



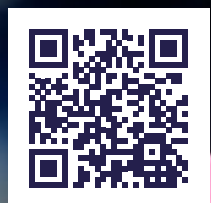
International  
Labour  
Organization

# Investing in decent work for social justice

Making the case for funding partnerships  
with the ILO



To learn more,  
visit the Business  
case website!





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# Why invest in decent work?

In a world filled with challenges, we find ourselves at a crossroads. **Economic and social progress** has elevated living standards and broadened opportunities across the globe. However, recent decades have seen the troubling shadow of **growing economic inequality**, where the wealth of the top 1% stands in stark contrast to the livelihoods of the majority. The seismic impact of the **COVID-19 pandemic** has exposed vulnerabilities in our societal and economic fabric, worsened by **soaring food and energy costs, extreme weather events, and conflicts**. This confluence of factors inflicts hardship on countless individuals, intensifying poverty, exclusion, and inequality. The dream of social justice remains distant for too many. In the quest for a better life, **unsafe working conditions** stands as a fundamental pillar.

**It's more than just a job;**

**it's a path to dignity**

**and inclusion, a gateway to**

**a brighter future.**

Yet, shockingly, as of 2022, a staggering

**205 million people** remained  
unemployed worldwide

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Even for those fortunate enough to secure work

**Over 60%** are in the informal sector,  
often grappling with precarious job  
conditions

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The looming specter of climate-related risks and instability only adds to the economic uncertainty. Tragically, these challenges are compounded by policies that have left

**Over 4 billion people** without  
any safety nets for protection





# Decent work isn't just a buzzword

It's the linchpin of sustainable development. It's the embodiment of a **people-centric approach**, championing human well-being and social justice. This vision is not just an ideal but a reality, deeply integrated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It's about investing in the hopes, dreams, and dignity of individuals worldwide.

# The ILO's value proposition

At its core, the International Labour Organization (ILO), established in 1919, embodies a profound commitment to enhancing **labour rights, social justice, and the quality of work opportunities** globally. Rooted in a rich history of championing fair working conditions and human rights, the ILO remains a driving force in shaping a world where individuals find fulfillment and respect in their workplaces. In today's complex landscape, marked by compounding challenges, from geopolitical instability to climate shifts and transformative technologies like AI, the ILO plays a pivotal role in **guiding essential transformations**.







# An enduring commitment

The heart of our mission is rooted in the belief that universal peace can only flourish on the foundation of **social justice**.

This conviction has guided the ILO since its inception, propelling the organization toward the ultimate goal of **improving labour conditions**. Its initial pact, anchored in the principle of freedom of association, fostered a unique system of governance. It brought **governments, employers, and workers** together under one banner to tackle the issues that the ILO still works on today: unacceptable working conditions, widespread insecurity, deprivation, and industrial unrest. **Tripartism**, a novel concept in its day, swiftly became a time-tested approach, bringing us closer to the realization of social justice.

Development cooperation is a key means of action that helps to **improve peoples' livelihoods and produce decent and productive jobs**. Investing in the ILO is not only a strategic decision but also a commitment to fostering equitable societies and sustainable development.

## Tripartite structure

The UN Secretary-General's report **Our Common Agenda** includes a resounding call for a renewed social contract grounded in human rights at the national level. While many voices echo this call, there's a **diversity of perspectives** on what this renewed social contract should entail.

The ILO, with its unique tripartite composition and role as a normative institution, holds a pivotal position in shaping and rejuvenating these arrangements. This distinct approach empowers the ILO to emphasize priorities, promote social justice, and facilitate the renewal of the social contract through **social dialogue**.

Historically, even in situations where opposing viewpoints seemed insurmountable and tough decisions inevitable, **governments, employers', and workers' organizations** have found common ground through social dialogue. The tripartite agreements that emerge from these dialogues has proven invaluable in **building trust, ensuring inclusivity, and effectively implementing subsequent policies**. This governance model has been instrumental in upholding fundamental workers' rights, nurturing functional labour market institutions, and creating conducive conditions for job creation, inclusive growth, and sustainable development.

## Multi-stakeholder powerhouse

The ILO's approach to promoting decent work is built on a foundation of **multi-stakeholder engagement**. It engages governments, employers' and workers' organizations from its **187 Member States**, as well as with the United Nations and other development partners. As the ILO rallies expertise, resources, and perspectives from a wide spectrum of sectors around the common goal of social justice and decent work, it becomes a more potent force for change and progress.

Social justice, a fundamental pillar of more cohesive **multilateralism**, is intrinsically linked to the pursuit of decent work for sustainable development. The ILO provides a vital avenue for reinforcing tripartism and social dialogue within a connected multilateral system.

## Championing International Labour Standards

At the heart of the ILO's mission lies its role as the UN agency that sets and promotes **international labour standards**. These standards serve as a blueprint for fostering social justice and ensuring fair working conditions worldwide. By setting norms that respect human rights, promote gender equality, and uphold dignified work, the ILO **guides governments, employers, and workers** toward creating inclusive, safe, and respectful work environments. This not only ensures tripartite cooperation but also contributes to the overall development and stability of nations.

Simultaneously, it underscores the importance of translating these rights into **legislation, policies, and national institutions**. This translation ensures not only effective access to public services but also the realization of enabling rights, such as the freedom of association, thus securing a **more equitable and just society**. One of the key ways the ILO is able to carry out this work is through development cooperation.

# Where the ILO works

The ILO operates in countries and regions worldwide to promote decent work and social justice. Its global footprint spans across **Africa, the Americas, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia.**

**The ILO's impact is not confined to lofty ideals but is deeply embedded in the communities it serves.**

**Through its extensive network - 67% of its 3,605 staff work in more than 40 field offices - the organization remains closely connected to the reality on the ground.**



The ILO's training arm, the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) operates in Turin, Italy and offers nearly 50 years of experience in innovative learning and training. Its grassroots presence allows the ILO to work collaboratively with local organizations, leveraging their insights to **tailor efforts** and interventions to address unique challenges and opportunities.

This is how the ILO leads genuine improvements in working conditions and the broader societal landscape. In partnering with the ILO, organizations gain **access to this network** and a foothold in the global economy.

# Our partners for social justice

The ILO's mission to advance decent work is made possible through the support of a diverse array of funding partners, encompassing various categories. These partners – which include **bilateral funding partners, the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations, domestic funding providers, private/non-state actors** such as enterprises, foundations and universities, **and international financial institutions (IFIs)** – play a pivotal role in the ILO's development cooperation initiatives.

Financial support allows the ILO to carry out crucial projects in over **140 countries and territories**. Governments that provide official development assistance are key contributors, providing about 65% of all **voluntary contributions to the ILO**, complementing the fees paid by Member States.

The ILO's collaboration with development partners extend beyond financial support. It involves close alignment of **policy actions**, backed by the necessary **resources and capacities**. South-South and triangular cooperation is an important modality to facilitate exchanges among peers. Through these concerted efforts, the ILO works alongside its partners to promote decent work as a fundamental human right and an integral aspect of social justice, integrating it into **broader development agendas on a global scale**.

In this collective endeavor, **the ILO acts as a central hub**, bringing together funding partners and constituents for a common goal - improving working conditions and prospects for people around the globe. This **collaborative network** ensures that the principles of decent work are upheld and that inclusive and equitable societies are nurtured worldwide.





# Investing for global impact

Funding the ILO is an investment in decent work, a fundamental component of sustainable development and a key driver across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In doing so, the ILO and its partners ensure a brighter future for employers, workers, societies, and economies worldwide. With its tripartite structure fostering collaboration, multi-stakeholder partnerships **driving change**, and international labour standards **promoting fairness and human dignity**, the ILO stands as an indispensable catalyst for progress.

As the world faces global challenges like climate change and conflict, the ILO upholds that the best solutions lie in the transformation of people's lives through the power of **decent work** and unwavering commitment to **social justice**. No matter who or where they are, the ILO envisions a future where every individual can find **hope, purpose, and a better life** through dignified employment and a fair society.

# Learn how the ILO is funded

The ILO is funded through a combination of assessed and voluntary contributions. These resources support the advancement of ILO decent work priorities established at both the country, regional and global levels in consultation with its constituents and outlined in its biennial Programme and Budget and in decent work country programmes. Voluntary contributions, constituting almost half of the total budget, allow the ILO to make positive changes in people's lives.

## Voluntary earmarked funding

Voluntary earmarked funding is an invaluable asset for the ILO, providing specific and time-bound support to enhance the working lives of individuals. Approximately 90% of the ILO's development cooperation portfolio consists of projects funded through voluntary earmarked contributions. These contributions are directed towards specific projects aimed at achieving tangible decent work outcomes.

## Voluntary lightly-earmarked funding

This type of funding provides flexibility to the ILO, allowing it to advance its global outcomes and programmes. It offers several advantages, such as increased opportunities for policy coherence in multilateral platforms, leveraging resources for decent work and the SDGs, and better efficiency in delivering ILO's technical assistance.



## Voluntary unearmarked funding

Nine funding partners provide funding in the form of voluntary core contributions (Regular Budget Supplementary Account) to the ILO, adhering to the UN Funding Compact that calls for predictable and flexible funds for increased results and efficiency. These unearmarked contributions not only enhance the ILO's capacity to deliver results where needed but also reduce transaction costs for both partners and the ILO, streamlining financial and reporting processes. This allows the ILO to allocate resources effectively, advancing its mission and seizing strategic opportunities for partnerships and funding leverage.

## Assessed contributions

Assessed contributions are mandatory contributions provided by all ILO Member States based on the United Nations allocations assessment. They constitute approximately half of the total resources available to the organization. Together with voluntary contributions, assessed contributions fund the ILO's priorities outlined in its Programme and Budget.

# Explore our go-to partners

Partnership is key to everything the ILO does. The ILO has a presence around the world, bringing a wealth of expertise that spans both theoretical knowledge and practical experience across various development issues and contexts. The ILO's longstanding trustworthiness has naturally positioned the organization as a top choice for global collaboration.

## Governments

Forge impactful partnerships to drive the ILO's development efforts forward. Governments contribute to the ILO by actively participating in policymaking, funding programmes and initiatives, and collaborating to promote decent work and social justice worldwide. Notably, over 60% of the voluntary funding supporting these efforts comes from the contributions of governments.

