



International
Labour
Organization



Bali Declaration Implementation Progress Report 2017–2018

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Regional Office for Arab States

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1. Introduction – The Bali Declaration and priority areas

At the closing ceremony of the Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) on 9 December 2016, delegates adopted the Bali Declaration which outlines the priorities for policies and actions at national level and by the ILO.¹ With the overall aim to promote decent work as a driver of inclusive growth and social justice, the Declaration served as a call to action for ILO member States in the Asia-Pacific region and Arab States. While acknowledging the economic progress made in the both regions, and highlighting certain achievements in the promotion of decent work and inclusive development, the Declaration pointed to a need for governments, workers' and employers' organizations in the region to promote inclusive growth, social justice and decent work in a more comprehensive and concerted way.

The document outlined 13 priority areas for national policy and action and ten priorities for ILO action. It was agreed that the ILO would report on progress made in supporting constituents on the priority areas of the Bali Declaration every two years to the ILO Governing Body. Some information on ILO action at the country and regional levels in support of the Bali Declaration were captured on an annual basis in a series of Bali Declaration Policy Briefs (see box 1). This document consolidates the information from the Briefs and pulls from additional evidence from official reporting to serve as the requested mid-term implementation progress report on the Bali Declaration, highlighting action taken over the period January 2017 through December 2018.

The mid-term reporting has not attempted to quantify outcomes, i.e. it does not provide a full count of number of countries that achieved results on the respective outcome areas. One reason that this was not attempted has to do with the challenge of the Declaration time span. As the Bali Declaration period (2017–2020) falls across two ILO Programme and Budget reporting periods (2016–17 and 2018–19), the exercise of reporting on results has been challenging. Results achieved in 2017 are fully registered and summarized in the ILO Programme Implementation Report 2016–17 and in its associated online dashboard. The same cannot be said of outcomes achieved in 2018, however, as at the time of drafting, the 2018–19 implementation report was in process. This mid-term report thus leans more heavily on results achieved in 2017 than 2018. The final Bali Declaration implementation report, planned for release at the 17th APRM in late 2020, will contain the complete picture, drawing from the registered results of the two biennium.

¹ The Bali Declaration and supporting document are available at website: https://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/regional-meetings/asia/aprm-16/reports/WCMS_537445/lang--en/index.htm.

Box 1. Bali Declaration Policy Briefs, 2017 and 2018

Following the adoption of the Bali Declaration in December 2016, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific set out to prepare a series of “Bali Declaration Policy Briefs” with the purpose of highlighting the priority areas for national policy and action defined by the governments, employers’ and workers’ groups in the Declaration and reporting on good practices and lessons learned in the policy areas. A set of 12 Briefs on the topics listed below were published in October 2017. In December 2018, the “2018 updates” of the Briefs were published online.²

ILO Bali Declaration Policy Briefs

1. Closing the gender gap: Enhance opportunity, wages and treatment at work for women
2. Developing policies for decent work
3. Building resilience in situations of crisis arising from conflicts and disasters
4. Accelerating action to eliminate child labour and forced labour
5. Extending social protection
6. Protecting fair migration
7. Promoting sustainable enterprises
8. Promoting decent work in global supply chains
9. Fundamental principles and rights at work: Towards commitment and action
10. Tackling inequality and boosting wage growth
11. Strengthening social dialogue and tripartism
12. Improving labour market information and analysis

2. ILO support to national priorities in Asia-Pacific and the Arab States

2.1 The regional pictures

Asia and the Pacific

Persistent labour market challenges in Asia-Pacific

working poverty • informal employment • vulnerable employment • gender gaps • occupational injuries and deaths • social protection coverage • excessive working time • child labour • forced labour

In the two years since the adoption of the Bali Declaration at the 16th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting in December 2016, the region has continued to grow at a rate above the global average, although the pace of growth has slowed. The GDP growth rate was 5.6 per cent in 2017, before falling to 5.4 per cent in 2018.³ It is expected to decline further in 2019 to 5.1 per cent, remaining there in 2020 and only then projected to increase again. At sub-regional levels, growth slowed down the most in Eastern Asia, largely owing to the stabilization of output in China. The growth rate of Eastern Asia increased from 5.1 to 5.5 per cent between 2016 and 2017, then fell to 5.1 per cent in 2018 with a projected drop again in 2019 to 4.8 per cent. Southern Asia, buoyed by growth in India, hit a peak in 2016 at 7.6 per cent, dropped to 6.2 per cent in 2017 and back up to 6.6 per cent in 2018. A stable growth outlook is projected for South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific with a growth rate of around 4.6 per cent for 2019 and 2020.

² See website: at: https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/issue-briefs/WCMS_613618/lang--en/index.htm.

³ Growth figures (GDP and employment) based on ILO: *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2019* (Geneva, 2019).

While the unemployment rate in the region is projected to remain at a level notably lower than the global average (remaining at 3.6 per cent between 2017 and 2019), employment growth in the Asia-Pacific decreased by almost half a percentage point from 1.1 per cent in 2017 to 0.7 per cent in 2018. The negative employment growth can be isolated to the Eastern Asia sub-region, where demographic trends reflect low and decreasing fertility rates and aged populations.

Strong economic growth in the past two decades has contributed to lifting a large section of the population out of poverty in the Asia Pacific region. The share of the working population living on an income of less than US\$1.90 per day fell from 33.4 per cent in 2000 to 15.4 per cent in 2010 and to 5.3 per cent in 2018.⁴ However, there remains a large share of people in the region that still lives just above the margins of extreme working poverty—oftentimes only an illness or natural disaster away from falling back into extreme poverty. In 2018, about 308 million workers in Asia and the Pacific region were living in moderate poverty (defined as living between US\$1.90 – US\$3.10 per day) while 378 million workers in the region lived in near poverty (defined as living between US\$3.10 per day – US\$5 per day).

Arab States

Persistent labour market challenges in Arab States

gender gaps in labour force participation • labour market duality (migrants/non-migrants; public sector/private sector; women/men; youth/adults) • occupational injuries and deaths
• youth unemployment • child labour • forced labour

In the Arab States, 2017 was a year of economic contraction, but the region re-entered positive territory in 2018 with a growth rate of 2.6 per cent. Growth is projected to strengthen further in 2019 due primarily to the economic recovery in member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The economic outlook also improved slightly in non-GCC countries starting in 2018, however, long-lasting geopolitical tensions and continuing armed conflicts continue to inhibit economic activity in the sub-region.

Between 2017 and 2018, employment growth slowed (from 2.9 per cent in 2017 to 2.4 per cent in 2018) while at the same time the unemployment rate increased from 7.2 to 7.3 per cent. The unemployment rate in non-GCC countries, which stood at 10.8 per cent in 2018, is more than double the rate in GCC countries in the same year (4.0 per cent). These data suggest that the labour market situation in non-GCC countries continues to be critical, with active conflicts and security risks undermining socio-economic development.

