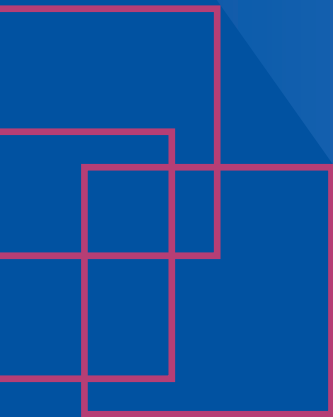




International  
Labour  
Office  
Geneva



# ILO vision and priorities 2010-15

Making decent work happen

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**Making decent work happen**

Prepared by  
the Bureau of Programming and Management,  
September 2009

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## Preface

The Strategic Policy Framework is the medium-term planning document of the International Labour Organization (ILO). It sets out the strategic orientation of the Organization, what it aims to achieve and how over the planning period.

As its 304th Session (March 2009), the Governing Body of the International Labour Office endorsed the Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15, taking into account the views expressed during its discussion.

*“As we shape the ILO of the future, we need to be both ambitious and realistic. We need to have dreams and be ready to take risks with new ideas and methods of work.*

*Looking towards the future, we feel energized by the widespread support for ILO values, policies and proposals, and challenged by the difficulties ahead. Our task is to rise to the opportunity to strengthen our capacity to service the needs of our constituents in advancing the Decent Work Agenda. This is the sense of our action. This is what this Strategic Policy Framework is about”.*

Juan Somavia – ILO Director-General



In order to ensure that the document would be a useful reference for ILO constituents, staff and a wider audience, the Office has edited the Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15 to reflect decisions from the subsequent discussion of the Programme and Budget for the biennium 2010-11, following its adoption by the International Labour Conference in June 2009. This brochure is based on the introductory section of the edited version of the Strategic Policy Framework.



## The ILO mandate

The ILO embodies a vision of universal humane conditions of labour as an expression of social justice and a condition for peace among nations. This vision is rooted in the values of the Organization and its unique tripartite structure giving equal weight to Government, Employer and Worker representatives.

The ILO is mandated to realize, through social dialogue and tripartism, the universal values of freedom, human dignity, security and non-discrimination in the world of work. The contemporary expression of the ILO's vision and strategy is the Decent Work Agenda.

In the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2008, the tripartite delegations of 182 member States confirmed the key role of the Organization in assisting its Members in their efforts to reach the ILO's objectives, as set out in its constitutional mandate, in the context of globalization.

The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization is based on the mandate contained in the ILO Constitution, including the Declaration of Philadelphia (1944), while drawing on and reaffirming the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up (1998). It requires the Organization to “promote the ILO’s standard-setting policy as a cornerstone of ILO activities by enhancing its relevance to the world of work, and ensure the role of standards as a useful means of achieving the constitutional objectives of the Organization”.

Today, the Organization’s foremost task is to respond to the constituents’ needs related to the world of work, in keeping with its basic values and mandate in a globalized world.



## The ILO today

The world of work is being transformed through the rapid globalization of trade, labour, financial, information and technology flows. As a consequence, the economic and political geography of the world is changing.

In today's societies, work and employment are perceived to be the main path to a better life. The promise of rapid economic growth raises expectations for advancement through decent work. The extent to which the world of work is able to meet such expectations is a major contributory factor to economic and social progress and political stability.

Globalization is accelerating adjustments in employment, occupations and skills, bringing new pressures on labour markets and insecurities to individuals, families and societies. Overall gains in one country and globally, by themselves, do not compensate for the adjustments borne by enterprises and workers.

The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization in its 2004 report, *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*, proposed that decent work should become a global goal to be pursued by every country and the international community. The World Commission pointed to the uneven impact and volatile nature of globalization. It emphasized the central role of the Decent Work Agenda, in partnership with other international and regional organizations, in contributing to an inclusive and sustainable globalization. It is vital that effective national and interna-



tional tripartism influence decisively the shaping of a social dimension to a new and more stable globalization for the twenty-first century.

The Decent Work Agenda has received strong political backing from the UN General Assembly and its Economic and Social Council, from regional summits and from many other political fora. A wide spectrum of political leaders, across all regions, has committed, in one form or another, to decent work as a policy agenda.