### Examples

- TRIANGLE in ASEAN
- ILO/China Partnership Programme on Strengthening Skills Development in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)
- Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct
- Improving workers' occupational safety and health in selected supply chains in Mexico – A Vision Zero Fund Project
- Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS)
- Labour Market Governance

## UN system

Join the ILO in actively contributing to the collective efforts of the United Nations. As a member of the UN family, the ILO has reinforced the importance of the Decent Work pillars as crucial areas for UN assistance. The ILO participates in Joint UN Programmes and manages allocations from Global and Country Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTFs). In 2022, the UN stood as the fourth-largest contributor of voluntary contributions to the ILO's development cooperation programme, highlighting the significant role it plays in supporting the ILO's initiatives.

### Examples

- United Nations Joint Programme on Social Protection in Zambia (UNJPSP-II)
- Oferta de asistencia técnica presentada al Instituto Nacional de Formación y Capacitación para el Desarrollo Humano (INADEH)
- Increasing Access to Employment Opportunities for Vulnerable Urban Population in Basra City in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis

## Other intergovernmental organizations

Engage with the ILO on decent work policies that are important to Member States organized in intergovernmental organizations. These organizations have a great potential in leveraging policy coherence; their contributions allow the ILO to test and demonstrate what works on the ground. Partnering with the ILO can advance rights, due diligence in supply chains, social protection, safe labour migration, women economic empowerment as well as data and knowledge for the implementation of landmark labour reform.

### Examples

- WAFIRA – Women As Financially Independent Rural Actors
- Social Dialogue for Formalization and Employability in the Southern Neighbourhood Region (SOLIFEM) Project
- E-MINDFUL: Enhancing European Migration Narrative to Develop Further Union's Long-term actions
- Data Analysis to Observe Success (DATOS)
- Ship to Shore Rights
- Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa (STRENGTHEN2)

## Private sector

As the UN's sole agency where employers and workers work alongside governments to advance the decent work agenda, public-private partnerships (PPPs) play a vital role in achieving the ILO's mission. In a dynamic global landscape, the private sector's contributions to the ILO extend beyond traditional support, embracing innovation, entrepreneurship, and tailored solutions.

### Examples

- Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour in Seasonal Agriculture in Hazelnut Harvesting
- Inditex joins ILO's Global Business and Disability Network

## Foundations

The ILO collaborates with philanthropic and corporate foundations by securing grant funding for development projects. This collaboration enables the ILO to address global labour and social justice challenges, leveraging resources and expertise to promote decent work and fair employment practices on a global scale.

### Examples

- Young Futuremakers Malaysia: Promoting the career progression of young women through up/reskilling in STEM, including digital skills, and employment services
- Understanding and improving women's work on digital labour platforms
- Quality Apprenticeship and Lifelong Learning in China – Phase 2

## IFIs

Embark on a transformative journey with the ILO on topics such as affordable and clean energy for micro and small enterprises; decent work opportunities specifically for women and youth; infrastructure and innovation in the context of rural development; and many more. Partner with the ILO to achieve shared goals for comprehensive policy responses that champion social justice through the promotion of decent work. The ILO's commitment to labour standards and decent work serves as a crucial contribution to shaping robust environmental, social, and governance frameworks.

### Examples

- Assistance technique au Projet d'Entrepreneuriat des Jeunes dans l'Agriculture et l'Agro-Business (PEJAB)
- Targeting women in insurance
- Promoting Responsible Sourcing in Uzbekistan's Textile Sector using Tools from ILO Better Work Programme

## NGOs, academic, research and training institutions, and social partners

Partner with the ILO to leverage expertise and grassroots connections and address specific labour issues. Academic and research institutions contribute valuable insights and data to inform evidence-based policies, while training institutions help build the capacity of individuals and organizations in the field of labour. Social partners, including employers' and workers' organizations, play a crucial role in shaping policies that promote fair and equitable working conditions.

### Examples

- Climate risk adaptation and insurance in the Caribbean
- Sparking Disability Inclusive Rural Transformation (SPARK)
- South-South Cooperation to Enhance the Institutional Capacities of Trade Unions in Asia and the Pacific

# Our call to action

**Collaborate with the ILO to support a more unified policy landscape and to bolster a more substantial, predictable, and flexible resource base.**

## Connect with Peter

If you're grappling with questions about funding modalities, exploring global versus regional funding initiatives, or ready to present your ideas for partnerships or development cooperation projects, the ILO wants to hear from you. Reach out directly to:



**Peter Van Rooij**, Director  
of Multilateral Partnerships  
and Development  
Cooperation at the ILO

 Peter Van Rooij

 Peter Van Rooij

 vanrooij@ilo.org

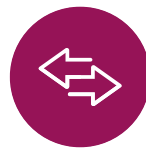
# Thematic areas

Dive into the ILO's impactful initiatives in thematic areas such as **social protection, just transition, crisis contexts, child and forced labor eradication, supply chains, gender equality, and lifelong learning.**

Each area contributes to building a more equitable and sustainable future.



**Social protection**



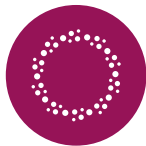
**Just transition**



**Gender equality**



**Crisis contexts**



**Lifelong learning**

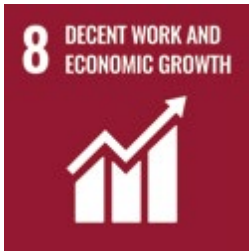


**Child and forced labour**



**Supply chains**

# Fostering a just transition







# CERTIFICATE

OF ATTENDANCE  
In the Solar Panel Production Training

*This is to Certify that  
Emmery Matongo  
Has successfully completed a 10days training in the  
production of Solar Panels  
Held at Peoples Process in Housing and Poverty in Zambia  
Offices- Kitwe  
from 23<sup>rd</sup> July to 01<sup>st</sup> August, 2015*

*Signature*  
PRINCIPAL  
Technique Construction Training Centre  
01<sup>st</sup> August, 2015

## Key numbers

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# 80 million

### The challenge

Continued global warming leading to heat stress could result in losses of 2.2% of total working time by 2030, equivalent to **80 million full time jobs**. Between 2000 and 2015, 23 million working life years have been lost to disasters every year.

# 20+ countries

### Our impact

The ILO leads the UN's **Climate Action for Jobs Initiative**, fostering global collaboration among governments, social partners, and UN agencies for a just transition. In 2021-22, over 700 policymakers and practitioners, developed just transition measures. This effort, combining capacity development and technical assistance, led to 20+ countries implementing policies affecting 50+ million jobs.

# 100 million

### What we need

Adopting climate-neutral and circular economies could generate **100 million new jobs by 2030**, but potential job losses and inequality risks exist. Deliberate policies are essential for positive social outcomes and equity. A just transition is crucial for ambitious climate action.



**I call on all countries to  
embrace the ILO guidelines  
for a just transition towards  
environmentally sustainable  
economies and societies for all**

António Guterres, UN Secretary-General (Our Common Agenda)

# What the ILO does for a just transition

**The shift to a green economy must be a just transition with decent work.**

The ILO emphasizes the interconnectedness of environmental sustainability, decent work, and social justice amid the triple planetary crises. Climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss threaten decent work and sustainable development, posing challenges alongside global employment opportunities.

The ILO advocates for a just transition, fostering environmentally sustainable economies inclusively, with a commitment to creating decent work, reducing inequality, and ensuring that no one is left behind (ILC Resolution 2023). Leveraging the ILO's endorsed Just Transition Guidelines and collaborating with partners, the organization assists countries in formulating and implementing comprehensive just transition policies. These policies aim to maximize employment benefits from climate actions, offer skills for green jobs, extend social protection, and facilitate inclusive social dialogue for broad-based support.

Here's an overview of ILO contributions:



### **Climate Action 4 Jobs**

The Climate Action for Jobs Initiative, led by the ILO and endorsed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres, seamlessly integrates climate action with the promotion of decent work. This initiative assists countries in embedding just transition principles into their climate policies, including the Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement. It acts as a catalyst for global knowledge and advocacy on just transition, bringing together diverse allies such as governments, social partners, UN agencies, and multilateral development banks (MDBs).



### **United Nations Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)**

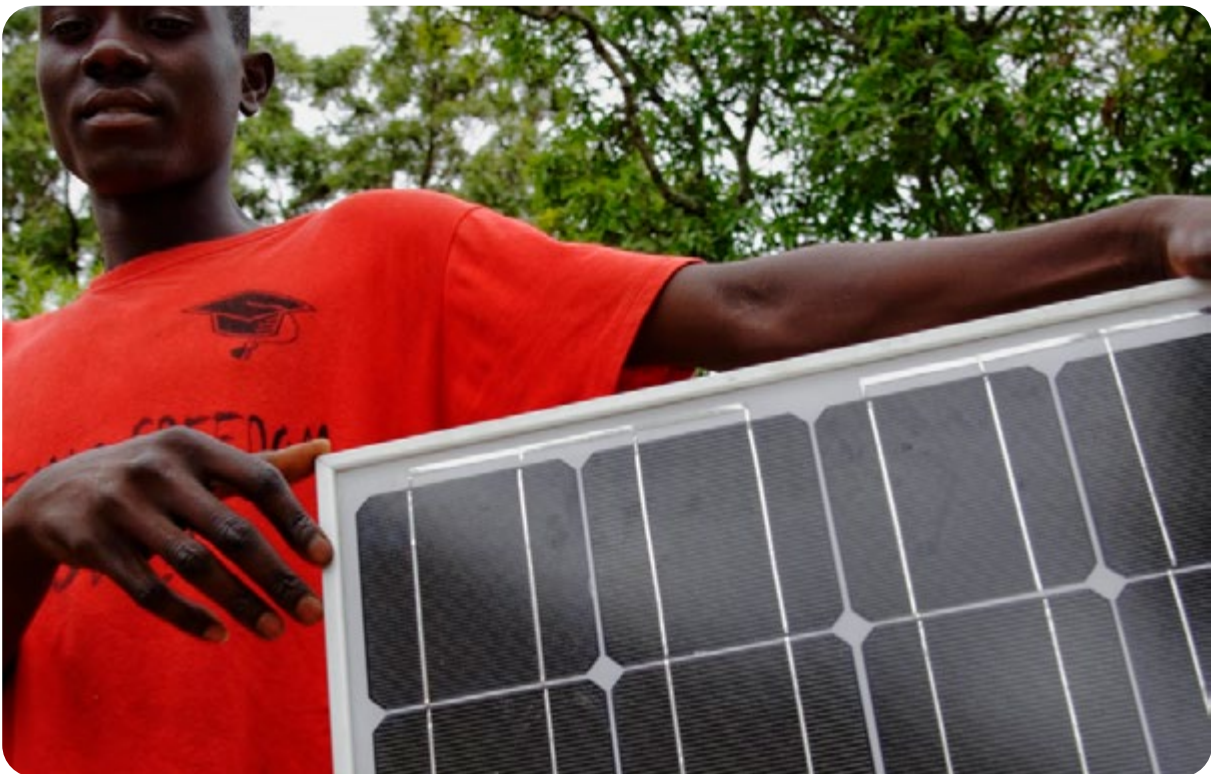
UN PAGE places sustainability at the forefront of economic policymaking, with five UN agencies (UNEP, UNDP, ILO, UNIDO, and UNITAR) offering policy guidance, assessments, capacity building, and analytical tools. This collaborative effort assists partner countries in transitioning to an inclusive green economy. Recognized for its cohesive support in attaining Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement targets, PAGE, launched in 2013, operates in 22 countries. Through assessments, policy support, and training over 31,000 people, it fosters economic growth while enhancing well-being, social equity, and environmental sustainability.



Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS)

### **Supporting Resilient Livelihoods, Food Security and Climate Adaption in Yemen - Joint Programme (ERRY III)**

The ILO, in partnership with donors EU and Sweden, is engaged in the third phase of the Supporting Resilient Livelihoods, Food Security, and Climate Adaptation in Yemen programme (ERRY III). Launched in March 2022, this initiative focuses on enhancing the resilience and self-reliance of crisis-affected communities in Yemen, with a special emphasis on vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and internally displaced persons. The programme, a collaborative effort involving FAO, UNDP, and WFP, supports livelihoods, food security, and climate adaptation, benefiting approximately 847,000 people and contributing to rebuilding lives and fostering peace in Yemen.



# Decent Work in Nature-based Solutions 2022

The report highlights the potential of **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** to align with global agreements and support a just transition to a green economy. However, it emphasizes that the creation of decent employment in NbS is **not guaranteed**. Co-developed by the ILO, UNEP, and IUCN, this report is the first in a series, focusing on **the role of NbS in employment, especially for vulnerable populations**. It includes appendices with stakeholder survey findings, methodology for estimating NbS employment, country classifications, and case studies of job creation in NbS.

# Bryan's story: Advocating for a just transition to a green economy

## **Growing up amidst pollution in Houston**

Bryan Parras, an environmental justice advocate from Houston, Texas, describes his upbringing in the midst of heavy pollution generated by oil refineries and chemical plants near the Houston Ship Channel. The landscape, dominated by industrial facilities, exposed him to health issues like asthma in the 1980s, a period when the detrimental effects of the oil and gas industry on public health were largely ignored.

## **Personal transformation and environmental justice advocacy**

Parras' health challenges and desire for change led him to environmental justice work. Initially a volunteer, he now works full-time at the Sierra Club, contributing to the Dirty Fuels and Healthy Communities campaigns. His commitment to amplifying the voices of vulnerable communities reflects a belief in bottom-up organizing, emphasizing that those most affected often hold valuable insights and solutions. As a passionate advocate, Parras aims to halt further fossil fuel exploration and development, advocating for a transition to a greener economy and ensuring support for workers in the industry.

## **A path to a greener future and global urgency**

Looking ahead, Parras envisions Houston prioritizing the cleanup of its environmental mess. While advocating for a transition to clean energy, he underscores the importance of addressing existing pollution legacies, such as brownfield Superfund sites and abandoned oil wells. Parras urges global leaders at COP26 to exhibit courage, emphasizing the need for legally binding agreements to ensure accountability in combating climate change. He believes in humanity's adaptive capacity, drawing parallels with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and emphasizes the shared responsibility of protecting the planet for future generations.





“

**In the last 10 years, there's been recognition that if we're to curb the worst of our impact on the climate, we have to stop any further fossil fuel exploration and development, and we have to begin to transition to a greener economy. So that's at the core of the dirty fuels campaign.**

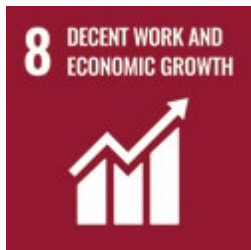
Bryan Parras, environmental justice advocate and campaigner at the Sierra Club, United States



Your support is essential to achieve the necessary scale and speed in the transition to environmental sustainability and deliver social justice. We need ambitious policies and investments that integrate climate, employment and social objectives. Partner with the ILO for inclusive solutions that are rooted in social dialogue and stakeholder participation for increased impact.



# Achieving decent work in supply chains





## Key numbers

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# 75 million

### The challenge

Supply chains, trade and investment can be powerful engines of employment creation and of development. Millions of jobs worldwide are linked to supply chains. In Asia alone, **75 million jobs** – more than 25% of total jobs – are connected to global supply chains. However, for supply chains to fulfill their development potential, it is essential that jobs created are decent jobs.

# Millions

### Our impact

The ILO has a demonstrated impact in advancing decent work in supply chains. Practical tools implemented through ILO development cooperation programmes in supply chains have supported job creation and impacted **millions of workers**, including amongst the most vulnerable. Interventions have resulted in improved working and living conditions and more resilient and productive enterprises.

# Tripartite commitment

### What we need

A shared tripartite commitment - taking into account the different and complementary roles and responsibilities of constituents - to an ambitious, coherent, coordinated and holistic approach and to use all ILO means of actions is necessary to ensure decent work in supply chains. This also relates to the mobilization of the necessary resources critical to ensure that the ILO provides its constituents with support and assistance towards decent work in supply chains.



**Several strategies are underway to make global supply chains more inclusive, sustainable and resilient, including diversification, digitalization and through responsible business practices.**

Gilbert Hounou, ILO Director-General

# The ILO's MNE Declaration

The ILO's [Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy \(MNE Declaration\)](#) is the instrument that provides direct guidance to enterprises (multinational and national) on social policy and inclusive, responsible and sustainable workplace practices, providing a framework to integrate decent work considerations in trade and investment policies.

## The ILO's focus on decent work in supply chains

Decent work flourishes in productive and sustainable enterprises. The ILO's renewed focus on decent work in supply chains, investment and trade offers greater opportunities for partnering with private and non-state actors. For instance, the ILO receives significant private sector contributions for supporting compliance with international labour laws in apparel supply chains through Better Work.





### **Better Work**

A collaborative initiative between the ILO and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Better Work improves working conditions in the global garment industry across 13 countries on three continents, benefiting more than 3 million workers and millions more of their family members. It brings together governments, global brands, factory owners, unions, and workers to enhance labour rights, safety, and productivity in the apparel and footwear sector. The initiative strives to create sustainable enterprises that empower women, respect fundamental rights, and reduce environmental impacts while collaborating with factories, governments, and industry stakeholders. Through assessment, advisory visits, and academic research, Better Work has demonstrated its effectiveness in increasing compliance with labour standards, improving working conditions and worker wellbeing, strengthening competitiveness, productivity and profitability, and driving economic and social development in the garment sector.



### **Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE)**

A collaborative initiative between the ILO and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Better Work improves working conditions in the global garment industry across 13 countries on three continents, benefiting more than 3 million workers and millions more of their family members. It brings together governments, global brands, factory owners, unions, and workers to enhance labour rights, safety, and productivity in the apparel and footwear sector. The initiative strives to create sustainable enterprises

that empower women, respect fundamental rights, and reduce environmental impacts while collaborating with factories, governments, and industry stakeholders. Through assessment, advisory visits, and academic research, Better Work has demonstrated its effectiveness in increasing compliance with labour standards, improving working conditions and worker wellbeing, strengthening competitiveness, productivity and profitability, and driving economic and social development in the garment sector.



### Vision Zero Fund

VZF, initiated by the Group of Seven (G7) countries, is a global initiative focused on preventing work-related deaths, injuries, and diseases in the context of global supply chains. Given that millions of workers suffer from work-related issues annually, leading to significant economic losses, the VZF aims to foster occupational safety and health (OSH) prevention activities in businesses, especially in low and middle-income countries. The initiative focuses on specific sectors: agriculture, garment and textile, and construction value chains. The VZF operates as a multi-donor trust fund, receiving contributions from governments, organizations, and private sources, and seeks to make real improvements in worker health and safety through data-driven guidance and collaboration, impacting millions of workers worldwide.

# Promoting gender equality in global garment supply chains

Garment supply chains present challenges and opportunities for achieving gender equality. Over the past few decades, these supply chains have provided women with significant opportunities for economic empowerment. However, serious issues such as discrimination, violence, and harassment persist, especially for female workers. The article highlights four major challenges faced by women in the industry, including difficulties in voicing concerns, unequal pay, caregiving responsibilities, and exposure to discrimination and violence. It also emphasizes the need for equitable policies and actions in the garment sector to alleviate poverty, promote inclusive economic growth, and ensure decent work conditions for all workers, with specific recommendations for achieving gender equality.



# Briseida's dedication: Cultivating safety and community in coffee fields

## **A proud peasant's journey in the coffee fields**

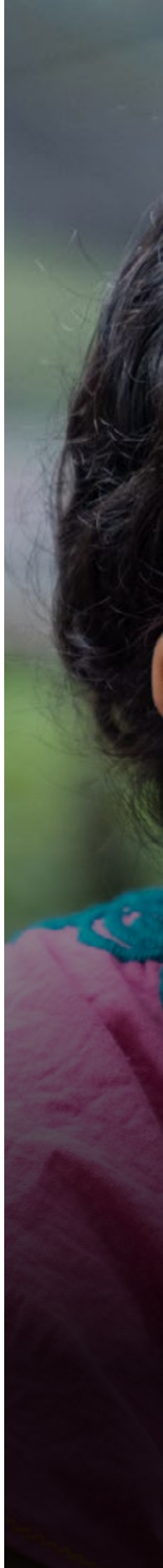
In the lush coffee-growing region of Ixhuatlán del Café, Veracruz, Mexico, Briseida Venegas Ramos, the “proudly peasant” daughter of farmers, leads Vida AC, a women-led coffee cooperative. Briseida's connection to coffee runs deep, starting at the tender age of eight when she first learned about this aromatic bean. Today, it's not just a job; it's an integral part of her identity. She wakes up early during harvest seasons, tends to the plantation, and cherishes her co-workers as family


## **The transformation through OSH training**

Briseida's commitment to her community goes beyond coffee cultivation. When she discovered the Vision Zero Fund project and occupational safety and health (OSH) training, she eagerly embraced it. Health had always been a priority for Vida AC, but OSH was a new dimension. The risks associated with coffee farming are significant, from heavy machinery accidents to potential electrical hazards. Through the training, Briseida and her cooperative members gained valuable knowledge in OSH, which now helps them keep each other safe and maintain their equipment for sustainable production.