The region is also greatly influenced by the labour market dynamics of migrant workers. With migrants making up 41 per cent of total employment,⁵ the Arab States stand out as the region with the largest proportion of migrant workers. This share is even higher in GCC countries, where on average over half of all workers are migrants; additionally, migrants account for three-quarters or more of all private sector employees.

⁴ ILO modelled estimates, November 2018: Employment by economic class from ILOSTAT.

⁵ The global average is 4.7 per cent. Source: ILO: *ILO global estimates on international migrant workers: Results and methodology* (Geneva, 2018).

2.2 Institutional and policy developments

2.2.1 An update on Decent Work Country Programmes

Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) are the programme framework that links the ILO's Programme and Budget targets to those at country levels. As such, they serve as vehicles to deliver results envisaged in the Bali Declaration. The DWCPs completed after the adoption of the Bali Declaration all make reference to advancing the Bali Declaration. Since late 2016 through December 2018, in the Asia-Pacific region, 12 DWCPs were finalized and signed and an additional 15 countries are nearing the signature stage. In total, there were 14 active DWCPs in the region by the end of 2018 (table 1).

In the Arab States region, the emphasis on decent work within the 2030 Agenda and in crisis response has created an unprecedented demand for ILO services as now reflected in five active DWCPs with one more (Iraq) at the formulation stage.

All current DWCPs also link national outcomes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The primary focus of all DWCPs is on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 (promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), but the following other goals are linked as well, thus demonstrating the cross-cutting importance of elements of the decent work agenda to the global principals of sustainable development and the notion of "leaving no one behind": SDGs 1 (No poverty), 3 (Good health and well-being), 4 (Quality education), 5 (Gender equality), 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), 10 (Reduced inequalities), 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), 13 (Climate action), 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the goals).

➡ **What's new?** The recent ILO *Asia-Pacific Employment and Social Outlook 2018*,⁶ argues that in order to make real progress towards sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth based on decent work, the targets need to extend beyond SDG 8. A framework for "SDG 8+" is thus proposed that pulls from elements embedded across a wide array of goals. *In drafting the DWCPs, ILO constituents would thus seem to intrinsically understand the inter-linking of the decent work agenda in the 2030 Agenda.*

➡ **What's new?** DWCPs developed since 2016 are characterized by enhanced constituents ownership developed through tripartite consultations, including in the formulation of priorities and outcome statements and selection of indicators.⁷ *An important characteristic of the constituents' ownership is the strengthened governance mechanism in the form of a tripartite DWCP steering committee.* Officially introduced in DWCP starting 2016 onwards, some of these tripartite DWCP steering committees or mechanisms are formally designated as a sub-group of a national tripartite body. For example, in Myanmar, a DWCP Technical Working Group (TWG) was established under the National Tripartite Dialogue Forum (NTDF). Formal functions of the NTDF include serving as high-level advisory body on DWCP formulation, implementation and monitoring. In some other cases, particularly in the Pacific Island States of Papua New Guinea and Samoa, the national tripartite forum have taken on the responsibility of the DWCP steering committees.

⁶ ILO: *Asia-Pacific Employment and Social Outlook 2018: Advancing decent work for sustainable development* (Bangkok, 2018).

⁷ Following from the 2016 Resolution on Advancing Social Justice through Decent Work, an explicit reference to DWCP governance was included in the DWCP guidebook version 4, published in 2016.

A recent review of DWCP tripartite governance mechanisms in operation showed that they are established in all DWCPs but demonstrate varying degrees of tripartite participation and functioning. DWCP tripartite governance is part of a wider eco-system of formal tripartite entities and processes (national, subnational and sector-based), often with overlapping memberships, alongside and linked to informal networks and relationships. In this context DWCP tripartite governance mechanisms can both demonstrate social dialogue in practice and serve as an incubator for developing social capital (trust, knowledge and networks) which can influence broader tripartite and social dialogue structures, processes and culture. In addition, many terms of reference (ToRs) for the DWCP governance mechanism explicitly include DWCPs annual reporting to feed into the national reporting on the SDGs.

➡ **What's new?** *With completed DWCPs in hand, the ILO country programmes have both influenced and been influenced by the national United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), which are negotiated medium-term strategic planning documents of the UN Country Teams. The ILO has increasingly been identified as lead agency on outcome areas of the UNDAFs that relate to SDG 8, including outcomes on employment creation, social protection, enterprise development, skills development and labour protection.*⁸

Table 1. Current and previous DWCPs and status of UNDAFs

Sub-region/Country	Current	Previous	Reviews	UNDAFs
Asia				
Afghanistan	2018–22	2010–15	2015 (internal)	One UN for Afghanistan, 2018–21
Bangladesh	2017–20	2006–10; 2012–15	2009, 2011, 2016 (internal)	UNDAF, 2017–20
Cambodia	Formulation in progress	2006-07; 2008–10; 2011–15; 2016–18	2007, 2011, 2015, 2018 (internal), also independent as part of Independent evaluation of DWCP Mekong sub-region	UNDAF, 2019–23
China	2016–20	2006–10; 2013–15	2015 (internal)	UNDAF, 2016–20
India	2018–22	2007–12; 2013–17	2012 (independent evaluation), 2017 (internal)	UN Sustainable Development Framework, 2018–22
Indonesia	Formulation in progress	2006–10; 2011–15	2009 (independent evaluation)	UN Partnership for Development Framework, 2016–20
Lao People's Democratic Republic	2017–21	2011–16	2011, 2016 (internal), 2018 as part of Independent evaluation of DWCP Mekong sub-region	UN Partnership Framework, 2017–21
Malaysia	Formulation in progress	None		UN Sustainable Goals Development Framework, 2018–20
Maldives	Formulation in progress (endorsed by Government, but not social partners)	None		UNDAF, 2016–20
Mongolia	Formulation in progress	2006–10	2008 (internal)	UNDAF, 2017–21
Myanmar	2018–21			UNDAF, 2018–22

⁸ While primarily occurring over the course of 2019 and thus outside the reporting period of this report, there are increasing instances where the country diagnostic of decent work deficits in the country also contributed to the common country assessment of the new UN Sustainable Development Country Framework (UNSDCF). A good example is Iraq with its UNSDCF for the period 2020–23.

