

SDGNOTE



International
Labour
Organization



ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON DECENT WORK - BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND INVESTMENTS

The 2030 Agenda embraces the three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental – in an integrated and interconnected manner. It contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will build on the progress achieved under the Millennium Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development puts people and the planet at its centre and gives the international community the impetus it needs to work together to tackle the formidable challenges confronting humanity, including those in the world of work.

The ILO DW for SDGs Notes Series

At a special UN summit in September 2015 world leaders adopted a new vision for global development: “Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.



The 2030 Agenda calls for integrated and transformative policies to tackle development challenges. The promotion of more and better jobs is a central element that cuts across many of the Sustainable Development Goals with SDG 8 at its core. The Director-General has stressed that Agenda 2030 is a major responsibility, opportunity, and at the same time, a challenge for the ILO. It thus requires a new way of working across the Office and a new way of communicating about Decent Work. The DW for SDGs Notes series is one building block in this process. It aims to provide a thematic decent work perspective on the SDG framework for ILO officials engaging in SDG discussions with constituents, UN counterparts, as well as development partners. SDG notes are envisaged for all Programme and Budget (P&B) outcomes. These more detailed notes are complemented by short leaflets on communication and advocacy prepared for external distribution.

The DW for SDGs Notes should be used in conjunction with the ILO Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The present document is an SDG Note on “Engaging the private sector on decent work”, which mainly responds to SDGs 8 and 17 and related indicators.¹ It highlights the importance of engaging enterprises on decent work in order to achieve sustainable development and inclusive growth and underlines how businesses are expected to contribute to the new development agenda by respecting workers’ rights and engaging in decent work priorities at country level through their operations and investments. It aims to provide guidance on how the Office can support the work of the tripartite constituents to this effect.

1- The Global Indicator Framework developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to monitor progress on 169 targets of the SDGs was agreed upon by General Assembly in July 2017. The framework has 232 indicators and each indicator has been assigned to one or several organizations to coordinate efforts around collection and reporting of national data. These indicators are classified into three tiers depending on the availability of data and internationally agreed measurement methodology. The global indicators can be found [here](#). The list of custodian agencies [here](#).





1- THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON DECENT WORK

Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth is essential for prosperity. Building dynamic, sustainable, innovative and people-centred economies and promoting decent work for all is therefore central to the new development agenda and is the focus of SDG 8.

To realize this ambitious programme and reach the 17 SDGs and its 169 associated targets, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for an enhanced global partnership bringing together governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors. The Agenda for Sustainable Development specifically highlights the importance of partnerships to ensure its implementation and fully recognizes the role played by the private sector, ranging from micro to cooperatives to multinational enterprises (MNEs) in meeting its goals and targets.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that **“private business activities, investment and innovation are major drivers of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation.”**

Engaging with enterprises is important for the realization of all sustainable development goals and targets but is of particular relevance to SDG 8. Enterprises contribute to sustainable development and the achievement of SDG targets first and foremost, by respecting workers’ rights and contributing to decent work priorities through their day to day operations and investments. In some cases, the engagement of enterprises in a given country of operations can lead to the creation of public-private partnerships that address specific decent work deficits or identify decent work opportunities and might complement or lead to specific projects and programmes.





SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Selected target of direct relevance for enterprises:

- **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**
- **8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**
- **8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**
- **8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms**
- **8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment**

Indicator 8.3.1.: Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex

Indicator 8.5.1.: Average hourly earnings of male and female employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities

Indicator 8.5.2.: Unemployment rate, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities

Indicator 8.6.1.: Proportion of youth (aged 15 – 24 years) not in education, employment or training

Indicator 8.7.1.: Proportion and number of children aged 5 – 17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age

Indicator 8.8.1.: Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status

Indicator 8.8.2.: Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status

Successfully engaging the private sector in achieving the SDG targets also requires a public legislative and policy framework conducive to the sustainable development of enterprises. Private sector engagement and private sector development are two sides of the same coin. Governments are thus called upon to put into place an enabling policy framework in order to promote private sector development as a means to promote more and better jobs.

1.1 Why is engaging with the private sector important for sustainable development?

The **Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development** is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides guidance as to the means that are necessary to achieve the targets. In paragraphs 35-49 it addresses actions and considerations related to “domestic and international private business and finance”.

It highlights the crucial influence of foreign direct investment (FDI) on sustainable development and underlines the need to ensure that incentives meant to attract private sector investments are in line with national development priorities:

“Private international capital flows, particularly foreign direct investment (FDI), along with a stable international financial system, are vital complements to national development efforts.” (Paragraph 35)

“We will develop policies and, where appropriate, strengthen regulatory frameworks to better align private sector incentives with public goals, including incentivizing the private sector to adopt sustainable practices, and foster long-term quality investment. Public policy is needed to create the enabling environment at all levels and a regulatory framework necessary to encourage entrepreneurship and a vibrant domestic business sector.” (Paragraph 36)

It recognizes the contribution made by enterprises to sustainable development through their business operations. It calls for a rights-based approach to business development and for the promotion of business good practices that share the common vision of sustainable development while looking into the social impact of their operations:

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“We will foster a dynamic and well-functioning business sector, while protecting labour rights and environmental and health standards in accordance with relevant international standards and agreements, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the labour standards of the ILO, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and key multilateral environmental agreements, for parties to these agreements. We welcome the growing number of businesses that embrace a core business model that takes account of the environmental, social and governance impacts of their activities, and urge all others to do so. We encourage impact investing, which combines a return on investment with non-financial impacts. We will promote sustainable corporate practices, including integrating environmental, social, and governance factors into company reporting as appropriate, with countries deciding on the appropriate balance of voluntary and mandatory rules. We encourage businesses to adopt principles for responsible business and investing, and we support the work of the United Nations Global Compact in this regard.” (Paragraph 37)