## **Coffee, community, and feminism**

Briseida's journey isn't just about coffee; it's also about women's empowerment and gender equality. Women play a crucial role in coffee production, yet they are often overlooked in statistics. Briseida's cooperative stands as a testament to her determination to challenge traditional gender roles in the coffee sector. She shares the cooperative presidency with two other women, emphasizing that everyone has rights and obligations. Briseida's vision extends to her community's self-sufficiency and the advancement of feminism, and she works tirelessly to achieve it, supported by her community, whom she affectionately calls her family.





“

**First health, then work. It's important to be safe and to take care of one another. You must know your community and act as a unit.**

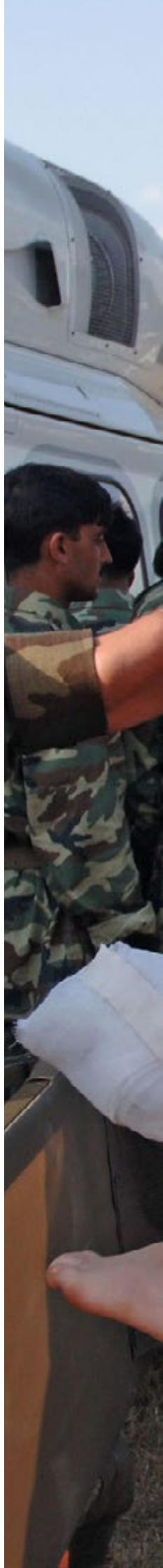
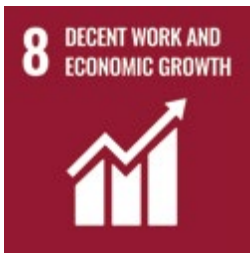
Briseida Venegas Ramos, President of Vida AC, a women-led coffee cooperative in Ixhuatlán del Café, Veracruz, Mexico

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a large quantity of mixed beans, including black beans, white beans, and yellow beans. The background is dark and out of focus, emphasizing the texture and colors of the beans. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image in white font on a dark purple background.

**Join the ILO in reshaping the future of work and supply chains. The ILO's expertise in international labour standards and innovative policies creates abundant, high-quality jobs while fostering resilient supply chains. Its unique tripartite structure engages the private sector through their supply chains, catalyzing collective action. Partner with the ILO to redefine the future of business for a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow.**



# Enhancing decent work in crisis contexts and across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus







## Key numbers

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# 2 billion

### The challenge

Over **2 billion people** live in fragile or conflict-affected countries, and **200 million more** are impacted by disasters. While 1 in 23 needs humanitarian aid, only 230 million are targeted, leaving a gap. The cost to address these challenges is \$51.5 billion. Crisis situations threaten development and SDG achievement, with extreme poverty in fragile areas projected to reach 59% by 2030.

# 22,232 jobs

### Our impact

Since 1919, the ILO has been instrumental in addressing global challenges like war and conflict. For instance, in Jordan from 2016 to 2022, the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme generated **22,232 jobs** for displaced populations and provided vocational training for 1,443 beneficiaries.

# two-thirds

### What we need

By 2030, **two-thirds of the extreme poor** will be in conflict-affected states. The ILO seeks support for decent work initiatives, emphasizing the role of employers' and workers' organizations in crises. The Decent Work agenda calls for a recovery vision that addresses fragility factors, promoting resilience and peace. Your support empowers communities to thrive amid adversity.



**We live in times marked by  
compounding crises. Each crisis  
reveals longstanding weaknesses  
in our prevailing systems and  
policies**

DG Report to the 2023 International Labour Conference

# International Labour Standards

Explore [Recommendation No. 205 on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience](#) (2017), providing a **comprehensive framework** to address the impact of crises from conflict and disasters on societies and economies. The recommendation prioritizes **recovery, reconstruction, and tackling root causes** of fragility, while advocating for resilience-building measures. Supported by a comprehensive strategy, including **awareness raising, policy advice, knowledge dissemination, and international cooperation**, it aims to assist governments, employers, and workers in implementing the recommendation and advancing the role of decent work in crisis prevention and response.

## The ILO's work in fragile contexts

### Fostering partnerships across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus.

The emergence of multiple crises strains the prospects for recovery and universal social justice. Simultaneously, the world of work, particularly workers' and employers' organizations, can play a role in stabilizing, recovering from, and preventing crises, primarily through promoting social justice.

The ILO actively engages in crisis and post-crisis situations, promoting decent work, social justice, and contributing to peace and recovery. It focuses on early and proactive involvement across the humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) nexus, addressing,

in partnership with its constituents and UN partners, both immediate and long-term socio-economic aspects while tackling conflict drivers related to decent work deficits.

The ILO supports coordinated crisis response for more effective and coherent efforts in partnership with other players. The organization prioritizes constituents' leadership at every stage of the HDP nexus, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable individuals.



Partnership for improving  
prospects for forcibly  
displaced persons and  
host communities  
(PROSPECTS)

### **Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS)**

The PROSPECTS Programme is a comprehensive initiative designed to enhance access to employment and livelihood opportunities for host communities and forcibly displaced individuals in regions grappling with significant displacement challenges. This partnership, involving the ILO, IFC, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the World Bank, operates in eight countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and East Africa. The programme concentrates on crafting evidence-based solutions tailored to local contexts, aiming to bolster labour markets, business development, social protection, and policy environments. It prioritizes gender-responsive and integrated approaches to address the complexities of forced displacement and promote inclusive development.



## Operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus for social protection in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

### Operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus for social protection in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Prior to the current hostilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, commitments to a humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) nexus approach were translating into tangible actions, with coordination at the forefront. Innovations led by the ILO provide valuable lessons applicable to HDP nexus contexts globally.



# How ILO Programmes Contribute to Social Cohesion between Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in the Arab States Region

The ILO, in collaboration with the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), has developed strategies to address the root causes of vulnerability and conflict linked to decent work deficits. With over 258 million people living outside their home countries, including 89.3 million forcibly displaced individuals, recent ILO research evaluates its programmes' contribution to social cohesion in the Arab States region, focusing on direct beneficiaries. The report identifies steps to enhance the integration of social cohesion in programme design, implementation, and monitoring, highlighting potential strains on social cohesion in labour markets due to job competition in host communities.

# Al Batool's triumph: Turning refugee dreams into reality

## **Starting anew with a home-based business**

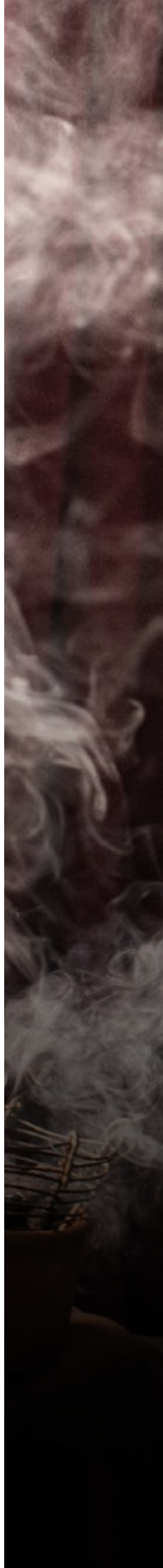
Al Batool, a Sudanese refugee in Egypt, faced tremendous challenges as a single mother of four when she arrived in Egypt seven years ago. Struggling to secure regular employment while caring for her children, she eventually turned to the idea of starting a home-based business, making Sudanese incense sticks. However, without the necessary financial support and business knowledge, she struggled to make progress. Her situation took a positive turn when she learned about an enterprise development programme initiated by the ILO PROSPECTS programme in Egypt, in collaboration with Caritas.

## **Mentorship and determination for entrepreneurial success**

With determination and the guidance of mentors, Al Batool learned the essential aspects of business development and management through the ILO's Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training programme. This newfound knowledge enabled her to establish a sustainable enterprise successfully. Furthermore, her business performance earned her a cash grant through the PROSPECTS programme, allowing her to expand her product line and significantly increase her profits. Al Batool's success story highlights the impact of such programmes in empowering individuals and communities, particularly women entrepreneurs, in Egypt.

## **PROSPECTS for change and local development**

The ILO recognizes that entrepreneurship can offer a vital pathway for individuals, including forcibly displaced populations, to create livelihoods, support their families, and contribute to local economic development. Al Batool's journey exemplifies the positive outcomes that can be achieved through programmes like PROSPECTS, which have benefited over 6,000 women entrepreneurs in Egypt and continue to pave the way for more success stories in the future.