Nepal	2018–22	2008–12; 2013–17	2007, 2013, 2017 (internal)	UNDAF, 2018–22
Pakistan	2016–20	2005–09; 2010–15	2015 (internal)	One Programme III, 2018–22
Philippines	Formulation in progress	None	2006 (independent evaluation of the country programme)	UN Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development, 2019–23
Singapore	Partnership Agreement in place since 2011, renewed biennially	None		
Sri Lanka	2018–22	2008–12; 2013–17	2013, 2017 (internal)	UN Sustainable Development Framework, 2018–22
Thailand	Formulation in progress	None	2018 as part of Independent evaluation of DWCP Mekong sub-region	UN Partnership Framework, 2017–21
Timor-Leste	2016–20	2008–13	2013 (internal)	UNDAF, 2015–19
Viet Nam	2017–21	2012–16	2016 (internal), 2018 as part of Independent evaluation of DWCP Mekong sub-region	One Strategic Plan, 2017–21
Pacific				
Cook Islands	Formulation in progress	None		UN Pacific Strategy 2018–22
Fiji	Formulation in progress	2010–12	2007 (internal)	
Kiribati	Formulation in progress	None	2007 (internal)	
Marshall Islands	Formulation in progress	None		
Palau	Formulation in progress	None		
Papua New Guinea	2018–22	2009–12; 2013–17	2007, 2012 (internal)	
Samoa	2017–20	2009–12; 2013–16	2007, 2015, 2019 (internal)	
Solomon Islands	Formulation in progress	2009–12	2007 (internal)	
Tonga	Formulation in progress	None		
Tuvalu	Formulation in progress	2010–12		
Vanuatu	Formulation in progress	2009–12; 2014–16	2007, 2016 (internal)	
Arab States				
Bahrain		2010–13		
Iraq	Formulation in progress	None		UNDAF 2015–19
Jordan	2018–22	2006–09; 2013–17	2018 (High Level Evaluation)	UN Sustainable Development Framework 2018–22
Kuwait	2018–20	None	2018 (internal)	UN Sustainable Development Framework 2019–23
Lebanon	2017–20	None	2016 (internal)	UNDAF 2017–20
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2018–22	2013–16		UNDAF 2018–22
Oman	2018–20	2007–13; 2014–16	2016 (internal)	
Qatar		2008–10		
Saudi Arabia		None	2011 (internal)	
Syria		2008–10	2011 (internal)	UN Strategic Framework for Cooperation 2016–19
Yemen		2008–10		UN Strategic Framework 2017–19

Notes: Only countries with current or past DWCPs are listed. Additional DWCPs have been finalized in 2019 (after the cut-off date for this reporting), including Cambodia 2019–23, Cook Islands 2019–22, Kiribati 2018–22, Malaysia 2018–25 (back-dated) and Thailand 2019–21. UNDAFs are occasionally given alternative names, hence the diversity of titles in this column. In June 2019, UNDG issued the final Internal Guidance concerning the “United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework” (UNSDCF) which is the new planning framework replacing the UNDAF.

2.2.2 Ratification and implementation of fundamental labour standards

There has been some important progress in the Asia-Pacific region in the last couple years when it comes to ratification of international labour standards, although the region continues to lag behind others in its record of ratification rates. Currently, with an average number of 23 ratifications by country, the Asia-Pacific regional average is at about half the global average. Ratification rates range from two in Brunei Darussalam to 38 in the Philippines. Among the Arab States, the average number of ratifications per country is 26 (ranging from four in Oman to 68 in Iraq).

Among member States in the Asia-Pacific and Arab States regions the number of ratifications of ILO Conventions in 2017 and 2018 number 16 (table 2). If 2019 is also included despite falling outside the reporting period, the success of the recent “One for All” Centenary Ratification Campaign is evident in the addition of ten ratifications in the Asia-Pacific region, including on fundamental Convention C182 (Child Labour Convention) in Marshall Islands, Palau and Tuvalu and C098 (Collective Bargaining Convention) in Viet Nam.⁹

Table 2. Ratifications of ILO Conventions by Asia-Pacific and Arab States, 2017–19

Instrument	Country	Date
C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948	Iraq	01 Jun 2018
C088 - Employment Service Convention, 1948	Viet Nam	23 Jan 2019*
C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	Viet Nam	05 Jul 2019*
C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	Thailand	13 Jun 2017
C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973	India	13 Jun 2017
C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	Samoa	05 Dec 2018
	Cook Islands	15 Aug 2018
C151 - Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978	Philippines	10 Oct 2017
C155 - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981	Singapore	11 Jun 2019*
C159 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983	Viet Nam	25 Mar 2019*
C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	Tuvalu	11 Jun 2019*
	Marshall Islands	13 Mar 2019*
	Palau	04 Mar 2019*
	Cook Islands	15 Aug 2018
	India	13 Jun 2017
C185 - Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003	Myanmar	16 Jan 2018
	Sri Lanka	02 Dec 2016
C188 - Work in Fishing Convention, 2007	Thailand	30 Jan 2019*
C187 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)	Philippines	17 Jun 2019*
P029 - Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930	Sri Lanka	10 Apr 2019*
	Thailand	04 Jun 2018
MLC, 2006 - Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC)	Hong Kong, SAR	06 Aug 2018
	China	
	Indonesia	12 Jun 2017
	Lebanon	08 Mar 2018
	Sri Lanka	12 Jan 2017

Note: * Ratification took place in 2019 which is outside the reporting period of this report.

Source: ILO Normlex, Latest ratifications and declarations.

⁹ Paragraph 16 of the Bali Declaration tasks the ILO to undertake “a campaign to promote the ratification and implementation of fundamental labour standards” in addition to the efforts committed to in the DWCPs. This was taken up as part of the ILO Centenary celebration, whereby an invitation was made to all 187 ILO member States to ratify at least one international labour Convention in the course of 2019.

The lag in respect of overall ratifications holds true in respect of fundamental Conventions, including Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention No. 87 and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention No. 105, which are yet to be ratified by 12 and 18 member States, respectively. In fact, all ILO member States that are yet to ratify Convention No. 105 are from the Asia Pacific region. Also the only two countries to ever denounce an ILO fundamental Convention already ratified are in the region – Malaysia and Singapore re. C105. The ratification by Thailand of C111, India of C138, Iraq of C87, India, Marshall Islands, Palau and Tuvalu and Tonga (the latter three in 2019) of C182, and Viet Nam of C98 (also in 2019) were the latest ratifications of fundamental Conventions by member States in the region. Notably, with its ratification of C87, Iraq has now also completed its ratification of all eight fundamental Conventions.

While the ratification rate in Asia-Pacific may be improving, application of standards does not always follow in a seamless fashion. The supervisory bodies have identified in several member States in the Asia-Pacific region and in a number of countries of the Arab region serious and persistent problems of application of fundamental standards, in particular on freedom of association and, mainly in the context of labour migration, forced labour. Over the past three years, the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) found that issues in the application of Conventions by five ASEAN countries and one country in the Arab region were serious enough to warrant a direct contacts mission.

