partner institutions on training curricula to ensure implementation and quality.

Local Economic Development

Local Economic Development (LED) aims to develop local economies and communities via a highly participatory approach that involves fully local public and private agents, with ownership of the process to maximize commitment and sustainability. The approach, tightly linked to local comparative advantages and endogenous resources, consists of carefully chosen priorities and well-integrated initiatives.

The LED process is highly context specific, but is typically a six-step cycle, illustrated below.



The resulting action plan can include a variety of interventions such as: improving the local business environment and promoting investments; upgrading skills and improving access to local labour market information; stimulating entrepreneurship, including cooperatives; strengthening enterprise productivity and competitiveness; promoting infrastructure building and maintenance with high local employment impact; upgrading value chains that bring local employment and income benefits; improving financial services including micro finance; improving working conditions and labour relations in small enterprises and farms; greening local economies; reducing social exclusion (including combating child labour); and strengthening the institutional framework and promoting good local governance.

A LED approach was first used in the 1970s to ease pressures during Europe's transition away from coal mining industries. In the 1990s, the ILO together with other UN agencies adapted and applied it to support peace building processes in post-conflict areas (first in Central America,¹ then spreading to Cambodia, Mozambique, the Balkans and Africa) and to support political transition (e.g. in South Africa).

Over the past decade, experience has revealed many different entry points and motivations to initiate LED, such as focus on a target group (e.g. informal economy workers, indigenous populations, unemployed youth); economic crises (leading to contracting markets and job losses); social problems (e.g. lack of social protection, crime and violence, child labour); and to structure and accelerate job-rich recovery after natural disasters (like the 2004 tsunami in Asia and 2009 earthquake in Haiti).

While the ILO's LED technical cooperation portfolio now covers some 15 countries worldwide, four important features characterize the approach across the diverse initiatives and countries:

- 1) **A forum gathering local stakeholders:** This LED fundamental element can take various forms. Today, some 60 LEDAs operate in over 15 countries. They are gathered into the ILS LEDA (International Links and Services

for Local Development Agencies) network,² supporting national and territorial actors and LEDAs to strengthen territorial development processes within the frame of national policies. Many LEDAs set up long ago have been integrated into national policy and still have meaningful impact.

2) Integrated and interrelated support: LED strategies integrate governance components (public-private partnership, local-national relations), strategic components (coordination between planning and action), human development components (social inclusion, instruments of support to vulnerable groups, relations between centre and suburbs of the territory, environmental protection), components of territorial promotion (project financing and international marketing), and of service supply to enterprises (technical assistance, professional training, marketing and loans). LED is in fact becoming increasingly holistic and integrated. In the Nepali Dhanusha and Ramechhap districts, the LED programme (2007-2010) focuses on tourism and agriculture, developing irrigation, road and trekking infrastructure through labour-based technologies, promoting investment in business development services, upgrading food-products value-chains, and enabling local people to access those food products (see Box 4). In Cameroon, a LED initiative (2008-2014) is fighting child trafficking in rural areas through creating decent job opportunities for youth, women, and vulnerable groups (particularly indigenous peoples, such as the Mbororos), as well as vocational training for at-risk children, and is supplemented with alert systems on child trafficking. It also includes aspects of HIV/AIDS, SIYB, and sensitization to child trafficking and gender equality.

3) Local capacity building and knowledge management: An important focus of the ILO's LED approach is on building national and local stakeholders' capacity for effective and coherent implementation of policies and initiatives, and to secure ownership and sustainability. The ILO's LED projects also carefully document impact and lessons learned. Knowledge sharing among similar projects within the same region is stimulated, for example through study visits and regional knowledge sharing events. At an international level, expert meetings of national and local policy-makers and practitioners are conducted to achieve a more coherent policy and institutional framework for LED promotion. Partnerships with agencies such as UNCDF, UNIDO and OECD's LEED programme are promoted and strengthened, to improve coordination and foster synergies in projects and to enrich the LED knowledge base. Also, a strong triangular ILO HQ-Field offices-Turin Training Centre collaboration has produced among others a multidisciplinary LED course since 2004, training over 100 people each year.³

4) Adaptability and demand-driven orientation: The drive for LED initiatives comes increasingly from constituents and development partners at country level. The focus and technical interventions vary per country. In Namibia and Egypt, LED strategies promote cultural community-based tourism. In Vietnam, LED is used to promote green jobs in rural value chains, and youth employment. In the Philippines, LED aims at supporting the peace process in a conflict-affected area through increased local job opportunities.

LED-based strategies are particularly well adapted to rural areas as they recognize and take advantage of their individual complexities and specificities, reconcile the local, national and international levels and their interconnectedness, and gather the public, private and non-governmental sectors into broad strategic partnerships to decide and implement *together* a development strategy grounded in local comparative advantages to stimulate economic activities and create good, productive jobs.

¹ The ILO developed its LED approach in the inter-agency programme PRODERE (1990-1995), to consolidate the peace process in Central America (Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize). The programme moved away from traditional central-level interventions to offer a process based on broad participation and consensus of local actors via the setting up of Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs). Local development strategies emerged that proved effective to provide quick responses to local needs, in terms of business development, employment creation, reconciliation and community building. Many of the LEDAs promoted by PRODERE are still fully operational.

² *International Links and Services for Local Economic Development Agencies*, 2011, <http://www.ilsleda.org/home/>

³ For tools relevant to the LED process, as well as techniques for training, see *LED Toolbox*, 2009, <http://www.ledknowledge.org/index.php?mod=doc&act=detail&cid=201&idC=1>

Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE) and Work Improvement in Neighborhood Development (WIND)

Work-related accidents and illnesses still kill an estimated 2.3 million men and women each year and disable many more, translating into an estimated 4 per cent loss in world GDP, as well as severe income and social losses for workers and their families.¹ Workers in rural areas, particularly in developing countries, face the greatest challenges as many operate in informal activities, micro/small enterprises, and in agriculture, one of the three most hazardous sectors, where the probability of work-related accidents, illnesses, and fatalities are more frequent—and also less likely to be reported.

The ILO WISE, launched in 1988, aims to reduce hazards in the workplace by helping small businesses lacking regular access to advisory or inspection services, develop safer and healthier conditions for production. WISE is a participatory and action-oriented training approach that encourages both entrepreneurs and workers to make simple, low- to no-cost improvements in their work environments and behaviour, resulting in noticeable enhancements to both working conditions and enterprise performance.² Its user-friendly and simplified tools and practical applications allow elemental upgrades in basic safety (e.g. lighting and ventilation, tools and workspace organization, waste management, chemicals handling and storage) as well as access to basic services such as clean drinking water and sanitary facilities.

The approach was first implemented in the Philippines, and its success prompted the government to integrate WISE at national policy level.³ More recently, Tanzania's governmental programme, "Improving Job Quality in Africa (IJQA)," has embraced WISE and is working with a public vocational training institute to implement the methodology statewide. Thanks to its practical, tangible, and immediate nature (e.g. low cost, rapidly noticeable results, simple Training of Trainer programmes, ease of use with other ILO tools, etc.) WISE is ideal for small, rural enterprises, where a little improvement can go a long way.

WISE training materials have been translated into 12 languages and have contributed to improvements in small-scale industries in over 20 countries throughout Asia, the America, and Africa. Its adaptability has generated several other ILO work improvement tools tailored for: entrepreneurship (WIDE),⁴ environment and business (I-WEB),⁵ and agriculture (WIND). WISE also shares features with the ILO's SOLVE,⁶ SIYB,⁷ SCORE,⁸ and WEDGE,⁹ and is highly compatible with other ILO employment creation approaches and tools such as EIIP,¹⁰ TREE,¹¹ and WED,¹² thus creating possibilities for synergies.

The adaptation of WISE to agriculture in 1995, called WIND, has greatly benefitted a marginalized segment of the population living and working in rural regions. Their work is all the more unsafe as the workplace is often also the family dwelling, thus multiplying risk of injury or illness, and exposing family members too. For small, family farms in rural areas where accessing resources that can improve productivity through better working and living conditions is scarce, WIND provides a locally-grown, affordable support system that responds to farmers' immediate needs through a participatory process, with equal input from both women and men. It helps local farmers find practical solutions they can rapidly implement using locally available materials and skills. It is cheap, effective, and sustainable through a follow-up mechanism consisting of a local support network of trained instructors and volunteer farmers who periodically visit agricultural communities to provide help and maintain communication with participants.

The practicality and self-sustainability of WIND has facilitated its spread to 23 countries.¹³ In Vietnam the success of the approach, which initiated over 100,000 improvements in one province alone, prompted its incorporation into the government framework for OSH in agriculture.¹⁴ As observed in Kyrgyzstan, in addition to promoting safe work, gender equality, and entrepreneurship, WIND encourages social dialogue and tripartite relationships, easing its integration at policy level (see Box 5).¹⁵ In fact, WIND can be an entry point for the Decent Work Agenda as a whole, since it too can be easily combined with other ILO products like micro-insurance and micro-finance schemes, as well as with training and business skills development.

Despite their demonstrated potential, WISE and WIND have been carried out as programme work and not as fully funded and designed project work. The most immediate downside is the lack of systematic evaluative and stocktaking materials, essential to allow strengthening approaches and incorporating them into other ILO products. Efforts are underway to formulate Implementation Guides and identify indicators to gauge impact in future evaluations. More also needs to be done in-House to upscale WIND and WISE so they can reach policy level. Undoubtedly by simultaneously promoting working conditions *and* productivity in informal, micro-, and agricultural activities, the methodology is particularly relevant to combating rural poverty and stimulating growth.