The 2005 UN General Assembly stated, *inter alia*, that “We strongly support fair globalization and resolve to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of our relevant national and international policies as well as our national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies, as part of our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.”<sup>1</sup>

This call is amplified in the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, which requires the International Labour Office to effectively assist its Members in their efforts to: promote employment, skills development, sustainable enterprises and economic growth; extend social security and labour protection; promote social dialogue and tripartism; and respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work.

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 47 of A/RES/60/1.

A global and integrated strategy for decent work is called for, which gives concrete expression to the inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive nature of the four dimensions of decent work. Members expect the ILO to assist with the implementation of an integrated strategy for decent work, adapted to national circumstances, taking into account the rapidly evolving external context.

In late 2008 and early 2009, the global financial and economic crisis has engulfed all countries and regions. The halting of the crisis and recovery from it and from its long-term implications are set to dominate agendas of constituents for a good part of the period to 2015.

The crisis is leading to a fundamental rethinking of policies. Values and ethical standards are given renewed prominence; the balance between the productive function of the market, the regulatory role of the State and the democratic expressions of society, between responsibility and opportunity, protection and security, is being revisited. The policies implemented to combat the crisis, deemed unorthodox only a few months ago, will have long-term implications for future economic and social policies and for global policy coordination.

The ethical foundation of the ILO and the balanced and integrated nature of the Decent Work Agenda, fully reflected in the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, are proving to be well adapted to the new global economic and social context. In the context of crisis, many governments are applying elements of decent work policies on rights, employment, social protection and social dialogue.

The rising number of ratifications of international labour Conventions is another signal of support to the Decent Work Agenda. In 2008, there were 1,306 ratifications of the eight fundamental Conventions<sup>2</sup>, which represent almost 90 per cent of the total potential ratifications of these Conventions by 182 member States. Thirty-three member States have not yet ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No.87). The total number of ratifications of all ILO Conventions reached 7,600 in 2008.

In parallel, a growing number of donors are entrusting the ILO with increasing amounts of voluntary contributions to assist countries to implement one or several dimensions of the Decent Work Agenda. Extra-budgetary resources have almost doubled over the last decade in nominal dollar terms.

This increase in donor contributions dovetails with the increase in demand for ILO services, as reflected in Decent Work Country Programmes and in the requests for assistance linked to the financial and economic crisis. This demand is also reflected in UN Development Assistance Frameworks and joint UN operations in which ILO services and policies are frequently integrated.

With strong political backing for a reconfirmed agenda, the ILO is confronted with the task of effectively and efficiently assisting its Members facing the opportunities and challenges of the globalizing world of work, as well as with implementing the necessary internal reform to enable the Organization to do so.

2 These 8 fundamental Conventions cover the following fundamental rights: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, the effective abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. See ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).



## The ILO in 2015

The ILO vision for 2010-15 is that of an Organization assisting its Members to seize, from the standpoint of the world of work, the opportunities of globalization and confront its challenges. It is founded on the experience that ILO tripartite constituents are able – separately, together and as an Organization – to advance towards decent work and humane conditions of labour for all working women and men.

By the end of the planning period, the ILO will be responsive to the needs of its constituents and will give effect to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization through realizing the following vision:

- The ILO is recognized as the foremost forum for debate and authoritative guidance on policies on the world of work and on placing full and productive employment and decent work for all at the centre of economic and social policies. Policy debates on strategic issues are held annually at the International Labour Conference and through Governing Body sessions, as well as regional and technical meetings. The resulting guidance is efficiently implemented and effectively monitored.
- The ILO Decent Work Agenda is recognized for its contribution to building sustainable economies and societies, enabling countries to recover from the global crisis with more balanced policies combining economic and social objectives and setting the foundations for a fair globalization.

- A strengthened ILO standards system, through more efficient, transparent and effective procedures, authoritatively supports the attainment of decent work for women and men across the world.
- The Office is able to rapidly implement the decisions and guidance of the International Labour Conference and Governing Body, and progress is made on the implementation of all elements of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.
- The Office is the authoritative source of information, data, knowledge and advice on decent work policies in all their dimensions. As the centre of excellence on decent work, the Office researches, monitors and evaluates world of work trends and policies, thereby establishing a recognized competency in the policies and subject matters in which the ILO has a clear comparative advantage.
- The ILO cooperates actively, directly and through common UN country programmes, with governments and with employers' and workers' organizations at national, regional and global levels, assisting them to design and implement decent work policies. Capacity building programmes using a variety of modalities are carried out for the benefit of ILO constituents. There is a close partnership among beneficiaries and donor countries on the ILO programme priorities.