Whilst the Asia-Pacific region is diverse, international trade continues to be an important driver of economic and social policies overall. With an increasing number of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with social clauses, a clear increase can be seen in the demand for ILO development cooperation partnerships in the areas of promoting compliance with ILS in the export-led sectors and the supply chains, and building stable labour markets conducive to attracting investments (see section 2.4). ILO projects relating to promoting workplace compliance through labour inspection, and International Labour Standards amounted to 31 per cent of the total budget for the 2017–18. Alongside projects on promoting compliance, there is increasing call to address the protection of migrant workers' rights, which occupies 11 per cent of the DC budget.

Regarding implementation of fundamental labour standards in the Arab region, a number of new programmes and projects were initiated over the past few years. The agreement of an ILO project jointly implemented with the Government of Qatar to improve the situation of migrant workers in the country led to the closing in 2017 of the complaint concerning non-observance by Qatar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81). A number of legal and practical measures towards realization of the fundamental rights of migrant workers in Qatar have been adopted in the meantime. Furthermore, an ILO project concluded in 2018 with Saudi Arabia supports national efforts to develop an equality policy for the labour market, enhance social dialogue and eliminate child labour.

2.3 Supporting the Bali Declaration priorities for national policy and action

The aim of this section is to highlight some of the main achievements of the ILO tripartite constituents that were supported by the Office, organized according to the specific priority area listed under the Bali Declaration.¹⁰

2.3.1 Creation of enabling conditions for environmentally sustainable, inclusive job-rich economic growth

Developing policies for more decent jobs (Bali Declaration paragraph 2) is linked to the ILO outcome to promote more and better jobs and enhance youth employment prospects with a view to inclusive growth and development. As a broad set of multidisciplinary policies and institutions are often needed to get more people into decent jobs that contribute to stronger and more inclusive economic, this outcome is consistently the most frequently targeted in ILO country programming while also embedding the widest array of action areas for obtaining results. Some actions taken in this area and key results by Bali Declaration paragraph are detailed here:¹¹

a. Developing policies for more decent jobs (paragraph 2)

A number of countries in the regions, including **Cambodia, China, India, Sri Lanka** and **Timor-Leste**, embarked on efforts for job-friendly macroeconomic frameworks, including creation of inter-ministerial bodies for promoting employment. As an example, in April 2017, the State Council of **China** adopted the “Opinion of the State Council on Advancing Employment and Entrepreneurship at present and in the Upcoming Period”, which stresses the need to continue prioritizing employment as a means for economic and social development and requests to put job creation in the centre of China’s macroeconomic policy. The policy will guide national employment programmes until 2020. The ILO made technical inputs in the process of policy drafting. Another example is **Timor-Leste**, where the Council of Ministers of the 6th Constitutional Government approved the National Employment Strategy 2017-30.

A special case of ILO technical support on employment-friendly macroeconomic policy-making came in **Vanuatu** where in late 2016 to early 2017, ILO input to the tripartite consultation influenced the decision to back away from plans to implement a simultaneous income and value-added tax increase that could have significantly impacted the livelihoods of the population. The package of tax reforms were rescinded for further review.

In circumstances where aggregate demand is lacking, countries occasionally rely on the implementation of public works for job creation while also improving the delivery of active labour market policies (ALMP) either national wide or targeted to particular vulnerable regions and/or population groups. ILO support in promotion of employment-intensive investment is covered below (section 2.3.1-d), but in regards to assisting the development and implementation of ALMPs, the following interventions are highlighted:

¹⁰ This exercise is not intended to give an all-inclusive account of activities taken in ILO member States over the period, but rather to highlight a selection of outcomes of interest from the ILO results-based management system.

¹¹ The examples provided are a selection of ILO supported action on areas linked to the Bali Declaration that have taken place in the 2017–18 period. This is not intended as a comprehensive accounting of all policy interventions and outcomes that occurred in the region over the period.

- In 2016 and 2017, the Department of Labour of **Sri Lanka** and other relevant national stakeholders developed several measures to facilitate school-to-work transitions with ILO support, including training of teachers to provide students with school career guidance and information on availability of vocational training, courses to re-skill unemployed youth – with more than 1,300 youth finding work after training – and development of a scheme for recognition of prior learning.
- In 2018, the ILO and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS) in **China** jointly examined international experiences in public employment services. The ILO published a joint working paper with MOHRSS entitled “Good practices in using partnerships for the delivery of employment services in China,” which gave rise to the organization of an international seminar on public employment services. Through this seminar, the ILO shared the requested information with the MOHRSS and other stakeholders for their preparation of the drafting of the “Guidance on further promoting comprehensive basic public employment service”, which was issued by the State Council in April 2018.
- In **Yemen**, the Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) upgraded informal apprenticeship schemes and business development services. The Chamber of Commerce and employers’ associations also implemented a pilot programme for upgrading informal apprenticeships in four governorates, with advice offered by the ILO on entrepreneurship skill needed to fuel the targeted value chain development.

Numerous countries reported work towards increasing protections of vulnerable workers through stronger labour institutions, including wage laws, and development of integrated policy frameworks particularly on youth employment.¹² Examples follow:

- **Pakistan** targeted support to workers in the garments sector, including measures to ensure enforcement of minimum wages for formal and informal segments of the garment supply chain.
- Similarly, **Mongolia** piloted new wage practices in the mining and construction sectors, with a focus on eliminating gender biases. Also in Mongolia, a national Decent Work for Youth Network has been active in raising the awareness of the public, young workers, employers and governments on the enforcement of labour rights of young men and women at workplace and the need to improve young workers’ employability and their conditions of work.
- In **China**, a national network of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network was established in June 2018. The country also took efforts to create an enabling environment and promote fair employment for persons living with HIV. A study on HIV-related employment legislation and policies with analysis of policy gaps and good practices was discussed at a tripartite workshop with the objective of discussing measures to be taken forward.
- Also in **Indonesia**, through the UN Partnership on the Rights of People with Disabilities Fund, the ILO focused on priority issues faced by people with disabilities, including in

¹² In the Asia-Pacific region, more than ten countries reported action on the objective to support youth employment. While the primary focus of interventions related primarily to training of targeted youth populations, including on entrepreneurship development (details in section 2.3.1-b), **India**, **Nepal** and **Sri Lanka** expanded these efforts to the broader public through public employment centres. Likewise, in the **Occupied Palestinian Territory**, the Ministry of Labour developed a national action plan on employment.

support of a newly-established Indonesia Business and Disabilities Network. The ILO also supported efforts to improve the availability of data on people with disabilities, in terms of type of disabilities and geographical area, several factors of employment (gap in compensation, gender, type of work, etc.), for better policy and programme formulations at both national and local level.