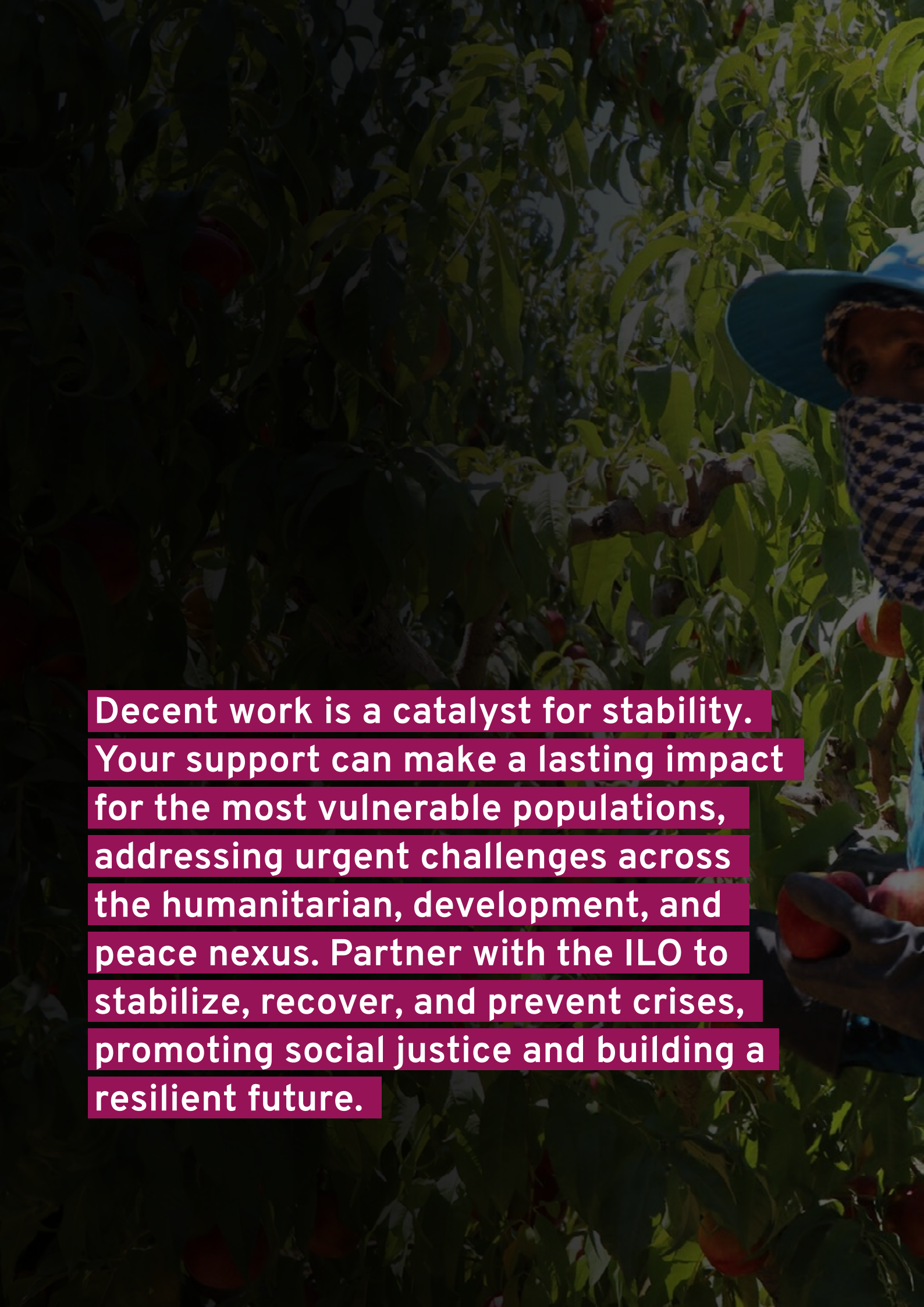




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**This has brought a multi-fold increase in the profits I generate from my business. I am truly feeling independent and proud of myself. Having my own successful business makes me feel like a queen.**

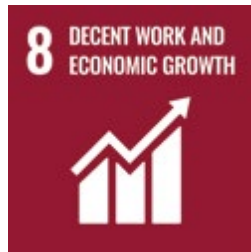
Al Batool, a Sudanese refugee in Egypt



**Decent work is a catalyst for stability. Your support can make a lasting impact for the most vulnerable populations, addressing urgent challenges across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus. Partner with the ILO to stabilize, recover, and prevent crises, promoting social justice and building a resilient future.**



# Improving social protection coverage for all





## Key numbers

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Ensuring comprehensive social protection coverage is an imperative goal in addressing global disparities and safeguarding the fundamental human right to social protection. In seeking to bridge the gap in resources and individual coverage, the ILO invites potential partners to join its mission to transform the lives of millions worldwide.

# 4 billion

### The challenge

The human right to social protection is still not a reality for more than **4 billion people** who are left totally unprotected without access to any social protection benefit.

# 136 countries

### Our impact

Since 2012, ILO projects and actions have contributed to the achievement of social protection development in over **136 countries** in the world.

# 43 million USD

### What we need

Our resource gap is **43 million USD** - potential partners can join the ILO today to help meet our goals and change the lives of millions of people.



**Social protection lies at the core  
of sustainable development,  
decent work and social justice**

Gilbert F. Hounqbo, Director-General, ILO

# International Labour Standards

The ILO has developed a comprehensive set of Conventions and Recommendations on social protection. These global standards lay the foundation for robust social security systems, defining their fundamental principles and outlining crucial factors that secure their long-term viability and effectiveness.

The landmark [Social Security \(Minimum Standards\) Convention, 1952 \(No. 102\)](#) sets out **principles and minimum levels of protection to be guaranteed by national social security systems**, aiming to ensure that all people, including workers and their families, are adequately protected.

The [Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 \(No. 202\)](#) is the first international labour standard that reaffirms the right to social security for all. It provides guidance on how to build comprehensive social security systems, including **national social protection floors** for all in need, comprising also the unprotected, the poor, and the most vulnerable. This way, we ensure that all members of society enjoy **at least essential healthcare** and basic income security throughout their lives.

## What the ILO does in social protection

The ILO aims to improve social protection and ensure a sustainable and resilient future, in collaboration with development partners such as the [Global Business Network](#); the [Social Protection, Freedom, and Justice for Workers Network](#); and partnerships with the United Nations, among others.





### Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All

The Global Flagship Programme **assists 50 countries in developing and extending their national social protection systems**. It covers 16 thematic areas related to social protection, offers policy and technical support for creating new schemes and reforms (or improving old ones), and collaborates with UN agencies, IFIs, and other partners to enhance the impact of the ILO's initiatives. For example, in partnership with the EU on the SP&PFM project, it focuses on strengthening social protection systems, improving fiscal management, and prioritizing inclusion, particularly gender and disability. Experts provide technical assistance and research to share best practices and tools for application in different country contexts, while strategic alliances ensure a coordinated approach to supporting countries.



### Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions

Launched in September 2021 by the UN Secretary-General, the Global Accelerator aims to create 400 million decent jobs, particularly in green, digital, and care sectors, and extend social protection to 4 billion excluded individuals. It unites member States,

international financial institutions, social partners, civil society, and the private sector to address the challenges intensified by COVID-19 and global crises. The initiative operates through three pillars: evidence-based strategies, integrated financing, and enhanced multilateral cooperation. It emphasizes human rights, social dialogue, and participation, initially focusing on selected pathfinder countries. A Technical Support Facility strengthens implementation through UN expertise and financial partnerships.



# World Social Protection Report 2020-22

This report provides a **global overview of recent developments in social protection systems**, including social protection floors, and covers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also identifies protection gaps and sets out key policy recommendations, including in relation to the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

# Champa's journey: Advocating for domestic workers' protection

## **The challenges of an immigrant domestic worker**

Champa, a 46-year-old migrant domestic worker from Myanmar, left her village at a young age to work in Bangkok to support her family. She faced challenges due to her immigration status. Likewise, she experienced long working hours without days off and difficulty in asserting her rights. Over time, she realized the importance of workers' rights.

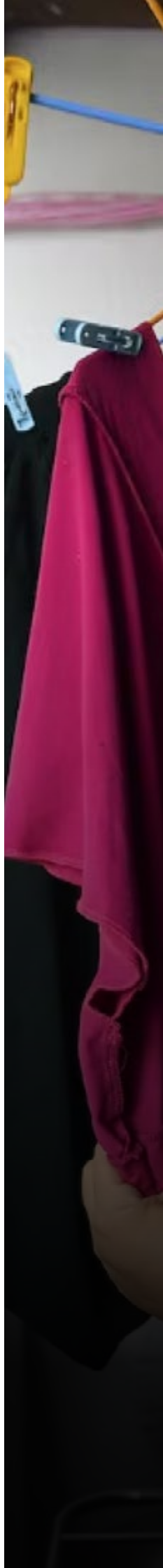
## **Advocating for social protection**

Champa became involved with HomeNet Thailand and the Network of Migrant Domestic Workers. She learned about rights such as a day off and social security benefits, emphasizing the legitimacy of domestic work as a contributing occupation.

As a local leader, Champa calls for the inclusion of domestic workers in social security programmes, highlighting the significance of domestic work to the country's economy. She is dedicated to ensuring a better future for all domestic workers.

## **The ILO's support for domestic workers**

The ILO played a crucial role in Champa's journey. It supported the Thai Ministry of Labour's review of laws regulating domestic work, potentially extending labour rights and social protection to domestic workers. The ILO's efforts align with Champa's advocacy for better conditions and social security for domestic workers.

