

World of *Work*



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Decent work for domestic workers

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"Become a man instead of a mere machine": The ILO and trends in working hours



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In 1930, John Maynard Keynes imagined a world in which, a hundred years later, work would be to a large extent replaced by leisure. He speculated about a three-hour shift and a 15-hour working week by 2030. In so doing, he was reflecting the general expectation of economists during that period that rising incomes would be converted into both higher levels of consumption and shorter hours of work.

But working time has proven to be much less sensitive to income than is commonly believed, particularly in more developed countries. Despite a long-term trend towards a reduction of average working hours over the last 80 years in most countries of the world, and even though we still have another 20 years to go till 2030, Keynes' vision is clearly out of reach. What's more, recent ILO research shows that 22 per cent of the world's workers were working more than 48 hours per week at the turn of the 21st century, more than 80 years after the adoption of the ILO's first labour standard – the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1) – which sets this as a maximum working week for industrial workers.

It was no accident that the ILO's first Convention set a 48-hour limit on weekly hours of work in industry. Limits on working time had been one of the principal demands of the international trade union movement for many years, and was widely regarded as legitimate and a suitable subject for international legislation, not only to discourage competition among countries and enterprises, but also as a concession to workers' demands which could help contain the influence of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Addressing the International Labour Conference in 1921, when the Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention (No. 14) was adopted, the French Government delegate Arthur Fontaine put it this way: "It is essential that the worker should be able to recruit his strength

after his week's work, and should have time to fulfil his duties as father and as a citizen and have some intellectual distraction, so as to become a man instead of a mere machine." If one substitutes the word "parent" for "father", this far-sighted quotation continues to have resonance today.

Hours of work remained on the ILO agenda throughout the 1920s and 1930s and the Organization was the principal forum for international debate on the issue, although the impact of its work was largely indirect. In practice, national legislation has been progressively converging towards the aspirations of the ILO's Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47), as envisioned by the Reduction of Hours of Work Recommendation, 1962 (No. 116). The evidence from a 2005 data collection confirms that the 40-hour limit is now the dominant standard across the world, in the sense that it is the standard to which the largest number of countries adheres.

But working time cannot be analysed in isolation from the wider economic and social setting of work. Around the world, many people are actually working shorter hours than they would wish: ILO research shows that many part-time working women are typically in this situation, and such time-related underemployment has become even more widespread during the economic crisis. However, the greatest challenge 90 years later still lies in the persistence of long or inadequate working hours, despite the existence of extensive national regulation of working time. For example, more than a third of workers in many developing countries are working excessive hours – more than 48 hours per week.

For further information see the ILO-TRAVAIL Database of Conditions of Work and Employment Laws at <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home>



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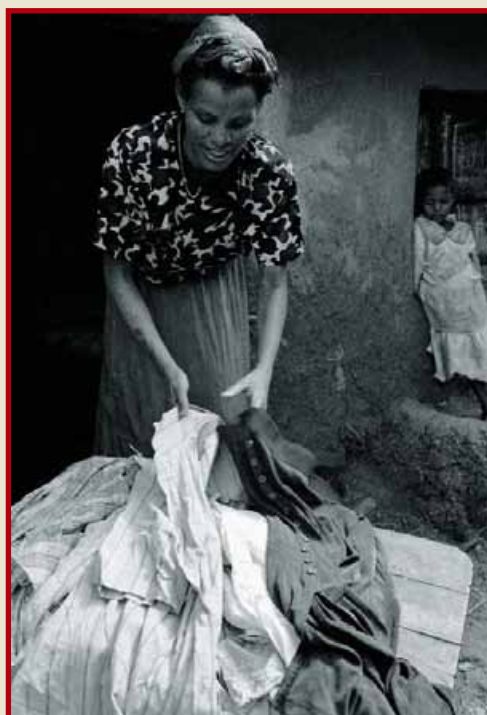
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Decent work for domestic workers

Despite its growing social and economic significance, domestic work has traditionally been, and still is, one of the most precarious, low-paid, insecure and unprotected forms of employment. The decision to discuss a norm on decent work for domestic workers at the International Labour Conference in June 2010 recognizes that domestic workers are real workers and takes account of the fact that the overwhelming majority of domestic workers in the globalizing economy are women.

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Created in 1919, the International Labour Organization (ILO) brings together governments, employers and workers of its 183 member States in common action to improve social protection and conditions of life and work throughout the world. The International Labour Office, in Geneva, is the permanent Secretariat of the Organization.

Decent work for Towards new internat



© M. Crozet/ILO

The work of caring and cleaning in the home for pay is one of the most important occupations for millions of workers, mostly women, around the world. According to a new ILO report¹ prepared for the June 2010 session of the International Labour Conference, domestic work absorbs a significant proportion of the workforce,

ranging between 5 and 9 per cent of total employment in developing countries, and making up to 2.5 per cent of total employment in industrialized countries. Manuela Tomei (photo), director of the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Programme, looks at the working conditions of this global and growing workforce and ways to improve them.

GENEVA – Domestic workers may cook, clean, take care of children, the elderly or the disabled, even domestic animals. While they overwhelmingly comprise women, many of them migrant workers, men may be also concerned as gardeners or as guardians in private homes or as family chauffeurs.

Domestic workers may work as wage workers for one or more employers – whether on a full-time or part-time basis. They may also work as self-employed with substantial control over the terms of their work, or may provide services in individual homes while being paid by licensed institutions. Domestic workers, especially full-time migrant domestic workers, may also live in the employer's home.

The composition of the domestic workforce changes by country and over time, but their numbers have been growing everywhere. It has been suggested that the increase of domestic work in industrialized countries is associated with the widening of income inequalities,² while in low-

income agrarian/informal economies domestic work has acquired further prominence especially in countries ravaged by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Changes in the organization of work and the intensification of work, and the marked rise in female labour participation rates which has reduced women's availability for unpaid care work, are responsible for this rise. Besides, the ageing of societies, intensified national and international female migration and the decline in State provisioning of care and social services, have made it increasingly difficult for families to reconcile paid work with family responsibilities. As a result, reliance on domestic work has increased everywhere across the world as a private strategy to counter mounting work-family tensions.

The decent work deficits of domestic work

Despite its growing social and economic significance, domestic work has traditionally been, and still is, one of the most precarious, low-paid, insecure and unprotected forms of employment. Abuse and exploitation are common, especially when children and migrant workers are involved. Because of their young age or nationality, and the fact that they often live in the employer's household, they are particularly vulnerable to verbal and physical violence. There are frequent media reports on such violence, including suicides and homicides in the worst cases.

The serious decent work deficits facing domestic workers are a consequence of their legal and social vulnerability. Domestic workers are excluded either *de jure* or *de facto* from the effective protection of national labour law and social security regimes – both in industrialized and developing countries. Domestic workers, for instance, have limited access to the kind of protections that could ensure them safe and healthy pregnancies and births, a replacement income when they are on maternity leave and the right to return to their jobs. In some countries, the law allows the dismissal of domestic workers in case of pregnancy. Elsewhere this practice is unlaw-

¹ ILO, 2009: *Decent work for domestic workers*, Report IV(1), International Labour Conference, 99th Session 2010, Geneva.

² R. Milkman, E. Reese and B. Roth: "The macro-sociology of paid domestic labour", in *Work and Occupations*, Vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 483-507.

domestic workers: ional labour standards

ful, but anecdotal evidence suggests that pregnancy-based lay-offs still occur and are more frequent among domestic workers than among other categories of workers.

Another flagrant case is the exclusion of domestic workers from the scope of occupational safety and health legislation in most countries, as the household is erroneously perceived as safe and non-threatening. Access to social security benefits is more likely to be granted under general social welfare systems that provide universal and egalitarian access to health care and age-based pension entitlements, but unemployment insurance coverage is an entitlement which only a few countries provide to domestic workers.

If decent work is to become a reality for them, their specific features must be acknowledged and understood. It is indeed common for labour and social security legislation of general application to overlook the specific characteristics of the domes-

tic work relationship and to leave them to the individual employer to resolve.

The specificity of domestic work

Domestic work differs from other types of work in many respects.

First, domestic work does not take place in a factory or an office or a street or a farm, but in the home. It therefore escapes the outreach of conventional mechanisms of control such as labour inspection services, which face legal and administrative obstacles to inspecting private premises.

Moreover, it involves a degree of physical proximity with the employer and her family as well as some emotional attachment, especially when child-care or care of elderly people is concerned. While the establishment of ties of mutual trust and affection is rewarding for both the worker and the employer, this may, nonetheless, dilute the boundaries of the employment relationship and may

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>> result in arbitrary treatment, especially if specific, adequate regulation is lacking.

Second, domestic work mirrors unpaid work traditionally performed by women without a wage, and is thus perceived as lacking in value and exogenous to the “productive” economy. This explains why domestic workers commonly earn low wages, and are often either underpaid or not paid at regular intervals. Moreover, the fact that domestic workers typically comprise women belonging to disadvantaged groups, with lower than average years of education, keeps a downward pressure on wages.

Third, domestic workers have limited bargaining power as they are an “invisible” (working inside the household, out of public sight) and isolated workforce, with no peer workers to turn to for support or guidance on what is to be considered a reasonable request or unacceptable treatment. When migrant workers are involved their isolation may be even greater, for they often do not master the national or local language and have no family or other supportive networks to rely on.

This, alongside low pay and often unpredictable household demands, makes it challenging for domestic workers to mobilize and organize for better working conditions. At the same time, the home being the worksite, trade unions’ traditional organizing strategies prove inadequate to address the specific circumstances of domestic workers. But even when domestic workers do manage to organize, national law may raise further obstacles to their right to enter into collective agreements on the grounds that, for the purpose of unionization, the employer cannot be considered as an “enterprise”, since domestic work is non-commercial and non-productive.

All these characteristics reinforce the perception of domestic work as not constituting “real” work,

thus contributing to its further undervaluation and neglect.

There have been, nonetheless, some encouraging legal and policy developments in a number of countries that have tried to address the distinct circumstances of domestic workers by devising regulations tailored to their specific contexts. For instance, countries such as Belgium and France have sought to ensure payment of minimum wages and to improve the social security entitlements of domestic workers by making it easier and cheaper for employers to comply with the law through simplified payment procedures and fiscal incentives (see page 9).

Towards international labour standards on domestic work

Internationally, the situation does not differ much. Existing international labour standards do not offer adequate guidance on how to ensure meaningful protection to domestic workers, because they either fail to address the specific context in which domestic work takes place or allow for their explicit exclusion. This has led the ILO Governing Body to agree to include a standard-setting activity on *decent work for domestic workers* on the agenda of the 99th Session (2010) of the International Labour Conference (ILC). The Conference will deal with this question according to the double discussion procedure. This means that, while in 2010 the ILC will be called to discuss the desirability and form of a possible international instrument on the subject, a final decision in this regard will be taken in June 2011.

A specific international norm for domestic workers, to be effective, would need to reaffirm the protections to which domestic workers are already entitled to under existing ILO standards, while recognizing their special employment relationship and providing for specific standards to make these rights a reality.

The decision to discuss such a norm on decent work for domestic workers reflects the ILO’s commitment, as embedded in its Decent Work Agenda, to bring workers once deemed to be outside its constituency into its mainstream work. It recognizes that domestic workers are real workers and takes account of the fact that the overwhelming majority of domestic workers in the globalizing economy are women.



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Domestic work is not for children

Last November, the Government of Cambodia convened a national consultation on decent work for domestic workers. At the end of the meeting, government, workers' and employers' organizations in the country agreed on the need for a new international labour standard extending social protection to those who work in the homes of others. The following article by Bill Salter, director of the ILO Subregional Office for East Asia, was adapted from an earlier version published in a local newspaper.

PHNOM PENH – Which situation is worse? Is it abusing children for the commercial sexual gratification of adults, or beating and torturing children who have been forced to work as domestic slaves?

It's a question I had to ask myself when I read the *Phnom Penh Post's* recent story about an 11-year-old girl – a domestic servant – who was reportedly trafficked into the home of a Phnom Penh couple, and then allegedly tortured with pliers, whips and electrical wires – leaving as many as 200 scars across her young body.