- In **Bangladesh**, tea plantation owners and workers agreed to improve working conditions as well as promoting the interests of indigenous and tribal workers.
- **Pakistan** also focused on the protection of transgender persons through legislation. Finally, particularly in the Arab States, but also in **India** and **Nepal** (targeted to the garment sector and to women, respectively), efforts were made to promote decent work among migrant workers (see section 2.3.4-b for more details).

b. Skills development

In the 2016–17 biennium, results were reported on national action on skills development systems in **Cambodia, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka** and **Samoa**. Typically, skills development is embedded in programmes linked to youth employment, and in countries where absorption of jobs in the formal sector is limited, countries tend to focus on entrepreneurship training in the hopes that youth can create their own enterprises.

Another trend was to prioritize skills development to meet demand in particular industries, including for “green sectors” – for a more targeted matching of labour supply and demand. “Demand-driven” human resource development planning was undertaken in **India, Lebanon, the Marshall Islands, Myanmar** and **Timor-Leste**. A selection of detailed outcomes follows:

- In **Myanmar**, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism developed the Tourism Human Resource Development Strategic Action Plan, which includes a component of skills development for tour guides and the objective of strengthening tourism training schools. The National Skills Standards Authority sub-committee on Hotels and Tourism endorsed new competency standards for tourist guides at levels 1, 2 and 3, and engaged with the private sector and workers’ organizations for the delivery of training.
- The **Philippines** is one country that took action on skills development as an action area of the 2016 Philippine Green Jobs Act and its implementation plan. The latter was informed by ILO studies on skills for green jobs and green jobs mapping, which further resulted in the formulation of the first phase of the National Green Jobs Human Resource Development Plan, Development of the Green Jobs Act Assessment and Certification system and guidelines for the granting of the Green Jobs Act incentives, in partnership with the Climate Change Commission (CCC).
- In **Lebanon**, a National Strategic Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) 2018–2022 was developed by the Government with the support of ILO and UNICEF. ILO input included four sectorial nation-wide labour market assessments that identified growth occupations, training trainers, government officials and NGOs on mixed methodologies for labour market assessments.
- The ILO country offices in the ten **ASEAN** countries plus **Bangladesh** and the Turin International Training Center collaborated to promote research capacities in assessing skills demand in the growing care economy. Professionalizing care skills can contribute to improving job quality in the region especially in the care economy where women’s work are undervalued.

➡ **New research** In November 2018, the ILO-Korea Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Forum on Skills and the Future of Work, brought together governments, worker and employer representatives and skills experts from 12 countries in Asia-Pacific to discuss how skills strategies can help address the challenges and disruptions facing labour markets in the region. The event also posed an opportunity to launch the ILO publication, *Skills and the Future of Work: Strategies for Inclusive Growth in Asia and the Pacific*.¹³

c. *Responding to the impact of technological innovation on employers and workers (paragraph 3)*

The Bali Declaration acknowledges that policies will need to take into account and respond to current megatrends in the world of work, including demographic shifts and technological advances. How well countries withstand any turmoil in future labour markets will largely depend on the strength of the countries' labour market institutions and the degree of investment in ALMPs, including activities linked to retraining (like activities reported in section 2.3.1-a).

➡ **New research** Numerous studies investigating the impact that technological changes will have on jobs and enterprises were conducted in the period under review. Among these are Country briefs undertaken as part of the "ASEAN in transformation" series led by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and based on consultations with national employers' organizations. In 2017, studies were published for **Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam**, along with a focus on the impact of automation on the apparel sector value chain.¹⁴ In **India**, the ILO also undertook two research studies in collaboration with the social partners on the impact of emerging technologies. The two reports focusing on India were published in 2018, with one launched with a national tripartite dialogue.¹⁵ A similar study using the "technology foresight" approach was subsequently conducted in **Sri Lanka** in 2018, although not launched until 2019.¹⁶ An additional study was on the topic of technological changes, but this time specific to the potential use of technology to ease the transition to formality.¹⁷ This study is intended to inform future research on technology as a social good in the region and beyond.

Beyond research, some countries are adapting their skills development programmes in reaction to national planning for future industrial development. In **Cambodia**, for example, the application of the Skills for trade and economic diversification (STED) programme resulted in detailed skills-needs assessments in two sectors selected as growth sectors in a process of tripartite consultations. Following the identification of skills gaps, the Directorate General on Technical Vocational Education and Training developed new competency based standards,

¹³ ILO: *Skills and the Future of Work: Strategies for Inclusive Growth in Asia and the Pacific* (Bangkok, 2018).

¹⁴ Country briefs are available at: https://www.ilo.org/actemp/publications/WCMS_579558/lang-en/index.htm. The ASEAN in transformation series also contain impact assessments of automation on specific sectors and the general synthesis. While these reports were published in 2016, they served as the basis of numerous national dialogues also in 2017.

¹⁵ Tandem Research: *Emerging technologies and the future of work in India*, ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series (New Delhi, ILO, 2018); D. Nathan and N. Ahmed: *Technological change and employment: Creative destruction*, ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series (New Delhi, ILO, 2018).

¹⁶ ILO: *Future of Work in Sri Lanka: Shaping technology transitions for a brighter future* (Colombo, 2019); see: https://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/events/WCMS_677014/lang-en/index.htm.

¹⁷ T. Bhattarai: *Emerging trends in the use of technology as a driver of the transition to formality: Experiences from Asia and the Pacific*, ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series (Bangkok, ILO, 2018).

curriculum and assessment packages for four occupations, which were subsequently endorsed by an Industry Advisory Group on manufacturing.

In both the Asia-Pacific and Arab States regions, regional and interregional events linked to the Future of Work Initiative were organized after the APRM in 2016 (14 in Asia-Pacific countries and nine in Arab States). The national dialogues culminated in joint deliberations between ILO constituents and other stakeholders on the achievements made in advancing the Decent Work Agenda, including in light of technological innovation, and the ILO's role in bringing about a future of inclusive growth with decent work. One such deliberation at the Tripartite Arab Meeting on the Future of Work, held in Beirut in April 2017, focused on regional transformations in the world of work, including in fragile States. A synthesis assessment of the national Future of Work dialogues held in these regions and others was produced as input for consideration by the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work appointed in 2018.¹⁸

d. Building resilience in situations of crisis arising from conflicts (paragraph 6)

Conflicts and disasters inflict tremendous costs to the society, causing damage to productivity and working conditions, and dismantling and obstructing progress towards the achievement of development goals. Building resilience in crisis situations requires that interventions lead to lasting gains and help guard against their re-emergence. The ILO continues to provide technical support to constituents to develop employment-centred response and recovery after disaster or conflict, which helps to provide an income to people caught in a disaster. In the period under review, support was offered in conflict-afflicted Mon and Shan communities in **Myanmar** with more than 10,000 labour-days of short-term employment generated through the community re-building construction activities, benefiting 2,742 people.