- The ILO is cooperating closely with other organizations at regional and global levels and achieving convergence and coherence on the orientation of major policies that impact on the world of work. The ILO is recognized for its key contributions to making the UN system an effective and efficient partner in realizing decent work outcomes.
- The regular budget, complemented by voluntary contributions, enables the ILO to perform its functions, including the delivery of technical cooperation, more effectively and efficiently. The management and internal governance practices of the Office are aligned with best practices in the UN system and elsewhere. The ILO is a learning Organization with a diverse and highly competent staff with opportunities for staff development, knowledge sharing, team working, geographical and career mobility.



To achieve this vision and goals, the ILO has developed a focused, results-based strategic framework for the period 2010–15, as well as an implementation plan for the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and its accompanying resolution that, inter alia, provides for the necessary internal reform of the Organization.



## The strategic framework

The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization emphasizes the inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive nature of the strategic objectives, challenging the Office to put in place a strategic framework and work methods that will drive an integrated approach to achieving results. *Figure 1* illustrates the strategic framework for 2010-15.

The strategic framework is centred on essential priorities in the world of work captured in 19 outcomes. Although outcomes are broadly associated with specific strategic objectives, this association is not exclusive. Each outcome contributes to all four strategic objectives. Gender equality and non-discrimination are mainstreamed across all outcomes. Indicators provide detail on results and on the measurement of results. Results-based targets have been set for the full planning period.

Delivery under each outcome is supported by advisory services, products and advocacy that are built on ILO comparative advantage, ensue from decisions of the ILO's governing organs and meet the needs of constituents, as expressed in particular in regional priorities and Decent Work Country Programmes.

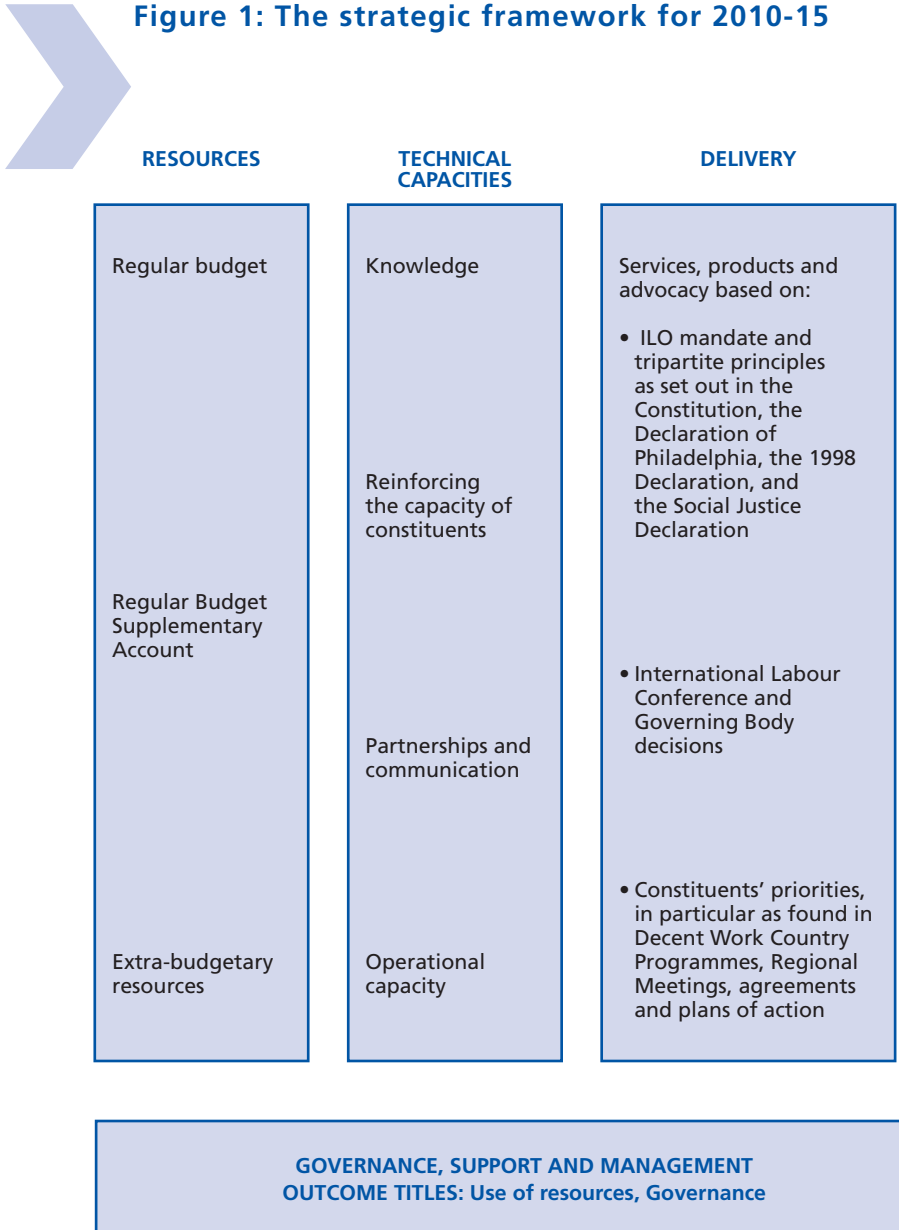
Four technical capacities – knowledge, capacity of constituents, partnerships and communication and operational capacity – drive the work of the Office to better serve constituents under each outcome. The ongoing review of the ILO field structure will lead to a more effective operational capacity based on critical mass and streamlined operations and delivery. Partnerships within the UN and the multilateral system and other actors at national, regional and global levels aim to amplify the impact of the ILO programme and to promote ILO objectives.