The Action Agenda also looks into the contribution of the private sector in addressing gender equality, which is at the heart of both sustainable development and the decent work agenda:

“We further encourage the private sector to contribute to advancing gender equality through striving to ensure women’s full and productive employment and decent work, equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and equal opportunities, as well as protecting them against discrimination and abuse in the workplace. We support the UN Women’s and UN Global Compact’s Women Empowerment Principles and encourage increased investments in female-owned companies or businesses.” (Paragraph 41)

2 WHAT IS THE ILO’S APPROACH?

2.1 ILO instruments

The **Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration)** was revised in March 2017 to take into account global developments, including the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, governments and enterprises have the opportunity to use the principles of the MNE Declaration as guidelines for enhancing the positive impact of business operations to achieve decent work for all and thus contribute to the realization of the Sustainable Development Agenda. The guidance provided in the MNE Declaration can also be used in developing partnerships, including multi-stakeholder partnerships and international co-operation initiatives. As the only ILO instrument which addresses enterprises directly, the MNE Declaration translates principles derived from international labour standards into operations to be undertaken by companies. But it also addresses governments (home and host countries of MNEs), as well as social partners and urges them to put in place a legislative and policy framework which will elicit a positive contribution on the part of the private sector to socio-economic development and decent work. The instrument promotes social dialogue at all levels, calls for policy coherence and an alignment of private sector actions with national development objectives and decent work priorities.

It is also interesting to note that the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 ([No. 193](#)) recognizes the significance of cooperatives for the attainment of sustainable development goals and, to this effect, encourages workers’ and employers’ organizations together with cooperatives’ organizations to seek ways and means of promoting cooperative involvement .

2.2 International Labour Conference discussions

The **96th International Labour Conference session (2007)** focused on the promotion of sustainable enterprises as a means to achieve decent work within the wider framework of sustainable development. The outcome of this discussion was the adoption of “Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises”, which provide guidance on what is meant by an environment which is conducive to sustainable enterprises; on responsible and sustainable enterprise-level practices; and, on the roles of the Office and constituents in working towards the goal of sustainable development through the promotion of sustainable enterprises.

More recently, the 104th International Labour Conference (2015) adopted a **Resolution concerning small and medium-sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation** building on the 2007 ILC conclusions. At the 105th International Labour Conference (2016), ILC delegates discussed ways to enhance **Decent Work in Global Supply Chains**. The resolution that was adopted underlines the role of government, business and social partners, and provides guidance to the future programme of action of the ILO.

2.3 Key areas of work

Establishing a platform for the ILO to engage with enterprises is one of the seven centenary initiatives launched by the ILO’s Director General in 2013 in order to enhance the effectiveness of the ILO in fulfilling its social justice mandate. The “Enterprises Initiative” aims to contribute to enterprise sustainability and to advance ILO objectives through engaging with enterprises.

Promoting sustainable enterprises is a cornerstone of the ILO’s strategy featured in the **Programme and Budget 2016-17** (Outcome 4). The P&B outlines a number of strategic priorities for the promotion of sustainable enterprises, which include improvement of the environment in which sustainable enterprises will thrive – through policy, legal, institutional and regulatory reforms, through supporting the design and implementation of programmes aimed to promote and introduce responsible and sustainable enterprise practices, as well as the design and implementation of scalable entrepreneurship programmes targeting youth and women.

As part of the emphasis of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on multi-stakeholder cooperation, the ILO will strengthen its partnerships with intergovernmental and international organizations that also engage with enterprises on sustainable development. Within the Enterprises Department, the **Multinational Enterprises and Enterprises Engagement Unit (ENT/MULTI)** leads the ILO’s work on promoting the uptake of the principles of the MNE Declaration among governments, social partners and enterprises. As such, it provides country-level assistance to support ILO constituents in their engagement with enterprises on decent work priorities. This is done through enhanced policy coherence, social dialogue, public-private dialogue facilitation and joint action plans recognizing the different yet complementary roles of governments, private sector and social partners. The Unit operates the ILO Helpdesk for Business on International Labour Standards which is the ILO’s one-stop shop for company managers and workers on how to better align business operations with international labour standards and build good industrial relations. It coordinates ILO activities related to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and contributes to international policy coherence on initiatives and frameworks addressing business behaviour through its collaboration with the UN Global Compact, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It also engages with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) to strengthen national strategies aimed at attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) which would generate a positive impact on decent work.



2.4 ILO country-level assistance

The following case studies provide examples of how the ILO has supported constituents to engage with the private sector for the realization of decent work objectives:

Engaging multinational enterprises on job creation for young women and men in Côte d'Ivoire

Building on the recommendations of the ILO MNE Declaration, the ILO provides since 2010 technical assistance to Côte d'Ivoire to engage the private sector on addressing one of the major challenges in the country: youth employment.

Thirty multinational enterprises from the agriculture and agri-business, banking, mining, and telecommunications sectors were surveyed to identify ways in which they could through their business activities generate more and better jobs for local youth, both in their own operations and along their supply chains.

The findings and recommendations of the study conducted were presented to representatives of the MNEs, who subsequently established a multi-stakeholder Task Force on Youth Employment Promotion and Responsible Investment under the leadership of the Confédération Générale des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire (CGE-CI) comprising of representatives of MNEs, training and research institutions, universities and government institutions.