In October 2008 an international WIND conference hosted by Kyrgyzstan facilitated exchanging experiences among WIND programmes in Africa, Asia, Central Asia and Latin America. It recommended, in particular, the expansion and replication of the WIND methodology, and the development of a “WIND Plus” concept incorporating, in addition to WIND, vocational training, youth employment support, job creation for potential migrants, SIYB, micro-finance, cooperative development, social security, and child labour in a coherent package for rural development and employment.

¹ *Facts on Safety and Health at work*, World Day for Safety and Health at Work, ILO, 2009. http://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-dreports/-dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_105146.pdf

² ILO: *Defining Strategies for Improving Working and Employment Conditions in Micro and Small Enterprises and the Informal Economy – Overview of the ILO Learning and Research Agenda*, Conditions of Work and Employment Programme, Geneva, 2003.

³ ILO: *An Introduction to the WISE Programme*, Conditions of Work and Employment Programme, Geneva, 2007. Also available at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/pdf/pamphlets/brochure.pdf>

⁴ Work Improvement and the Development of Enterprise.

⁵ Improve your Work Environment and Business.

⁶ Addressing Psychosocial Problems at Work - Stress, Tobacco, Alcohol & Drugs, HIV/AIDS, Violence.

⁷ Start and Improve Your Business.

⁸ Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises.

⁹ Women’s Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality

¹⁰ Employment Intensive Investment Programme.

¹¹ Training for Rural Economic Empowerment.

¹² Women’s Entrepreneurship Development.

¹³ WIND has been or will soon be implemented in the following countries: Azerbaijan, Benin, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, India, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mali, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

¹⁴ T. Kawakami et al.: *Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development* (Vietnam, Center for Occupational Health and Environment, Department of Health, 2005). In the province of Can Tho alone, where the programme was initiated, farmers have made over 100,000 improvements using WIND.

¹⁵ *Fair WIND for Safety in Kyrgyzstan*, ILO, Institutional Video, 2008. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Broadcast_materials/Institutionalvideos/lang—en/docName—WCMS_101324/index.htm

Employment Intensive Investment

Infrastructure is a major entry point and a catalyst for pro-poor growth. It is vital to safeguard natural resources and to allow people access to basic social and economic services such as healthcare, potable water, transport and communication, education, and livelihood opportunities. Lack or degradation of infrastructure delays economic development isolates and even discriminates against the poorest communities, especially in rural areas. The ILO is capitalizing on the fact that infrastructure and construction represent 40 to 70 percent of public investment expenditures in developing countries to introduce technologies that can create more employment and reduce poverty in a structural and financially sustainable manner. Comparison studies have demonstrated that labour-based technologies cost 10 to 30 percent less than equipment-intensive methods; reduce foreign exchange requirements by 50 to 60 percent; and create two to five times more employment—all for the same investment.¹

These results make the Employment-Intensive Investment approach particularly suited for rural settings in three types of activities: (i) Productive infrastructure (irrigation, minor dams, drainage and sewerage systems; terraces; land development, feeder roads); (ii) Social infrastructure (schools, health centers, water supply schemes); and (iii) Protection of the resource base (soil and water conservation, environmental protection, erosion control, afforestation, etc.).

The ILO's interventions combine work at the **upstream policy level**, advising the ministries in charge of employment, economic planning, and procurement to include employment criteria in the planning and programming work of the line ministries that are main users of public investments in rural areas; with work at the **meso level**, to develop institutional capacity of governments (at national and decentralized levels), private sector, and civil society; and work at **project level**, to provide technical assistance to identify opportunities and formulate employment-intensive investment programmes that enhance economic growth and income distribution, setting up monitoring and evaluation systems to track the amount injected into the local economy, employment created and who benefits from these job opportunities.

The ILO's work in EII began in the mid-'70s and peaked in the '80s and early '90s, when it was operating demonstration projects in over 30 countries² and attracting about half of the ILO's TC resources. To strengthen delivery capacity, the ASIST³ programme was created in the early '90s to provide a link between country level activities, sub-regional backstopping and Headquarters. The demand for EII especially in Africa and Asia resulted in the creation of an ASIST Africa (1991) and an ASIST Asia-Pacific (1998) programme. A biannual international forum, the Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners, provides for international support and knowledge sharing. After a decline of the EII Programme in the '90s, the recent food security and economic crises as well as environmental concerns, have renewed interest in labour-intensive public works to provide quality local jobs. Since 2000, the ILO has been promoting employment-intensive investment in 52 countries: 26 of which are in Africa (see, for example, Box 1), 13 in Asia, 11 in Latin America, along with one each in Iraq and Azerbaijan.⁴

The EIIP's key tools include:

- **Integrated Rural Infrastructure Planning (IRAP)** – Consisting of a set of local level, participatory, planning tools to identify infrastructure needs at community level. The IRAP process produces ranked priorities for infrastructure investments in various economic and social sectors such as transport, agriculture, health, education, and water. It is an important tool in the democratisation of rural areas.
- **Technology choice and local resource-based approach** – Ensuring that while maintaining cost competitiveness and acceptable engineering quality standards, light equipment is used and employment opportunities optimized in construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure. A variety of technical documents and training materials are available.
- **Strategies for private sector development and training courses for SMEs** (organization, business management, technology, etc.) – Training of local contractors and establishing an efficient contract administration are

essential elements of a conducive environment. Training courses designed for local contractors are available in different technical fields

- **Employment friendly procurement systems and contract procedures, and capacity building for local government institutions** – Applying employment-intensive technologies calls for participation of local actors and use of local know-how and materials, and EIIP has been instrumental in adjusting procurement procedures, specifications and contract packaging accordingly. Decent work elements are to be reflected in standard contracts, along with transparent procurement procedures.
- **Community Contracting** – Providing an opportunity to develop local governments, small contractors and community groups into effective rural infrastructure construction and maintenance entities
- **Course on Innovations in Public Employment Programmes** – Covering the full spectrum from short-term public work programmes to employment guarantee schemes. It includes, besides public works, activities such as social services and community works. These programmes pursue the twin objectives of providing employment and social protection.
- **Employment Impact Assessments (EIA) of infrastructure investments and projects** – Providing to policy makers analytical tools to facilitate their choice in resource allocation. The methodologies (Input-output models and Social accounting matrices -SAM) evaluate and estimate the actual and potential impact of applying labour-based infrastructure programmes on a variety of macro-economic variables such as forward and backward linkages, employment creation (direct, indirect and induced), GNP, household income and consumption, private investment, public finance deficit and fiscal space, investment spending, fiscal earnings, balance of payments and multiplier effects.

These EII tools are complementary and compatible with other ILO products such as LED, micro-finance, business development skills, and training components. One example is “Start and Improve Your Construction Business (SIYCB)”, first launched in South Africa, an adaptation of the generic Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) tool, preparing businesses and creating an enabling environment for productive delivery of infrastructure and sustainable practices while promoting job creation and income generation.

The EII approach is deeply rooted in the Decent Work Agenda. It emphasizes integrating relevant labour standards into contract documents; monitoring and promoting decent work conditions in infrastructure works, including equality of job training and entrepreneurship opportunities as local contractors for instance, for men and women; participation and negotiation; and it actively stimulates people and community empowerment, and democratization at grass-roots level.

¹ ILO: *Reducing the Decent Work Deficit in the Infrastructure and Construction Sectors*, Geneva, 2004.

² K. Thorndahl: *The DANIDA Support to the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP)* (Geneva, ILO, 2002), p.10.

³ Advisory Support, Information Services and Training Programme.

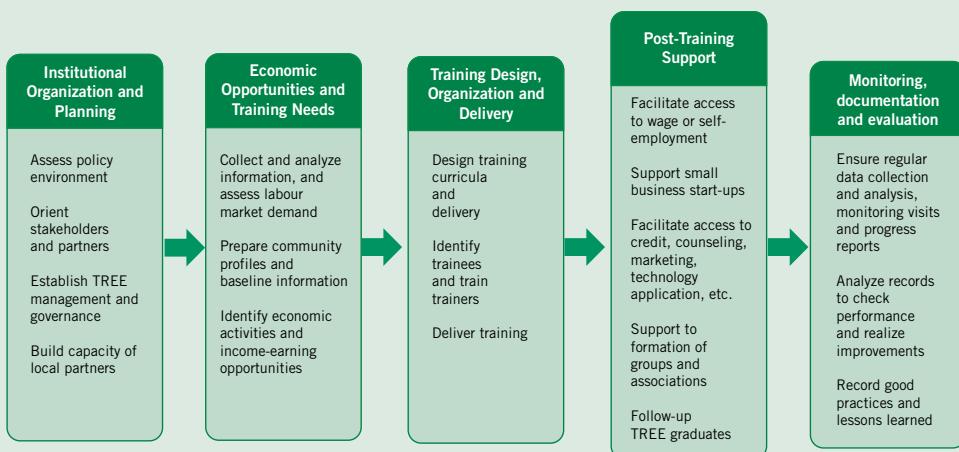
⁴ ILO: *Independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy for employment-intensive investment*, Governing Body, 297th Session, Geneva, Nov. 2006, GB.297/PFA/2/2, p. 4; *Employment Intensive Investment Programme – Countries Covered*, ILO, 2009, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/countries/index.htm>

Training for Rural Economic Empowerment

Training is a key determinant of sustainable development, empowerment and pro-poor growth. The ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology, developed over the past decade, is based on a range of ILO rural skills development experiences since the late 1970s.¹

TREE stimulates the creation of local economic and employment opportunities for rural people and disadvantaged groups such as the poor, rural women, youth and disabled persons, by linking training directly to specific opportunities for self and wage employment and increased incomes. It encompasses a wide variety of skills: skills for construction work, maintenance and repair, rural industry and crafts; non-farm skills for agricultural production, processing, storage, distribution and marketing; skills for cooperatives and rural project management, and for entrepreneurial development; skills contributing to home and family improvements; skills related to provision of basic community services and facilities; safety and health skills; and non-vocational skills that help solve social problems, through leadership training, organizational development, group participation and functional literacy.