Close integration of different budgetary resources available to the ILO – the regular budget and voluntary contributions, in particular the Regular Budget Supplementary Account and extra-budgetary resources – is central to ILO strategy to deliver successfully on high priorities in countries, regionally and globally.

Overall implementation of the ILO strategy is grounded on more efficient, effective and accountable Office-wide practices on governance, support and management.



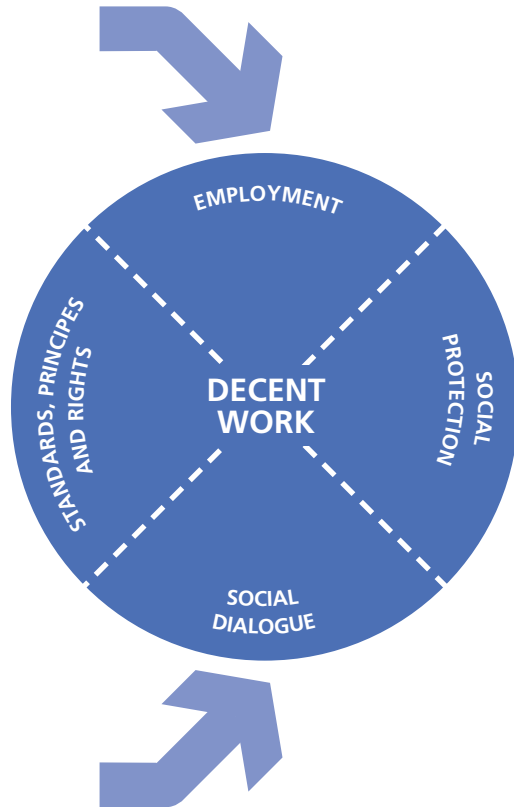
**Figure 1: The strategic framework for 2010-15**



## OUTCOME TITLES

Employment promotion  
Skills development  
Sustainable enterprises  
Social security  
Working conditions  
Occupational safety and health  
Labour migration  
HIV/AIDS  
Employers' organizations  
Workers' organizations  
Labour administration and labour law  
Social dialogue and industrial relations  
Decent work in economic sectors  
Freedom of association and collective bargaining  
Forced labour  
Child labour  
Discrimination at work  
International labour standards  
Mainstreaming decent work

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOAL



Working as a team, senior management will emphasize integrated action that responds to the cross-cutting nature of expected results, which will require the application of expertise from across the Office. Teamwork will be an essential feature in the day-to-day delivery of integrated services to constituents. This will require close working relations between headquarters and the regions and across technical services. Teamwork will be implemented across the Office during the full planning period and evaluated periodically.



## Conclusion

**T**his brochure is designed to provide a high-level overview of the ILO mandate, its role today and its vision and strategic priorities for the planning period 2010-15. The indicators, targets and strategies as well as the resources needed to achieve this programme are elaborated on in greater detail in the Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15 and the Programme and Budget for the biennium 2010-11.