The member companies of the Task Force participated in a number of initiatives of the CGE-CI translating their commitment to youth employment into joint actions, including a partnership with the Agency for Employment Research and Promotion (AGEPE) to offer internship opportunities to hundreds of young women and men.

Technical support is currently provided in the framework of the French-funded project "Business and Decent Work" to further build the capacity of ILO constituents to engage with national and multinational enterprises on decent work priorities. The project is also building national capacity to engage with new investors to maximize their contribution to sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Inclusive growth in mining communities in Zambia

The ILO intervention in Zambia aims to identify ways in which mining companies can expand their business ties to local SMEs and provides support to all relevant actors to achieve this goal.

In 2013, the ILO facilitated initial consultations between the Government of Zambia, mining companies, employers' and workers' organizations and broader stakeholders to air views and concerns which had caused relations to deteriorate. The ILO organized a tripartite study tour to Peru and Chile to identify how mining companies in other major mining countries are contributing to local economic development and decent work. The ILO commissioned two research studies to identify the most promising areas for expanding business linkages with local enterprises. These activities laid the groundwork for a high-level tripartite plus dialogue meeting in November. A follow up meeting was organized in February 2014 during which the constituents and the mining companies agreed on the main components of a strategy focused on multi-stakeholder sectoral dialogue, enterprise development and skills upgrading.

A series of studies were then undertaken in the Copperbelt and Northwestern provinces with the aim of better understanding constraints faced by small and medium enterprises in mining communities in establishing business linkages with large companies, and to look at the challenges faced by large companies to increase their local procurement. Activities in 2015 focussed on the organization of a roundtable with mining companies to analyse procurement practices and ways to overcome the challenges, as well as the development of a policy brief on ILO action on the extractive industries with a focus on Africa, with a validation workshop in Zambia.

2.5 The role of the International Training Centre

The ILO International Training Centre (ITC) offers a number of courses relevant to the issue of enterprises, decent work and sustainable development.

A five-day residential course, **Multinational enterprises, development and decent work: the approach of the MNE Declaration** provides ideas and stimulates exchanges on how governments, enterprises and the social partners – mainly through social dialogue – can adopt and monitor policies to maximize the positive contribution of multinational enterprises to socioeconomic development and decent work.

Another course, **International Labour Standards and Corporate Social Responsibility: Understanding workers' rights in the framework of due diligence** aims to strengthen the capacity of participants to understand the principles of international labour standards as they relate to company operations (including due diligence related to labour rights) and how those principles can be most effectively implemented in company operations.

Also, a self-guided, interactive e-learning module **Business and Decent Work: an introduction to the MNE Declaration** provides an overview of the principles of the MNE Declaration, presents real cases of how its principles can be put into practice, and provides a description of how the MNE Declaration relates to other international instruments that stimulate responsible, sustainable, inclusive business. It is available in six different languages at www.ilo.org/mnelearning.

The training offer of the ITC also covers a wide range of technical issues for enterprises that might want to deepen their knowledge in specific areas: <http://www.itcilo.org>

3- HOW TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY?

3.1 Policy options to address key challenges

How can the ILO foster engagement with MNEs on decent job creation (SDG 8.3)?

The ILO MNE Declaration provides guidance to MNEs on how to maximize their contribution to the creation of decent jobs locally, including by giving priority to the employment of nationals of the host country and building business linkages with local enterprises for the provision of goods and services, as well as for the local processing of raw materials (paragraph 20). Recognizing that decent work deficits are most pronounced in the informal economy, the MNE Declaration recommends to enterprises to contribute to government efforts to facilitate the transition to the formal economy (paragraph 21). The ILO and its tripartite constituents can engage with MNEs on decent job creation by promoting good corporate practices and by creating a space for tripartite dialogue with enterprises in which opportunities and challenges regarding the achievement of national development objectives can be discussed. Such dialogue can lead to the creation of solution-oriented programmes and the implementation of measures to support the development of national enterprises by facilitating business linkages between MNEs and SMEs or training programmes for potential suppliers.

See also *“Engaging multinational enterprises on job creation for young women and men in Cote d’Ivoire”* in Section 2.4 Country-level assistance.



How can the ILO engage with MNEs on productivity and improvement of working conditions in international supply chains (SDG 8.3)?

The ILO MNE Declaration recognizes that multinational enterprises often operate through relationships with other enterprises as part of their overall production process and, as such, can contribute to its aim of enhancing positive contribution of business to socio-economic development and decent work (paragraph 6). The ILO has been working with MNEs, in their lead buyer role, to adopt global policies and to develop and support their suppliers. MNEs can support initiatives in order to build the capacity of their suppliers and encourage compliance with national and international labour standards.

The **Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) Programme** is a practical training and workplace improvement programme seeking to increase the productivity of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), while promoting better working conditions. By integrating SCORE into their CSR or supplier support programmes activities MNEs help SMEs to participate in larger, more demanding supply chains and improve the overall performance of their supply chain. The suppliers themselves benefit from the SCORE training programme by increasing productivity and competitiveness. In China, companies like Metro Group (Germany), COOP Switzerland and The GAP have already used SCORE to complement their supplier monitoring activities. The Spanish brand INDITEX group has applied SCORE training at their Pinghu Lianda garment factory in China. With the implementation of five SCORE modules, the Chinese supplier decreased labour turnover and absenteeism (from 13 per cent to 2 per cent), and improved the overall product quality (the defects rate went down from 5 per cent to 1.5 per cent). Through their engagement with the ILO, international buyers and MNEs give the important signal to their suppliers that labour-management cooperation is highly valuable in order to operate in a more sustainable manner.