When it comes to child abuse, surely this is about as bad as it gets. Sadly this is not the first time I've seen reports like this. A 17-year-old Burmese girl was nearly killed by her employer in Bangkok, and a Vietnamese girl was beaten regularly by her domestic employers in Hanoi.

It's been suggested that the Cambodian girl's torture lasted for at least a year – and possibly much longer – until neighbours intervened and contacted the police. The couple has been refused bail – so has the girl's so-called “guardian”, who is accused of selling the girl as a domestic servant. All three are now facing trial on several charges including human trafficking.

Unfortunately, child domestic workers are all too common in Phnom Penh. An ILO-supported survey in 2003, conducted by the Royal Government of Cambodia's National Institute of Statistics in the Ministry of Planning, concluded there were nearly 28,000 child domestic workers in Phnom Penh alone – or ten per cent of all children aged 7-17.

The International Labour Organization is working to raise awareness about child labour and its negative impact on society. Through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), the Royal Government of Cambodia and the ILO have been able to demonstrate that, with the right interventions, child domestic

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>> workers can be removed from work and rehabilitated into schools, and the entry of fresh children into child domestic work prevented. We are confidently working together toward the goal of a child-labour-free country by 2016. Considerable progress has been made and the situation is improving.

The fact that neighbours came forward to save this girl is an indication that the messages are getting through and Cambodians will not stand for this kind of abuse directed at children.

But there is another troubling aspect, and that is the systemic abuse of domestic workers in general – occupations that by their very nature involve vulnerability, as the work is conducted behind closed doors in the homes of others. While this girl was clearly too young to be working anywhere, domestic workers of all ages are often marginalized by society, ignored by laws that govern workplaces and denied the social protection and working conditions other workers have come to rightly expect.

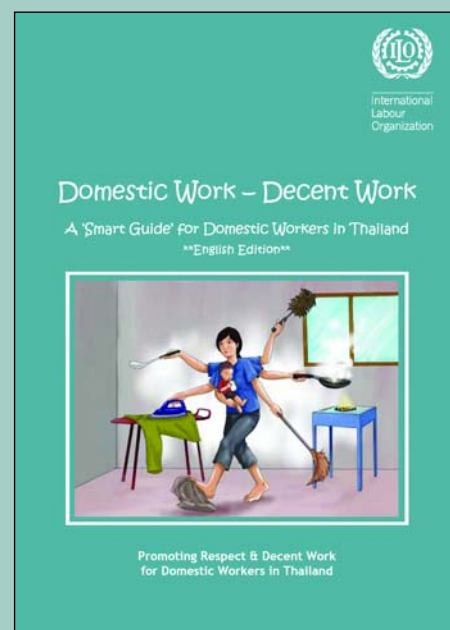
Domestic work is hard work. It is work often performed by women and work that frees up members of her employer's family so they can pursue and improve their own livelihoods. But far too often this hidden workforce and its labours are under-acknowledged and under-valued. Many domestic workers are physically and sexually abused and denied even basic human rights.

There is, however, some cause for optimism.

Cambodia has ratified the two ILO Conventions on the abolition of forced labour (the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), and in 2008 a new anti-trafficking law entered into force – instruments that afford protection to domestic workers of all ages from the worst forms of abuse. The Royal Government of Cambodia has also ratified the International Labour Organization's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and has developed a 2008-2012 National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour – a plan that the ILO is supporting. Indeed, domestic work has been identified as one of 12 unacceptable and hazardous forms of work from which children must be removed with urgency.

As we approach the International Labour Conference this June – and the general discussion on standards setting for domestic workers – let's all remember that domestic work is real work. It's

DOMESTIC WORK – DECENT WORK: A "SMART GUIDE" FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS



This ILO guidebook promotes the rights and responsibilities of domestic workers. Initially published in Thailand in a variety of languages, it is aimed primarily at the domestic worker and explains the benefits and risks associated with domestic work while offering the worker advice on how to interact with her/his employer to achieve a mutually satisfactory working environment and system of remuneration and benefits for the worker.

*Domestic Work – Decent Work*¹ is published in Burmese, English, Karen, Laotian, Shan and Thai, and is being disseminated by ILO constituents within the trade union movement and partners from civil society organizations. The guide is also being adapted and published in Cambodia and Lao PDR for domestic workers within those countries and is available for adaptation and dissemination in other countries as well.

¹ For more information, please refer to http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/publications/lang--en/docName--WCM_041809/index.htm

work for adults that requires proper compensation, time off and the right to stay in contact with others, and is to be conducted in a safe environment.

And finally, let's all re-affirm that it's not work for children.

Moving domestic workers to the formal economy

The service cheque system

Domestic work does not take place in a factory or an office, but in the home. Domestic employees do not work alongside other workers, but in isolation behind closed doors, so domestic work is often informal and undocumented. In an important step to overcome informality and thus guarantee a minimum of social protection, several countries have introduced the “service cheque”.

The cheque system facilitates the calculation of mandatory employment deductions and may assist payment for services rendered by cleaning personnel who work for several different employers. The idea is to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy, in part by reducing transaction costs for employers and employees

In Europe, the service cheque was introduced in France in 1993 before being replaced in 2005 by the universal employment service cheque (CESU). The CESU permits an employer in metropolitan France to pay for a range of services carried out by a domestic employee, including wages and social protection contributions as one package. It may be used for both occasional and regular domestic work.

A similar system was set up in 2004 in France and Belgium, where job creation was an explicit goal. Austria and Canada (Quebec) use the system for nursing and housekeeping services supporting the elderly and disabled. In Brazil the government has introduced fiscal incentives for employers to encourage them to register domestic workers under the social security system.

Following the French example, Geneva and other French-speaking cantons in Switzerland have also adopted a service cheque system. Kirsi Hyytiäinen, a Geneva-based journalist, spoke with Bernard Babel, Director-General of PRO (Entreprise Sociale Privée), the foundation which runs “Chèque Service” in Geneva.



© K. Hyytiäinen

How successful is the cheque system?

Geneva started “Chèque Service” in 2004. Today, it is administered by the PRO Foundation which facilitates the reintegration of handicapped people into the labour market. Following the adoption of a new law against undeclared work in 2008, demand for the new system exploded: our services registered a growth rate of 250 per cent. We now administer some 3,900 contracts representing an estimated 20 per cent of people in legal domestic work in Geneva, that is to say those who have social protection. Last year we transferred payments worth 3.5 million Swiss francs for social coverage which would not have been paid without us.

What exactly is your role in the domestic labour market? Are you some kind of employment agency I can call to get a job as a cleaner or to find somebody to take care of my children?

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That's not the case. We are facilitators simplifying the administrative process between the domestic worker and the employer but we do not act as an employment agency. Our customers are employers, that is to say, people who would like to get some help in the garden, in the house, or to care for children or the elderly at home. They contact us and we prepare all the administrative work to obtain social security coverage for their employee.



© K. Hyttäinen

Mr. Bernard Babel,
Director-General of PRO
(Enterprise Sociale Privée)

Without our support, the employer would have to be constantly keeping abreast of all the different social contributions covering a wide range of risks, including retirement, accidents, invalidity, unemployment, maternity and so on. And without our intervention the social insurance system would have to deal

with all the small insurance payments for each worker contributed by the various employers – which would considerably increase its administrative work. We streamline the administration process for all these insurances. The employers pay a fee of about 5 per cent of the employee's salary for our services, while the social security contributions for their employees amount to 15 per cent of the salary.

What are your plans for the future?

We believe we could double the number of contracts, but we won't be able to grow as fast as we have done over the last two years. At present, each month some 50 new employers start using our services. We employ 10 officers – five of them people with disabilities, according to the principles of the PRO Foundation. Thanks to our services, the employee is also guaranteed at least the minimum wage. Many employers of domestic workers are foreigners themselves, unaware of local labour standards. From time to time the local media report on the worst cases, where domestic employees have been kept in extreme conditions, violating working hours or minimum wage legislation.

It seems that the average domestic worker is undeclared, a woman and a foreigner?

Many domestic workers live undeclared in the country and have no insurance coverage. Incomes

vary a lot. At one extreme, they work only something like two hours per week to improve the family income, and at the other extreme they can live with their employer and earn well over 20,000 Swiss francs per year. But the latter case is rare: we don't have more than 200 people registered here working so intensely in domestic employment in the canton of Geneva.

You also deal with migrants having no regular residence permit. Does your action influence their legal status?

By no means, we do not aim to legalize their status, but some of these people have been living here for many years. If we get their insurance contributions paid, they have at least something to show the authorities. However, they won't be allowed to receive unemployment benefits, for example, if they lose their jobs. Similarly, here in Geneva we put the children of undocumented migrants into school. We see this as a means to better integrate these people into our society.

An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 workers are not covered by the social security system in Geneva and a large number of them are in domestic employment. This is one of the reasons why the PRO Foundation was given the job of administering the service: the cheque system needs to be separated from public administration because the information gathered has to be treated confidentially. We do not deal with tax matters either. Workers have to handle that themselves – at least for the time being. There is, however, a discussion going on here in Geneva about the taxation at source of this category of workers.

At the June session of the International Labour Conference, the ILO will look at the possibility of an international labour standard to protect domestic workers. What would you expect from such a standard?

An ILO standard should guarantee that every domestic worker gets at least a written labour contract fulfilling minimum requirements related to salary, leave and working hours, based on local standards. Every country has its own laws, so it would be difficult to define an overall regime. A written labour contract would already be a great achievement.

US domestic workers find their voice



The achievement of decent work for domestic workers ultimately depends on their capacity to organize and engage in collective action. Ground-breaking legislation covering the rights of domestic workers is on the brink of passage in New York State. If signed into law it will be the culmination of a decade of grassroots activism supported by the American labour federations AFL-CIO and may open the door to similar legislation in other states. Gary Humphreys, a California-based journalist, reports.

NEW YORK – According to the US census there are currently over two million people engaged in domestic service in the United States – a number that is probably a significant underestimate. Overworked, underpaid and, until fairly recently, isolated, domestic workers do not even have the right to organize, clinging to the coat tails of labour federations to see their few rights defended.

The plight of domestic workers caring for the sick and the elderly is of particular concern. According to a recent report by the Alliance for Retired Americans, the American Association for People with Disabilities, and the labour federations AFL-CIO and “Change to Win”, roughly half of all home-care workers work full time year round. They are twice as likely as other workers to receive food stamps and to lack health insurance, while one in five lives below the poverty level.

According to the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), a leading labour organization, 90 per cent of home-care workers are female, and one in four heads a household with children. “These people are engaged in essential work that enables others to go out and make a living,” says Priscilla Gonzalez, director of Domestic Workers United (DWU) a grassroots organization based in New York, “and yet they are denied a living themselves.”



The last time US labour law was changed to expand coverage for domestic workers was in 1974 with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), but employees providing “companionship services” to the aged and disabled were left out (“exempted” in the language of the document) – deemed too casual and informal for legal protection. Since 1974 the world has changed, and both the numbers of home-care workers and the services they provide have grown, but the law has failed to grow with them.

The last time the FLSA’s so-called domestic worker “exemption” was challenged was in 2007 when the Supreme Court ruled that home health-care workers were not eligible for the overtime and minimum wage protections extended to others. And the domestic worker exemption is but one of a list of similar exclusions. As already mentioned, domestic workers in the United States have no right to organize under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). They have no protection under



>> the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). They have no protection under civil rights laws.

But things are beginning to change. After years of outreach and advocacy, notably from small groups like the DWU, scrapping this exemption is back on the political agenda. Last summer fifteen US senators sent an open letter to Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, calling for the repeal of the exemption, and arguing in favour of a national minimum wage and the extension of federal overtime requirements to domestic workers. Solis, the daughter of an immigrant domestic worker herself, has been supportive of the idea of scrapping the exemption, referring to it as a “loophole” which should be closed.



How soon that will happen is anyone's guess, but domestic workers may not have to wait for Congress to get round to changing the law because change may be coming state by state, starting in New York where a comprehensive Domestic Worker Bill of Rights looks set to pass in the State Senate in the coming month or so. If passed the legislation will grant housekeepers, nannies and caregivers the same rights that the majority of US labour enjoys, notably: time-and-a-half for every hour over 40 hours per week; one day off per 7-day calendar week; a limited number of paid vacation days, holidays, and sick days; advance notice of termination or severance pay in lieu of notice. The bill will also give domestic workers the ability to sue employers where these provisions are not met. The bill has been debated within the State legislature for more than six years, and has already passed in the State Assembly. The State Governor has pledged to sign legislation once it reaches his desk.

