

▶ SSTC Strategy for the Priority Action Programmes and Gender Equality

April 2024

▶ Observation

Grounded on the Priority Action Programmes' objectives and aligned with the Programme and Budget 2024-25 and the Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-25; the Emerging Partners and South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Unit will leverage its expertise by engaging with partners from the Global South to improve coherence in support and action to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy; facilitating just transitions towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies; advancing decent work outcomes in supply chains; and promoting decent work in crises and post-crisis situations, through the following actions. These action areas are closely linked with the G20 Priorities in 2024 under the Brazilian Presidency: 1) Social inclusion and combat hunger and poverty 2) sustainability and development, just transition; 3) global governance; 4) fighting inequality.

Transitions from the Informal to the Formal Economy enhanced through South-South Cooperation

The informal economy predominates in the Global South. In low-income countries, it represents 89% of total employment, compared to 82% and 50% in lower-middle and upper-middle-income countries, respectively, being particularly prevalent in developing Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. In this context, SSTC is pivotal for addressing this issue. To address these challenges, two outcomes are proposed, namely:

- Enhanced Global South Collaboration for Formalization by engaging experts from the Global South in knowledge exchange, workshops, and forums, resulting in an increased understanding of effective strategies for achieving decent work through formalization. Also, collaboration among BRICS countries, ASEAN countries, and Arab states is strengthened, leading to improved access to qualifications, training courses, and high-level commitments to enhance working conditions in the informal economy.
- Improved Social Protection and Well-being in Informal Sectors by implementing concrete measures for improved social protection in Global South countries, resulting in better well-being for workers in the informal sector. In addition, integrated strategic approaches, exchange missions, and statistical reports are applied, potentially leading to significant improvements in apprenticeship programs and overall working conditions in countries with large informal economies.
- There are two initiatives planned in the current biennium, including South-South cooperation between Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau and Cabo Verde, to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy through extension of social protection to informal economy workers and the action programme on formalisation of the informal economy.

What about climate?



- Policy and operational tools, good practices and training programmes to enhance capacity development on just transition are developed and disseminated, by facilitating partnerships and exchange of best practices among countries of the Global South to strengthen just transitions in labour-related policies; supporting the formulation and implementation of policies and practices for just transitions in member countries from the Global South; and delivering training programmes that address topics related to just transitions with emerging partners from the Global South; and training with the support of ITC Turin will continue to deliver results-oriented packages and tools on sustainable development, rural development, and sustainable tourism.

Just Transitions towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies promoted through SSTC

The Emerging Partners and SSTC Unit is committed to leveraging its expertise by engaging with partners from the Global South to advance a just transition through coherent approaches in international processes and partnerships. To achieve this, two key outcomes are proposed, namely:

- Development cooperation with partners from the Global South for just transitions is strengthened and scaled up, through coalition building at the global/regional levels; liaising with BRICS countries for funding and non-funding agreements with the ILO; developing the ILO's value proposition in relation to key partnerships from the Global South; assisting with the development of the just transition dimension of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, and continuing the peer learning work with GAIN and PAGE.
- The initiatives of 2024/25 will be focused to the Future Leaders in the World of Work. The first initiative will establish the "Future of Work" South-South and Triangular University network. Representatives of tertiary education institutions from BRICS+ countries are involved as knowledge partners in an ITCILO capacity development initiative. Therefore, it will bring the voices future leaders from the BRICS to the attention of relevant stakeholders at ILO HQ and during the Summit of the Future in September 2024.

Decent work in supply chains; an approach for the Global South

The Responsible Supply Chains in Asia program promotes sustainable and inclusive progress by integrating responsible business practices into multinational companies' operations and supply chains across six Asian countries. Through this multifaceted approach, it aims to uphold human rights, labor, and environmental standards. Enhancing supply chain skills is crucial, achieved through guidelines, tools, peer-learning, and platform building among Global South countries. A key proposed outcome is supporting ILO tripartite constituents in Asia and beyond to develop capacity for decent work across supply chains, leveraging the Responsible Supply Chains in Asia program's best practices. This involves raising awareness, building capacity among stakeholders, promoting CSR/RBC initiatives, enhancing coherence, fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, and facilitating information exchange in line with international CSR/RBC principles and guidelines.