The **Better Work Programme**, a partnership between the ILO and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), aims to improve working conditions and business competitiveness in the global garment and footwear industry. The programme brings together governments, social partners, global brands and retailers, as well as suppliers in coordinated, sector-wide interventions. At the business level, these include the identification and reporting of non-compliance both with national labour laws and international core labour standards. Interventions also include the provision of tools and training in order to support lasting improvements in the workplace while strengthening social dialogue at the business and national levels. At a multinational enterprise level, committed global brands and retailers are able to enter a public-private partnership with the ILO and IFC in order to share best practices and work collectively to create sustainable sector-wide improvements. Beyond the workplace, Better Work also contributes to building the capacity of national institutions and social partners enabling them to play a stronger role in governing labour markets.

How can the ILO promote equality of treatment in enterprises (SDG 8.5)?

Numerous enterprises have put into place policies to eliminate discrimination in the workplace or made public commitments to this effect. Information and advocacy campaigns that target enterprises can encourage respect for the rights of vulnerable workers. Furthermore, specific ILO tools and initiatives have been developed to share good practices on the full integration of indigenous peoples, workers with disabilities or living with HIV in the workplace; and also on how to promote diversity, support female managers, or achieve a good work-life balance. The MNE Declaration calls upon enterprises to help promote equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation (paragraph 30). Managers and workers should review their hiring and other employment practices to ensure that no jobseeker or worker is treated less favourably than others because of characteristics that are not related to the person's competencies or the inherent requirements of the job. It specifically states

that companies should make qualifications, skills and experience the basis for the recruitment, placement, training and advancement of their staff at all levels. The principle of non-discrimination is one of the United Nations Global Compact principles based on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, also referenced in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights among the rights that enterprises have the responsibility to respect in their operations. This may constitute additional leverage for mobilizing enterprises and engaging with them on the issue

For more information, see also: ILO Tools and resources for business on discrimination and equality: www.ilo.org/business

How can the ILO engage with the private sector to improve access to jobs for people with disabilities (SDG 8.5)?

People with disabilities have the same rights as others. Their employment can make a valuable contribution to the national economy, reduce the need for disability benefits and contribute to poverty reduction. There is a strong business case for employing people with disabilities since they have valuable skills to offer and are more likely to remain working with companies. Many organizations and their networks – including employers' and workers' organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities – are contributing to facilitating the employment, job retention and return-to-work opportunities for people with disabilities. Measures adopted by these organizations include policy statements and provision of advisory and supportive services. The ILO Code of practice on managing disability in the workplace has been drawn up to guide enterprises of all sizes in adopting a positive strategy with which to manage disability-related issues in the workplace.

*For more information, see also the **ILO Global Business and Disability Network**: <http://www.businessanddisability.org/>*

How can the ILO leverage the contribution of business to enhance youth employability (SDG 8.6)?

Youth employment is a particular area where companies can play a major role as young women and men (between 18 and 25 years old) are two to three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. Enterprises can make a significant contribution towards national efforts to enhance youth employability by training their own young employees. Moreover, in collaboration with ILO constituents, enterprises can support the development of skills among the workforce according to market demand through providing advice and guidance based on their own needs for skills; contributing technical expertise to national and sectorial vocational education and training systems, and providing apprenticeships for young people to gain work experience. Along these lines, the ILO MNE Declaration recommends that enterprises cooperate with national training institutions, make available the services of skilled resource personnel and participate in programmes, while devoting special funds to this effect (paragraph 39).

*See also, the **Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth** and the Côte d'Ivoire country experience, as well as the **SDG Note on Skills**. The ILO is also partnering with the **Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN)**.*

How can the ILO mobilize business to eradicate forced labour (SDG 8.7)?

The eradication of forced labour is one of the fundamental principles and rights at work. The ILO MNE Declaration calls upon enterprises to contribute to the realization of these fundamental principles and rights at work and to take immediate and effective measures to secure the elimination of forced labour in their operations (paragraph 25). Even if a company does not directly exploit forced labour, it may become associated with such practices through business links with other enterprises, including contractors and suppliers. As a result, all managers should be aware of the forms and causes of forced labour, as well as how it might occur in different industry sectors and along the supply chains. The ILO and its constituents engage enterprises in campaigns and initiatives for the eradication of forced labour (see the Fair Recruitment Initiative and SDG Alliance 8.7). The eradication of forced labour is one of the principles of the United Nations Global Compact based on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, also referenced in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights among the rights that enterprises have the responsibility to respect in their operations. This may constitute additional leverage for mobilizing enterprises and engaging with them on the issue.

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How can the ILO mobilize business to end child labour (SDG 8.7)?

The ILO MNE Declaration provides the following guidance to enterprises: “Multinational enterprises, as well as national enterprises, should respect the minimum age for admission to employment or work in order to secure the effective abolition of child labour in their operations and take immediate and effective measures within their own competence to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency” (paragraph 27). The abolition of child labour is also one of the principles of the United Nations Global Compact based on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, also referenced in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights among the rights that enterprises have the responsibility to respect in their operations. This may constitute additional leverage for mobilizing enterprises and engaging with them on the issue. However, for multinational enterprises, ensuring the elimination of child labour throughout the supply chain remains a challenge. To achieve a meaningful impact, it is important that businesses coordinate their efforts and align their private initiatives with the relevant national policy and programme. The ILO and its constituents can play an important role in this regard and facilitate dialogue and partnerships on issues such as monitoring and remediation. The Child Labour Platform is a cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholders forum for sharing experiences and lessons learned in eliminating child labour with a particular focus on supply chains. It aims to identify the obstacles to the implementation of the ILO Conventions in supply chains and surrounding communities, identify practical ways of overcoming these obstacles, and catalyse collective action.