TREE consists of a sequence of five processes:²



This approach differs from classical vocational training methods by 1) identifying income generating opportunities leading to training design; 2) involving local community and social partners throughout the processes; and 3) facilitating post-training support. It also mainstreams local economic development, gender issues as well as those concerned with disabled persons and other socially excluded groups.

TREE's modular approach allows adaptation to a range of training delivery situations, including in the absence of established training centres in rural communities. It uses short-cycle training courses which are closely related to the actual working environment. It also allows the integration of other ILO tools and approaches, in particular SIYB, Grassroots Management Training, WEDGE, LED, and those concerned with eliminating child labour and occupational safety and health.

This approach has also proven valuable in sensitive areas such as the Pakistani North-West Frontier Province, where in 2002-2007 it trained over 3,000 youth, women and disabled persons, over 93 percent of whom used the skills learned to secure jobs.³ The project also increased access to information and financial resources by helping beneficiaries form 175 new savings and credit groups and 7 business associations; and it instructed over 4,000 persons in work skills, literacy, or numeracy.⁴ Mainstreaming women into the local economy was a major achievement. The percentage of women able to get a wage or pursue self-employment following those training and literacy courses reached 91 percent, a particularly impressive figure. Results for male youth were also impres-

sive, as 76 percent obtained wage or self-employment after training and another 12 percent became apprentices. Encouraged by such economic and social results, in 2008 the national government adopted TREE as its main approach for developing skills and creating employment.⁵ In the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao in the Philippines where poverty levels were high and where communities suffered years of lack of peace and order, TREE had proven an effective tool for employment creation. Of the beneficiaries trained about 95 percent had some form of employment and monthly incomes increased by over 100 percent.⁶ TREE proved to be an effective approach in restoring livelihoods to many internally displaced people due to the tsunami in Sri Lanka and was mainstreamed as a key approach to rural development. A TREE project in Niger led to development of a National Policy for Technical, Educational and Vocational Training.⁷ In Burkina Faso the TREE methodology is being integrated into the “10,000 youth” national program for rural training that began in January 2010.

TREE has proven its effectiveness in various settings, being practical and adaptable to diverse situations and areas. It has the potential to contribute to the ILO Decent Work agenda by bringing about pragmatic and relevant skills to people living and working in rural areas, giving them the means to develop, implement and sustain professional as well as personal facets of their lives. In 2009, the Government of Denmark funded a large (USD 16 million) 5-year ILO skills development programme for rural youth, with two entry-points: TREE and upgrading of informal apprenticeships that will allow further dissemination of the approach.

¹ The training for Rural Gainful Activities (TRUGA) – mainly implemented in Asia and Africa - and Skills Development for Self-Reliance (SDSR) - mainly in Anglophone Africa – emerged in the 1970s-early 80s. In the 1990s they were combined into the Community-Based Training (CBT) for (Self-) Employment and Income Generation.

² ILO: *Rural Skills Training. A Generic Manual on TREE*, Geneva, 2009.

³ F.C. Huxley and L. Lazo: *Final Evaluation of TREE Project: Pakistan and the Philippines* (Geneva, ILO/USDoL, 2007). See also ILO: *Evaluation of the InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability*, Governing Body, 291st Session, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee, Geneva, 2004.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Skilling Pakistan: A Vision for the National Skills Strategy 2008-2012, National Vocational and Technical Education Commission (NAVTEC), <http://www.navtec.gov.pk/webpages/nationalstrategy.html>

⁶ Op. cit., Huxley and Lazo (2007).

⁷ ILO project “Appui à la formation professionnelle et continue et à l'apprentissage” (NER/07/01/EEC). The national policy is financed independently from the ILO support by a Training Fund (2-3 percent apprenticeship tax).

Annex 5: Rural Focal Points ILO-wide

Units	Full Title of Departments and Offices
EMPLOYMENT	Employment Sector
♦ COOP	Cooperatives
♦ SEED	Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development
♦ LED	Local Economic Development
♦ SFP	Social Finance
♦ SKILLS	Skills and Employability Department
♦ POLICY	Employment Policy Department
♦ ANALYSIS	Policy Analysis and Research
♦ EIIP	Employment-Intensive Investment Unit
♦ CRISIS	Crisis Response and Reconstruction
♦ YEP	Youth Employment Programme
♦ YEN	Youth Employment Network
♦ MULTI	Multinational Enterprises Programme
PROTECTION	Social Protection Sector
♦ TRAVAIL	Conditions of Work and Employment Programme
♦ SAFEWORK	Safety and Health at Work and the Environment
♦ SECSOC	Social Security Department
♦ HIV/AIDS	AIDS
♦ MIGRANT	International Migration
STANDARDS	Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Sector
♦ NORMES	International Labour Standards
♦ IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
DIALOGUE	Social Dialogue Sector
♦ ACT/EMP	Employers' Activities
♦ ACTRAV	Workers' Activities
♦ DIALOGUE	Industrial and Employment Relations Department
♦ LAB/ADMIN	Labour Administration and Labour Inspection Programme
♦ SECTOR	Sectoral Activities
	- Agriculture
	- Forestry
	- Food and Beverages
	- Fisheries
	- Hotel and Tourism

CABINET**Director-General's Office****INTEGRATION****Policy Integration and Statistics Department****STAT****Bureau of Statistics****GENDER****Bureau for Gender Equality****PARDEV****Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department**

- ◆ CODEV Development Cooperation

ED/MAS**Management and Administration**

- ◆ EVAL Evaluation Unit
- ◆ PROGRAM Bureau of Programming and Management

TURIN CENTRE**International Training Centre – Turin****Field Offices****Countries Covered****NEW YORK OFFICE***United Nations***BRUSSELS OFFICE***European Union and other European agencies***AFRICA**

- ◆ Abuja Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone
- ◆ Addis Ababa Ethiopia, Somalia
- ◆ Algiers Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Tunisia
- ◆ Antananarivo Comoros, Djibouti, Madagascar
- ◆ Cairo Egypt, Eritrea, Sudan
- ◆ Dakar (and Abidjan) Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo
- ◆ Dar-es-Salaam Kenya, Tanzania (United Republic of), Uganda
- ◆ Harare Zimbabwe
- ◆ Kinshasa Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon
- ◆ Lusaka Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia
- ◆ Pretoria Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland
- ◆ Yaoundé Angola, Cameroon, São Tomé

AMERICAS

◆ Lima	Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
◆ Port of Spain	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago
◆ San José	Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama
◆ Santiago	Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay
◆ CINTERFOR	
◆ Andean countries	

ARAB STATES	Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Occupied Arab Territories, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
--------------------	--

ASIA & PACIFIC	[Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore]
---------------------------	--

◆ Bangkok	Cambodia
◆ Bangkok	Lao People's Democratic Republic
◆ Bangkok	Thailand
◆ Beijing	China (including Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR), Mongolia
◆ Colombo	Maldives (Republic of), Sri Lanka
◆ Dhaka	Bangladesh
◆ Islamabad	Pakistan
◆ Jakarta	Indonesia, Timor-Leste
◆ Kathmandu	Nepal
◆ Manila	Philippines
◆ New Delhi	India
◆ Suva	Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
◆ Hanoi	Viet Nam

EUROPE

◆ Budapest	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia (The former Yugoslav Republic of), Moldova (Republic of), Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine
◆ Moscow	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Annex 6: Examples of rural-related ILO external partnerships¹

Institution (date of formal agreement)	Overlapping goals and core values	Complementary competencies and comparative advantages	
		For ILO	From ILO
Agencies			
European Union (various years, including 1958, 2003, 200	Eradicate poverty; Develop the economic and social fabric of rural communities; Enable food producers to succeed in world markets, supporting innovation and productivity increases; Make farming environmentally friendly	EU negotiates on behalf of its Member states in the WTO; Ability to respond to crisis; Strong link with governments and local actors; Strong in-country presence; Funding agency	Technical expertise and tools; Decent work approach; Gender equality; Links with employers and workers; Links with the UN
FAO (2004)	Fight hunger by helping improve agricultural productivity and the lives of rural populations; Gender equity	Farmers, fishers and forest users; Links with farmers' organizations; Expertise in agricultural technology; Country presence	Employment; Wage workers; Expertise in soft skills (entrepreneurial, etc.) and capacity building; ILS; OSH; Decent work approach; Links with employers and workers
IFAD (1978)	Promote agriculture and rural development; Empower the rural poor to achieve higher incomes and overcome poverty, with emphasis on the poorest, marginalized people, indigenous peoples, gender equity, youth; Capacity building	Small farmers; Links with farmers' organizations, local NGOs and communities; Advanced tools for context assessment, project design and implementation, and for M&E; Funding agency	Technical expertise and tools; Decent work approach; Gender equality; Links with employers and workers
UNDP (1993)	Fight poverty; Human development; MDGs	Coordination among UN agencies and international development actors; Widespread country-level presence and programme operation; Multi-sector partnership within countries; Strategic partnership with national and sub-national planning and budgeting authorities	Technical expertise and tools focusing on employment and other decent work areas; Links with employers and workers; Local implementation capacity

¹ This table is not exhaustive, but merely provides an example of partnerships, highlighting respective shared goals and comparative advantages.