“It's going to put domestic workers on an equal footing with everyone else,” says DWU's Gonzalez, one of the activists who have been fighting for change for a number of years. “The new laws are also going to send a strong message to the work force about being recognized and protected under the law.” Some domestic workers are already getting the message. “The Bill of Rights will put an end to decades and decades of exploitation,” says Patricia Francois, a nanny who spent six-and-a-half years looking after the daughter of a wealthy Manhattan couple until she was fired in December of 2008 after an altercation (Francois claims that her employer punched her in the face, a claim the employer disputes). For Francois the importance of the bill goes beyond any specific rights it may include. “It will give us back our dignity and respect,” she says.

And the bill's impact will not be limited to New York. Andrea Cristina Mercado, Lead Organizer of Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA), a group of San Francisco/Oakland-based activists – says that as a result of the New York campaign, MUA has decided to push for a legislative Bill of Rights campaign in California. “This year we are going to be introducing a resolution in support of domestic workers at the State level and we are hoping that will help us build momentum for a legislative campaign in 2011,” she says. The last time groups like MUA tried to effect change in California was in January 2006 when they managed to get the so-called “Nanny Bill” introduced in the California Assembly.

The bill was passed by the Assembly and the Senate but was then vetoed by the Governor of California. This time Mercado believes things will be different: “In 2006 we were just focused on rights for overtime and fines for abusive employers,” she says. “This time, we will take an approach similar to the one used in New York and will be going for a comprehensive Bill of Rights, an inspiring platform that gets people stirred up.”

And it is not just the approach to campaigning that has changed. The big difference between now and 2006 is that grass-roots domestic labour movements in the United States have become organized. Domestic workers may be banned from forming a union, but there is nothing to stop cooperatives and associations coming together to exchange

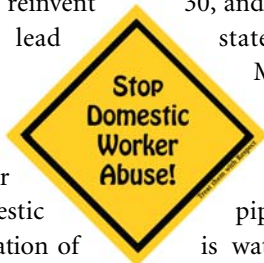
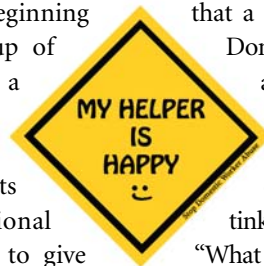


information and develop strategy. And this is exactly what they have been doing, beginning in June of 2007 when a small group of domestic workers came together at a National Domestic Worker Gathering in Atlanta, Georgia. On the last day of the gathering the participants took the decision to form a National Domestic Worker Alliance (NDWA) to give domestic workers a voice and to draw attention to their plight. “There were all these local campaigns and initiatives going on, but we wanted to create a coherent whole – and not to have to reinvent the wheel each time,” says NDWA lead organizer Jill Shenker.

The basic idea behind the NDWA was that domestic workers in one state could learn lessons from their counterparts in another; the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights is the first indication of how powerful that approach can be. “The California coalition has been inspired by what their sisters

in New York have achieved,” says Shenker, reporting that a comprehensive bill called the California Domestic Worker Bill of Rights (CDWBR) has already been drawn up. The NDWA has also provided the participants with a sense of connection and of course empowerment. “We are not just about tinkering with the labour code,” says Shenker. “What we’re trying to do is build a social movement.”

That social movement is growing. Founded by 13 organizations, the NDWA now comprises over 30, and it is only a matter of time before other states, notably Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington pick up the Bill of Rights idea. “We’re really excited about what’s coming down the pipeline,” says DWU’s Gonzalez. “Everyone is watching what is happening in Albany.” Soon they’ll be watching what happens in California.





ORGANIZING DOMESTIC WORKERS WORLDWIDE: DECENT WORK IN ACTION



In various parts of the world, domestic workers have been seeking to exercise their rights through collective action.

In Brazil, the first organization of domestic workers was formed in 1936 in São Paulo, and since 1988 Article 7 of the Constitution has provided protection for their right to do so.

In Uruguay, the establishment of the new tripartite wage board composed of government, employers' and workers' representatives also consolidated organizations representing domestic workers and their employers. The Housewives' League of Uruguay, which was originally created to revalue unpaid domestic work, agreed to act as the employers' representatives on the wage board, while the National Trade Union Confederation agreed that the National Confederation of Domestic Workers, not yet registered as a trade union, could negotiate on their behalf.

Founded in Bogota, Colombia, on what is now Domestic Workers' Day in much of the region (30 March 1988), the Latin American and Caribbean Confederation of Household Workers (CONLAC-TRAHO) has member organizations from 13 countries, plus Canada and an organization of migrant workers in Europe. Most of the members have been domestic workers for 15 to 20 years and are committed to promoting law reform to achieve equal rights in member States.

Associations of domestic workers in India have also lobbied for improvements in working conditions since shortly after independence in 1947. Except for the establishment of a servant's registry, attempts at legislative reform failed, however, and the Supreme Court decided in 1977 that domestic workers belonged to the category of workers that should not be recognized as "organized labour".

In Namibia, domestic workers organized even during the colonial era when trade union membership was illegal. A 1994 ILO study reported that the Namibian Domestic Workers' Union (NDWU) had recruited about one-third of the 12,000 domestic workers in the country.

Despite the obstacles facing migrant workers, the Asian Domestic Workers' Union (ADWU) has operated in Hong Kong, China, where domestic workers enjoy some trade union freedoms, since its establishment in 1988. In Sri Lanka, the National Workers' Congress (NWC) has signed a cooperation agreement with unions in receiving countries and seeks to inform domestic workers prior to departure of their rights in these countries, while the unions of the receiving countries provide them with support.

“Children belong in school, not in domestic work”

Thousands of children have been able to escape from domestic work, thanks to an action programme launched by a Tanzanian trade union. The programme may gain fresh impetus if an international standard on domestic work is adopted. Samuel Grumiau, a journalist specializing in trade union matters, sends us this account from the United Republic of Tanzania.

DAR ES SALAAM – A 2006 Tanzanian Government study on the labour force showed that one in five children between 5 and 17 years of age is involved in some type of hazardous work. For girls, domestic work is one of the main forms of exploitation. Most of them are taken to the cities by people who have gained their parents’ confidence by promising wages and schooling. In practice, they often fall victim to the worst kinds of abuse: working for up to 18 hours a day, beaten and humiliated by their employers, sleeping on the floor, denied proper food. Child domestic workers earn no more than US\$12 a month – if they are paid at all.

CHODAWU¹ is a trade union which has been campaigning against child domestic labour since it was founded in 1995. Its action has been supported by the ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), particularly through time-bound programmes, of which Tanzania was one of the first beneficiaries. One of the first steps taken by CHODAWU is to set up committees against child labour in the areas concerned. These are composed of influential persons within the local communities (teachers, nurses, representatives of the authorities, and so on) and one of their roles is to identify child domestic workers, which is no easy task since the work is done in private houses.

“We start by asking members of the local community if they know of any child domestic workers in their street,” explained Leah Medard, a CHODAWU activist in the Kawe area of Kinon-



Leah Medard, a CHODAWU activist in the Kawe area of Kinondoni district in Dar es Salaam

doni district in Dar es Salaam. “If they report a case, a delegation from the committee against child labour goes to the employer’s house to check whether the information is accurate. Well-respected people in the area are part of the team and this helps to open doors. If the persons concerned really are employing a child, we try to make them more aware, explaining that even though employing a minor is illegal, we aren’t there to punish them but simply to help the child. We want to get the message across that children belong in school, not in domestic work.”

Offering employers a helping hand

The employment of children as domestic workers is so widespread in Tanzania that the union prefers to extend a helping hand to employers rather than threaten them with court action. “Arrests and penalties are a matter for the police, not for the unions,” said CHODAWU general sec-

¹ CHODAWU (Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers’ Union) is affiliated to the Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA) and, at the international level, to the IUF (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations).



>> retary Towegale Kiwanga. “We only contact the police in cases of extreme abuse, for example where sexual harassment is involved. Otherwise we prefer to negotiate with the employer to arrive at a situation of decent work if the domestic worker is over 14 years of age, or to ensure that he sends the worker to school if she’s younger.” The pressure exerted by the committees against child labour always has a positive impact. “Even in the rare cases where the employer refuses to release the child, he’ll treat her better because he’ll feel that the community is keeping an eye on him,” emphasized Leah Medard.

Where an agreement is reached with the employer, CHODAWU discusses possible options with the child: to be integrated into the state school system (possibly after a period of catch-up tuition at one of the government centres set up for that

purpose), to take courses at one of the three vocational training centres run by the union, or to return to the village of origin. “During the first phase of the project we had more funds for reintegrating children into their villages of origin,” explained Silpha Kapinga, coordinator of CHODAWU action against child labour. “The operations were a joint effort with our representatives in the various regions and with the local authorities, but it’s not easy to monitor these children when they’ve returned home. In the last few years, the vast majority of children formerly engaged in domestic work who received help from our project have preferred to stay in the towns and cities to follow training courses in our centres or go back to school.”

Over 6,000 children have been withdrawn from domestic labour by CHODAWU since 1995. Awareness-raising campaigns have prevented thousands more from being recruited. “In the districts where the programme has been set up, it’s become difficult to find child domestic workers,” Vicky Kanyoka, Africa coordinator for the IUF, was happy to point out. As a result of its efforts against child labour, the union has also been able to raise its public profile and engage in effective lobbying with the Government. CHODAWU has got the legislation to recognize domestics as workers, thereby entitling them to benefits including a minimum wage (from US\$48 with a standard employer to US\$66 with a diplomat), maternity protection and annual holidays.

In view of the long tradition of exploitation of domestic workers and the individual nature of their employment, the observance of all the rights recognized in Tanzanian legislation is far from being a reality on the ground. “An ILO Convention on domestic work would help us to apply these rights,” emphasized CHODAWU chairman Titus Mlengeya. “It would also raise self-awareness among the workers themselves. They will be internationally recognized as a category of workers that makes an important contribution to the economy and to livelihoods. If the Tanzanian Government ratifies this new standard, nobody will give us odd looks and ask ‘How can you defend domestic servants?’ On the contrary, we will be seen as citizens who are protecting the interests of a group of people who are just as important as anyone else.”

A PERSONAL STORY



“When I was 12, I left school to take up domestic work – seven days a week, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., without any breaks. I was earning 15,000 shillings (US\$11) a month. I slept on a mattress in my employer’s living room. I wasn’t allowed to eat the same food as the family. They were a couple with three children. The wife was always hitting me and insulting me. The worst jobs were washing the clothes, fetching water and cleaning the toilets. When the people from the CHODAWU committee against child labour met me in 2008, I

hadn’t been paid for three months. I took courses in sewing at one of the CHODAWU centres until December 2009. Since then I’ve been doing odd jobs at the house of a neighbour who’s got a sewing machine – that way I can keep my hand in. If I can’t find a proper job in this field, I’ll go back to domestic work – I’ve no choice, I’m the eldest of four brothers and sisters and my mother’s on her own. If I’d been able to carry on my studies, I’d have liked to become a teacher.”

(Neema Jackson, aged 16)

"THE TV AND THE COMPUTER AREN'T FOR PEOPLE FROM YOUR BACKGROUND"

Now, domestic work is just a bad memory for Sara, a Moroccan girl who was able to return to school thanks to action by a teachers' trade union.

Life changed dramatically in January 2003 for Sara Marbough, a 10-year-old girl living in Fès (Morocco). Her father had to give up work as a result of losing his eyesight and her mother decided that Sara should leave school to help the family earn a living. "I was in the fourth year of primary school, I wanted to carry on because I liked studying. If we hadn't had these financial problems, my mother would have let me continue at school, even though she wasn't entirely convinced it was useful, especially because one of my brothers hadn't been able to find a job in the field for which he was qualified. A neighbour knew a woman in Casablanca who was looking for a domestic worker and offering a wage of 500 dirhams (US\$58) per month. I kept pestering my mother to change her mind. After we'd had an argument I thought I'd convinced her but one Sunday in January 2003, about 10 o'clock in the morning, the woman arrived in her car and in the afternoon she took me back home with her."