How can the ILO collaborate with enterprises to improve occupational health and safety (SDG 8.8)?

The ILO has adopted more than 40 standards specifically dealing with occupational safety and health (OSH), as well as over 40 Codes of Practice. Enterprises should apply the principles embodied in these standards and Codes of Practice to the greatest extent possible. The ILO MNE Declaration calls on MNEs (paragraphs 43-46) to maintain the highest standards of safety and health, in conformity with national requirements, bearing in mind their relevant experience within the enterprise as a whole. MNEs should provide information on their safety and health practices and inform those concerned of any special hazards and related protective measures associated with new products and processes. MNEs, like national enterprises, should also play a leading role in the examination of causes of industrial safety and health hazards and in the application of improvements. Compensation should be provided to victims of occupational accidents or diseases. The ILO and its constituents can contribute to establishing a sound culture of prevention by ensuring that good corporate practices are shared and that strong linkages are built with national authorities in charge of health and safety matters. The ILO project carried out with the Government of Germany and Volkswagen with respect to occupational safety and health inspection in countries from which Volkswagen sources is one example of partnerships in this area.

For more information, see also: ILO Tools and Resources for Business on Occupational Safety and Health: www.ilo.org/business

How can the ILO work with business to protect migrant workers' rights (SDG 8.8)?

Enterprises should respect the rights of migrant workers and treat them equally, providing them with the same job and training opportunities as national workers. Special attention has been given to vulnerable migrant workers in the context of specific ILO projects. In Thailand, for example, the ILO is working with tripartite constituents and business to prevent and reduce forced labour, child labour and other unacceptable forms of work, as well as to progressively eliminate the exploitation of workers, particularly migrant workers, in the fishing and seafood processing sectors.

How can the ILO engage with MNEs to protect the rights of workers in precarious employment (SDG 8.8)?

The ILO MNE Declaration calls on enterprises to endeavour to provide stable employment for their employees and observe freely negotiated obligations concerning employment stability and social security (paragraphs 32-36). MNEs should strive to assume a leading role in promoting security of employment, particularly in countries where the discontinuation of operations is likely to accentuate long-term unemployment. In considering changes in operations (including those resulting from mergers, take-overs or transfers of production) which would have major employment effects, MNEs should provide reasonable notice of such changes to the appropriate government authorities and representatives of the workers in their employment and their organizations so that the implications may be examined jointly in order to mitigate adverse effects to the greatest possible extent. This is particularly important in the case of the closure of an entity involving collective lay-offs or dismissals. Governments, in cooperation with multinational as well as national enterprises, should provide some form of income protection for workers whose employment has been terminated. An overarching programme on corporate social responsibility based on the principles of the ILO MNE Declaration could be a good entry-point to address the sensitive issue of employment security with companies.

3.2 Added value in engaging with tripartite constituents

The ILO encourages its tripartite constituents to engage with enterprises of all sizes on decent work, and builds their capacity to this effect (see 2.4 Country-level assistance for examples).

It should be underlined that dialogue is a key component of the ILO MNE Declaration which promotes consultations between MNEs, governments and national employers' and workers' organizations to ensure that business activities are in harmony with the development priorities of the host countries. This key feature of dialogue and consultations is particularly relevant in the context of the SDGs, as a mean to ensure alignment of private sector practices and initiatives with public goals.

Each of the tripartite constituents has a role to play when dealing with private sector engagement on decent work:

- **Governments** play an important role both in establishing a legislative and policy framework that enables enterprises to be sustainable and in coordinating efforts of the private sector to achieve decent work outcomes. They can also facilitate public-private partnerships which address specific national development priorities and decent work deficits.
- **Workers' and employers' organizations** contribute to the creation of an environment that is conducive to the emergence and growth of sustainable enterprises by ensuring economic efficiency, democratic governance and social equity. They influence working conditions at the enterprise level. They also influence the policy and regulatory environment in which companies operate, thus making a substantive contribution towards enhancing productivity and competitiveness through the creation of appropriate conditions for sustainable enterprise development. They promote participation, representation and empowerment of their members through legitimate and effective organizations, enabling them to influence policies and to demand greater accountability and transparency from decision-making bodies. They also participate in the formation of broad-based social consensus on development and policy directions.

The ILO advocates for the strong involvement of ministries of Labour and social partners in initiatives in order to translate the SDGs into national policies and actions. Workers' and employers' organizations are sometimes overlooked as partners in sustainable development efforts. They are however important players in ensuring that decent work challenges are addressed in an effective and sustained way that is coherent with socio-economic development priorities.

Considering its unique tripartite structure, its tripartite participation in adopted instruments and its global membership, the ILO is well positioned to facilitate dialogues on challenges and opportunities related to foreign direct investment and operations of enterprises. The ILO can also provide a neutral space for dialogue between governments, or between companies and unions when needed.





3.3 ILO added value: Working within the United Nations system and other development partners

Further to the guidance provided by the ILO Governing Body, the Office has been promoting policy coherence among international organizations, with a view to enhancing the uptake and recognition of the MNE Declaration and its principles.