Institution (date of formal agreement)	Overlapping goals and core values	Complementary competencies and comparative advantages	
		For ILO	From ILO
UNWTO* (2008)	Guarantee decent work and respect of fundamental principles and rights at work; Promote coherence between economic, social and environmental dimensions; Sectoral approach	Sectoral technical expertise	Technical expertise and tools; Links with employers and workers; Country presence; Focus on social dimensions of rural tourism (ex. in LDC IV cooperation); Decent work approach
World Bank (various years, including 2006, 2007, 2009)	Support countries improve agriculture's contribution to food security, raise income of the poor; facilitate economic transformation; provide environmental services; empower the ultimate beneficiaries, especially women and including farmers, livestock keepers, fishers	Depth in technical expertise; Demonstrated ability to respond to shocks (e.g. rapid response to global food crisis; Strong links with Ministries of Finance and other sectors; Largest number of country programmes across bilateral and multilateral development partners; Strong policy base; Robust facilitation role with local and national authorities; Strong institutional memory; Solid in local processes; Funding support and partnership; Strong in-country representation	Technical expertise; Tested methodologies and tools for capacity building in employment and decent work; Strong links with employers and workers and other social partners, including cooperatives and social economy organizations; Tested partnership in design, supervision and monitoring of methodologies and tools at the neighbourhood, community, local and national levels; Local processes; Decent work approach
NGOs			
ICA (2004)	Cooperative values and principles; Inter-linkage of cooperatives to employers' and workers' organizations (because of it ICA holds one of 7 permanent observers' seats on ILO's GB)	Outreach: ICA has 258 member organisations from 96 countries active in all economic sectors and representing over 1 billion people.	Involvement in TC; Link with UN; Policy advice; Decent work approach
Oxfam	Right to sustainable income generation, and to basic social services; Economic justice; Gender equity; Equality; Labour rights	Links with civil society; Focus on small farmers; High convening power; Presence in numerous organizations, initiatives, and over 100 countries; Advocacy capacity	Links with governments, employers and workers; Focus on wage workers; Decent work approach

Institution (date of formal agreement)	Overlapping goals and core values	Complementary competencies and comparative advantages	
		For ILO	From ILO
RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS			
IFPRI	Seek sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty; Promote poverty alleviation and social benefits through food security	Food policy knowledge; Capacity building on food, agriculture, and nutrition policies; Active engagement in policy communications; Working with users to link research and policy action	Involvement with rural and agricultural TC; Link with UN; Methodologies and tools for promoting food security through employment and decent work
IDS (University of Sussex)	Poverty alleviation; Reduction of inequalities; Social Justice; Economic growth focusing on human well being	Cutting edge research, teaching and communication on accelerating global development; Collaboration with over 250 partners around the world; Research on social protection, work and vulnerability, agricultural commercialisation, youth and food, and food and nutrition policies	Links with governments, employers, workers and UN agencies; Technical expertise; Sustained involvement with rural employment based on earlier joint work starting in the 1970s.
GROUPINGS			
COPAC (1971)	Promotion of cooperatives: raising awareness, enabling policy dialogues and advocating policies that enable cooperative success.	Coordination of activities relating to cooperatives among members (ICA, FAO, ILO, UN DESA), technical inputs, sharing information and knowledge, joint research and publications.	Links with governments, employers, workers; Technical expertise; Enabling environment for cooperatives; Tools
IPCLA (2007)	Fight child labour, especially hazardous work; Improve rural livelihoods; Improve safety and health in agriculture	Expertise in agriculture; Expertise on and links to small farmers; Providing a decent work orientation	Technical expertise and tools; Decent work approach; Links with employers and workers
UN High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (2009)	Fighting poverty	Providing a decent work orientation to a major multilateral initiative	Employment, social protection and other decent work dimensions; Links with employers and workers; Monitoring impact of the economic crisis on purchasing power, hunger, malnutrition

*World Tourism Organization

Annex 7: Bibliography

English:

African Union for the Blind. *State of Disabled Peoples Rights in Kenya (2007)* Report (Nairobi: African Union of the Blind, 2007).

African Union. "Plan of Action for Promotion of Employment and Poverty Alleviation." *Assembly of the African Union, Third Extraordinary Session on Employment and Poverty Alleviation*. Ouagadougou: African Union, 8–9 September 2004.

Ahmad, Zubeida and Martha Loutfi. *Women Workers in Rural Development*. Geneva: ILO, 1985.

Ahmed, Iftikar: *Improved working conditions and environment in Philippine forestry*. Working document No. 9 for the Philippine National tripartite conference on Improving Working Conditions and the Environment, Manila. Geneva: ILO, 1977.

Albracht, Gerd. "Integrated Labour Inspection Systems: The Strategy of the ILO, [special topic:] The Global Challenges of Labour Inspection." *Labour Education*, No.140–141, p. 67–73, 2005.

Allal, Maurice and Enyinna Chuta. *Cottage Industries and Handicrafts: Some Guidelines for Employment Promotion*. Geneva: ILO, 1982.

Allal, Maurice, Geoff A. Edmonds, and Ajit S. Bhalla, *Manual on the planning of labour-intensive road construction*. Geneva: ILO, 1977.

Bartsch, William. *Employment and Technology Choice in Asian Agriculture*. New York: Praeger, 1977.

Bhalla, Ajit (ed.). *Technology and Employment in Industry*, Geneva: ILO, 1974.

Bhaduri, Amit and Anisur Rahman (eds.) *Studies in Rural Participation*. New Delhi: Oxford and IBH Pub, 1982.

Birchall, Johnston and Lou Hammond Ketilson. *Resilience of the Cooperative Business Model in Times of Crisis*. Geneva: ILO, 2009.

Böhning Roger. *A brief account of the ILO and policies on international migration*, ILO Century Project. Geneva: ILO and IILS, 2010.

Cecelski, Elizabeth. *The Rural Energy Crisis, Women's Work and Basic Needs, Perspectives and Approaches to Action*. Geneva: ILO, 1985.

Cotula, Lorenzo, Sonja Vermeulen, Rebecca Leonard and James Keeley. *Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural Investment and International Land Deals in Africa*. Rome: FAO, IFAD and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IEED), 2009.

David H. Freedman. *Improving Skills and Productivity of Disadvantaged Youth*. Employment Working Paper No. 7. Geneva: ILO, 2008.

Davis, Junior R. "Rural Non-Farm Livelihoods in Transition Economies: Emerging Issues and Policies." *Journal of Agricultural and Development Economics* (FAO), Vol. 3, No. 2, 2006, pp. 180–224.

de Givry, Jean. "The ILO and the Quality of Working Life - A New International Programme." *International Labour Review*, Vol. 117, No. 3, May-June 1978, pp. 261–272.

Dercon, Stefan. "Rural Poverty: Old Challenges in New Contexts." *The World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 24, No. 1, February 2009.

DFID. *Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future*. London: DFID, July 2009.

Egger, Philippe and Peter Peek. *ILO Projects for Rural Development: Some Preliminary Evidence on Their Impact*. Report presented to the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development. Geneva: ILO, 1989.