In **Timor-Leste**, through the Enhancing Rural Access Agro-Forestry Project (June 2017-May 2021), the focus is on increasing opportunities and improving food security in rural areas through agro-forestry development. Also in Timor-Leste, the Roads for Development Program (R4D), now in its second phase (April 2017-March 2021), has been contributing to the socio-economic development of the post-conflict country since 2012. To date, 138 km of core rural road have been rehabilitated by R4D and short-term employment opportunities for local labour has resulted in approximately 611,000 labour days of work.

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis in **Lebanon** and **Jordan**, the ILO has created jobs for vulnerable workers, applying Local Resource-Based Technology and decent work strategies in labour-based construction of locally prioritized productive infrastructure, maintenance and environmental works (see also box 2). The employment-intensive investment approach has eased the strain on local infrastructure and services, strengthened the resilience of host communities and reduced tensions within the labour force. The ILO has also provided capacity-building to the governments of Lebanon and Jordan in order to establish an institutional mechanism to expand such labour-based and decent work approaches in the future. What's more, in Jordan, the ILO has successfully advocated for changes in the regulatory environment to facilitate access of Syrians refugees to decent work, helped to facilitate the issuance of work permits through involvement of cooperatives and the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions and set up and managed a number of employment service centres for Jordanians and Syrians to facilitate job placement, mostly for young

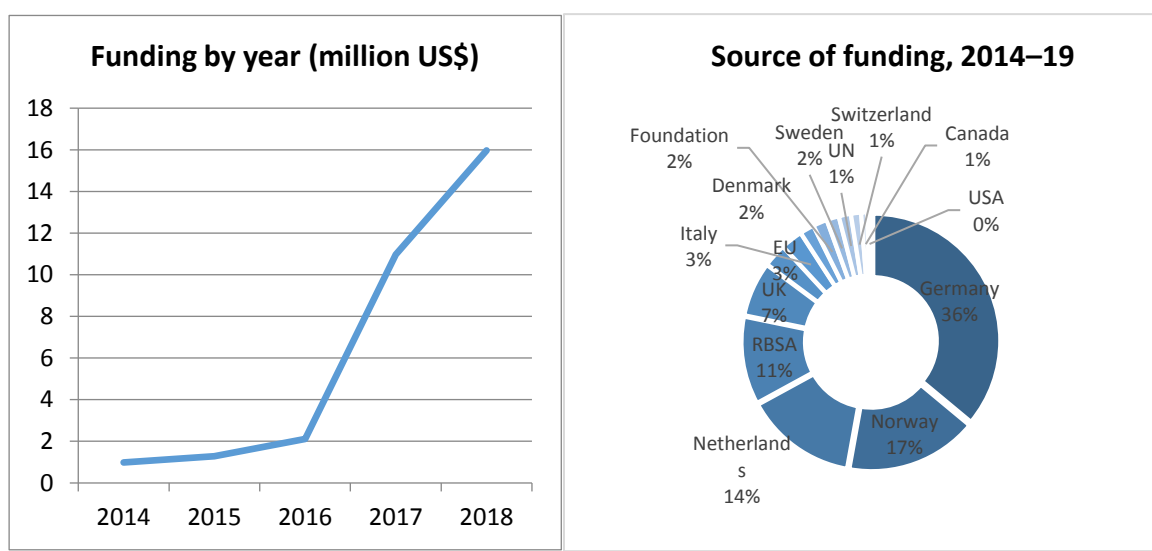
¹⁸ ILO: *Synthesis report of the national dialogues on the future of work* (Geneva, 2017).

people. In 2018, the ILO implemented a green works, agriculture and forestry sector programme which created employment for instance through the construction of cisterns and reforestation.

To ensure that decent work is mainstreamed in UN Strategic Frameworks of fragile states, the ILO participated in the formulation of both the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UNDAF 2018–22 for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the United Nations Strategic Framework (UNSF) and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2017–2020 for Lebanon, and the UN Strategic framework (UNSF) for Bahrain 2018–22.

Box 2. The ILO response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

After the adoption of the Bali Declaration in 2016, and in line with international commitments made at global conferences held on this matter in 2016 and 2017, the ILO has played an increasingly prominent role in the Syria crisis response. The ILO's response in Jordan and Lebanon focused on measures to create more and better job opportunities for both Syrian refugees and host communities, aligned with the ILO's 2016 *Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market*. The most important achievements include the formalization of the work of refugees, the creation of job placement mechanisms, the promotion of measures preventing unacceptable working conditions in the informal economy in urban settings and child labour in agriculture, and the creation of jobs paired with improved economically critical infrastructure. The main components of ILO's response to the crisis situation in the Arab States region have been entrepreneurship development, the implementation of employment-intensive infrastructure programmes and the extension of social protection.



e. Closing the gender gaps in opportunities and treatment at work (paragraph 7)

One of the ILO's primary goals is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent work. Gender equality plays a pivotal role in reaching this goal and is a cross-cutting policy driver for all ILO work. Work during the period of assessment involved two main streams of work; first a targeted approach to improve working conditions in female dominated sectors and occupations and second mainstream specific gender outreach or measures in law, policies, programme and institutional practices.

Notable female-dominated sectors and occupations included domestic work, home-based work and garment work. Important gains were seen in **India**, **Nepal** and the **Philippines** in improving working conditions of domestic workers. For example in the **Philippines** in November 2017, the Domestic Work Technical Working Group developed and adopted a new

Philippine Action Plan on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. In **India**, workers' organizations in three states launched an online mobile-based technology platform to facilitate domestic workers to register their grievances.

Significant progress was also made in promoting women's labour market participation in National Employment Policies, which demonstrates an important shift in the positioning of women's employment from "requiring protection" to "economic participation". Facilitating labour market participation of women, coupled with removing barriers were part of the ILO programmes in support of design and implementation of employment policies in **Samoa** and **Timor-Leste**.

Important developments were also seen in labour law revisions or adoption processes, where non-discrimination was explicitly incorporated with particular attention to the prevention and elimination sexual harassment and violence at work. An example here is **Pakistan's** National Labour Protection Framework. Gender issues were also prominent in the social security legislations with emphasis on non-discrimination in benefits and/or retirement age (**Nepal** and **Viet Nam**). In **Timor-Leste**, the parliament approved the General Social Security Law with the first time inclusion of maternity protection. In **Mongolia**, an amendment to the Law on Pensions and Benefits was adopted that equalizes the replacement rate of maternity benefits by increasing the rate under the voluntary scheme from 70 to 100 per cent and the retirement age of men and women at 65. This amendment was one of the main recommendations of the Assessment-Based National Dialogue on social protection facilitated by the ILO. The government of **Nepal** also strengthened its legislative framework for maternity protection by passing the contribution-based Social Protection Bill. The law provides for eight types of social security schemes, including maternity protection.