As the core agency competent for the Global Compact's labour principles, the ILO collaborates with the Global Compact to enhance the understanding of these principles by participating companies. As such, the Office promotes relevant ILO tools and resources and conducts joint webinars with ILO experts on labour topics. The Office also provides inputs for Global Compact materials, secretariat services for the Human Rights and Labour Working group (HRLWG) and participates in awareness-raising and capacity-building activities at the global and national levels. The Global Compact-ILO Child Labour Platform operates under the oversight of the HRLWG as an engagement and cooperation platform with respect to the Global Compact principle pertinent to the action of companies with regard to the elimination of child labour. In view of the Global Compact's role in enhancing the business contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, collaboration will be reoriented towards closer partnership on decent work, in line with the principles of the MNE Declaration.

The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights fully recognizes the importance of the ILO mandate and instruments as regards the business and human rights agenda. The ILO contributes to the Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights, as well as to regional forums. The ILO has also been requested to provide inputs to the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) on Business and human rights, and to country visits and thematic reports of the Working Group. The Office was requested to provide technical inputs to the sessions of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. This working group has the mandate to elaborate an international, legally-binding instrument to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises under international human rights law.

The ILO collaborates with the OECD on its MNE Guidelines, which includes participation in the OECD's Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct, technical inputs on OECD due diligence guidance tools for business, and capacity building of National Contact Points (NCPs).

The ILO-UNCTAD Memorandum of Understanding (2014) includes a work item on supporting investment promotion agencies in the formulation and implementation of strategies to attract sustainable investment leading to more and better jobs. In this context, the ILO also concluded a cooperation agreement with WAIPA, which is seeking to strengthen the social and decent work dimension of foreign direct investment by promoting the principles of the MNE Declaration. WAIPA and the ILO organized jointly a course on effective investment facilitation and sustainable development at the International Training Center of the ILO: http://www.itcilo.org/en/areas-of-expertise/enterprise-development/effective-investment-facilitation-and-sustainable?set_language=en

Together with UNCTAD and OECD, the ILO coordinates the annual Interagency Roundtable on Corporate Social Responsibility. This brings together experts from international organizations, as well as their development and social partners to explore corporate social responsibility topics, share experiences and identify opportunities for collaboration. The 2015 Roundtable² discussed the role of the private sector in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

² <http://www.csrroundtable.org/round-tables/2015-round-table/>



MORE INFORMATION

Further information on the MNE Declaration and its operational tools can be found at: www.ilo.org/mnedeclaration. The ILO Helpdesk for Business provides an individual assistance service to respond to specific questions (assistance@ilo.org) and a website (www.ilo.org/business) which features ILO tools and resources for business on a wide range of labour topics, including questions and answers (Q&As) and useful links on: child labour, collective bargaining, discrimination and equality, employment promotion, forced labour, freedom of association and the right to organize, occupational safety and health (OSH), security of employment, wages and benefits and working time.



ILO PUBLICATIONS AND TOOLS RELEVANT TO BUSINESSES FOR THE REALIZATION OF SDG 8 AND ITS TARGETS:

8.1



SUSTAIN PER CAPITA ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND, IN PARTICULAR, AT LEAST 7 PER CENT GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT GROWTH PER ANNUM IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

- **The financial and economic crisis: Responding responsibly. Some frequently asked questions**
Tools that can assist enterprises to adopt a framework of principles and practices that help it to make responsible decisions at difficult times
- **Restructuring for corporate success: A socially sensitive approach**
How can an enterprise restructure in the spirit of social partnership with maximum economic benefits and minimum costs to workers, the community and society at large?

8.2



ACHIEVE HIGHER LEVELS OF ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH DIVERSIFICATION, TECHNOLOGICAL UPGRADING AND INNOVATION, INCLUDING THROUGH A FOCUS ON HIGH-VALUE ADDED AND LABOUR-INTENSIVE SECTORS

- **Making microfinance work: Managing product diversification**
This textbook, designed for middle and senior managers in microfinance institutions, is relevant for institutions that have already diversified and are looking for ways to manage their diversification more effectively as well as those that have not yet done so and are looking for guidance on where and how to begin.

8.3



PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED POLICIES THAT SUPPORT PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES, DECENT JOB CREATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION, AND ENCOURAGE THE FORMALIZATION AND GROWTH OF MICRO-, SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES, INCLUDING THROUGH ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES

- **Training package on workplace risk assessment and management for small and medium-sized enterprises**
This training package on risk assessment and management at the workplace seeks primarily to empower owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to take action themselves to improve safety and health conditions in their workplaces.
- **A rough guide to value chain development**
How to create employment and improve working conditions in targeted sectors.
- **Value chain development for Decent Work: How to create employment and improve working conditions in targeted sectors**
This publication provides guidance on design and implementation of value chain development interventions and puts forward new and improved tools for sector selection and value chain analysis.
- **Training on Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE)**
Training modules for medium sized companies producing for large international buyers, covering issues such as workplace cooperation, quality management, and occupational safety and health.
- **Entrepreneurship training (Start and Improve Your Business - SIYB)**
A set of training packages for different groups ranging from a first orientation for potential start-ups to in-depth training for existing enterprises.
- **Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED)**
Key gender-sensitive training products develop to empower women starting and running their own businesses.

8.5



BY 2030, ACHIEVE FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL WOMEN AND MEN, INCLUDING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, AND EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE

- **A guide to worker displacement: Some tools for reducing the impact on workers, communities and enterprises**

The Guide, drawing on a wealth of experience primarily in North America and during the transition process in Central and Eastern Europe, sought to demonstrate the wide range of possible responses by enterprises, communities and workers to economic downturns and how to reduce potential job losses.

- **Better Work guidance sheet on contracts and human resources**

A guide regarding human resources and contracts.

- **Q&As on business, discrimination and equality**

Questions sent by enterprises to the ILO Helpdesk, and answers provided by our specialists.