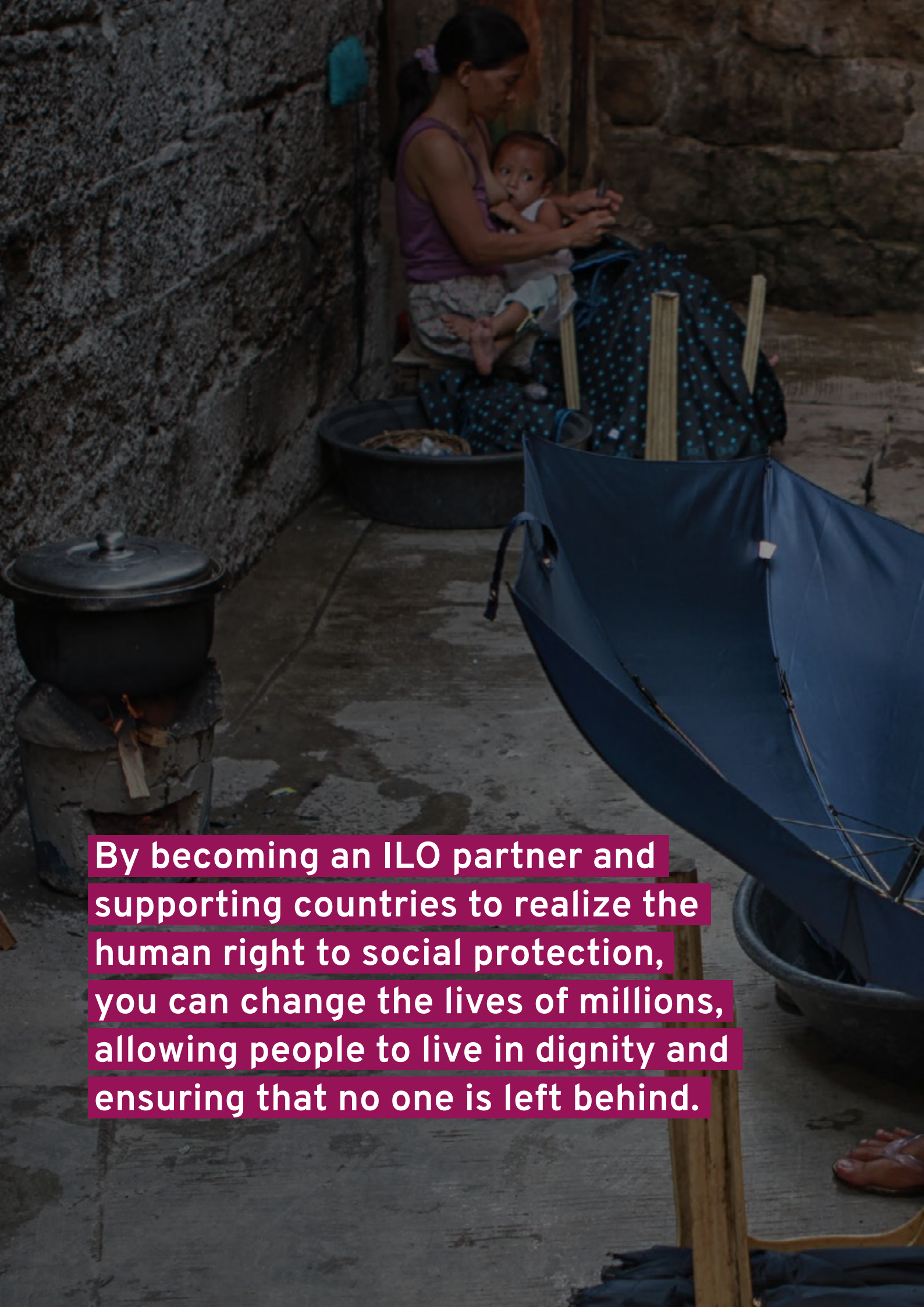


A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a light-colored shirt, is smiling warmly at the camera. She is in a laundry room, with several colorful clothes hangers (blue, orange, purple) and a maroon top hanging on a rack in the foreground. The background is dark, possibly a doorway or a window with blinds.

“

**I want to convey a message to the government to please include domestic workers in Social Security Article 33 like other workers. We are workers. Domestic work is an occupation. Actually, we are productive for the country and the economy.**

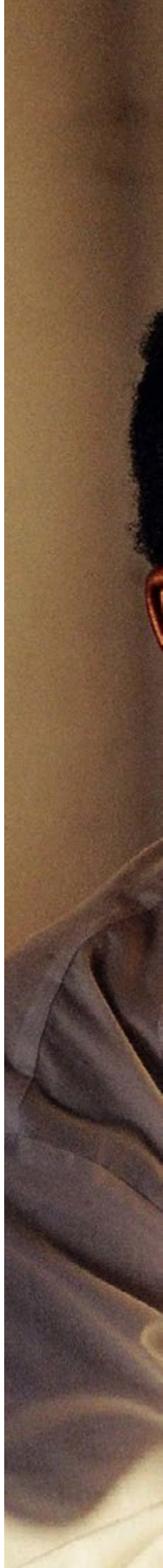
Champa, Domestic worker and President, Network of Migrant Domestic Workers, Thailand



**By becoming an ILO partner and supporting countries to realize the human right to social protection, you can change the lives of millions, allowing people to live in dignity and ensuring that no one is left behind.**



# Eradicating child labour and forced labour







## Key numbers

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Ensuring comprehensive social protection coverage is an imperative goal in addressing global disparities and safeguarding the fundamental human right to social protection. In seeking to bridge the gap in resources and individual coverage, the ILO invites potential partners to join its mission to transform the lives of millions worldwide.

# 160 million

## The challenge

Progress against child labour has stagnated since 2016, and **160 million children** are still in child labour; in 2021, 27.6 million people were still in situations of forced labour, with no region spared.

# 181 countries

## Our impact

The ILO has been working to end child and forced labour since its inception. As of November 2023, **181 countries** have signed the 1930 Forced Labour Convention and all of ILO's 187 Member States ratified the 1999 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention.

# 18 times faster

## What we need

To end child labour by 2025, we need to progress 18 times faster than we did between 2000 and 2020; with growing numbers in relation to forced labour, the goal to end it by 2030 will only be met if fundamental changes are made.



**The ILO has proven to be a very important partner for this agenda, they have a lot of knowledge and experience, especially when it concerns working in partnership with governments and social partners on creating the conditions needed.**

Marchel Gerrmann, Director Sustainable Economic Development Department (DDE) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

# International Labour Standards

The Member States of the ILO, even if they have not ratified the Conventions on child and forced labour set out below, have an obligation to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the ILO Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of the following Conventions:

[The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 \(No. 138\)](#) establishes a global framework for setting and implementing **minimum age requirements for employment**, protecting the rights of young workers, prohibiting the employment of children under the age of completing compulsory education and not less than 15 years.

[The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 \(No. 182\)](#) aims to eliminate the most harmful forms of child labour including **slavery, forced labour, child trafficking, and hazardous work**.

[The Forced Labour Convention, 1930 \(No. 29\)](#) provides a definition of forced or compulsory labour, prohibits them, requires that they be punishable as a penal offence and that penalties should be adequate and strictly enforced, and stipulates exceptions on what would not be forced labour.

[The Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 \(No. 105\)](#) prohibits forced or compulsory labour as a means of political coercion or education or as a punishment for holding or expressing political views or views ideologically opposed to the established political, social or economic system; as a method of mobilizing and using labour for purposes of economic development; as a means of labour discipline; as a punishment for having participated in strikes; and as a means of racial, social, national or religious discrimination.

[The Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930](#) aims to advance prevention, protection and compensation measures, as well as to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of forced labour, including trafficking in persons.

# The ILO's efforts to end child labour and forced labour

**Social justice means ending unacceptable forms of work that deny workers their basic human rights at work.**

The ILO has established a robust legal framework of international labour standards to guide the eradication of child labour and forced labour. Through extensive research, the ILO provides global estimates of modern slavery, forced labour, and child labour, aiding in policy formulation as well as national action plans, and works with governments, employers, and workers on advocacy and awareness campaigns. Furthermore, the ILO assists in collecting essential data on the prevalence and impact of forced labour, using this information to shape evidence-based policies and actions.

Moreover, the ILO strengthens government, worker, and employer roles in combating child labour and forced labour through training programmes for law enforcement, support for trade unions in informal sectors, and collaboration with employers to create tools and initiatives to promote replicable good practices.

The ILO also leverages networks and platforms to drive sustainable change. For example, the [Child Labour Platform](#) addresses child labour in supply chains by providing concrete solutions and supporting member companies through due diligence. The [ILO Global Business Network](#) on Forced Labour connects businesses globally to eradicate forced labour, fostering collaboration and finding sustainable solutions. And the ILO is a founding member of [Alliance 8.7](#), hosting its Secretariat and leading a global partnership against forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and child labour.



## 8.7 Accelerator Lab

### **8.7 Accelerator Lab**

The 8.7 Accelerator Lab aims to optimize the effectiveness of development cooperation in contributing to the eradication of forced labour and child labour. This is done by targeting interventions at the national, regional and global levels that foster and develop political commitment, address root causes of forced labour and child labour, focus on vulnerable populations, create and share knowledge, develop sustainable financing models and leverage innovation.



Accelerating action for the  
elimination of child labour  
in supply chains in Africa  
(ACCEL Africa)

### **Accelerating action for the elimination of child labour in supply chains in Africa (ACCEL Africa)**

The Accelerating action for the elimination of child labour in supply chains in Africa (ACCEL Africa) project targets the root causes of child labour in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, and Uganda in the cocoa, coffee, cotton, gold, and tea supply chains. The project contributes to strengthening policies, institutional frameworks, and innovative solutions while promoting knowledge sharing, partnerships, and financing. Occupational safety and health, livelihoods, social protection, and youth employment are its key areas of intervention.



## Work in Freedom: fair recruitment and decent work for women migrant workers in South Asia and the Middle East

### **Work in Freedom: fair recruitment and decent work for women migrant workers in South Asia and the Middle East**

The Work in Freedom programme reduces vulnerability to trafficking and forced labour of 350,000 women and girls across migration pathways leading to the care work and textiles, clothing, leather and footwear industries at source and destination in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, Oman, Bahrein, Lebanon and Jordan. The programme addresses key drivers and vulnerabilities of human trafficking, such as gender and other forms of discrimination, through targeted social protection and empowerment, fair recruitment practices and evidence based policy advocacy.

### **From Protocol to Practice: A Bridge to Global Action on Forced Labour**

The Bridge project supports governments, employers and workers in Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Uzbekistan, and in certain countries in the Pacific Islands, to reduce contemporary forms of forced labour. Putting the 2014 ILO Protocol on Forced Labour into practice means raising awareness; improving and enforcing national policies, action plans, and legislation; increasing research and knowledge, while enhancing access to social services and livelihood programmes for victims of forced labour.





# Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward

This joint report by the ILO and UNICEF reveals a **troubling rise in child labour**, now totaling 160 million children worldwide, an increase of 8.4 million in the past four years. Children aged 5 to 11 make up over half of this population, with 79 million children aged 5 to 17 engaged in hazardous work. Sub-Saharan Africa has seen an additional 16.6 million children in child labour due to population growth, poverty, and a lack of social protection. **COVID-19 has worsened the situation**, putting an estimated nine million more children at risk of child labour by the end of 2022, and potentially up to 46 million without access to social protection. The report underscores the need for **inclusive social protection, investment in quality education, decent work for adults**. The ILO and UNICEF urge Member States, businesses, trade unions, civil society, and international organizations to take concrete action.

# Suman's determination: From child labourer to aspiring police officer

## **A Desperate turn of events: From school to mica processing unit**

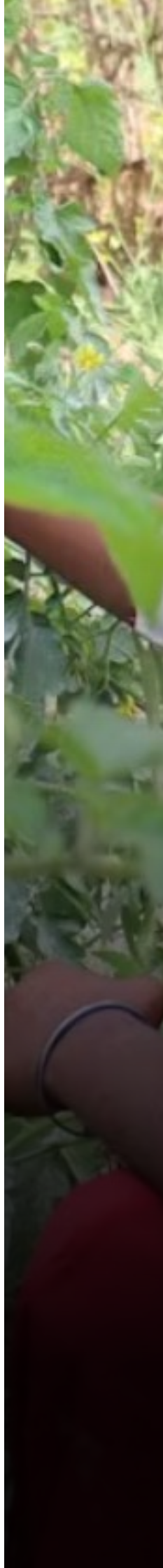
In 2020, Suman Kumari's life took a drastic turn when her family faced financial challenges due to her sister's wedding and her father falling ill during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unable to afford school fees, Suman, then 13, joined her mother to work at a mica processing unit, enduring hazardous conditions without protection from the mica dust. The meager wages, mistreatment by worksite managers, and the absence of respect made this a difficult period for Suman and her mother.

