

11th ILO African Regional Meeting
Addis Ababa

Information Note

**Plenary Session II: Delivery Through Decent Work Country Programmes:
Contents, strategy and process- Experiences, lessons learned and the way
forward**

Wednesday, 25 April *15.00-16.30*

Introduction

Africa has embraced *decent work for all* as its global goal at a crucial stage of its participation in the global economy. The Heads of State and Government participating in the African Union Extraordinary Summit on **Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa** (Ouagadougou, September 2004), overwhelmingly endorsed the Decent Work Agenda. The Ministerial Statement following the 40th Session of the Commission's Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Addis Ababa, April 2-3, 2007); and the report of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Addis Ababa, March 29th to April 1, 2007 reinforced Africa's commitment to Decent Work. The task ahead for the coming years is to realize the goal of Decent Work as a means of sustainable poverty reduction.

Objectives

This session will discuss the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) concept and the experiences in the delivery of DWCPs to date.

Key issues and challenges

Decent Work Country Programmes translate the commitments, made on a regional level, to their practical application on a national level. Africa's Decent Work Country Programmes are developed around the regional priorities set by the African Union Summit Outcomes: Women's Entrepreneurship development and Youth Employment. Countries have expanded this to include other priorities such as HIV/AIDS, child labour, human trafficking and so forth.

The approach is nation specific and based on a gendered implementation strategy. Each programme focuses on: analyzing national public policies so as to identify national priorities and promote policy coherence; improving national institutions' capacity to promote Decent Work and; developing the tools and instruments for measuring and monitoring national progress. Most importantly, the DWCPs are fully articulated within the context of the national development frameworks, including UNDAF.

A number of challenges, which are confronted include:

Quality Assurance: Decent Work Country Programmes are designed to attract long term funding from other development partners. This requires the formulation of a high quality document demonstrating national commitment to the objectives and outcomes. With that in mind a Quality Assurance Mechanism is now being implemented in the region to insure that DWCP documents meet the standards required by constituents and the international community.

Alignment and implementation within the context of “One UN”: The ILO is working within the national development framework as part of the UNDAF planning process. This requires close collaboration with the sister agencies as well as government machineries. On one level the planning process is now more complex and requires greater articulation with different agencies. However, this harmonization is one of the means of guaranteeing the sustainability of the programme as well as its possibility of attracting funds from a wide variety of sources.

Role of constituents in formulation, implementation and evaluation: DWCP within the UNDAF require careful attention to policy coherence as well as a substantial knowledge base of macro-economic and labour issues and how these articulate with attainment of the MDGs and the implementation of NEPAD. Constituents must participate fully in all aspects of formulation, implementation and evaluation of the DWCPs. This may require enhancing constituents’ capacity through knowledge sharing and the development of methodological skills.

Availability of adequate data: The above underscores the need for developing adequate, national institutional framework for ongoing research. Constituents must have adequately analysed, up to date, gender desaggregated information with which to participate in policy analysis and formulation within the context of national development planning. This is a matter of increasing urgency if constituents are to play a determinant role in joint planning.

Possible questions for debate

- What levels of capacity building do our constituents require for greater participation in the formulation of DWCP?
- How can we ensure that DWCPs articulate fully with the UNDAF; and vice versa?
- How do we integrate the goals of DWCP into the PRS?
- How to reconcile ILO’s mandate with the specific requirements of constituents?
- What should be the focus of national capacity building programmes for constituents?