

Newsletter



International
Labour
Organization

Jul-Sep 2012 | Issue 1 | International Labour Organization Hanoi

New ILO – Vietnam Decent Work Country Programme signed



Photo (c) MoLISA

The ILO, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs and the workers' and employers' organizations on May 24 agreed to put forth the new Decent Work Country Programme 2012-2016, an important document expected to help Vietnam cope with its key labour market challenges.

The programme sets out areas of co-operation between the four sides in addressing major labour-related problems, including inadequate quality of human resources, inequality for the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, labour supply-demand imbalances, weak labour market governance, and unfavourable business environment for small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Labour market governance

Decent employment & sustainable enterprise development

Social protection

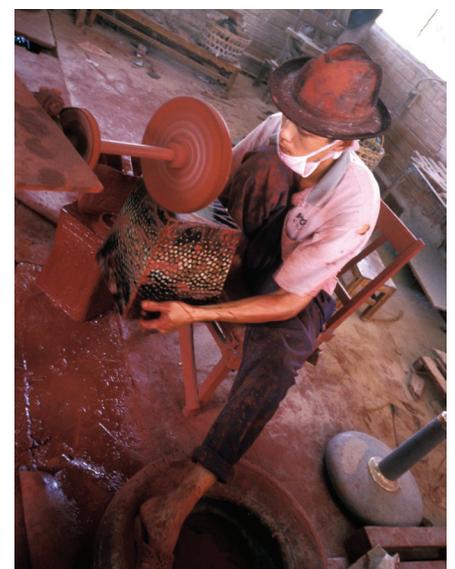
Decent Work Country Programme Priorities

The document is in line with Vietnam's overall development priorities and the One UN Plan.

"Entering a new period, in the Five-year Socio-Economic Development Plan and the 2011-2020 Socio-Development Strategy, the Vietnamese Government continues to give priority to employment, human resources and social security to improve its competitiveness and

sustainable development to become an industrialised economy by 2020," said Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs Pham Thi Hai Chuyen at the signing ceremony.

Ms Chuyen also highlighted the significant contribution of the ILO in Vietnam in various fields -- industrial relations, employment, occupational safety and health, social protection, child labour, disabled support, and gender equality. ■



Amended Labour Code to better protect worker's rights

New Labour Code approved by the National Assembly on June 18 is expected to have profound effect in modernising the labour market and industrial relations in Vietnam.

The revision of the basic law governing world of work was the focus on one of the most important ILO projects from 2009. The ILO, through "Industrial Relations Project" (funded from One UN Fund), provided technical and financial support to all the stakeholders in the process, including the MoLISA, the trade union, employers organisations, and the National Assembly's Social Affairs Committee.

The project's chief technical advisor Yoon Youngmo explains the fundamental changes in the new Labour Code:

"The new Labour Code recognises 'labour sub-leasing' which means workers of one company are sent to work temporarily in another company as a new pattern of employment. In addition, part-time workers and domestic workers are also provided the protection of the Labour Code.

The revision creates the possibility for recognising employment relationship between a labour-user (employer) and workers on the basis of actual relationship, such as, supervision of work, regardless of whether or not they signed a written 'labour contract'.



These changes aim to encourage workers to make use of the formal procedures to raise their concerns and demands, reducing the need for wild-cat strikes."



The new Labour Code makes it mandatory for companies to establish a social dialogue mechanism, which will enable the management and the workforce to exchange information and engage in consultation on important issues affecting working conditions.

At the same time, upper-level trade unions and employer organisations will be allowed to participate in collective bargaining, while the government will be required to provide facilitation support. These changes aim to encourage workers to make use of the formal procedures to raise their concerns and demands, reducing the need for wild-cat strikes." ■

Minimum wage will be fixed with less government intervention. From 2013, the government will announce the new minimum wage based on the recommendation of the tripartite National Wage Council.



Photo competition puts child labour in the spotlight

A photo competition on child labour was launched in April by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs with the support of the ILO to mark the World Day Against Child Labour on June 12.

Nineteen photos out of more than 1,500 entries were awarded with first, second third and motivation prizes for the competition themed “Child Protection – Let’s end Child Labour”.

A series of celebrations were also organised in five cities and provinces across the country -- Ha Noi, Lao Cai, Ninh Binh, Quang Nam and Dong Nai -- to mark the tenth anniversary of the annual day. Around the world, a large gap remains between the ratification of conventions on child labour and the actions countries take to deal with the problem.