## **Hope found in Balmanch: A return to education**

Despite the harsh circumstances, Suman's resilience prevailed. She learned about Balmanch, a children's club, through friends and desired to join despite her parents' hesitations. Balmanch intervened, persuading her parents about the importance of education. With their support, Suman returned to school, receiving scholarships, books, and supplies. Balmanch not only helped her catch up on missed education but also provided life skills, emphasizing the detrimental cycle of child labour and poverty.

## **Dreams of a bright future: Empowerment through education**

Suman's dreams of becoming a police officer and living in a big city were rekindled by Balmanch's assistance. The organization not only supported Suman's education but also empowered her parents by teaching them alternative, safer livelihoods. With improved conditions and her father's recovery, Suman's family now cultivates vegetables for extra income. The story sheds light on the critical role organizations like Balmanch play in breaking the cycle of child labour, ensuring education, and offering families sustainable alternatives for a brighter future.





“

**I still go to Balmanch and look forward to seeing everyone there. Balmanch taught me life skills and my rights as a child and helped me catch up with the teaching that I missed**

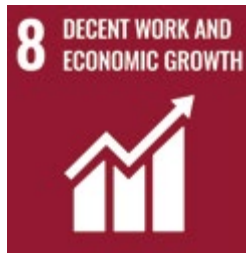
Suman Kumari, former child labourer and current student



**Partner with the ILO to accelerate progress and broaden impact towards a future free from exploitation. Unite and align efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to eliminate child labour by 2025 and forced labour by 2030. Partnership and collaboration is crucial in shaping a world where every child and person is free.**



# Promoting gender equality for all





## Key numbers

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# 20%

### The challenge

In today's workforce, women face persistent challenges like occupational segregation, caregiving imbalances, and a glass ceiling. Issues like undervalued professions, a 20% gender pay gap, and workplace violence add to the complexity. Closing the gender gap not only aligns with ethics but also offers significant economic potential, potentially boosting global GDP.

# 71+ countries

### Our impact

In 2022-23, the ILO aided 71+ countries in crafting gender-responsive employment policies, with five nations enhancing care sector conditions. Despite economic challenges, 59 countries joined the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC). ILO Convention No.190 on workplace violence gained global prominence. The ILO Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme supported 1,135 women, focusing on a gender-responsive just transition in enterprise development.

### What we need

Bold commitments must evolve into tangible, transformative laws, policies, and practices. Eliminating gender stereotypes is crucial for equal valuation of women's and men's work. Ensuring women have an equal seat at the table, with power, dignity, and respect, is imperative. To support these commitments, generous and strategic investments, along with robust monitoring and accountability, are essential.





**Gender equality is essential for social justice and key to productive, resilient economies. The ILO, with our constituents, is working to make this a reality, both with policies and with actions. It is an essential step on the road towards social justice for all.**

DG Report to the 2023 International Labour Conference

# International Labour Standards

[The Maternity Protection Convention \(No. 183\)](#) safeguards the rights of pregnant and nursing mothers at work, ensuring provisions for maternity leave, job security, and other benefits to support women during this crucial phase, fostering gender equality and women's well-being in the labour force.

[The Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 \(No. 189\)](#) focuses on ensuring the rights of domestic workers, guaranteeing a safe and healthy working environment for every domestic worker.

[The Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 \(No. 190\)](#) addresses workplace violence and harassment, striving to create a safe and respectful working environment for all. It emphasizes the prevention and resolution of these issues to ensure protection for everyone in the world of work.

## The ILO's promotion of equal opportunities

The ILO actively advocates for social justice through the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment for women and men in the pursuit of decent work. Below are tangible examples of the ILO's initiatives advancing gender equality.



### Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)

Led by the ILO, UN Women, and the OECD, EPIC is committed to achieving global equal pay for work of equal value between women and men by 2030. EPIC unites diverse stakeholders, including governments, employers, workers, and civil society, to collaboratively narrow the gender pay gap. Operating globally, regionally, and nationally, EPIC's approach involves raising awareness, sharing knowledge, promoting innovation, and scaling up initiatives to address pay equity. Recognizing gender pay inequality as a human rights issue, the coalition emphasizes objective job evaluations, a focus on gender-neutral criteria, and engagement in social dialogue to address this challenge.



### Spotlight Initiative

As part of the UN Spotlight Initiative to eradicate violence against women and girls, the National Trade Union Centre and the Employers' Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago collaboratively created and implemented a model workplace policy on gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, and sexual harassment. This successful initiative inspired the Caribbean Congress of Labour and the Caribbean Employers' Confederation to adopt a joint policy position addressing gender-based violence in the workplace. Serving as a guiding framework, this policy position encourages other Caribbean Member States to develop their own policies on these critical thematic areas.



« Lutte contre la violence et le harcèlement dans le monde du travail & Égalité de rémunération et de carrière entre les hommes et les femmes »

**« Lutte contre la violence et le harcèlement dans le monde du travail & Égalité de rémunération et de carrière entre les hommes et les femmes »**

The ILO supports world of work institutions in West Africa to eradicate violence and harassment at the workplace for all. Leveraging institutional research, technical assistance, capacity building, social dialogue, and partnerships, the project launched an International Research Network specifically addressing violence and harassment at work in the region. In addition, the ILO is supporting the ratification process of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) as well as the creation of two women-led cooperative businesses in Senegal, including training on equal remuneration and women's leadership.



# Care at work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work

This report provides a comprehensive overview of global care policies, including maternity protection, paternity leave, parental leave, and childcare services. It assesses the progress made in these areas over the past decade while highlighting significant legal gaps that leave many workers with family responsibilities without adequate support. The report emphasizes the importance of investing in transformative care policies to achieve a more gender-equal world of work. It also discusses issues related to employment protection, non-discrimination, workplace safety for pregnant and nursing women, and the provision of breastfeeding breaks and childcare services. Additionally, the report addresses long-term care services for older persons and persons with disabilities and highlights the challenges and gaps in this area.

# Mary's voice: Empowering Maasai women through education and entrepreneurship

## **Awakening the voices of Maasai women in Kenya**

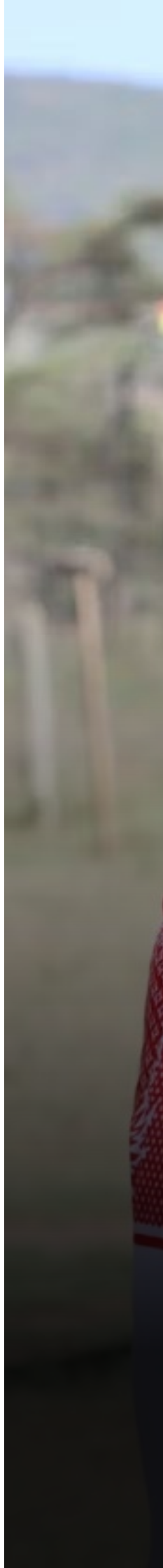
Mary Nkisonkoi, a Maasai woman living in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya, shares her remarkable journey of empowerment and transformation. Before her involvement in a community project, women in her region were not allowed to openly discuss their challenges and problems. However, through this project, Mary and other women were educated about gender equality, women's rights, and business skills, leading to a significant change in their lives. They learned how to run businesses, obtained adult education, and formed a women's group, which empowered them to take control of their financial futures.

## **Mary's entrepreneurial spirit and leadership**

With newfound knowledge and determination, Mary embarked on her entrepreneurial journey, defying traditional gender roles. She started a self-help group with other women, enabling them to pool their resources and support each other's businesses. Mary's success as an entrepreneur allowed her to build a permanent house, contribute to her family's income, and become a prominent leader in her community. She now advocates for women's rights and encourages other women to take up leadership positions and fight for their rights, emphasizing the positive impact women can have on their families and communities when empowered.

## **The transformational impact of education and collective action**

Mary's inspiring story illustrates how education and entrepreneurship have transformed the lives of Maasai women in Kenya, enabling them to break free from traditional constraints, contribute to their households, and become advocates for change in their communities. This journey reflects the power of education and collective action in promoting gender equality and empowering women to reach their full potential.





“

**Now we are free as women to run our own businesses. Each woman can bring in something into their homes and put it on the table, however little. So, this is a big change. We are not living the way we used to before**

Mary Nkisonkoi, community facilitator and entrepreneur

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white lab coat, is shown from the chest up, holding a baby wrapped in a white blanket. The image is dimly lit and has a dark grey overlay. Overlaid on the bottom left is a series of pink rectangular boxes containing white text.

**Gender equality isn't just about women  
- it's a foundation for social justice,  
resilient economies, and lasting peace.  
Partner with the ILO to boldly commit  
to a transformative agenda for gender  
equality in the world of work.**





# Enabling lifelong learning and skills development





## Key numbers

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# 77%

### The challenge

Global changes like technology, climate shifts, and events like COVID-19 are reshaping work and can lead to skill mismatches and unemployment – for example, 77% of employers can't find suitable skills. To address this, investing in lifelong learning is key.

# 4,811 youths

### Our impact

In Bangladesh, 4,811 youths were trained in TVET, 1,875 received entrepreneurship training, and 2,748 workers were certified through Recognition of Prior Learning. Additionally, 2,925 became TVET trainers, and 690 instructors were trained in blended learning and e-learning.

# \$225 million

### What we need

The ILO's 2022-2025 Skills and Lifelong Learning Strategy needs about \$225 million, with over 80% for country-level initiatives and nearly 40% for capacity development. An extra \$65 million is sought for 2023-25, with \$28.7 million secured in 2021 and \$11 million in early 2022.