- Emmerij, Louis. *The Basic Needs Development Strategy*. Background paper for the World Economic and Social Survey 2010, Draft Paper Available at:
http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2010workshop/wess2010_emmerij.pdf [Accessed on 1st Nov. 2010.]
- FAO Investment Centre. *Increased Agricultural Investment is Critical to Fighting Hunger*. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/tci/whyinvestinagricultureandru/en/> [Accessed on 11th Feb. 2010.]
- FAO, ILO, UNESCO. *Training and Employment Opportunities to Address Poverty Among Rural Youth*. Bangkok: FAO-ILO-UNESCO, 2009.
- FAO. *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security*. Rome: FAO, 16–18 November 2009.
- FAO. *FAO Rural Employment Strategy 2010-2014: Productive and Decent Employment for Rural Development and Food Security*. Rome: FAO, 2010.
- FAO. *The roles of agriculture in development: policy implication and guidance*. Roles of Agriculture Project (ROA). Rome: FAO, 2007.
- FAO-IFAD-ILO. “Gender Dimensions of Agriculture and Rural Employment: Differentiated Pathways Out of Poverty.” Paper presented at the FAO-IFAD-ILO Workshop on ‘Gaps, Trends and Current Research in Gender Dimensions of Agricultural and Rural Employment: Differentiated Pathways Out of Poverty,’ 31 March - 2 April 2009. Rome: FAO, 2010.
- FAO-ILO-UNESCO. *Training and Employment Opportunities to Address Poverty Among Rural Youth*. Bangkok: FAO-ILO-UNESCO, 2009.
- Fazzio, Joseph. *The ILO and Cooperatives – Ninety Years of Partnership for a More Decent World for Working People*. Fazzio, Joseph. ILO and Cooperatives, COOP News No. 1. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- Gaude, Jacques André Guichaoua, Bertin Martens and Steve Miller. “Rural Development and Labour-Intensive Schemes.” *International Labour Review*, Vol. 126, No. 4, July-August 1987, pp. 423–446.
- Gaude, Jacques, Ng Phan-Thuy and Casper Van Kempen. “Evaluation of Special Public Works Programmes: Some Policy Conclusions.” *International Labour Review*, Vol. 123, No. 2, Mar-April 1984, pp 203-219.
- Ghai, Dharan and Samir Radwan (eds.) *Agrarian policies and rural poverty in Africa*. Geneva: ILO, 1983.
- Ghai, Dharan, Azizur R. Khan, Eddy L. H. Lee, and Torkel Alfthan. *The basic-needs approach to development. Some issues regarding concepts and methodology*. Geneva: ILO, 1980.
- Giusti, Jorge. *Resume of EDUC's Activities Regarding Rural Employment Generation*. Department Minutes. Geneva: ILO, 1986.
- Giusti, Jorge. *Special Services: A Real Instrument to Strengthen the Economic Basis of the Rural Workers' Organizations and to Promote Peoples' Participation*. Workers' Education for the Strengthening and Development of Rural Workers' Organizations and their Participation in Rural Development. Geneva: ILO, 1987.
- Gorham, Alex and Arsenio Espinoza. *Rural Vocational Training: Recent Experiences and Lessons Learned*. Geneva: ILO/ITC-Turin, 1990.
- Government of Pakistan, Prime Minister's Secretariat. *Skilling Pakistan: A Vision for the National Skills Strategy 2008-2012*. National Vocational and Technical Educations Commission (NAVTEC). <http://www.navtec.gov.pk/webpages/nationalstrategy.html> [Accessed 25th Feb. 2011.]
- Haggblade, Steven, Peter B.R. Hazell, and Thomas Reardon. “Transforming the Rural Non-Farm Economy: Opportunities and Threats in the Developing World.” *International Food Policy Research Institute*, Issue Brief 58, February 2009.
- Holz-Gimenez, Eric and Raj Patel. *Food Rebellion! Crisis and the Hunger for Justice*. Oxford: Pambazuka Press, 2009.
- Hurst, Peter and Peter Kirby. *Health, Safety and Environment: A Series of Trade Union Education Manuals for Agricultural Workers*. Geneva: ILO, 2004.
- Huxley, Frederick C and Lucita Lazo. *International Labour Organization Annual Evaluation Report: Final Evaluation of TREE Project: Pakistan and the Philippines*. Geneva: ILO & USDOL, 2008.

IDEASS. *Local Economic Development Agencies for Governance and Internationalization of Local Economies, and Human Development*. Rome: IDEASS, 2009.

IFAD: Rural Poverty Report. Rome: IFAD, 2011 (Forthcoming) <http://www.ifad.org/rpr2011/index.htm>

ILO and SIDA. *Skills Development for Self-Reliance – Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland and Zambia*. Report of ILO and SIDA Evaluation Mission (mimeographed). Geneva: ILO, 1991.

ILO and USDOl. *Independent Final Evaluation on the Regional Programme on Prevention, Withdrawal and Rehabilitation of Children engaged in Hazardous Work in Commercial Agriculture*. Geneva: ILO and USDOl, 2005.

ILO and UNDP. *Evaluation of Three Special Public Works Programmes: Burundi, Nepal and Sierra Leone, Main Report*. UNDP and ILO Joint Meeting for Support to Special Public Works Programmes. Geneva: ILO and UNDP, 1986.

ILO. *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*. Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. Geneva: ILO, 2004.

ILO. *Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15; Phase I: Aligned with Programme and Budget 2010–11*. Geneva: ILO, 2010.

ILO. *Assistance to Employers Organizations with Emphasis on Small Enterprise Development*. IYB Seminars for Asian and Pacific Employers' Organizations (1979-1981) Archives TF 18-01-2-B-1-1-4-1 Jacket 1. ILO, Geneva: 1979.

ILO. *Danida Project on Assistance to Employers' Organisations in East Africa with Special Emphasis on Small Enterprises Development: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe*. IYB Projects in East Africa: Archive file 18-159-4-A-2-10. ILO, Geneva: 1989.

ILO. *Employment Opportunities for Rural Women through Organization*. Phase III, 1984–1985, interim evaluation. Geneva: ILO, 1985.

ILO. *Facts on Safety and Health at Work*. World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2009. Geneva: ILO, 2009.

ILO. *ILO strategy on promoting women's entrepreneurship development*, Governing Body, 301st Session, Committee on Employment and Social Policy. ILO: Geneva, March 2008.

ILO. *In-depth Review of ILO's Role and Activities in Rural Development*. Governing Body, 202nd Session, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee. Geneva: ILO, February March 1977.

ILO. *Poverty and Landlessness in Rural Asia*. Geneva: ILO, 1977.

ILO. *Recovering from the Crisis: a Global Jobs Pact*. Report of the Secretary-General to UN ECOSOC, substantive Session of 2010. New York: ILO, 28 June - 23 July 2010.

ILO. *Report of the Advisory Committee on Rural Development*. ACRD 10th Session, Geneva: ILO, Nov. & Dec. 1983.

ILO. *Report of the Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour* (CEIL/1/8.1951), 1st Session, Geneva: ILO, 1951.

ILO. *Report on the Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Global Food Price Crisis and its Impact on Decent Work*. Geneva: ILO, 5-6 March 2009.

ILO. *Resolution and Conclusion Concerning the Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises*. International Labour Conference, 96th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2007.

ILO. "Cooperatives and Rural Employment," COOP Fact Sheet No. 1. Geneva: ILO, 2007.

ILO. "History of ILO's Work." Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/indigenous/Aboutus/ HistoryofILOswork/lang—en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/indigenous/Aboutus/HistoryofILOswork/lang—en/index.htm) [Accessed 28 November 2010.]

ILO. "Promoting Decent and Productive Employment of Young People in Rural Areas: A Review of Strategies and Programmes." Project (October 2010 – September 2011). Geneva: ILO, 2010.

ILO. "Ten Years After: A Decade of Progress for Indigenous Peoples." *World of Work Magazine*, No. 52, Geneva: ILO, Nov. 2004.

ILO. "Trade Unions in the Informal Sector: Finding Their Bearings. Nine Country Papers: Bulgaria, Columbia, El Salvador, Ghana, Hungary, India, Italy, Kenya, Philippines." *Labour Education* 1999/3, No. 116. Geneva: ILO, 1993.

ILO. *A Roadmap for the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa*. First African Decent Work Symposium, Recovering from the Crisis: The Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in Africa. Ouagadougou: ILO, 1 -2 December 2009.

ILO. *Action Against Child Labour 2008-2009: IPEC Progress and Future Priorities*. ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. Geneva: ILO, 2010.

ILO. *Action Taken to Implement the Recommendations of the Second Session of the Committee of Experts on Indigenous Labour*. Panel of Consultants on Indigenous and Tribal Populations, First Session, Geneva: ILO, 1962.

ILO. *Activities of the ILO 1969*. Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference, Fifty Fourth Session. Geneva: ILO, 1970.

ILO. *Agenda Hemisférica Para Genera Trabajo Decente 2006-14*, 16th Latin American Regional Meeting. Brasilia: ILO, 2-5 may 2006.

ILO. *Agenda of the 97th Session (2008) of the ILC*. Governing Body, 295th Session. Geneva: ILO, March 2006.

ILO. *An Introduction to the WISE Programme*. Conditions of Work and Employment Programme. Geneva: ILO, 2007.

ILO. *Appraisal of the Achievements of the Andean Indian Programme*. Agenda Item 2, Panel of Consultants on Indigenous and Tribal Populations. Geneva: ILO, 1962.

ILO. *Asian Development in the 1980s: Growth, Employment and Working Conditions*. Report of the Director-General to the Ninth Asian Regional Conference, Report I, Part I. Manila: ILO, 1980.

ILO. *Assessment of Selected ILO Projects Concerning Rural Small Industrial Enterprises*. ILO Governing Body, 238th Session, Committee on Operational Programmes. Geneva: ILO, November 1987.

ILO. *Assistance to Employers' Organizations with Special Emphasis on Promoting Small Enterprise Development*, via employers' organizations in Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Project reference number RAF/84/MO&/DAN Available in: Archive file 18-159-4-A-2-6.

ILO. Bitter Harvest: Child Labour in Agriculture. ILO Project Developing National and International Trade Union Strategies to Combat Child Labour. Bureau for Workers' Activities. Geneva: ILO, 2002.

ILO. *Conclusions of the 11th African Regional Meeting*. Addis Ababa: ILO, 24–27 April 2007.

ILO. *Conclusions to the International Workers' Symposium on Decent Work in Agriculture*. Geneva: ILO, September 2003.

ILO. *COOPREFORM Structural Reforms Through Improved Cooperative Development Policies and Laws*. 10th Progress Report (January–December 2000) and Work Plan (January–December 2001). Geneva: ILO, 2000–2001.

ILO. *Declaration Concerning the Aims and Purpose of the International Labour Organization* (Declaration of Philadelphia). International Labour Conference, 26th Session. Philadelphia: ILO, 10 May 1944.

ILO. *Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action*. Adopted by the Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour (World Employment Conference). Geneva: ILO, 4–17 June 1976.

ILO. *Defining Strategies for Improving Working and Employment Conditions in Micro and Small Enterprises and the Informal Economy – Overview of the ILO Learning and Research Agenda*. Conditions of Work and Employment Programme. Geneva: ILO, 2003.

ILO. *Employing Youth: Promoting Employment-Intensive Growth*, Report for the Interregional Symposium on Strategies to Combat Youth Unemployment and Marginalization. Geneva: ILO, 2000.