Sara started work the very next day. "There was no end to it: washing the clothes, washing the dishes, cleaning the house, etc. They woke up at 6 a.m. but I had to get up before them to prepare their breakfast and then I was working all day and in the evening too, sometimes until midnight. They all had their own rooms but I slept in the kitchen. My employer often hit me. She did so the first time I did the washing because she wasn't happy with what I'd done. One day, when I was alone in the house, I went on the family computer but when my boss arrived, she was really angry. She hit me and she told me to stay away from the computer and TV in future because they weren't for people from my background. The same thing happened when I picked up the children's toys. She told me there were cameras hidden in the house to keep an eye on me."



© S. Gramina

Thanks to a programme launched by the National Education Union (SNE), Sara was able to go back to school. Among other things, the programme aims to raise the awareness of teachers regarding their role in the community in cases of absenteeism or dropping out of school altogether. "When we noticed Sara's absence and found out what had happened to her, we held a meeting to discuss her case. Then we went to see her mother to try and make her realize the importance of education," explained the head of Sara's school, Mohammed Glioui, who is also a union activist. "We offered her help with getting Sara back to school: some classroom items, some clothes, things like that. She was proud that we were doing that for her daughter. After mulling over the situation for two months, she called the woman Sara was working for and arranged for her daughter to come back to school."

Sara is 16 now and doing extremely well at school. She is in her first year of secondary school and hopes to continue her studies and become a paediatrician.

Strengthening the HIV/AIDS response: Towards a new international labour standard

ILO constituents strengthen their leadership in the HIV/AIDS response



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The ILO will reach a major milestone in the global response to HIV/AIDS when the International Labour Conference votes on the adoption of an international standard on HIV/AIDS and the world of work in June 2010, almost a decade after the launching of the *ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS*. Once the standard is adopted by the representatives of governments, employers and workers of ILO member States, it will be the first international human rights instrument entirely dedicated to HIV/AIDS and applicable to all workers in all sectors, formal and informal, as well as to jobseekers, laid-off workers and persons in vocational training.

Governments, employers' and workers' organizations of the 183 member States of the International Labour Organization (ILO) are working on the development of the first international human rights instrument focusing on HIV/AIDS. The process began in 2007 with a decision of the ILO Governing Body to include a standard-setting item on HIV/AIDS on the agenda of the International

Labour Conference (ILC). One of the main motivating factors for the new international labour standard was the stigma and discrimination that resulted in many jobs lost. It was decided that it was necessary to adopt a standard in order to increase the attention devoted to the subject at the national and international levels, to promote united action among the key actors on HIV/AIDS, and to increase the impact of the *ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work* developed by a tripartite group of experts and adopted by the ILO Governing Body in 2001.

Since the beginning of the epidemic, almost 60 million people have been infected with HIV and 25 million have died of HIV-related causes. Today, more than 33 million people around the world are living with HIV. Significant progress has been made in expanding access to treatment, so that by the end of 2008 more than 4.7 million people had access to HIV treatment. While there is no cure for the HIV virus, early treatment and continued adherence to antiretroviral treatment can halt its progression, permitting people living with HIV to continue to work and live productive lives for an indefinite period of time. Nevertheless, efforts to prevent and reverse the spread of the pandemic must continue to be strengthened and expanded. The number of new HIV infections continues to outstrip the number of people in treatment – for every two people starting treatment, another five become infected with the virus.

More than 90 per cent of people living with HIV are youth and adults in their productive and reproductive prime. If they lose their livelihoods as a result of HIV infection, they risk losing their access to treatment as well as their ability to support their families. Enterprises are also negatively affected, suffering the loss of trained workers and loss of productivity. The workplace is an optimal entry point for reaching the working-age population and providing information on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

Policies and strategies for prevention and treatment must reach all workers where they work, including in the informal and rural economy.

Juan Somavia, ILO Director-General, on the occasion of World AIDS Day, 1 December 2009

Building on a strong foundation

Developed through an extensive tripartite consultation process, the *ILO Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work* (2001) provides ILO constituents with the framework to build a strong national HIV response and has been translated into 57 languages to date. The Code establishes ten key principles as the basis for the development of comprehensive rights-based national HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes. The principles of the Code have been successfully applied in many countries around the world.

Why is a new standard necessary?

Building on the strong foundation established by the *ILO Code of Practice*, the new instrument will promote more uniform, coordinated action on HIV/AIDS to replace the varied patchwork of different types of measures taken at the country level. Also, the Code is a voluntary instrument for which uptake is optional. It does not give rise to any obligation on the part of constituents to give effect to its principles. In contrast, a new international labour standard will strengthen the impact of the Code, giving its principles greater force and visibility. Moreover, following adoption of the instrument, each member State will be required under the ILO Constitution to determine what measures it should take to implement the new instrument, including the adoption of national laws and policies.

The standard will promote the development and adoption of HIV workplace policy frameworks in countries that have none. It will promote the establishment of synergies at the national level and facilitate the distribution of roles and responsibilities between public, private and civil society actors. As an international labour standard, the instrument would also be adaptable to the specific circumstances and needs of each member State.

PRINCIPLES OF THE ILO CODE OF PRACTICE ON HIV/AIDS AND THE WORLD OF WORK

- Recognition of HIV/AIDS as a workplace issue
- Non-discrimination on the basis of HIV status
- Gender equality
- Healthy work environment
- Social dialogue (between employers, workers and government), with inclusion of persons living with HIV
- No screening for purposes of exclusion from employment
- Confidentiality
- Continuation of employment relationship and prohibition of termination due to HIV status
- Importance of prevention
- Need for treatment, care and support, including access or referral to services

Meeting the challenges through an unfolding process

The standard has been developed following the double-discussion process provided for in the ILO Constitution. Report IV (1) on *HIV/AIDS and the World of Work* was issued in 2008. It provided a global overview of the HIV response in the different ILO member States, showing that 169 out of the 183 ILO member States have provided for some measures on HIV.

Report IV (1) laid the basis for the first discussion on the standard at the 98th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2009, which took place within the Committee on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work composed of



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HIV/AIDS AND ILO MEMBER STATES

- Of the 183 ILO member States, 169 have adopted a national HIV/AIDS strategy
- More than 70 ILO member States have, or are in the process of adopting, national legislation on HIV/AIDS
- A total of 30 countries have adopted or are in the process of adopting specific HIV workplace rules
- Countries have addressed HIV/AIDS in different ways, some dealing with HIV/AIDS under equal opportunity or public health legislation, whereas others have also integrated HIV/AIDS into general labour legislation

148 members (79 government members, 27 employer members and 42 worker members). Discussions in the Committee were lively and the first draft text of the instrument was the subject of almost 300 amendments. Broad consensus was ultimately reached on the substantive provisions of the draft instrument, which addresses a range of fundamental human rights issues.

The draft instrument envisages a broad scope of application, covering all workers in any employment or occupation, persons in vocational training, volunteers, jobseekers and job applicants, laid-off workers in all sectors of economic activity, including the private and public sectors and the formal and informal economies, as well as persons in the armed forces and uniformed services.

It highlights the importance of the principle of non-discrimination, providing that a job applicant should not be denied access to employment on the basis of HIV status, whether real or perceived. Similarly, the instrument establishes that HIV status is not a valid justification for termination of employment. The instrument also safeguards workers' rights to privacy. The principle of continuation in employment is established, according to which workers living with HIV/AIDS should be allowed to continue to work – with reasonable accommodation if necessary – for as long as they are fit to do so.

Prevention is a central theme in the draft instrument, which calls for the development and implementation of comprehensive workplace education programmes and campaigns promoting voluntary counselling and testing. Indeed, finding out one's HIV status frequently empowers workers, enabling

STREET VENDORS LEAD THE HIV RESPONSE IN MOZAMBIQUE'S MARKETS



© ILO/AIDS

Mr. Ramos Marrengula, President of ASSOTSI, in the market of Xipamanine

When Maria Jacinto Siteo became pregnant and the hospital told her she was HIV-positive, her husband left her and she lost her home. "Since then I have been working in the market. I sell second-hand clothes and other small articles," she says.

Like Maria, approximately 85 per cent of Mozambique's workforce make their living in the informal economy. It is a hard life with poor working condi-

tions, low wages and little or no social protection. Children are often forced to leave school and live on the streets, as parents do not earn enough to sustain their families. Their situation is of great concern to the *Associação de Operadores e Trabalhadores do Sector Informal* (ASSOTSI), a Mozambican association that represents 48,000 informal-sector workers countrywide.

As part of a programme set up by the ILO and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), ASSOTSI started running a range of HIV/AIDS activities to help give its members the skills and knowledge to prevent HIV and to cope with its impact on their lives. The ILO programme helped vendors to increase their profits and to reduce HIV vulnerabilities through training sessions addressing issues such as small business management. The programme is now being further expanded to other locations with the support of the ONE UN Fund.

CHINA'S VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS REACH OUT TO YOUNG MIGRANT WORKERS



Students in a Chinese vocational training school attending an HIV/AIDS training session

In China millions of workers migrate every year from poor rural areas to seek work in manufacturing zones. The Pearl River Delta in the province of Guangdong is the largest manufacturing centre in the country, employing over 60 million rural migrant

workers. Due to the lack of sex education, young migrant workers face increased risk of unexpected pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. To mainstream HIV and mitigate its impact, the ILO is working with the Chinese Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the US Department of Labor to integrate HIV prevention into the core curriculum of vocational schools. The vocational school of Zhaoqing, near the Pearl River Delta, is one example: here, young migrants aged between 14 and 19 receive training on HIV prevention in addition to core technical skills.

Over 2,000 teachers in China have been trained in delivering participatory training. With the capacity built, five million students will be reached in China over the next five years.

them to access treatment early and dramatically increasing their prospects of remaining healthy and fit for work indefinitely.

The instrument focuses on measures to mitigate the impact of the epidemic and improve the quality of life for people living with HIV, and on ensuring mechanisms whereby there is on-going access to treatment. To further this end, the instrument calls for public health services to be strengthened. Examples of measures to support people living with HIV include, among others, those ensuring that workers living with HIV, and their dependants, have equal access to health care and social security benefits, as well as the development of income-generating opportunities for people living with or persons affected by HIV/AIDS.

The draft instrument also contains provisions focusing on specific groups, including children and young persons, migrant workers and persons in vocational training.

Member States may give effect to the Recommendation through a range of measures, including through the adoption of national laws and regulations, collective agreements, national and workplace policies and programmes, and sectoral strategies with particular attention to sectors in which workers are the most vulnerable to HIV.

The second tripartite committee discussion will take place at the 99th Session of the ILC in June 2010, at which time the new standard is expected to be adopted by the required two-thirds majority vote of the ILC.

Almost a decade after the launching of the *ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work* at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS, 2001), a new international labour standard on HIV/AIDS and the world of work will set a key milestone in the global HIV/AIDS response.



The ILC Committee on HIV/AIDS was chaired by Ms. Thembi Nene-Shezi (Government member, South Africa). Mr. Patrick Obath (Employer member, Kenya) and Mr. Jan Sithole (Worker member, Swaziland) were Vice-Chairpersons

Entrepreneurial Moms in Canada

Reconciling work and family life



Since 2001, Quebec has seen a baby boom and there seem to be more and more “entrepreneurial moms”. According to the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC), over the last 15 years, the number of self-employed women in Canada has risen by more than 50 per cent.¹ Furthermore, the CIBC predicts that, in 2010, one million Canadian women will own a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) or be self-employed. Lavinia Botez, a journalist based in Quebec, looks at the challenges for entrepreneurial moms in Canada and elsewhere.

QUEBEC – If the trends are anything to go by, more and more mothers are choosing to work from home in the interests of a better balance between work and family life, even if there are still no official figures. Flexibility is a central concern for these women, whatever their occupation.