**Skills development is a crucial component for achieving social justice. Effective and inclusive skills and lifelong learning systems are a key enabler of human development and decent work for all.**

Gilbert Hougbo, ILO Director-General

# International Labour Standards

[The Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 \(No. 142\)](#) focuses on the development of human resources and skills in the workplace. It emphasizes the significance of investing in and promoting human capital through effective training, education, and vocational guidance, with the goal of enhancing workforce competence and employability. Member States are encouraged to implement comprehensive policies and programmes that facilitate skill acquisition and lifelong learning, recognizing that a skilled and adaptable workforce contributes to economic growth, job creation, and improved labour market conditions.

[The Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 \(No. 195\)](#) offers valuable insights into the vital aspects of human resource development. It presents suggestions and recommendations addressing various social and labour issues, serving as key pillars for formulating strategies and policies in training, labour relations, and the broader world of work. Notably, the recommendation emphasizes the pivotal role of training in the economic and social development of each country. It underscores the interconnectedness of training with decent work and underscores the need for the creation of efficient and effective training processes and systems.

[The Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 \(No. 208\)](#), marks a significant stride in advancing quality education and decent work. This international standard highlights the crucial role of quality apprenticeships in tackling work-related challenges. It aligns with overarching objectives such as boosting productivity, fostering resilience, facilitating smoother transitions, and enhancing overall employability.

# The ILO's work in skills development

Lifelong learning enables successful economic structural transformation and social justice.

## Skills policies and sector skills bodies development and implementation

The ILO actively assists constituents in developing national and sectoral skills and lifelong learning strategies. This includes support in drafting documents, policy diagnosis, governance design, financing solutions, and institutional capacity development. Tools like the sectoral skills bodies guide are available, enabling constituents to define and manage sectoral coordination bodies for functions like skills intelligence gathering and tripartite curriculum and qualification definition.



Resource Guide for Sector Skills Bodies (SSBs)

### **Resource Guide for Sector Skills Bodies (SSBs)**

This resource guide seeks to enhance industry engagement in governing and operating skill systems. It is designed for organizations and individuals involved in establishing sector skills bodies (SSBs). The guide addresses key issues in the establishment and operation of tripartite SSBs, explores international mandates and structures, and outlines key actions to enhance the establishment of sustainable SSBs.



## The Digitization of TVET and Skills Systems

### **The Digitization of TVET and Skills Systems**

This joint ILO-UNESCO report offers a global, high-level perspective on the impact of digitalization on TVET and skills systems. It synthesizes insights from consultations with key stakeholders in various countries and international organizations. The report delves into the implications of digitalization on the management, delivery, assessment, and certification of technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Country examples, including Brazil, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, New Zealand, Slovenia, Turkey, and the United States, contribute to the study's comprehensive overview.



## Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED)

### **Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED)**

The STED programme serves as a technical assistance tool aimed at aligning skills development with sectoral strategies for export growth, economic diversification, and employment generation. It provides strategic guidance for integrating skills development into sectoral policies, supporting economic sectors with export potential. The programme assesses sector competitiveness, outlines growth scenarios, identifies necessary business capabilities, anticipates changes in labour demand, and offers policy recommendations to address critical skills gaps at various levels.





# Skills beyond sight: Small Wolf's journey of resilience and independence

## **Overcoming Darkness: Small Wolf's Journey**

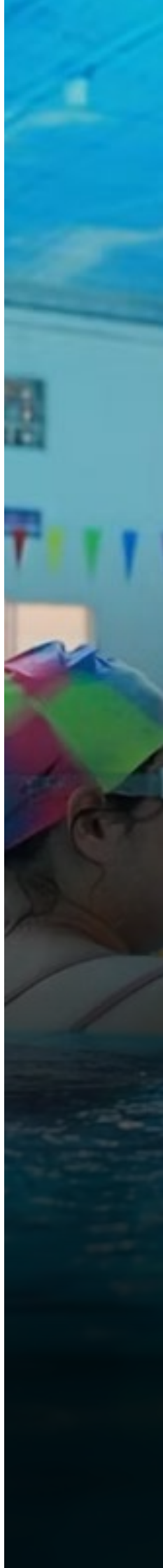
Bi Qiting, known as 'Small Wolf,' faced adversity when she lost her eyesight at the age of 14. Despite the challenges and societal expectations, she pursued her passion for swimming, becoming a professional athlete. After winning medals, an injury in 2018 forced her to reevaluate her path. In 2020, Small Wolf joined a vocational training programme, providing essential skills and a sense of belonging. Fueled by newfound confidence, she decided to become a swimming instructor, aiming to empower individuals with disabilities to embrace life beyond their homes.

## **Diving into independence: Small Wolf's vision**

With a diving certificate, Small Wolf challenges preconceived notions about her limitations. As she trains as a swimming instructor, Small Wolf employs innovative teaching methods, proving that disabilities don't hinder competence. Her message echoes resilience and determination, encouraging young people with disabilities to step outside their comfort zones and discover a world full of opportunities and friendships.

## **Breaking barriers: Small Wolf's future endeavors**

Looking ahead, Small Wolf sets her sights on obtaining a free diver certificate, expressing her desire to experience the sea's wonders. Despite skepticism, she remains steadfast in proving that her blindness does not diminish her capacity to explore and enjoy life. Small Wolf's story is not just about overcoming personal challenges but challenging societal perceptions. Her journey exemplifies the power of determination, resilience, and the ability to redefine one's identity beyond disability. As she continues to break barriers, Small Wolf's story serves as an inspiration for others facing similar obstacles, urging them to focus on what they can achieve rather than what society thinks they cannot.

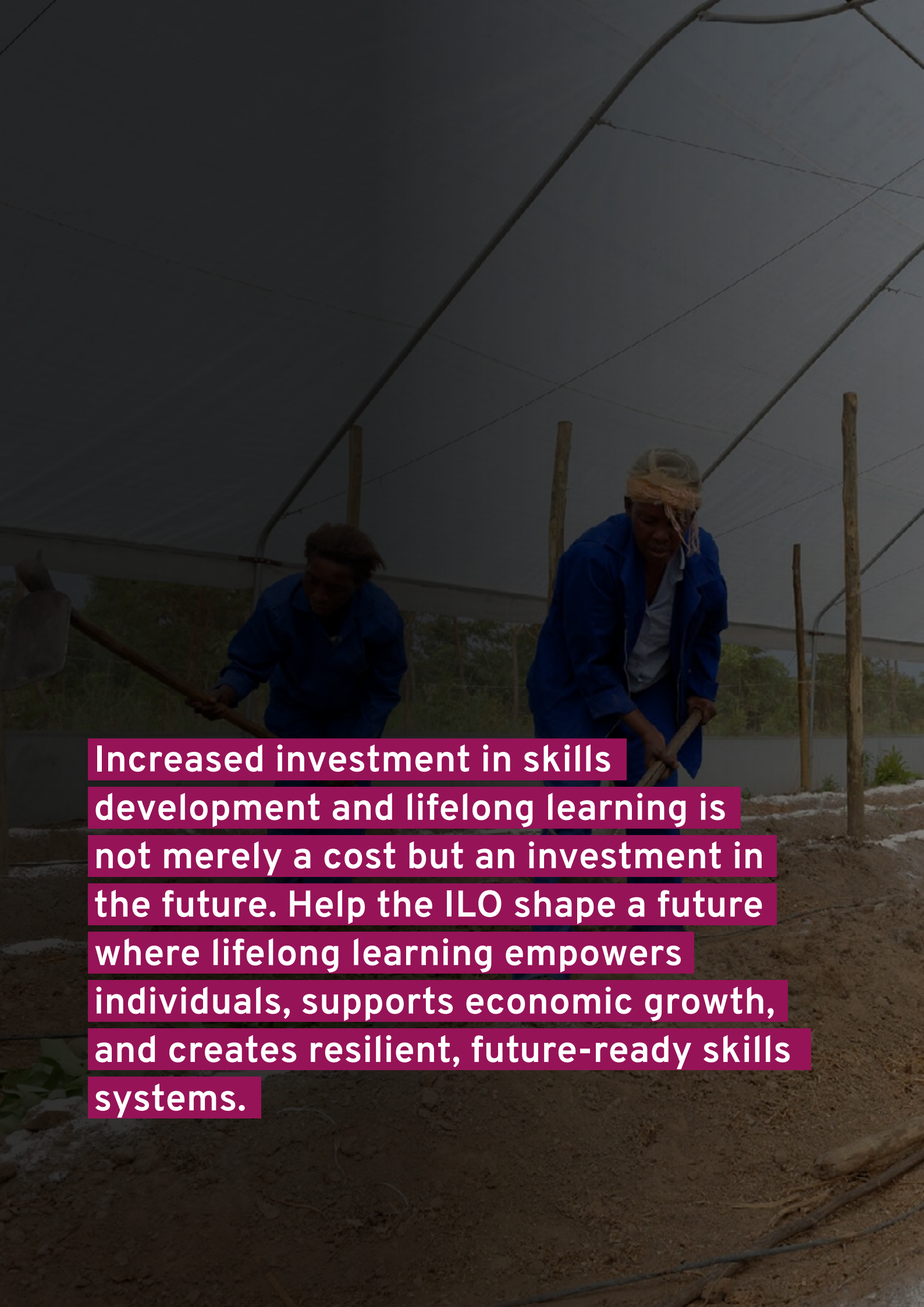


A woman in a swimming pool, wearing a light blue swim cap and goggles, looking thoughtful. The pool is filled with water, and there are colorful lane markers (blue, yellow, red) visible. The background shows a large indoor swimming pool with a high ceiling and colorful triangular flags hanging from the ceiling. The lighting is soft and blue-toned.

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**My message to young people with disabilities is that the outside world is not as scary as you may imagine. When you step outside, you will discover many new things**

Bi Qiting, known as 'Small Wolf,' a swimming instructor in Guangzhou, China

A photograph of two individuals working in a greenhouse. They are wearing blue protective suits and are using tools to work on the ground. The greenhouse structure is visible with wooden posts and a translucent covering. The background shows some greenery outside.

**Increased investment in skills development and lifelong learning is not merely a cost but an investment in the future. Help the ILO shape a future where lifelong learning empowers individuals, supports economic growth, and creates resilient, future-ready skills systems.**



# Dive deeper

Join the Global Coalition for Social Justice



Take a closer look at the ILO's development cooperation landscape.

- [Visit the ILO website to learn more about partnerships with the ILO worldwide through links to recent publications, news, and information about various global initiatives.](#)
- [Explore this interactive, visual platform that provides real-time data on who funds what, and where.](#)





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