ILO. *Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One- World Problem*. Report of the Director-General to the World Employment Conference. Geneva: ILO, 1976

- ILO. *Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women in Employment*. Report VII, International Labour Conference. Geneva: ILO, 1985.
- ILO. *Establishment of a Regional Rural Vocational Training Centre in the Asia and Pacific Region*. Governing Body, 225th Session, Committee on Operational Programmes. Geneva: ILO, Feb-March 1984.
- ILO. *Evaluation of the InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability*. Governing Body, 291st Session, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee. Geneva: ILO, 2004.
- ILO. *Project Extending Social Protection through Health Micro-Insurance Schemes for Women in the Informal Economy*. (Final Report January 2003 – March 2005).
- ILO. Fair WIND for Safety in Kyrgyzstan. ILO Video. Geneva: ILO, 2008 Available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Broadcast_materials/Institutionalvideos/lang—en/docName—WCMS_101324/index.htm.
- ILO. *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work*. International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Report of the Committee on Gender Equality, Sixth Item on the Agenda. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- ILO. *General Observation on Labour Inspection Convention 1947 (No. 81) and Labour Convention (Agriculture) Convention 1969 (No. 129)*. Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), Report III (Part 1A), International Labour Conference. Geneva: ILO, 2010.
- ILO. General Report, regional Tripartite Colloquium on *La problématique de l'Emploi Rural dans les Pays Membres de l'UEMOA: Enjeux et Perspectives*. Bamako: ILO, 22–23 September 2005.
- ILO. *General Survey of the Reports Concerning the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), and the Protocol of 1995 to the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947, Labour Inspection Recommendation, 1947 (No. 81), Labour Inspection (Mining and Transport) Recommendation, 1947 (No. 82), Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129), and the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1969 (No. 133)*. Third item on the agenda: Information and reports on the application of Conventions and Recommendations. Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (articles 19, 22 and 35 of the Constitution). International Labour Conference, Report III (Partie 1B), 95th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2006
- ILO. *ILO Contribution to UNIDO International Labour Standards: Closing the Labour Protection Gap for Rural Workers*. Geneva: ILO, 2010.
- ILO. *ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (No. 169): A Manual*. Geneva: ILO, 2003
- ILO. *ILO Strategy on Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship Development*. Governing Body, 301st Session. Committee on Employment and Social Policy. Geneva: ILO, March 2008.
- ILO. *Implementation Report EMP/ENT: Intermediate Outcome – Sustainable Enterprises Generate Productive Jobs, Women's Entrepreneurship Development*. Internal ILO document. Geneva: ILO, October 2009.
- ILO. *Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Strategy for Employment-Intensive Investment (EIIS)*. Governing Body, Programming, Financial, and Administrative Committee. Geneva: ILO, Nov 2006.
- ILO. *Independent Evaluation of the ILO's Strategy for Employment-Intensive Investment*. ILO Governing Body, 297th Session, Programme, Financial, and Administrative Committee. Geneva: ILO, November 2006.
- ILO. *Indigenous Peoples: Living and Working Conditions of Aboriginal Populations in Independent Countries, Studies and Reports*. New Series No. 35. Geneva: ILO, 1953.
- ILO. International Symposium on Strategies to Combat Youth Unemployment and Marginalization. Geneva: ILO, 13–14 December 1999.
- ILO. *Inter-Regional Symposium on Workers' Education for the Strengthening and Development of Rural Workers' Organizations*. Working paper. Geneva: ILO, 23–31 March 1983.
- ILO. *Labour and Social Trends in ASEAN*. Bangkok: ILO, 2008.
- ILO. *Labour Inspection on Plantations*, Third Item on the Agenda, Report III, Committee on Work on Plantations, Fifth Session. Geneva: ILO, 1966.
- ILO. *Local Economic Recovery in Post-Conflict: Guidelines*. Geneva: ILO, 2010.

- ILO. *Minutes of the 292nd Session of the Governing Body*. Governing Body, 292nd Session. Geneva: ILO, March 2005.
- ILO. Outcomes of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts on the 1st African Decent Work Symposium, on *Together Addressing the Implications of the Financial and Economic Crisis on Africa's Peoples*. Addis Ababa: ILO, 27–28 February 2009.
- ILO. *Policy Responses to the Economic Crisis A Decent Work Approach in Europe and Central Asia*, 8th European Regional Meeting. Lisbon: ILO, 9–13 February 2009.
- ILO. *Problems of Rural Workers in Asia and the Pacific*. Report III, 9th Asia Regional Conference. Manila: ILO, 1980.
- ILO. *Productive Employment for Poverty Reduction and Development*. Governing Body 289th Session, Committee on Employment and Social Policy, Second Item on the Agenda. Geneva: ILO, March 2004.
- ILO. *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1992–93 Rural Development*, Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development Discussion Paper. Geneva: ILO, 24 April 1990.
- ILO. *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1994–1995*. Geneva: ILO, 1993.
- ILO. *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1996–1997*. Governing Body, 264th Session, Programme, Financial, and Administrative Committee. Geneva: ILO, 1995.
- ILO. *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1998–1999*. International Labour Conference, 85th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1997.
- ILO. *Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2004–2005*. Geneva: ILO, 2003.
- ILO. *Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction*. Report IV, International Labour Conference, 97th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2008.
- ILO. *Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises, Integrated Think Piece*. EMP/ENT. Geneva: ILO, 8 July 2009.
- ILO. *Ratification and Promotion of Fundamental and Governance ILO Conventions*. Governing Body, 306th Session, Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards. Geneva: ILO, November 2009.
- ILO. *Realizing Decent Work in Asia*, Fourteenth Asian Regional Meeting. Busan: ILO, August & September 2006.
- ILO. *Recovering from the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact*, Provisional Record, International Labour Conference, 98th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- ILO. *Reducing the Decent Work Deficit in the Infrastructure and Construction Sectors*. Geneva: ILO, 2004.
- ILO. *Report of the Committee on Rural Employment*. Provisional Record, International Labour Conference, 75th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1988.
- ILO. *Report of the Committee on Rural Employment*. Report IV: Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction, Provisional Record, International Labour Conference, 97th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2008.
- ILO. *Report of the Director-General – Activities of the ILO, 1992*. International Labour Conference, 80th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1993.
- ILO. *Report of the Director-General – Activities of the ILO, 1994–95*. International Labour Conference, 83rd Session. Geneva: ILO, 1996.
- ILO. *Report of the Director-General to the 1981 International Labour Conference, 67th Session*. Geneva: ILO, 1981.
- ILO. *Report of the Director-General, part 1: Child Labour*. Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference 69th Session 1983. Geneva: ILO, 1983.
- ILO. *Report of the Director-General: Activities of the ILO*. 1988 International Labour Conference, 76th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1989.
- ILO. *Report of the ILO – MATCOM Revision Meeting*. Geneva: ILO, 23 April 2009.
- ILO. *Report of the ILO Committee on Operational Programmes*. Governing Body, 219th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1982.

- ILO. *Report of the regional technical seminar on industrial relations for employers' organizations in French-speaking African countries*. Mimeographed (French only). Geneva: ILO, 1977.
- ILO. *Resolution Concerning ILO's and Tripartite Constituents' Role in Addressing the Global Food Crisis*. International Labour Conference, 97th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2008.
- ILO. *Resolution Concerning Rural Employment Promotion*, International Labour Conference. Geneva: ILO, 1988.
- ILO. *Review of ILO Rural Development Activities Since 1979*. Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 10th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1983.
- ILO. *Review of ILO Rural Development Activities Since 1983*. Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 11th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1990.
- ILO. *Review of ILO Rural Development Activities Since 1983*. First item on the Agenda, Panel of ILO's Advisory Committee on Rural Development. Geneva: ILO, 3–5 December 1985.
- ILO. *Rural Development - An Annotated Bibliography of ILO Publications and Documents 1983–1990*. Geneva: ILO, 1991.
- ILO. *Rural Development – Taking into Account the Problems of Indigenous Populations As Well as the Drift of the Rural Population to the Cities and its Integration in the Urban Informal Sector*, Report II (Agenda Item 2), 12th Conference of American States, Members of the ILO. Montreal: ILO, March 1986.
- ILO. *Rural Employment Promotion*, Report VII, 75th Session of the International Labour Conference. Geneva: ILO, 1988.
- ILO. *Rural Skills Training: A Generic Manual on TREE*. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- ILO. *Rural Transport in Developing Countries*. Barwell, Ian, Geoff A. Edmonds, John D.G.F. Howe and Jan de Veen. London: ILO, 1985.
- ILO. *Sierra Leone Labour-Intensive Rural Works Programme*, Evaluation Report. Geneva: ILO, March 1988.
- ILO. *SIYB China, Evaluation Report 2004–2007*. Geneva: ILO, 2007.
- ILO. *SIYB Final Project Evaluation*. Geneva: ILO, 2005.
- ILO. *SIYB Global Outreach Report*. Geneva: ILO, 2003.
- ILO. *Special Services of Rural Workers' Organizations. A Workers' Education Manual*. 2nd Ed., Geneva: ILO, 1994.
- ILO. *Special Services of Rural Workers' Organizations. A Workers' Education Manual*. 1st Ed., Geneva: ILO, 1978.
- ILO. *Special services: A Real Instrument to Strengthen the Economic Basis of the Rural Workers' Organizations and to Promote People's Participation*. Geneva: ILO, 1986.
- ILO. Speech of the Director-General at the Niamey (Niger) seminar to launch the IYB tool, December 1982. See Archives TF 18-01-2-B-1-1-4-1 Jacket 2, Speech document reference SDPME/1982/D.3.
- ILO. *Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15: Making Decent Work Happen*. Governing Body, Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee, 304th Session. Geneva: ILO, March 2009.
- ILO. *Strategies and practice for Labour Inspection*. Governing Body, Employment and Social Policy Committee, Third Item on the Agenda, Geneva: ILO, November 2006.
- ILO. *Study on Labour Inspection and Precarious Employment in Agriculture and the Food Industry*. Geneva: ILO, October 1993.
- ILO. *Supporting Entrepreneurship Education: A Report on the Global Outreach of the ILO Know About Business Programme*. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- ILO. *Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture: Guidance on Policy Making and Practice*. ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. Geneva: ILO, 2006.
- ILO. *Tackling the Global Jobs Crisis: Recovery Through Decent Work Policies*. Report I (A) of the Director General to International Labour Conference, 98th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- ILO. *Technical Review of ILO Rural Development Activities Since 1965 and Suggestions for the Future Orientation of the ILO's Work*. Advisory Committee on Rural Development, 8th Session. Geneva: ILO, 1974.