“There is no room for complacency when 215 million children are still labouring to survive and more than half of these are exposed to the worst forms of child labour, including slavery and involvement in armed



Let's end child labour

conflict,” said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia. “We cannot allow the eradication of child labour to slip down the development agenda – all countries should be striving to achieve this target, individually and collectively.”

In Vietnam, the ILO and the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour are working together under the Programme of Support to the National Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, launched in March 2010 and due next year. ■



Convention 122 ratified: Vietnam promises better work policies

Vietnam has committed to giving bigger emphasis to employment policies by ratifying the International Employment Policy Convention (known as Convention 122) in June.

The ILO convention requires member countries to pursue “an active policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment”.

“Employment has always been at the top of our agenda,” said Deputy Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs Doan Mau Diep at the conference. “By ratifying ILO

Convention 122 on Employment Policy, we are advancing our commitment to the international community concerning creation of employment, increasing the quality of education, building employability skills, business start-up skills, improving vocational guidance and reducing unemployment, especially youth employment.”

The deputy minister said the country is speeding up the drafting of the Employment Law to submit to the National Assembly for approval next year.

ILO Vietnam expected the Employment Policy Convention, which takes effect from June 2013 in Vietnam, would help push the country forward in establishing a comprehensive framework towards a more efficient employment policy.

“We are very pleased to have partnered with Viet Nam in doing the feasibility study of the ILO Convention on Employment Policy over the last two years that led to the country’s ratification of one of the ILO priority governance conventions,” said Director of ILO Vietnam Gyorgy Sziraczki. ■



Making sure Vietnam is part of global network

How is youth employment in Vietnam compared to other countries and the world as a whole?

Youth unemployment rate in Vietnam of 8 per cent in 2010 seems to be not as serious as other countries, such as 25 per cent in the Middle East. However, if we compare the employment situation of young people and adults, we will see a different story. In Vietnam, the 15 to 24-year-olds make up the largest group in unemployment, accounting for 50.4 per cent of the total unemployed.

Vietnam has a big informal economy which absorbs 69.4 per cent of the total employed workers. This sector provides a buffer at times of job crisis, and for 1.7 million young people entering the labour market every year. Many of the informal jobs are temporary, low-paid and unprotected. So, much has to be done to address both youth unemployment and underemployment in Vietnam.

What are you planning to do to help improve youth employment in Vietnam?

I came back home with a big head, with new ideas to improve youth employment, with excitement but also responsibilities that I am now in a network. The knowledge and information I gained will be shared with my colleagues and be applied in my work as an international cooperation officer of the MoLISA. We continue our discussion in the online platform and facebook group to update ourselves with youth employment efforts, for example, discussion in the ILC, Rio+20, as well as other regional forums and meetings. And my task is to make sure that Vietnam is part of the global network. ■

I myself shared the experience of Vietnamese young people in finding a good job. I also initiated a marketplace (group work) on partnerships for youth employment. Luckily, Mr Juan Somavia, Director General of ILO, joined our discussion. He appreciated our mapping model and gave very insightful advices.

What did you learn from other representatives?

We learned a lot from each other, and also from guest speakers of the ILO and other international organisations. We shared different initiatives that have been implemented successfully in other countries, for example, the young enterprise incubators, entrepreneurship training, internship and wage subsidy programmes. I also learned about other programmes to support youth employment efforts, such as Youth Employment Networks of the UNSG, Youth fund of UN Habitat, as well as ILO Youth employment programme and Work4Youth project. This information will definitely help me a lot in my work at the MoLISA.

A chat with Nguyen Dzung

Tien, who represented

Vietnam at the Global Youth

Employment Forum last May.

How was your experience as the only representative from Vietnam at Forum?

It was the first ILO global forum of this type for young people. Most of the participants and even organisers were between 14 and 29 years old.

As a result, the way we participated in the Forum was very "young". Before the Forum, all participants were invited to an online forum to brainstorm ideas on different topics. There was a global video contest on youth employment. At the forum, there were sessions for presentations, group work, roundtables, video interviews, market places and all of the discussions were covered by a group of bloggers.

For further information, please contact:
ILO Hanoi Office
48-50 Nguyen Thai Hoc, Hanoi

Tel: +44 3 734 0902
Email: hanoi@ilo.org
www.ilo.org/hanoi

All photos (c) ILO

The ILO is part of One UN in Vietnam