Women gain a number of benefits from working at home: they can choose their working hours, take days off with no questions asked when a child is ill, enjoy longer holidays, avoid spending hours in traffic or on public transport, and, above all, be their own boss. In terms of part-time work, Quebec does not seem to be at the forefront, particularly in certain spheres such as law. “Women lawyers often have to go on working long hours and end up feeling frustrated that they can’t spend time with their families,” says Christine Simard, a well-known blogger in Quebec who takes a great interest in the Entrepreneurial Moms movement.

Another factor that could partly explain the trend is that, in 2006, the Quebec government made significant improvements to its parental insurance plan. “The total number of parental benefit weeks may be taken by one of the two parents, or shared between them as they see fit. Parents may

take these weeks concurrently. Benefits don’t start before the week in which a baby is born.” As Simard explains, “we notice that women often begin to think about ideas for a business at this point, as well as about the pleasure of working from home.”

“In Quebec, entrepreneurial moms are all determined, independent women who want to achieve a balance,” says Valérie Hains, founder of the Quebec Entrepreneurial Moms Association, which was inaugurated on 10-11 February 2010. These women want fulfilment in motherhood and in their working life, making time for their children as well as their chosen career. “You always have to keep in mind that you don’t just need courage and determination to launch a company, but also, ideally, the right environment (a partner who can pay the bills while Mom is starting up the business, for example).”

Giving birth to an Association

Hains is the mother of four girls. After her first two, she decided to become a stay-at-home mom and, as she explains, “I’ve always taken full responsibility for my decision.” As a trainer of trainers, she didn’t have much time to work in her field, but still carried on writing. So one day she decided to open her own publishing company. While doing her research, she discovered Entrepreneurial Moms (www.entrepreneurialmoms.org) in Ontario, as well as other groups and associations in France and the United States, offering activities, services and support to women entrepreneurs who were also mothers. But she still couldn’t find anything in Quebec. It was then that she joined up with two other mothers: Mona Duplessis, who is self-employed in telecommunications and new technologies, and Audrey Martineau, who owns a specialist mother-

¹ <http://www.cibc.com/ca/pdf/women-entrepreneurs-fr.pdf>

and-baby boutique. Looking at the French model and the needs of women in Quebec, they founded the association *www.mamentrepreneures.com*.

Hains, Duplessis and Martineau decided to offer their services via a web site and through other social media, while also setting up workshops, conferences and other informal meetings to promote human contact. They all work from home but highly value their presence in social media. "We are on Twitter and Facebook – I think we need to be in the current climate. The Web alone opens up an entire new market to us and to entrepreneurs in general. It has many advantages: lower costs (none of the costs of running a "real" office, for example), a much larger market because the medium is international, a direct link to the community, and for people who sell products there are no limits any more – you can sell while you sleep!"

"It's important to include social media in a global enterprise strategy. Women entrepreneurs have every opportunity to find clients using social media. They can increase their sales and even clinch contracts," explains Karima-Catherine Goudiam, entrepreneur mother and founder of Three Angels, a business specializing in web marketing and social media. "Sure, managing social media takes time, but you reap the rewards in the end." Also, women are very active in social media, even outnumbering men on several social media sites. Opportunity is the watchword, according to the online review site *Mashable*. "For women, social media represent opportunities to lead, to participate in change, to innovate and to build relationships in various sectors at local, national and international level."

Reconciling work and family life

The theme of entrepreneurial moms is very popular among blogging Quebec mothers like Christine Simard, who is also a mother of two. Simard has a full-time job and is very interested in the situation of mothers in Quebec. Through her blog *mamamiiiia.com* she hopes to develop her thinking in two main areas of interest: the changing role of mothers in Quebec society, and reconciling work and family life.

According to Simard, the Entrepreneurial Moms movement undoubtedly began in other countries for reasons as simple as lack of resources – nurseries that are too expensive, town centres that are too far from the suburbs, and so on. The various movements have developed in line with the values and cultures of each country, and today Quebec in

turn is confronting its own new reality. "In Quebec, the culture of 'work at any price' still holds sway in many businesses. On the other hand, more and more businesses are opening up to the idea of reconciling work and family life. I think we need to go even further in our thinking: Quebec's working culture needs to change. We are at a crossroads – this isn't the feminists' battle any more, it's society's."

Who will be at the forefront? According to Nicole Beaudoin, president and director-general of the Quebec Businesswomen's Network, "Generation Y" will lead the fight to reconcile work and family life, among other things. "This is a generation that wants to live and enjoy a balanced life."

Entrepreneurial Moms in Canada, the United States and France

In the United States, Entrepreneurial Moms was born in Phoenix, Arizona, and is now based in Dallas, Texas, with more regional offices soon to be established in other parts of the country. The Entrepreneurial Moms movement is very popular: committees, events and workshops are organized by groups of determined women.

The activities of Entrepreneurial Moms are also making themselves felt in Ontario and the rest of Canada. A magazine, *The Mompreneur*, together with its web site *themompreneurs.com*, offers tools and articles to support entrepreneurial mothers. Entrepreneurial Moms International also began in Canada, and now has offices in Ottawa, Edmonton and Calgary.



For more information see <http://www.cibc.com/ca/pdf/women-entrepreneurs-fr.pdf>; <http://www.rqap.gouv.qc.ca/index.asp>; and <http://mashable.com/2010/02/15/social-media-women/>.

New ILO study on **childcare** and **working women**



© M. Crozet/ILO

A new ILO study says shortfalls in childcare for pre-school as well as school-age children have important implications for working parents, employers and societies as a whole.

The new ILO publication, entitled *Workplace solutions for childcare*,¹ explores how workers in both industrialized and developing countries are finding some support for childcare through their workplaces. It says the lack of adequate childcare can impact “women’s labour force participation and gender equality, as well as workplace productivity, economic development, child development and the well-being of families and society as a whole.”

The book examines childcare in 10 countries, including France, Hungary, the United Kingdom and the United States in the industrialized world, and Brazil, Chile, India, Kenya, South Africa and Thailand in the developing world. Each chapter provides a general overview of childcare policies and realities, as well as case studies presenting

examples of specific initiatives in workplaces as varied as plantations in Kenya and information technology companies in India.

By reviewing national childcare frameworks and presenting examples of workplace programmes for childcare, this book provides insights into why and how different partners have come together to develop solutions to help workers with childcare needs. While the role of the employer is important, other partners such as trade unions, non-governmental organizations and organizations specialized in childcare as well as government departments and municipalities are increasingly becoming involved in workplace-related childcare programmes.

The book also examines various workplace solutions to help workers with childcare for pre-school children, as well as before and after school and during holidays, using four main categories: company or on-site facilities, linking to community facilities, financial support and advice and referral services.



¹ Catherine Hein and Naomi Cassirer, *Workplace solutions for childcare*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2010. ISBN 978-92-2-122035-0

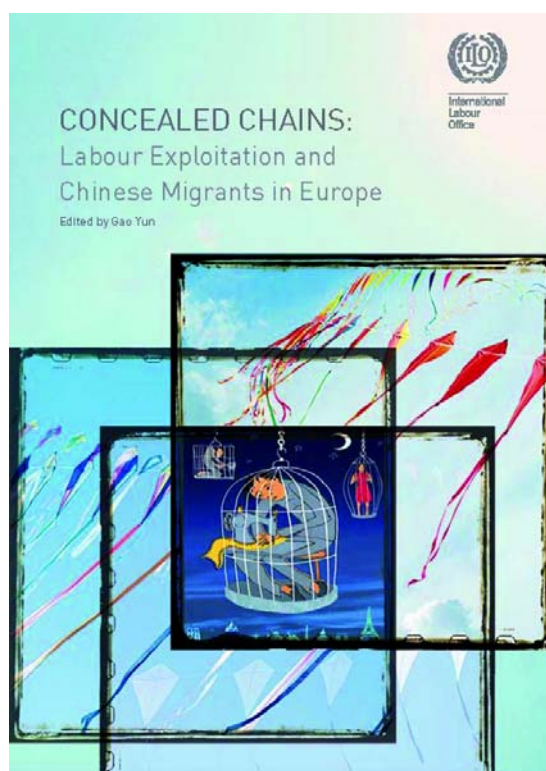
Concealed chains: Labour exploitation and Chinese migrants in Europe

Edited by Gao Yun

While media headlines regularly focus on the plight of clandestine Chinese migrants, little academic and policy attention has so far been paid to the role of overseas Chinese workers in Europe in the global production chain. While many Chinese workers migrate through perfectly legal channels, those who migrate through irregular channels are particularly vulnerable to exploitation on arrival in European destination countries, with the severest cases amounting to forced labour.

Concealed chains: Labour exploitation and Chinese migrants in Europe seeks to improve our understanding of the social, economic and legal aspects of the migration and working experiences of Chinese workers in irregular situations. It also explores how improved regulation and monitoring of labour markets by China and the European destination countries could offer solutions. The studies contained in the book were undertaken as part of a technical cooperation programme by the ILO and the Government of China that aimed to tackle the transnational trafficking of Chinese migrant workers for labour and sexual exploitation.

The book investigates the entire migratory process between China and Europe: the journey itself, the migrants' working conditions in the destination countries and the economic forces influencing those conditions. It explores the situations of irregular Chinese workers in France, Italy and the United Kingdom, examining the factors that make some migrants particularly vulnerable to exploitation and the reasons why they remain in these conditions. The book then proposes policy recommendations for all three countries.



The chains of the book's title are both metaphorical and literal: they refer to the obligations to traffickers, smugglers and employers that bind some Chinese labourers to intolerable living and working conditions, as well as to the supply chains of worldwide brands that may conceal abusive labour practices.

Irregular Chinese migrants pay a high price to emigrate and need specialized intermediaries to help them leave their country. Up to 50 per cent of irregular migrants turn to "snakeheads", the first link in the chain of organized crime networks, to

>>

>> facilitate their emigration. However, as a result, they quickly find themselves trapped in a web of financial and social obligations which can make them highly vulnerable to exploitation upon their arrival in Europe. Their situation is exacerbated by the language barrier, their inability to access information, assistance or the legal system, their irregular immigration status and the heavy debts they incur as a result of their migration. Because of their debts, which often take many years to repay, Chinese migrant workers have little or no bargaining power with employers regarding the long hours, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, low wages and other substandard labour practices that extract a high cost in terms of health, safety and family life. They often find themselves working in Chinese ethnic niches, separated culturally and in many aspects of their daily lives from the mainstream economy and society in which they are embedded.

The exploitation to which Chinese migrant workers are subjected is part of a highly developed underground economy that permeates both formal and informal sectors and is now an inseparable part of the host countries' economies. For example, in the garments sector, subcontracting and intense competition between contractors, who supply

brands or act as *pronto moda* producers for mainly European clients, tend to exacerbate the underlying exploitative conditions. Efforts by the police and labour inspectorates to prevent illegal work and enforce health and safety regulations are rendered ineffective by the strategies of some employers to avoid inspections, including moving production into workers' homes. Complex systems of multiple subcontracts and different layers of contractors allow such employers to avoid their labour responsibilities. They also make it almost impossible for law enforcement agents to trace those – both within and outside Chinese communities – genuinely responsible for the exploitation.

Protecting migrants whose vulnerability has been abused is an essential step in the fight against both trafficking and forced labour. Preventive measures are equally important. France, Italy and the United Kingdom, the three countries examined in the book, are all party to international instruments that represent a common legal framework for addressing trafficking and forced labour in the context of irregular migration. Each has taken legislative and other measures to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking. Given that these measures are so recent, it is still too early to assess their effectiveness in practice.



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Unemployment reached highest level on record in 2009

The number of jobless worldwide reached nearly 212 million in 2009 following an unprecedented increase of 34 million compared to 2007, on the eve of the global crisis, the ILO said in its annual *Global Employment Trends* report published in January. ILO Director-General Juan Somavia called for the same policy decisiveness that saved banks to save and create jobs.

Based on IMF economic forecasts, the ILO estimates that global unemployment is likely to remain high through 2010. In the Developed Economies and European Union unemployment is projected to increase by an additional 3 million people in 2010, while it will stabilize at present levels, or decline only slightly, in other regions.

According to the report, coordinated stimulus measures have averted a far greater social and economic catastrophe; yet millions of women and men around the world are still without a job, unemployment benefits or any viable form of social protection.