- ILO. *The Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007–2015*. Report of the Director-General, 11th African Regional Meeting. Addis Ababa: ILO, April 2007.
- ILO. *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*. Global Report Under the Follow-Up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. International Labour Conference 95th Session 2006 Report 1 (B). Geneva: ILO, 2006.
- ILO. *The Poor in Asian Development: An ILO Programme*. Report of the Director-General to the 1975 International Labour Conference. Geneva: ILO, 1975.
- ILO. *The Poor in Asian Development: An ILO Programme*. Report of the Director-General, first item on the agenda. ILO Asian Regional Conference, 8th Session. Colombo: ILO, September–October 1975.
- ILO. *The Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises*, Report VI, 72nd Session of the International Labour Conference. Geneva: ILO, 1986.
- ILO. *The Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises*. Report VI, International Labour Conference, 96th Session. Geneva: ILO, 2007.
- ILO. *Thematic Evaluation Report: Gender Issues in Technical Cooperation*. Governing Body, 292nd Session, Committee on Technical Cooperation. Geneva: ILO, March 2005.
- ILO. *Training Resource Pack on Child Labour in Agriculture*. ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. Geneva: ILO, 2005.
- ILO. *Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour*. Geneva: ILO, 4–17 June 1976.
- ILO. *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Full Participation and Equality*. Report of the Director-General to the 1981 International Labour Conference: Part I. Geneva: ILO, 1981.
- ILO. Project *Women's Education for Women Members of Rural Workers' Organizations in Asia*, Phase II Project started in 1984.
- ILO. *Women's Entrepreneurship and the Promotion of Decent Work: A Thematic Evaluation*. Governing Body 298th Session. Committee on Technical Cooperation. Geneva: ILO, March 2007.
- ILO. Project *Workers' Education* (EDUC), (1971–1999).
- ILO. *Workers' Education Assistance to Hint Khet Mazdoor Sabha, India*. (1985–1992).
- ILO. Project *Workers' Education for Women Members of Rural Workers' Organizations*. (RAF/85/M02/NOR - Phase I); (RAF/88/M09/NOR - Phase II).
- ILO. *World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization: A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*. Geneva: ILO, 2005.
- ILO. *World Employment Report 200–05: Employment, Productivity and Poverty Reduction*. Geneva: ILO, 2004.
- ILO. *World Food Conference*. Fourth Item on the Agenda, International Organizations Committee, Governing Body 195th Session. Geneva: ILO, Feb–March 1975.
- ILO. *Youth: Pathways to Decent Work*. Report VI, International Labour Conference, 93rd Session. Geneva: ILO, 2005.
- ILO/UNDP: *The Crisis and MDG Acceleration*. Joint ILO-UNDP Technical Meeting on Employment, September 2010.
- ILO-IALI. “Implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards Globally” IALI – ILO Conference & Workshop. Dusseldorf: ILO-IALI, 3–6 Nov. 2009.
- ILO-UN Social Protection Floor Initiative. *The Role of Social Security in Crisis Response and Recovery, and Beyond*. ILO News, 2010, Available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Feature_stories/lang--en/ WCMS_141818/index.htm Accessed on 15 November 2010 [Accessed on 25th Feb. 2011.]
- Islam, Rizwanul. *Rural Industrialization and Employment in Asia*. New Delhi: ILO-ARTEP, 1987.

- Islam, Riswanul. *Decent Employment through Labour-Based Technology in Infrastructure*, ACC Network on Rural Development and Food Security Available at: <http://www.rdfs.net/oldsite/en/themes/Employ-e.htm>
- Jolly, Richard, Louis Emmerij, Dharam Ghai and Frédéric Lapeyre. *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*. UN: UN Intellectual History Project Series, 2004.
- Kalyana, Samaja and Mahila Bishayaka Mantranalaya. *Final Report on the Evaluation of the Thana-level Cottage Industries Training-Cum-Production Centers*. Dhaka: Bangladesh Project Management Institute, 1988.
- Kawakami, Tsuyoshi, Ton That Khai, and Kazutaka Kogi. Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development. Vietnam: Center for Occupational Health and Environment: Department of Health, 2005.
- Khan, Azizur Rahman and Eddy Lee (eds.) *Poverty in Rural Asia*. Bangkok: ILO, 1984.
- Kilby, Peter and Paul Bangasser. "Assessing technical cooperation: the case of rural industry", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. 117, No. 3, May-June 1978, pp. 343–352;
- Kogi, Kazutaka. *International Experiences in Applying WIND*. Geneva: ILO, 2010. Unpublished report.
- Kugleman, Michael. *Introduction,’ in ‘Land Grab? The Race for the World’s Farmland*. Eds., Michael Kugleman and Susan Levenstein. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Asia Program: 2009.
- Loutfi, Martha Fetherolf (ed.). *Women, Gender and Work: What is Equality and How Do We Get There?* Geneva: ILO, 2001.
- Loutfi, Martha. *Rural Women: Unequal Partners in Development*. Geneva: ILO, 1980.
- Morse, David A. "The World Employment Programme." *International Labour Review*, Issue 6 (June 1968): 517–524.
- Mossige, Ann and Erik Whist. *Evaluation of ACOPAM*, 2002. Unpublished.
- Oakley, Peter and David Marsden. *Approaches to participation in rural development*. Geneva: ILO, 1983.
- OECD. *Promoting Pro-Poor Growth: Agriculture*. Paris: OECD, 2009.
- OECD-DAC *Measuring Aide to Agriculture*. Paris: OECD, April 2010.
- Otobe, Naoko. et al. *Gender Equitable Decent Work to Reduce Rural Poverty and Boost Economic Growth*. Part of a set of eight policy briefs policy briefs on rural women empowerment. Available at: www.fao-il.org/more/workshop/en [Accessed on 28 November 2010.] Rome: FAO-ILO, 2010.
- Peek, Peter and Philippe Egger. *ILO Projects for Rural Development: Some Preliminary Evidence on Their Impact*. Report for the 1989 annual meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development, Agenda Item 5. Geneva: ILO, 1989.
- PEET. *Poverty Reduction Through Employment and Empowerment: An Integrated Strategy*, Fifth draft. Geneva: ILO, 3 November 2005.
- Phongpaichit, Pasuk. *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masseuses*. Geneva: ILO, 1982.
- Ramilison, Eric Norbert and Jean Gabriel Randrianarison. *Cadrage Macro-économique et Potentiel des Approches Fondées sur l’Emploi et les Ressources Locales*. Genève: OIT, 2007.
- Redturs. *Our Conception of Tourism*. Available online at: http://www.redturs.org/_documentos/Trifoliar-English-p1-p2.pdf. [Accessed on 17 October 2010.]
- Rodgers, Gerry, Eddy Lee, Lee Slepston and Jasmien Van Daele. *The International Labour Organization and the Quest for Social Justice 1919-2009*. Geneva: ILO, 2009.
- Rodgers, Gerry and Guy Standing. "Economic Roles of Children in Low-Income Countries." *International Labour Review*, Vol. 120, No. 1, Jan-Feb 1981. Pages 41–47.
- Schmitz, Joachim. *COOPREFORM 1993-2001: Structural Reform Through Improvement of Cooperative Development Policy and Legislation – An Analysis*. Geneva: ILO, 2002.
- Sen, Amartya. *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.
- Sen, Amartya. *Employment, Technology and Development*. Oxford: University Press, 1999.