In 2018, the MOHRSS of **China** and the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) carried out a series of survey on gender discrimination in employment and at the workplace, for the purpose of developing effective responsive to mitigate gender gaps. The surveys found that reproductive role and family responsibility are the prominent barriers for women's equal access to employment and career development. The outcomes of the surveys include a new Guidance on "Addressing Gender Discrimination in Recruitment" promulgated by the MOHRSS together with other government agencies

In **Jordan**, the ILO formed a Rights Coalition to lobby for amendments in six articles in the Labour Law that include childcare provision for working parents (Article 72), paternity leave (Article 66), flexi working hours (Article 2), pay equity (Article 2, 53, 54), removing barriers to entry for spouses and children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians (Article 12). The amendments to the Labour Law were accepted by Parliament.

The large-scale entry of women particularly in garment factories has urged the labour inspectorates to evolve to fully incorporate gender equality. In **Bangladesh**, gender-specific issues have been incorporated into the inspection checklist, including to detect violence against women in the workplace. The labour inspectorates of the three provinces in **Pakistan** have integrated gender equality and non-discrimination as operational principles, leading to the inclusion of gender-specific provisions in their inspection checklists. In **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare revised and issued a Ministerial Agreement on Labour Inspection, and in the process conducted capacity buildings workshops on the gender dimension of labour inspection, national labour law and core labour standards for tripartite constituents and factory managers.

Among some specific achievements were:

- The ILO, with support of the Australian Government, hosted the regional conference on “Women and the Future of Work in Asia”, 31 January – 1 February 2018. During the event, the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) was launched for the Asia and the Pacific region. EPIC is an initiative led by the ILO, UN Women and OECD which intends to engage with stakeholders to take concrete steps to accelerate the closing of the gender pay gap and the achievement of pay equity
- The Better Work project in **Bangladesh** conducted a series of training to prevent sexual harassment between January 2017 and March 2018. Nearly 400 factory managers and brand representatives were trained.
- In **Saudi Arabia**, the ILO is supporting the government through a project aimed at boosting women’s employment towards a more inclusive labour market.

f. An enabling environment for sustainable enterprises and entrepreneurship

Countries that reported results in 2017 on effective interventions to directly assist sustainable enterprises and/or potential entrepreneurs include **China, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines, Solomon Islands** and **Timor-Leste**. One means of support to SMEs in **China, India, Indonesia** and **Viet Nam** has been the implementation of the Sustainable, Competitive and Responsible Enterprise (SCORE) programme, which entails trainings of trainers on business services that can be adapted in local enterprises to encourage productivity gains. In **China**, where the Chongqing Enterprise Confederation incorporated SCORE into their annual training program for seven local factories in 2016 and 2017, post-assessment results noted significant improvements in internal communication, improved relations between management and workers and increased working efficiency. The Ministry of Emergency Management referenced SCORE experience in its development of OSH standards and national guidelines on competitiveness. In **Myanmar**, the ILO’s Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme was rolled out in support of a large network of trainers from varied organisations, including 49 Business Development Service Providers; 314 Private Sector Companies; 76 NGOs; four microfinance institutions and 94 freelancers. In regard to entrepreneurship, the ILO has continued to promote the Know About Business (KAB) training package in schools and vocational training centres in over ten countries in the region.

Additionally, the ILO supported **Nepal** and **Timor-Leste** to assess the business environment with the application of the Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises methodology. In October 2017, the Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) package was the tool used by **Cambodia’s** Ministry of Education Youth and Sports in collaboration with the ILO to train 2,304 participants with entrepreneurship skills, an undertaking that was certified with the Guinness World Record as the world’s Largest Practical Business Seminar.

In **Lebanon**, the ILO has contributed to improving working conditions and productivity through the application of the Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE) Training Programme. Seven enterprises operating in the agro-food and printing and packaging sectors improved working conditions (workplace conditions and human resources practices) and productivity through intensive training and on-site coaching. Participating enterprises successfully increased the efficiency of their preventative maintenance plan which led to decreased machine downtime and errors. Moreover, enterprises increased compliance with

safety measures which led to a decrease in work-related accidents and in employee turnover rate, as well as to the creation of decent jobs for nationals.

In the **Occupied Palestinian Territory**, the ILO has provided extensive technical support to the development of the National Cooperative Sector Strategy, including capacity building for the General Directorate of Cooperatives in the Ministry of Labour to assess the performance and governance of 230 agricultural cooperatives and 124 cooperatives in the service, consumer and handicraft sectors. The ILO also promoted entrepreneurship by conducting KAB Training of Facilitators workshops for Palestinian teachers from the West Bank and Gaza. The ILO has also supported the Ministry of Labour in developing a strategic plan for the Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection to enable it to effectively assume its new role.

2.3.2 Strengthened labour market institutions

a. Tackling inequality and boosting wage growth (paragraph 5)

Over the past decade, wage growth in the Asia-Pacific region has outperformed most of the world yet rising inequality shows the benefits of growth are not equitably shared. If countries want to promote shared prosperity with rising incomes for all, and to build inclusive societies, then there is a need to address distributional issues, aiming to ensure that a fair share of the gains of growth reaches all workers. Linking wages to productivity ensures that while enterprises can increase their operating surplus in line with productivity growth, workers benefit from economic growth in the form of increased purchasing power of wages. This in turn can boost domestic demand, and support stronger, more balanced, sustainable and more inclusive growth.

The two main wage policy tools supported by the ILO are minimum wage setting and collective bargaining. Progress on both these fronts in the period 2017–18 include:

- In **Cambodia**, the government enacted a new Minimum Wage Law, expanding its coverage beyond the garment sector. The new law went into effect from 2019. The statutory minimum wages applicable to the garment sector more than doubled from US\$80 per month in 2013 to US\$182 per month for 2019, and actual wages have increased significantly in real terms. The Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains (LSGSC) project contributed to this outcome. According to the independent evaluation, “Cambodia is a LSGSC success story of effective support for minimum wage-setting mechanisms reform with notable outcomes in terms of improving the wage negotiation process as well as in terms of raising actual wages while maintaining the garment industry’s competitiveness”.¹⁹
- In 2018, both **Nepal** and **Pakistan** raised their minimum wage rates relatively higher than other South Asian countries. The increase made at national and provincial levels respectively meant a positive rise in terms of international dollars (PPP). Both countries are working to strengthen their technical capacity with use of evidence-based information on their minimum wage fixation analysis.
- The ILO’s *India Wage Report*, published in 2018, has provided substantial backing to enhance the discussion of minimum wage policy in **India**; the 2017 wage code bill still awaits approval from Parliament.

¹⁹ ILO: *ILO evaluation: Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains – Programme of Action for Asia and the Garment Sector* (Bangkok, 2019).