"As the World Economic Forum gathers at Davos, it is clear that avoiding a jobless recovery is the political priority of today," said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia. "We need the same policy decisiveness that saved banks now applied to save and create jobs and livelihoods of people. This can be done through strong convergence of public policies and private investment."

The ILO also said the number of unemployed youth worldwide increased by 10.2 million in 2009 compared to 2007, the largest hike since 1991. "Each year, the global labour market has expanded by 45 million people; therefore recovery measures must target job creation for young men and women entering the labour market for the first time," Somavia said.



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According to the ILO, the share of workers in vulnerable employment¹ worldwide is estimated to reach over 1.5 billion, equivalent to over half (50.6 per cent) of the world's labour force. The number of women and men in vulnerable employment is estimated to have increased in 2009 by as much as 110 million compared to 2008.

The report also says that 633 million workers and their families were living on less than US\$1.25 per day in 2008, with as many as 215 million additional workers living on the margin and at risk of falling into poverty in 2009.

The ILO report says that it is urgent to establish wide coverage of basic social protection schemes to cushion the poor against the devastating effects of sharp fluctuations in economic activity.



¹ Vulnerable employment is defined as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers.



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OTHER KEY FINDINGS OF GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

- The global unemployment rate rose to 6.6 per cent in 2009, an increase of 0.9 percentage points over 2007. However, it varied widely by region, ranging from 4.4 per cent in East Asia to more than 10 per cent in Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CSEE & CIS) as well as in North Africa.
- The global youth unemployment rate rose by 1.6 percentage points to reach 13.4 per cent in 2009 relative to 2007. This represents the largest increase since at least 1991, the earliest year for which global estimates are available.
- The overall impact of the economic crisis on women and men is far more important than the differences in impact between these groups.
- Preliminary estimates of growth in labour productivity, measured as output per worker, indicate that productivity levels fell in all regions except East Asia, South Asia and North Africa. The largest decline in output per worker occurred in Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, – 4.7 per cent, thus reversing part of the gains that were made in the first half of the decade.
- As a result of declining output per worker, working conditions are deteriorating especially in regions where labour productivity was already low preceding the economic crisis, such as in sub-Saharan Africa.



To address these issues, the ILO constituents which represent the “real economy” have agreed a Global Jobs Pact that contains a balanced set of tried and tested measures to promote a robust response to the employment challenge by focusing on accelerated employment generation, sustainable social protection systems, respect for labour standards, and strengthening social dialogue. The Pact has received strong backing from the G20 Heads of State and from the UN General Assembly. Rethinking policies is essential because we will not get out of the crisis by applying the same policies that led to the crisis in the first place.

Regional outlook

The ILO report shows wide variations in the employment impact of the crisis between regions and countries as well as in labour market recovery prospects.

The unemployment rate in the **Developed Economies and European Union** jumped to 8.4 per cent in 2009, up from 6.0 per cent in 2008 and 5.7 per cent in 2007. The number of unemployed in the region is estimated to have surged by more than 13.7 million between 2007 and 2009, with an increase of nearly 12 million unemployed in 2009 alone. Employment in the industrial sectors has suffered more than employment in agriculture or services.

Overall, despite comprising less than 16 per cent of the global workforce, the Developed Economies and European Union region accounted for more than 40 per cent of the increase in global unemployment since 2007. Unemployment in the Developed Economies and European Union is expected to remain elevated, with a projected increase in the regional unemployment rate to 8.9 per cent in 2010.

In **sub-Saharan Africa**, the unemployment rate is estimated to have risen to 8.2 per cent in 2009 and is likely to show very little change between 2009 and 2010. The limited increase is not reflective of the true impact of the crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, and should be seen in conjunction with indicators such as vulnerable employment and working poverty.²

In **North Africa**, the overall unemployment rate is estimated to have reached 10.5 per cent in 2009 and is projected to remain elevated in 2010, at 10.6 per cent. This would represent an increase of 300,000 unemployed in 2010 versus 2009. Overall, the weak conditions of labour markets prior to the crisis are likely to make the impact of reduced economic growth more severe, and the region may well need a long period to recover.

The **Middle East's** regional unemployment rate has not risen substantially over the 2007-2009 period and is expected to remain relatively unchanged in 2010, at around 9.3 per cent. However, with nearly 23 per cent of workers in the region living with their families on less than US\$2 a day, the impact of the crisis should also be seen in terms of increased vulnerable employment: any reduction in employment quality could also lead to increased poverty.

In **Latin America and the Caribbean** the unemployment rate is estimated to have risen from 7 per cent in 2008 to 8.2 per cent in 2009,³ amounting to 4 million additional jobless in 2009. Current estimates also indicate that the share of workers in extreme poverty ranged from 7.0 to 9.9 per cent in 2009, an increase of up to 3.3 percentage points from 2008. In 2010, unemployment is expected to decrease slightly to around 8.0 per cent, reflecting the better outlook towards the end of 2009.

In **East Asia** unemployment is estimated to have edged up to 4.4 per cent in 2009 from 4.3 per cent in 2008 and 3.8 per cent in 2007. A rapid improvement in the Chinese domestic market, as well as the positive spill-over effects to neighbouring countries, led to an improvement in the



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economic and labour market figures for the region. The region's unemployment rate is projected to decline slightly to 4.3 per cent in 2010.

The **South-East Asia and the Pacific** region includes a number of economies that are highly dependent upon foreign trade and investment flows. The number of workers in vulnerable employment in the region is estimated to have increased by up to 5 million since 2008. The regional unemployment rate is estimated to have risen to 5.6 per cent in 2009, up 0.2 percentage points versus 2007, and is expected to remain steady in 2010.



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The **Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CSEE & CIS)** experienced the most severe shock in terms of economic growth of all regions in 2009, leading to a 2.0 percentage point increase in the unemployment rate, from 8.3 per cent in 2007 to an estimated 10.3 per cent in 2009. The current outlook is for a slight decrease of the unemployment rate down to 10.1 per cent.

² The working poor are defined as people who are working but also fall below an accepted poverty line.

³ This compares with the regional urban unemployment rate for Latin America and the Caribbean estimated at 8.5 per cent (weighted average) by the ILO for January-September 2009 (ILO: *Panorama Laboral* 2009, Lima, 2010).



International Women's Day 2010

More women choosing to work, but gender equality remains a long way off



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On 8 March, the ILO marked International Women's Day at its headquarters in Geneva and other offices around the world. The Geneva event brought together experts from governments and employers' and workers' organizations from diverse countries and backgrounds for a panel discussion on "What works for working women." A new ILO report prepared for the event shows that despite signs of progress in gender equality over the past 15 years, there is still a significant gap between women and men in terms of job opportunities and quality of employment.

The report, entitled *Women in labour markets: Measuring progress and identifying challenges*⁴, says that more than a decade after the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing adopted an ambitious global platform for action on gender equality and women's empowerment, gender biases remain deeply embedded in society and the labour market.

The ILO report shows that the rate of female labour force participation has increased from

50.2 to 51.7 per cent between 1980 and 2008, while the male rate decreased slightly from 82.0 to 77.7 per cent. As a result, the gender gap in labour force participation rates has narrowed from 32 to 26 percentage points.

The increases in female participation were seen in all but two regions, Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU), and the CIS countries and East Asia, with the largest gain seen in Latin America and the Caribbean. In almost all regions, though, the rate of increase has slowed in recent years. It was in the 1980s and early 90s that gains in numbers of economically active women were strongest.

At the same time, the share of women in wage and salaried work has grown from 42.8 per cent in 1999 to 47.3 per cent in 2009, while the share of vulnerable employment decreased from 55.9 per cent to 51.2 per cent.

"While there have been areas of improvement since the Beijing conference and more women are choosing to work, they still don't enjoy the same gains as men in the labour markets," said Sara Elder of the ILO's Employment Trends unit and main author of the report. "We still find many more women than men taking up low-pay and precarious work, either because this is the only type of job made available to them or because they need to find something that allows them to balance work and family responsibilities. Men do not face these same constraints."

The report shows that there are three basic areas of lingering gender imbalances in the world of work. First, nearly half (48.4 per cent) of the female population above the age of 15 remain economically inactive, compared to 22.3 per cent of men. In some regions, there are still fewer than four economically active women per ten active men. Second, women who do want to work have a harder time than men in finding work. And third, when women do find work, they receive less pay and benefits than male workers in similar positions.

"Labour markets and policies must be much more attuned to a broader paradigm of gender equality, one that adapts and builds on the unique values and constraints of both women

⁴ The report is available on the following website: http://www.ilo.org/empelm/units/lang--en/WCMS_DOC_ELM_DPT_TRD_EN/index.htm

and men,” Ms. Elder said. “Faster and broader progress towards equality in occupations and employment opportunities is required and possible.”

The ILO report says the initial impact of the global economic crisis was felt in sectors dominated by men, such as finance, manufacturing and construction, but the impact has since expanded to other sectors – including services – where women tend to predominate.

The ILO estimates that the global female unemployment rate increased from 6.0 per cent in 2007 to 7.0 per cent in 2009, slightly more than the male rate which rose from 5.5 to 6.3 per cent. But in four of the nine regions, it was the male unemployment rate that rose more than the female. In 2009, female unemployment rates were higher than male rates in seven of nine regions, and in the Middle East and North Africa the difference was as high as 7 percentage points.

The report also says that while women and men workers may now be almost equally affected by the crisis in terms of job losses, the real gender impact of the crisis may be yet to come.

“We know from previous crises that female job-losers find it more difficult to return to work as economic recovery settles in,” Ms. Elder said. “That’s why it is important to ensure that gender equality is not a fair-weather policy aim that falls aside in the face of hard times. It should be seen as a means to promote growth and employment rather than as a cost or constraint.”



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Jane Hodges, Director of the ILO’s Bureau for Gender Equality, noted that the 15 years since Beijing had provided important lessons in terms of what works for working women and gender equality. She said the resolution on Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work, adopted by the 2009 International Labour Conference, will guide ILO constituents’ efforts towards a labour market in which all women and men can participate freely and actively, including efforts to facilitate women’s economic empowerment through entrepreneurship development, address unequal remuneration between women and men, enhance social protection for all and strengthen women’s participation in social dialogue.

ILO Director-General welcomes **Business Leaders’ Declaration on International Trade and Economic Recovery** at Davos

Last January, ILO Director-General Juan Somavia welcomed a statement adopted by the International Business Council (IBC) of the World Economic Forum in Davos.

The Business Leaders’ Declaration on International Trade and Economic Recovery urges heads of government to follow through on commitments made at recent high-level meetings,

including the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh, and support the need for “a concerted effort to put decent jobs at the heart of the recovery.”

The International Business Council (IBC), established in 2001, is an interactive community of concerned and committed business leaders made up of more than 100 highly respected and influential chief executives from all industries.

“We need to focus on a jobs-led recovery,” ILO Director-General Juan Somavia said. “Increasing trade flows will be crucial. We must reinforce the role of international trade as an



>> engine for growth and development. The benefits will be even greater when coordinated with coherent employment and social policies.”

Mr. Somavia also emphasized the call to “implement recovery plans that must help preserve employment and prioritize job growth, while continuing to protect and support the unemployed and the young generation, those most at risk of unemployment.”

The ILO Director-General said that the ILO Global Jobs Pact adopted by labour, employer and government representatives last year and

backed by the United Nations and G20 leaders provides an important impetus to crisis recovery efforts by stimulating productive investment in the real economy.

Mr. Somavia said the IBC statement embodied the convergence of public policies and private investment that will be needed to forge a global jobs response to the crisis. He also warned that failure to address the deepening unemployment crisis could lead to social consequences and instability, and could fuel recourse to protectionism.

ILO mourns death of former Director-General **Francis Blanchard**

Francis Blanchard of France, who served as Director-General of the International Labour Office during the turbulent and transitional years 1974 to 1989, died on Wednesday, 9 December 2009 at the age of 93.

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia expressed his deep sorrow and said he felt “a profound spiritual bond with Francis Blanchard, the principal architect of the Organization’s expansion in the 1970s and 1980s, a guardian of its universality, a champion of its struggle to promote human rights and a leader in expanding the fight against poverty and for better working conditions.”

