



Implementing the Decent Work Agenda in the Region

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Nada Al-Nashif
Regional Director and Assistant Director-General
ILO Regional Office for Arab States, Beirut



Decent Work

Productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Four inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive strategic objectives:

1. Employment creation and enterprise development
2. Social protection
3. Standards and rights at work
4. Governance and social dialogue



Decent Work and Social Justice

- “Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice” (ILO Constitution, 1919)
- World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization (established in 2002; Report 2004)
- UN World Summit (2005): full and productive employment & decent work as a central objective of relevant national and international policies; adopted new MDG target (1b)
- ILO Declaration on Social Justice for Fair Globalization (2008): an expression of the universality of the decent work agenda
- Global Jobs Pact (2009): A Decent Work response to the global crisis

Recovering from the Crisis: Global Jobs Pact



1. Sets principles for promoting recovery and development
2. Decent Work responses for crisis recovery
 - Accelerating employment creation, jobs recovery and sustaining enterprises
 - Building social protection systems and protecting people
 - Strengthening respect for international labour standards
 - Social dialogue: Bargaining collectively, identifying priorities, stimulating action
- Adopted by International Labour Conference in June 2009; endorsed by UN (ECOSOC) in July 2009
- Places social protection at the heart of a Decent Work response to the crisis

Arab Employment Forum (Beirut, 19-21 October 2009)



- Addressed the broad challenges and opportunities posed by the financial and economic crisis in light of the Global Jobs Pact
- Key conclusions
 - Reviewed recent trends, experiences, good practices and policy responses in selected policy areas
 - Agreed to strengthen tripartite social dialogue (bipartite committees, Arab ECOSOC)
 - Reconfirmed commitment to employment-centred recovery policies for the region
 - Reinforced commitment to all Decent Work objectives



Examples of Implementing the Decent Work Agenda in the Region

1. Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs)
 - Ongoing: Jordan, Syria, and Yemen
 - In progress: Oman, Bahrain, Jordan (second DWCP)
2. Decent Work Strategies in Lebanon and Palestine
3. Mainstreaming Decent Work in national planning processes (Yemen, Syria, and Iraq)
4. Mainstreaming Decent Work in UN planning frameworks (Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen)
5. Mainstreaming decent work in UN MDG joint programmes (Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in North Lebanon, Gender and Women's Empowerment in Palestine, MDGs Scaling Up in Syria)
6. Mainstreaming employment and Decent Work in regional and national MDG Reports

Decent Work and social protection in the region



- Building coherent national social protection policies based on a solid basic social protection floor
- Extending social security coverage and promoting productive employment
- Ensuring good governance of social security

Coherent social protection policies based on a solid basic social protection floor



- Basic social protection floor:
 - Minimum set of social security guarantees
 - Access to essential health care services
 - Income security for children and access to social services
 - Income security for women and men in active age unable to earn a living (e.g. unemployed, maternity)
 - Income security for women and men in case of old age or disability
 - Basic social protection floor recently endorsed by UN Chief Executive Board (lead agencies: ILO and WHO)
- Supplemented by progressively higher protection levels (usually through social insurance possibly supplemented by voluntary insurance)



Extending social security coverage and promoting productive employment

1. Guaranteeing adequate and sustainable pensions
2. Protecting workers in case of unemployment and promoting (re-)integration into the labour market
3. Enhancing maternity protection and promoting female employment

Ensuring good governance of social security



- Enhancing national statistical and monitoring capacities in social security
- Supporting review of social security and labour legislation in line with international labour standards
- Ensuring good governance of social insurance schemes (financial governance, management, monitoring)
- Building national technical capacities in social security