- Termine, Paola et al. *Breaking the Rural Poverty Cycle: Getting Girls and Boys Out of Work and Into School*. FAO-IFAD-ILO Policy Brief, 2010.
- The Economist. "Outsourcing's Third Wave." *The Economist*, May 21, 2009, Available online www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13692889
- Thorndahl, Kaj. *The DANIDA Support to the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP)*. Geneva: ILO, 2002.
- Ullrich, Gabriele. *Review of MATCOM Material*. Geneva: ILO, August 2008. Unpublished.
- UN ACC Network on Rural Development and Food Security: *Guidelines for Thematic Groups*. Rome: FAO, 1999.
- UN ACC. *Report of the Subcommittee on Rural Development*. 24th Session. Geneva: UN, 15–17 May 1996.
- UN CEB Issue paper: *The Global Financial Crisis and Its Impact on the Work of the UN System*. Geneva: UN, September 2009.
- UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination. *Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its Eighteenth Session*. 17 and 18 September 2009. New York: UN, 20 October 2009.
- UN ECOSOC. *Promoting an Integrated Approach to Rural Development in Developing Countries for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development*. Report of the Secretary-General, Substantive Section 2003, Item 2. Geneva: UN, 2003.
- UN ECOSOC. *Promoting an Integrated Approach to Rural Development in Developing Countries for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development*, Draft Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment Submitted by the President of the Council on the Basis of Informal Conversations, Substantive session. Geneva: UN, 30 Jun–25 July 2003.
- UN ECOSOC. *Recovering From the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact*. Report of the Secretary-General. New York: UN, 6th May 2010, E/2010/64.
- UN ECOSOC. *The Role of the United Nations System in Promoting Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All*. Report of the Secretary-General, Substantive session of 2007. Geneva: UN, 26 April 2007.
- UN ECOSOC: *Draft Ministerial Declaration of the High-Level Segment Submitted by the President of the Council on the Basis of Informal Consultations*. Substantive session of 2006, Agenda Item 2: Creating an Environment at the National and International Levels Conducive to Generating Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All, and Its Impact on Sustainable Development. Geneva: UN, 5 July 2006.
- UN General Assembly. Resolution on *Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. New York: UN, September 2010.
- UN HLTf. *Outline of Progress Against the July 2008 CFA*. Draft Report. New York: UN, 8 July 2009.
- UN HLTf. *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*. New York: UN, September 2010.
- UN Human Rights Council: *Large scale land acquisitions and leases: A set of minimum principles and measures to address the human rights challenge*. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Olivier de Schutter. New York: UN General Assembly, 28 September 2009.
- UN. *Economic Advancement of Women*. Report of the Secretary-General. Commission on the Status of Women, Fiftieth session, Economic and Social Council. UN: 9th December 2005.
- UN. *Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development*. Denmark: UN, 1995. Available at http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/pgme_action.html
- UN. *Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination Task Force on Rural Development*, ACC 9th Meeting. Rome: UN, February 1981.
- UN. *Report of the Auto-Evaluation of the UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security*. New York: UN, 2005.
- UN. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter*. Human Rights Council, 13th session. New York: UN General Assembly, 22 December 2009.

- UN. *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. 60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome*. New York: UN, 2005.
- UN. *United Nations Millennium Goals Website* Available at: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml> [Accessed on 28th Nov. 2010.]
- UNDG. *Enhancing the UN's contribution to National Capacity Development: A UNDG Position Statement*. UN: UNDG, 2008.
- UNDP, ILO, UNOPS, EURADA, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Local Economic Development Agencies: International Cooperation for Human Development, Economic Democracy and Poverty Reduction*. 2000.
- Van Imschoot, Marc. *Etude Comparative des Différentes Approches Utilisée Pour la Réalisation des Infrastructures de Base à Madagascar: Impact sur la Crédit d'Emplois et l'Utilisation de Devises*. Genève: OIT, 2007.
- WB Independent Evaluation Group. *Impact Evaluations and Development, NONIE Guidance on Impact Evaluation*. Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE), Frans Leeuv and Jos Vaessen. Washington, D.C.: WB, 2009.
- WB. *From Vision to Action in the Rural Sector*. Washington, D.C.: WB, 1996.
- WB. *Implementing Agriculture for Development - Action Plan FY2010–12*. Washington, D.C.: WB, 2009.
- WB. *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* Washington, D.C.: WB, September 2010.
- WB. *World Development Report 2005*. Washington, D.C.: WB, 2005.
- WB. *World Development Report: Agriculture for Development*. Washington, D.C.: WB, 2008.
- WHO. *Personal Health Care and Social Security*. Report of a Joint ILO/WHO Committee, WHO Technical Report No. 480. Geneva: WHO, 1971.
- World Bank: *World Development Indicators 2008*. Washington, D.C.: WB, 2008.
- World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization: *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*. Geneva: ILO, 2004.
- Zarraga, José. *Skills Training Programmes for Rural Workers*. Mimeo graphed. Geneva: ILO, 1986.

French:

- Egger, Philippe. *Travail et Agriculture dans le Tiers Monde- Pour une Politique Active de l'emploi Rural*. Geneva: ILO, 1993.
- OIT. *Projet Améliorer les Conditions de Travail et les Conditions de Vie des Familles et des Enfants dans le Milieu agricole au Sénégal, Bénin et Mali (2007–2010)*.
- OIT. *Projet Appui à la formation professionnelle et continue et à l'apprentissage*.

Spanish:

- OIT. *Trabajo Decente en las Américas: Una Agenda Hemisférica, 2006–15*. XVI Reunión Regional Americana. Brasilia: OIT, mayo de 2006.

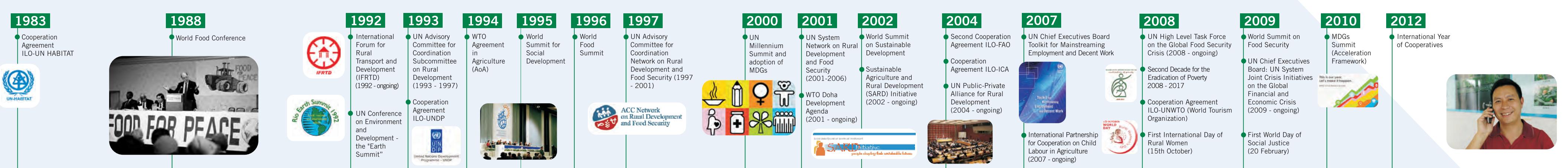
RURAL DEVELOPMENT through DECENT WORK

FOR GROWTH, PRODUCTIVE JOBS, INCOME, FOOD SECURITY, GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, RIGHTS, VOICE, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CRISIS RESILIENCE



International Labour Organization

Timeline of ILO RURAL WORK



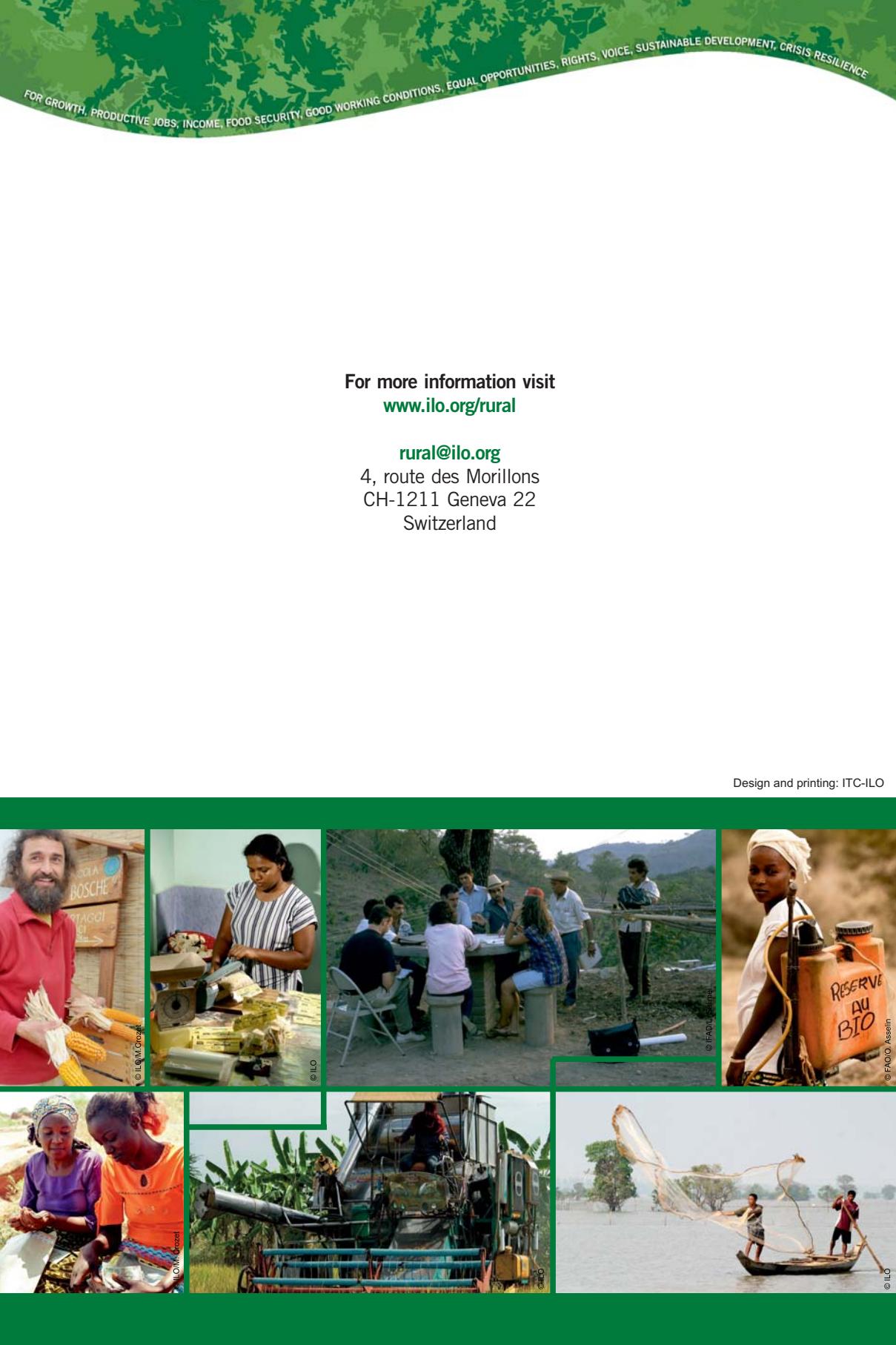
80s

90s

2000s

2010s





Design and printing: ITC-ILO