AGEING

- **A Training Package on Ageing**

Training package on Managing Diversity and Equality at the Workplace, to enhance the capacity of employers' organizations and other representative business organizations to assist and work with enterprises to launch or further develop initiatives on diversity and equality at the workplace.

HIV/AIDS

- **Factsheets: A workplace policy and programme on HIV/AIDS**

Complete set of factsheets on: A workplace policy and programme on HIV/AIDS: - How to get started - How to tackle stigma and discrimination - How to provide a prevention programme - How to provide care, support and treatment - How to tackle gender inequality - The legal and policy framework.

- **Driving for change - A training toolkit on HIV/AIDS for the road transport sector**

It is designed to enable workers, drivers, managers and instructors to respond to the epidemic in their workplace.

- **The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work**

The code provides practical guidance to employers' organizations and other social partners for formulating and implementing appropriate workplace policy, prevention and care programmes, and for establishing strategies to address workers in the informal sector.

- **Guide to mainstreaming gender in workplace responses to HIV and AIDS**

Step-by-step support for all, particularly ILO constituents and their partners, who are involved in workplace responses to HIV in order to facilitate mainstreaming of gender throughout their programmes and activities.

- **Helping micro and small enterprises cope with HIV/AIDS - A handbook for small business associations and service providers**

This handbook attempts to respond to the needs and constraints of small and micro enterprises, formal or informal, by providing practical guidance for those who regulate, advise and support them.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- **Business as unusual: Making workplaces inclusive of people with disabilities**

Examples from 15 multinational companies, employers' organizations and business networks.

- **Disability and corporate social responsibility reporting: An analysis comparing reporting practices of 40 selected multinational enterprises**

Reporting indicators and recommendations per indicator.

- **Disability in the workplace: Company practices**

Experiences of 25 companies and their work on the issue of disability.

- **Disability in the workplace: Employers' organizations and business networks**

12 contemporary case studies of employers' organizations and business networks and their work around the issue of disability in the workplace.

- **Managing disability in the workplace: ILO code of practice**

This code has been drawn up to guide employers to adopt a positive strategy in managing disability related issues in the workplace. It is intended to be read in the context of national conditions and to be applied in accordance with national law and practice.

GENDER EQUALITY

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

Guide to be used when implementing the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value, free from discrimination based on sex.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

- **Resource kit on indigenous peoples' issues**

This Kit focuses on development and indigenous peoples, with emphasis on their full and effective participation in all development processes and the need for a genuine partnership in—and ownership with them—of these processes.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

- **Women in business and management: Gaining momentum**

This report brings together available data and ILO statistics to provide a comprehensive, up to-date and global picture of women in the business world and in management positions. Companies are offered guidance in the section titled “What can companies do”?

MATERNITY PROTECTION

- **Maternity protection resource package**

It can be used as a reference for self-learning, training, policy advice, research and action.



BY 2020, SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE PROPORTION OF YOUTH NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING

- **What works for youth employment?**

Innovative experiences in the transition to formality: An Initiative under the ILO's Area of Critical Importance on Jobs and Skills for Youth (ACI 2).

- **Meeting the youth employment challenge, a guide for employers**

Outlines initiatives that employers and employers' organizations can take to stimulate youth employment.



TAKE IMMEDIATE AND EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO ERADICATE FORCED LABOUR, END MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SECURE THE PROHIBITION AND ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR, INCLUDING RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS, AND BY 2025 END CHILD LABOUR IN ALL ITS FORMS

- **The labour Principles of the United Nations Global Compact – A Guide for Business**

In a question and answer format, this Guide provides a description of each of the four Global Compact labour principles, and also provides practical guidance on what companies can do to respect, promote, and realize them.

CHILD LABOUR

- **ILO-IOE child labour guidance tool for business**

This guidance tool aims to improve global supply chain governance, due diligence and remediation processes to advance the progressive elimination of child labour.

- **Business and the fight against child labour - Experience from India, Brazil and South Africa**

A new report on the efforts of businesses in three countries in the global South to eliminate child labour, in their operations, supply chains and wider communities.

- **Guidelines for developing child labour monitoring (CLM) processes**

These guidelines provide information on how to design, develop and operate child labour monitoring along with practical examples that will help to adapt the model to specific child labour situations.

- **Combating child labour: A handbook for labour inspectors**

Key elements involved in the actual inspection of a child labour situation. These elements can serve as a sort of “checklist”.

- **Eliminating child labour guides for employers, Guide Two “How employers can eliminate child labour?”**

This guide explains what an enterprise can do to eliminate child labour in its operations, both as it relates to workers under the minimum age for work and as it relates to those under the age of 18 engaged in hazardous work. In addition, this guide discusses measures that may be taken to reduce child labour among suppliers.

- **Employers’ and workers’ handbook on hazardous child labour**

It provides an overview of child labour as defined by ILO Conventions. It describes how employers and workers are working jointly to combat hazardous child labour in key sectors, such as agriculture, construction, mining and manufacturing, and makes suggestions on how this cooperation could be strengthened in the future.

- **Q&As on business and child labour**

Questions sent by enterprises to the ILO Helpdesk, and answers provided by our specialists.

- **Facilitators’ Guide. Training manual to fight trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other forms of exploitation**

The resource kit contains more than 170 ‘resources’ – copies of conventions, good practice notes, guidelines, publications, website links etc.

FORCED LABOUR

- **Combating forced labour: A handbook for employers & business**

Checklist and guidance for assessing compliance.

- **Strengthening employers’ activities against forced labour**

Employers’ organizations and business have a central role to play in combating, preventing and eradicating all forms of forced or compulsory labour.