Mr. Blanchard joined the ILO in 1951, where his first assignment was as deputy chief of the Manpower Division. In 1968, Mr. Blanchard was appointed Deputy Director-General with responsibility for technical cooperation and regional activities. Two of the ILO’s major new tasks were brought under his supervision – providing assistance to developing countries and planning the decentralization of the ILO’s activities. In November 1973, the Governing Body appointed him Director-General.

Mr. Blanchard participated in the ceremonies marking the 90th anniversary of the ILO in May 2009 and was also present at the International



Labour Conference in June where the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, paid tribute to his distinguished legacy as Director-General of the ILO.

Mr. Blanchard oversaw the expansion of ILO technical cooperation programmes worldwide. He also played a major role in Poland by giving his full support to the legitimacy of the *Solidarnosc* independent trade union based on respect for the ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87). He was also at the forefront of efforts to ensure dialogue between the ILO, the World Bank and the IMF, particularly during the policies of structural adjustment during the 1980s. It was also through his personal leadership that the ILO and many other international agencies became actively involved in strategies to overcome poverty.

Mr. Blanchard retired from the ILO in 1989 after 38 years of service. He was born in Paris on 21 July 1916. Following his retirement he lived in France.

Major step towards entry into force of key **ILO Maritime Labour Convention**



Spain, which currently holds the European Union Presidency, has become the first EU Member State to ratify the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, in a major step toward bringing into force a new, comprehensive "bill of rights" for seafarers.

The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, sometimes called the "super convention" was adopted by the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva in February 2006.

In ratifying the MLC, 2006, Spain has implemented an EU Council Decision of 2007 authorizing Member States to ratify, in the interest of the European Community, and inviting them to

ratify before 31 December 2010. Spain's leadership as the first EU ratification in early 2010, the International Year of the Seafarer and the year in which all EU Members are expected to ratify, is especially significant.

Spain becomes the seventh country to ratify the Convention and joins a group that includes the world's four largest flag States. The Bahamas, Liberia, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Norway, Panama, and most recently, in January 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country with an emerging maritime interest, have all ratified.

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia said, "This ratification by Spain underlines its commitment to secure decent conditions of work for seafarers on its ships. This ratification is also a major step forward towards the ultimate entry into force of this important Convention, by leading the way for the other European Union countries."

One of the two requirements for entry into force of the MLC, 2006 (ratifications to cover 33 per cent of the world gross tonnage) was achieved nearly a year ago. The ratification of Spain and Bosnia and Herzegovina now brings protection to the world's seafarers on nearly 45 per cent of the world fleet by gross tonnage.

Spain's ratification as a leading EU maritime State is an important step towards achieving the second requirement of 30 ratifying countries. Progress in many other countries indicates that the number of ratifications needed for entry into force will be achieved, as expected, by the fifth birthday of the Convention in early 2011.

Aimed at protecting the world's 1.2 million or more seafarers, the MLC, 2006 addresses the evolving realities and needs of an industry that handles 90 per cent of international trade. It sets out a seafarers' "bill of rights" and is intended to be the "fourth pillar" in the international shipping regulation complementing major maritime Conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on environmental protection and ship safety and security. It sets minimum requirements for seafarers to work on a ship and contains provisions on conditions of



>> employment, hours of work and rest, accommodation, recreational facilities, food and catering, health protection, medical care, welfare and social security protection.

Importantly the MLC, 2006 establishes a strong compliance and enforcement mechanism based on flag State inspection and certification

of seafarers' working and living conditions. This is supported by port State inspection of ships to ensure ongoing compliance between inspections. The MLC, 2006 also contains provisions allowing it to keep in step with the needs of the industry and help secure universal application and enforcement.

Decent work approach to recovery urged by Pacific Island countries

Pacific Island Labour Ministers and social partners have reached an agreement to support a jobs-led recovery by promoting decent work in the Pacific region by adopting the Port Vila Statement on Decent Work and its accompanying "Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work".

The high-level tripartite delegates from Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu agreed to a new common framework, which will concentrate on the issues and challenges the Pacific Island countries are facing in tackling the jobs crisis. They affirmed their commitment to the application of the Global Jobs Pact, agreed to by the tripartite constituents at the 2009 International Labour Conference and endorsed by the G20 leaders and the United Nations.

The ILO Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, Sachiko Yamamoto, said in a statement to the conference delegation: "It is very clear that in spite of signs that the Pacific Islands will gain from a global economic recovery this year, unemployment numbers remain high with many people still struggling to find work. The crisis has also led to a decline in remittances from family members abroad, who are now unemployed. Double-digit youth unemployment in some Pacific member States will become a serious problem if they remain unaddressed."

The main components of the Action Plan include the following: to improve the quantity

and quality of employment through growth and increased job potential; to modernize labour legislation on the basis of international labour standards; to assist with reform of existing welfare structures and formal social protection systems, with the aim of providing a social floor and facilitate labour market adjustment; and to strengthen dialogue and involvement of social partners in the implementation of short- and medium-term development strategies related to the Action Plan.

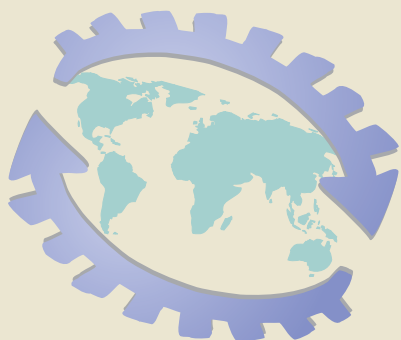
The capacity of labour ministries, social partners and tripartite institutions is too weak in many Pacific Island countries to facilitate active tripartite contribution to needed reforms. Furthermore, social partners commonly expressed the need for their staff to upgrade their skills in organizing, leading and managing their organizations to provide better services to their members and to strengthen their capacity as development partners.

The Pacific Island Ministers and the social partners committed themselves to incorporating their Decent Work Country Programmes into their respective national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies. The Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work will provide a regional framework for the ILO and development partners to support the Pacific Island countries in the realization of national priorities and plans.

The Action Plan and Port Vila Statement will be presented for further consideration by the wider Pacific and United Nations community at the Pacific Conference on The Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis which also takes place in Port Vila, Vanuatu from 10-12 February 2010.

AROUND THE CONTINENTS

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



Danish Government and involving African and international leaders, to improve development cooperation with African countries and find new and innovative strategies for creating jobs for youth based on private sector-led growth.

For further information, please see www.africacommission.um.dk

ILO appoints new Director in Washington

■ Last December, the ILO appointed Nancy Donaldson to head its Washington Office. Ms. Donaldson brings in-depth knowledge of the ILO, its constituents and issues to her new position. She has advised governments and corporations for 25 years. She has also served as an advisor to the ILO Washington office with US policy-makers on core labour standards and the Decent Work Agenda since 2005. Earlier in her career, she worked for AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and Service Employees International Union President Andy Stern.

Labour and social trends in Sri Lanka

■ Published last December, Sri Lanka's first edition of the *Labour and Social Trends 2009* report presents an overview of major trends in labour and social conditions in Sri Lanka and key policy challenges posed by these trends. The report looks ahead to 2020 with informed projections, likely scenarios and pol-



icy implications. Reforming labour market policies to better serve workers and employers, reduce informality, promote competitiveness and productivity, expand employment opportunities for all, enhance social protection and promote effective dialogue between workers, employers and the Government are some of the key policy issues that have been highlighted in the report in order to realize decent work for all. The report is a collaborative effort of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Manpower, Department of Census and Statistics, with technical support from the ILO.

For further information, please contact the ILO Office in Sri Lanka, tel.: +94-11/259-2525, 258-0691-8; fax: +94-11/250 0865, e-mail: colombo@ilo.org

Work and family in Latin America

■ On 25 January the Regional Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), Rebecca Grynspan, and the ILO, Jean Maninat, launched a new report on work and family in Mexico City. The ceremony was attended by Margarita Zavala, wife of the Mexican President, and Javier Lozano Alarcón, Secretary of State for Labour and

Decent jobs for youth in Africa

■ The Government of Denmark and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have signed a cooperation agreement with a total value of approximately US\$40 million to fund initiatives aimed at generating more decent jobs for young women and men in Africa. The first phase is to take place in Benin, Burkina Faso, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The "Unleashing African Entrepreneurship" and "Promoting Post-Primary Education" initiatives are two of five key initiatives identified by the Africa Commission, initiated by the

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Social Protection, as well as representatives of the Mexican Government and national and international organizations. The report *Trabajo et Familia* explores new ways of reconciling work and family responsibilities for the more than 100 million working women in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to the report, 53 per cent of women in the region participate in the labour market, a share which reaches 70 per cent for women aged 20-40, "with important effects on the creation of wealth in these countries, welfare of households and reducing poverty".

For further information, please contact the ILO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, tel.: +511/9893-01246, e-mail: cordova@oit.org.pe

Caribbean employers' organizations strengthen cooperation

■ In June 2007, the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities, the ILO International Training Centre in Turin, and the Mona School of Business of the University of the West Indies co-hosted the first-ever Caribbean Academy of the Management of Employers' Organizations (CAMEO). CAMEO was established as a capacity-building programme tailored for executives of Caribbean employers' organizations. The second course held in 2009 attracted 22 participants, representing

20 employers' organizations from 19 Caribbean countries. The courses have led to greater collaboration and networking among employers' organizations in the Caribbean, including organizational reviews and mutual support for strategic planning exercises.

For more information, please contact the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, tel.: +868/627-6304, fax: +868/627-8978, email: ilocarib@ilocarib.org.tt

7 million unemployed youth in Latin America and the Caribbean

■ In Latin America and the Caribbean young people aged 15-24 were the main victims of the employment crisis, leaving them in situations of unemployment and informality, concluded a European Union Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-LAC) Forum held in Lima last February. Faced with 7 million unemployed youth in the region, the Forum called for urgent action by governments and the social partners. In its conclusions, the Forum cited a series of measures to stimulate labour market integration of young people and the promotion of decent jobs for youth, including adequate education and training systems that take account of labour market needs. The conclusions will be presented at the 6th



K. Mehra-Kerpelman/ILO

EU-LAC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Madrid on 18 May 2010.

For further information, please contact the ILO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, tel.: +511/9893-01246, e-mail: cordova@oit.org.pe

Russian Federation ratifies ILO's Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention



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■ Last February, the Representative of the Russian Federation presented to the Director of the ILO's International Labour Standards Department the Federation's instrument of ratification of the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185). This brings the number of ratifications of the Convention up to 17, with a declaration of provisional application by one further ILO member State. The revised Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention was born in the aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001. "We are convinced that with this Seafarers' Identity Document, the ILO will contribute both to safer shipping through positive identification of bona-fide seafarers, and to making life easier for the seafarers concerned," said Ms. Doumbia-Henry, director of the ILO's International Labour Standards Department.

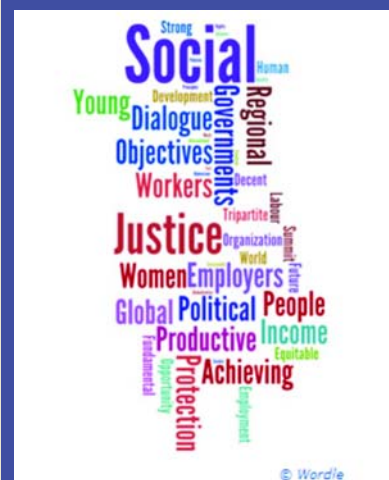
Promoting training and employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities in Africa

■ In Africa, some 10 to 15 million people have an intellectual disability. Because of stigma and discrimination, a majority are excluded from education, training and employment and live in poverty and isolation. To address these problems, the ILO held a conference in Lusaka, Zambia, 9-11

March 2010 to explore opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to work in the general community. The conference, "People with intellectual disabilities – Opening pathways to training and employment in the African region", brought together representatives from several East African countries, Australia and the United Kingdom, including government officials, workers' and employers' representatives, disability advocates and service providers.

For further information, please contact Guebray Berhane, Senior Communication and Public Information Officer, Addis Ababa, tel.: +251-11/544-4415.

VOICES ON SOCIAL JUSTICE



The ILO has launched a year-long Voices on Social Justice Campaign to provide a global platform for perspectives on what social justice means today and how it might be achieved in the years to come.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/sjd/>

ILO HONOURS SHAKIRA FOR HER WORK IN PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE



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Last March, internationally-acclaimed recording artist and humanitarian Shakira was honoured by the ILO for her work in promoting the advancement of children and youth around the world.