There are two initiatives planned in the current biennium, including interregional Technical Forum for Arab States and Asia Pacific for South-South experience sharing and learning and improving labour market statistics to reflect climate impact on labour market outcomes in the Asia Pacific region through SSTC. The initiatives address Action Programmes for Formalisation of the informal Economy / Crisis and Supply chains.

Decent work for crisis response; the response of the Global South



During crises, South-South cooperation partners share knowledge, resources, and collaborate on initiatives, fostering stability. The ILO facilitates dialogue for collective development of crisis-responsive labor policies. This approach strengthens social protection, workforce skills, and promotes inclusive, sustainable enterprises. Commitment to SSC enhances resilience in regional labor markets and promotes global solidarity. Thus, the Emerging Partners and SSTC Unit aims to enhance ILO's role in crisis recovery through three key outcomes:

- **Improved Social Protection Mechanisms**, through increased coverage and effectiveness of social protection programs, enhanced coordination between government, employers, and workers, and promoting international labour standards, in particular the core Conventions and Protocols;
- **Upskilled Workforce for Crisis Response**, through the implementation of targeted training programs, and increased availability and accessibility of online learning resources;
- **Strengthened Social Dialogue and Cooperation**, through enhanced collaboration between governments, employers, and workers; the establishment of effective communication channels for timely information exchange and joint decision-making; and ensuring a voice for women, youth, migrant workers and other vulnerable groups in the labour market.

Cooperation between ECOWAS and CARICOM in 2022/23 recognized shared objectives of regional integration, the initiative aimed to leverage the diverse experiences of CARICOM and ECOWAS, particularly in the skills dimension of labour migration, disaster crisis response, recruitment practices and tripartism.

▶ I call on all parties to meaningfully engage in the UN-facilitated political process and appeal for further support to scale up the humanitarian response. We must choose peace.

▶ António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

Gender Equality; an opportunity for peer learning

The objective is to promote and achieve gender equality in labour and employment practices through effective South-South and Triangular Cooperation in ILO member countries. Enhancing capacity and policies for gender equality in labor practices established in ILO member countries through SSTC. These outputs seek to create a robust framework that spans capacity development, policy advocacy, knowledge sharing, and collaborative efforts, all with a central focus on promoting gender equality within the labor sector across member countries. Two proposed outcomes in this area are described as follows:

- **Holistic Capacity Development for Gender-Responsive Employment:** This initiative encompasses multifaceted training programs aimed at policymakers, labor experts, and various stakeholders within member countries of the ILO. The core focus lies in instilling a gender-responsive approach within employment policies. These programs entail comprehensive educational materials and resources designed to raise awareness and advocate for gender equality in the workplace. Through the targeted training and developing informative materials, this effort aims to empower decision-makers and stakeholders to foster an environment that values and supports gender equality within labor policies and practices;
- **Integrated Advocacy, Implementation, and Collaborative Frameworks:** This approach supports member countries in developing and implementing gender-sensitive labor policies. It fosters partnerships and best practice exchanges to strengthen gender mainstreaming within labor policies. Utilizing platforms for sharing experiences and successful strategies, such as South-South meetings, facilitates sustained progress in achieving and maintaining gender equality in the workplace through collaborative efforts.
- **For the current biennium, two initiatives are proposed for the Arab states:** one focuses on just transition cooperation and implementation in the Arab States considering global climate change negotiations, adopting a South-South Cooperation approach. The second addresses decent work for paid care workers in the Arab States region through South-South and Triangular Cooperation. The main themes reflected are namely, just transitions and gender equality.



Conclusion

The Emerging Partners and South-South and Triangular Cooperation Unit will leverage its expertise by leasing with partners from the Global South to improve coherence in support and action of the four priority action programmes and gender equality, through enhanced Global South Collaboration for Formalization; improved Social Protection and well-being in informal sectors and crisis-affected nations; strengthened development cooperation with partners from the Global South for Just Transitions; enhanced capacity development for Just Transitions, and Decent Work outcomes throughout all aspects of supply chains; Gender-Responsive Employment; Upskilled Workforce for Crisis responses; Strengthened Social Dialogue and collaboration; and Integrated Advocacy, implementation, and Collaborative Framework for gender-sensitive labour policies.

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