- **UN.GIFT Guide - Human Trafficking and Business: Good practices to prevent and combat human trafficking**

Guide published by the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, with the collaboration of the UNODC, ILO, IOM, UNGC, as well as the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), Manpower, Apparel Export Promotion Council, The Code, The Body Shop International and ECPAT International.



PROTECT LABOUR RIGHTS AND PROMOTE SAFE AND SECURE WORKING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL WORKERS, INCLUDING MIGRANT WORKERS, IN PARTICULAR WOMEN MIGRANTS, AND THOSE IN PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT

OSH

- **All ILO Codes of Practice related to safety and health issues**

- **A 5-step guide for employers, workers and their representatives on conducting workplace risk assessments**

This guide aims to help employers, workers and their representatives assess safety and health risks in the workplace.

- **Q&As on business and occupational safety and health**

Questions sent by enterprises to the ILO Helpdesk, and answers provided by our specialists.

- **Audit Matrix for the ILO Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems**

In 2001 the ILO developed the ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Management Systems, ILO-OSH 2001, to help governments, employers and workers to continually improve their OSH performance. Auditing is one of the key steps in both implementing an OSH management system and evaluating its performance.

- **Better Work: 10 steps for a healthier and safer workplace**

- **Building a preventative safety and health culture**

A guide to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), its 2002 Protocol and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).

- **Growing up protected: A handbook for the protection of adolescent workers**

Through reader-friendly texts, proposals for action and clear definitions regarding adolescent work, this handbook seeks to inform small business owners on various aspects involved in hiring adolescent workers, while guiding them towards good practices associated with their protection.



- **Safe work for youth**

Materials designed for administrators, employers and young people about the occupational hazards and risks faced by young workers and what to do about them.

- **ILO Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems (ILO-OSH 2001)**

The ILO has designed these guidelines as a practical tool for assisting organizations and competent institutions as a means of achieving continual improvement in occupational safety and health (OSH) performance.

- **ILO training materials on safety and health issues**

Practical and easy to use training materials and methods that provide adequate occupational safety and health (OSH) capacities.

- **International chemical safety cards**

The cards are data sheets intended to provide essential safety and health information on chemicals in a clear and concise way.

WAGES

- **Q&As on business, wages and benefits**

Questions sent by enterprises to the ILO Helpdesk, and answers provided by our specialists.

- **Better Work guidance sheet on compensation**

- **Equal Pay – An introductory guide**

This Guide clarifies the concepts underlying this principle, which is at the heart of the ILO's Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) and offers insights on how it can be applied in practice.

WORKING TIME

- **Decent Working Time – balancing workers' needs with business requirements**

This booklet serves to summarize these five dimensions of decent working time, and how these principles can be put into action. It identifies how each dimension can contribute to reaching the desired working time win-win situation by being mutually beneficial for workers and employers, as it improves work-life balance while simultaneously making enterprises more competitive.

- **Q&As on business and working time**

Questions sent by enterprises to the ILO Helpdesk, and answers provided by our specialists.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

- **Q&As on business and collective bargaining**

Questions sent by enterprises to the ILO Helpdesk, and answers provided by our specialists.

- **ILO ACTEMP building effective employers' organizations**

Building strong and effective employers' organizations is the main goal of ACT/EMP's institutional capacity building programme.

- **Labour Dispute Systems: Guidelines for improved performance**

Advice on the steps to be taken to either revitalize an existing system, or establish an independent institution, ensuring that they operate efficiently and provide effective dispute resolution services.



8.9

BY 2030, DEVISE AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THAT CREATES JOBS AND PROMOTES LOCAL CULTURE AND PRODUCTS

- **HIV and AIDS: Guide for tourism sector**

Compilation of a range of resources – including tools and information – that can be used by the different players in the tourism sector to help slow the spread of the AIDS virus.

- **Toolkit on poverty reduction through tourism**

The toolkit outlines the background to poverty reduction approaches and how the ILO is involved within the context of decent work and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

- **Training package for the toolkit on poverty reduction through tourism**

The training package is a set of PowerPoint presentations with Teaching Notes to enable trainers to conduct workshops with the target audience and bring them through the content of the Toolkit on Poverty Reduction through Tourism.

- **Guide for social dialogue in the tourism industry**

This guide is a contribution to help solve its problems now and in the future – through social dialogue that builds on openness, trust and the involvement of the main stakeholders in the industry.



8.10

STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF DOMESTIC FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO ENCOURAGE AND EXPAND ACCESS TO BANKING, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR ALL

• **Linking business development services to financial services: The case of Financiera Solución in Peru**

The results of a case study regarding an assessment of Financiera Solución in Peru on the ins and outs of linkages between Financial Services (FS) and nonfinancial services, recently known as Business Development Services (BDS). It represents a case study that emphasizes the costs and benefits for clients.



8.b

BY 2020, DEVELOP AND OPERATIONALIZE A GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND IMPLEMENT THE GLOBAL JOBS PACT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

• **Tackling youth employment challenges: An overview of possible actions and policy considerations**

Examples of employer and business initiatives on youth employment.

• **Working with youth**

Tips for small business owners.

• **Youth employment: Making it happen, an electronic resource tool for employers**

Provides an overview of youth employment challenges and the role of the private sector in promoting access of young people to work as well as a compendium of useful resources.

• **Working with youth: Tips for small business owners - Packet for employers "Keep them safe!"**

Action checklist for small business owners.





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SDGNOTE

**ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR
ON DECENT WORK-BUSINESS
OPERATIONS
AND INVESTMENTS**



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