"You've always understood that social, economic and environmental policies and action must work together to create sustainable change," Shakira told ILO Director-General Juan Somavia and hundreds of ILO staff, members of the diplomatic community and high-level representatives from UN

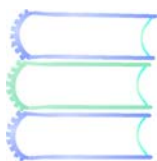
organizations at a special ceremony. "It's not too late to keep our promise to our children, but we must act now. Together, we can make education and decent work for all a reality."

Shakira was honoured for her Barefoot Foundation, which provides nutrition and education to more than 6,000 children in Colombia, as well as support and training for their parents and the communities they live in. She is also one of the founding members of the ALAS Foundation, which promotes public policies for children across Latin America and the Caribbean.

"Our work at Barefoot and ALAS is deeply tied to the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and your commitment to justice and peace, by creating decent work for parents, protecting the working conditions of teachers and eradicating child labour," she said. "How? Through education, which I see as the only path to peace and global stability."

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia presented Shakira with a medal as part of the ILO's events marking the World Day on Social Justice. He described her as a "true ambassador for children and young people, for quality education and social justice."

MEDIA SHELF



■ **The fundamentals of labour administration**

Giuseppe Casale and Alagandram Sivananthiran. ISBN 978-92-2-122999-5. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$28, €20, 30 Swiss francs.

A well-coordinated, professional and efficient labour administration machinery is essential to the effective governance of the labour market. This unique volume clearly sets out the role, functions and organization of labour administration, highlighting the relationship between social policy and economic policy, and identifying the vast array of services to which most people have access during their working lives. It gives a comprehensive overview of the main principles of labour administration, covering labour legislation, industrial relations, working conditions and employment, and describes ways in which current challenges can be met through policy, organization, coordination and management. An invaluable resource for labour administrators, labour inspectors, conciliators, employment service officials, governments, workers, employers, researchers and professionals.



■ **International labour migration: A rights-based approach**

ISBN 978-92-2-119120-9. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$50, €33, 50 Swiss francs.

A comprehensive and accessible overview of international labour migration and the ILO's efforts to protect migrant workers through a rights-based approach, this book gives new insights into the factors that motivate people to seek work outside their country of origin and the significant development effects on both origin and destination countries. Exposing the often limited access of migrant workers to their fundamental rights at work, it describes in detail the international norms that have evolved to protect migrant workers and ensure decent work for all. It reflects on existing and potential international governance structures, addressing the linkages between migration and development, and reviews the role of the ILO's Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration in improving policy-making and international cooperation in the area of labour migration.

■ **World Social Security Report 2010: Providing coverage in times of crisis and beyond**

ISBN 978-92-2-123268-1. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$50, €35, 50 Swiss francs.

This is the first in a new series of biennial reports that aim to map social security coverage globally, to present various methods and approaches for assessing coverage and to identify gaps in coverage. Backed by much comparative statistical data, this first report takes a comprehensive look at how countries are investing in social security, how they are financing it, and how effective their approaches are. The report examines the ways selected international organizations (the EU, OECD and ADB) monitor social protection, and the correlation of social security coverage and the ILO Decent Work Indicators. The report's final section features a typology of national approaches to social security, with a focus on countries' responses to the economic crisis of 2008 – and the lessons to be learned, especially concerning the short- and long-term management of pension schemes.

■ **Extending social security to all: A guide through challenges and options**

ISBN 978-92-2-123064-9. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$50, €35, 50 Swiss francs.

Social security represents an investment in a country's human infrastructure, which is no less important than its physical infrastructure. This book outlines basic concepts such as the social protection floor and the social security staircase, analyses the affordability of various approaches, and examines the results of practices around the world, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Its second part weighs the pros and cons of conditional cash transfers and, based on a wealth of statistics, argues that effective social transfer programmes not only alleviate poverty, but also improve labour market participation, productivity, nutrition, health care, education, consumption and social inclusion. The overall message is that such investment can benefit poorer countries as well as richer ones, and that even in times of tightened budgets and global economic crisis, the dividends are well worth the expenditure.



■ **Offshoring and working conditions in remote work**

Jon Messenger and Naj Ghosheh (eds). ISBN 978-92-2-123001-4. Geneva, ILO, 2010. Co-published with Palgrave Macmillan. US\$100, €75, 110 Swiss francs.

Advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs), combined with organizations

seeking to reduce costs, have led to a dramatic growth in service sector off-shoring and outsourcing, most notably to developing countries such as India. However, despite a burgeoning literature on this phenomenon, little attention has been given to the working and employment conditions that exist in the growing number of workplaces providing business process outsourcing and IT-enabled services in developing countries.

The authors address this phenomenon by examining and providing a historical context for the development of the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, based on case study analysis of working conditions in four countries where this industry is large or growing – Argentina, Brazil, India and the Philippines. Policy advice is offered to policy-makers and companies on how the growth of "good quality" jobs can be promoted as these industries grow and mature around the world.



■ **Global capital strategies and trade union responses. *International Journal of Labour Research*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February 2010.**

ISBN 978-92-2-122725-0. US\$42, €30, 45 Swiss francs. Also available in French and Spanish.

This expanded second issue of the *International Journal of Labour Research* presents a series of papers focused on the dynamic interaction between the corporate strategies of recent years and trade union collective bargaining. Examining a range of different industrial sectors and regions, each of the authors in this issue considers recent labour movement efforts to foster transnational coordination among trade unions and to coordinate collective bargaining on a regional and in some cases a global level.

Published twice a year in English, French and Spanish, the aim of this new journal launched in autumn 2009 is to provide an overview of recent research on labour and social policies from trade union researchers and academics around the world.

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■ **In search of decent work: Migrant workers' rights. A manual for trade unionists**

ISBN 978-92-2-121692-6. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$32, €23, 35 Swiss francs. Also available in French and Spanish.

Studies prepared by the ILO and global unions suggest that migrant workers are vulnerable to abuses such as low wages, poor working conditions, an absence of social protection, discrimination, social exclusion and a denial of their rights as workers and

of the right to freedom of association. Their problems, sacrifices and contributions to the economies of both host countries and countries of origin are too often unacknowledged.

Migration is primarily a labour issue. It concerns the movement of workers who cross borders to find employment, as well as the necessity of equal treatment, good working conditions and rights for these workers. The purpose of this manual is to guide the trade union movement's participation in shaping migration policies by promoting sound labour migration practices and reaching out to migrant workers. It aims to ensure that migration benefits the countries of origin as well as destination countries, and both migrant and non-migrant workers.



■ **Training manual to fight trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other forms of exploitation**
ISBN 978-92-2-122069-5. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$36, €27, 40 Swiss francs. Also available in French and Spanish.

This training manual, developed by ILO and UNICEF under the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, seeks to aid governments, workers, employers, international, and non-governmental organizations that combat trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other exploitation. The comprehensive training package to fight trafficking in children is composed of three textbooks, an exercise book and a CD-Rom.

■ **Scaling up for 2016: Accelerating the elimination of child labour.** Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. International Labour Conference, 99th Session 2010, Report I (B).
ISBN 978-92-121873-9. US\$35, €23, 35 Swiss francs. Also available in French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, German and Russian.

This third Global Report on child labour under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work is divided into four sections. Part I presents a dynamic global picture updating global trends introduced in the previous Global Report in 2006 and setting out progress in the ratification of ILO standards. Part II reviews the progress made in implementing the commitments of the Global Action Plan adopted in 2006. Part III exam-

ines key challenges and gaps that remain and how these can be addressed. Part IV outlines a series of key steps to ensure accelerated progress toward the 2016 target. The report concludes with specific action for the ILO in providing intellectual leadership, support to the worldwide movement, strengthening the social partners, and setting and implementing regional priorities.



■ **Maternity at work: A review of national legislation.** Findings from the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Database. Second Edition.

ISBN 978-92-2-122927-8. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$18, €13, 20 Swiss francs.

The importance of paid work to the lives of most adult members of society makes the intersection of maternity and work a particularly critical focal point in efforts to improve both health and equality. Maternity protection for women workers contributes to the health and well-being of mothers and their babies, and thus to the achievement of a number of Millennium Development Goals. This global report updates the current knowledge of the status and progress of maternity legislation around the world, providing a comprehensive review of national legislative provisions for maternity protection in 167 member States, with a particular focus on how well countries' provisions conform to the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 191). Key aspects of maternity leave provisions are analysed, and the noticeable improvements in maternity protection legislation around the world over the last 15 years are discussed.

This report draws from information on maternity protection legislation from the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Database, a searchable online database.

■ **International Labour Standards Electronic Library – ILSE 2010.** CD-Rom.

ISSN 1020-9972. Geneva, ILO, 2010. US\$25, €16, 25 Swiss francs. Trilingual English/French/Spanish.

ILSE is an electronic reference library of basic international labour standards documents, including ILO Conventions, Recommendations, Constitution, Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference, General Surveys, the Digest of Decisions of the

Committee on Freedom of Association, the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Global Reports, and the recent publications on international labour standards. A selection of further texts is available in Arabic, Chinese, German, Portuguese and Russian.



■ **Value chain development for decent work: A guide for development practitioners, government and private sector initiatives.**

Matthias L. Herr and Tamera J. Muzira.
ISBN 978-92-2-122230-9. Geneva, ILO,

2009. US\$45, €33, 50 Swiss francs.

The current global economic crisis has rendered governments, employers and workers concerned about the effects on people, enterprises and employment. Prepared in the context of the Paris Declaration for AID Effectiveness, this guide systematically addresses all relevant aspects that value chain facilitators need to take into account. It highlights the need to address underlying causes rather than symptoms in individual chains, and it focuses on organizational details, strategic human resources management and action research whereby value chain mapping and research can contribute to finding solutions on a participatory basis. Prepared for use in promoting growth in selected sectors and based on national priorities led by governments, employers and workers, this guide can be tailored to specific situations and used by both public- and private-sector entrepreneurs to facilitate and promote broad-based sustainable growth.



■ **Indigenous and tribal peoples' rights in practice: A guide to ILO Convention No. 169**

ISBN 978-92-2-122378-8. Geneva, ILO, 2009. US\$28, €20, 30 Swiss francs. Also available in French and Spanish.

In 1989 the International Labour Conference adopted the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No.169). Since then, the Convention has been ratified by 20 countries and has guided and inspired governments and indigenous peoples all over the world in their work to promote and protect indigenous peoples' rights. This guide presents experiences, practices and lessons learned since the adoption of the Convention, providing a practical tool for the further understanding and implementation of indigenous peoples' rights. User-friendly and concise, it puts forward ideas to help with the adaptation of good practices to national and local circumstances.

ILO publications for sale can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or directly from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, 4 route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Tel: +4122/799-7628, fax: +4122/799-6938, email: pubvente@ilo.org, web site: <http://www.ilo.org/publns>. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address. The ILO Publications Center in North America can be contacted by phone: +613/745 2665, fax: +613/745 7660, email: order.dept@renoufbooks.com. Customers from developing countries can benefit from special discounts on the regular prices indicated in this magazine and may be able to pay in local currency through an ILO field office. For more information, email us at pubvente@ilo.org.

城市,让生活更美好 Better City, Better Life

EXPO 2010 SHANGHAI CHINA

1 May to 31 October 2010.

Expo 2010 **Better City, Better Life** will show exciting initiatives aimed at achieving better living conditions and more sustainable urban environments – where over half of the world's population lives. The United Nations will have its own state-of-the-art pavilion held under the theme of **One Earth, One UN**.

With two billion new residents in the cities of the developing world in the next 25 years, the 21st century will witness massive and rapid urbanization. Three billion people - almost half of the world population - already live in cities. The challenge is to provide sustainable livelihoods, safe and secure living environments, adequate housing and basic services for all urban residents, especially the urban poor. There is a close link between poverty reduction, decent work and urban development.

In the context of economic and financial crisis, there has never been a greater need to put employment at the centre of economic and social policies. This is why the ILO adopted a Global Jobs Pact which calls on governments and organizations representing workers and employers to work together to collectively tackle the global jobs crisis through policies in line with the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.