- In May 2018, the **Myanmar** government announced a new daily minimum wage of K4,800 for workers, following from the successful introduction of the landmark first national minimum wage in 2015.
- In 2017, the Institute of Labour Studies of the MOHRSS, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, China Enterprise Federation and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce carried out a comparative analysis of collective negotiation practices in **China** and developed training manuals for government, workers and employers, with a view to improving the effectiveness of collective negotiation and the inclusiveness of collective agreements. The inclusion and participation of women workers and gender equality in collective negotiation has been an explicit component of all activities and is reflected in the strategy adopted by the MOHRSS and in the training packages.
- In **Jordan**, the ILO supported the drafting and promotion of a Collective Bargaining Agreement and related Unified Contract for the private education sector, which were signed in March 2017 by the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions and the Association of Owners of Private Schools, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and the National Committee for Pay Equity. The two-year Agreement, effective as of September 2017, aims to improve wages and working conditions of private schools teachers, mainly women.

b. Extending social protection (paragraph 11)

Overcoming the prevailing social protection deficits in the region requires a clear and ambitious vision. This vision must focus on the development of comprehensive social protection systems which are inclusive of social protection floors for all and based on a rights-based approach. Comprehensiveness includes the extension of personal coverage while widening the range of benefits.

Progress in areas of social protection have been made in a multitude of countries in the Asia-Pacific region, among which is the notable introduction of a contribution-based social security scheme in **Nepal** in November 2018 that includes medical, health and maternity benefits, accident and disability benefits, benefits for dependent family members, and old-age benefits. Another example is ILO's support to the MOHRSS in **China** in formulating new models of health insurance payment methods to improve the affordability and accessibility of the health services. In 2017, China adopted a plan on the reform of health insurance payment methods. The ILO also supported the MOHRSS in developing new measures on pension indexation. In 2018, China adopted a policy on establishing a regular adjustment mechanism for the pension scheme of urban and rural residents.

Numerous activities have also taken place in 2018 as part of ILO support to the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013), including a workshop on social security portability agreements and on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy.

Even though most of the countries in the Arab States region have introduced social security programmes over the last decade, the scope of legal social security coverage remains low (below 50 per cent, on average). On top of that, the refugee crisis and political instability in many non-GCC countries, together with fiscal consolidation efforts in GCC countries, have a negative impact on the region's already weak social protection institutions, resulting in

greater vulnerability and poverty. Actions to improve the scope and effectiveness of social protection in the region include the following:

- In the **Occupied Palestinian Territory**, following the adoption of a social security law for private sector workers, an important milestone in public institution-building was reached in 2018 with the establishment of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation (PSSC). The PSSC, which was established with ILO support, aims to offer comprehensive coverage to private sector workers and thus to fill a significant protection gap. The aim is to cover some 300,000 workers in the first ten years. However, the functioning of the institution will need continued international support on its way to financial sustainability as well as enhanced social dialogue to create trust among the tripartite stakeholders and the population at large, so as to arrive at a lasting agreement regarding the mechanics and processes of the institution.
 - In **Lebanon**, with the support of the ILO, the government and the social partners agreed in December 2017 on the reform of the end-of-service indemnity for private sector workers and on the establishment of a pension scheme covering old-age, disability and death benefits by carrying out an actuarial valuation and a legal assessment of the draft project social security law. Subsequently, the ILO received in 2018 an official request from each of the Minister of Labour, the Director General of the National Social Security Fund, and the President of the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers of its social partners to support them in this reform with a dual focus at: a) developing a comprehensive actuarial valuation of alternative reform options, and b) undertake a legal assessment of the proposed social security law of 2018.
 - In **Jordan**, the ILO produced several studies in May 2017, which provided tripartite constituents and policymakers with guidance and tools to implement a national social protection floor. The ILO also organized a series of roundtable meetings to present and discuss the findings and assumptions of the SPF studies in order to agree on the reform scenarios and the next steps towards the implementation of a national SPF. The ILO also strengthened the capacities of its tripartite constituents on the implementation of Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), as well as the capacities of the members of the SPF advisory board. As the Jordanian social security system is regarded as a best practice model in the Arab region, the ILO facilitated the exchange of knowledge between tripartite stakeholders from other Arab countries through study tour visits as part of south-south and triangular cooperation programmes during 2017. This resulted in fostering partnerships in the form of Memoranda of Understanding between the Palestinian Authority and the Governments of Jordan regarding the exchange of knowledge in the field of social security policy making and administration.
 - In **Oman**, the ILO has supported the government and the social partners in designing and implementing an unemployment insurance scheme. In **Iraq**, the ILO produced an actuarial valuation and a technical report on the new draft social security law, which were endorsed by the government in November 2017 and December 2017, respectively.
- c. *Promoting the transition of workers from the informal to the formal economy (paragraph 2f)*

The ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2015, encourages countries to design coherent and integrated strategies to facilitate such transition and to make, where appropriate, formalization of employment a central goal of national employment policy frameworks. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region, such as **Cambodia, India, Nepal, the Philippines** and **Viet Nam**, and also **Jordan** in the Arab region, have all initiated programmes and policies that link to the aim of promoting formalization of the informal economy. Details follow:

- **Cambodia** adopted a national action plan for formalization of workers which included: simplification of the registration process, raising awareness on the benefits of registration, education on laws and regulations, providing information on the benefits to productivity by formalizing the informal sector, and providing incentives for business to formalize. In addition, Cambodia adopted a plan to expand social protection in the construction sector, which employs a large number of informal workers.
- **The Philippines** adopted a national action plan for the formalization of domestic work through improved monitoring and implementation of the Domestic Workers Law and the Domestic Workers Convention.
- In **Nepal**, national efforts were focused on practices to formalize workers and small businesses in the housing construction and tourism sectors.
- **India** made particular efforts to register informal workers in some districts and also launched an online mobile-based technology platform for domestic workers to register grievances.
- In **Viet Nam**, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs developed and adopted a Plan of Action for the formalization of informal employment in 2018, which is in line with the Recommendation 204. As part of the commitment, the government issued a Master Plan on Social Insurance Reform that includes an outcome on “researching and designing short-term social insurance packages with contributions, levels of benefits and modes of payment suitable to informal workers”.
- In **Jordan**, the ILO has enhanced Jordanian and refugee beneficiaries’ access to the formal labour market and decent work in the Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Karak and Mafraq governorates by: (a) enhancing employability in the formal labour market through skills development, work safety trainings and expansion of the Recognition of Prior Learning model to new occupations; (b) supporting female workers to enter and remain in the formal work force through targeted packages of support and business development services; and (c) facilitating the issuance of work permits, including through a web-based e-counselling platform.

d. Accelerating action to eliminate child labour and forced labour (paragraph 4)

The Asia-Pacific region has made significant strides in eliminating child labour and getting out-of-school children back to learning, and some – albeit more modest – progress in the reduction of forced labour. Nevertheless, to eradicate child labour and forced labour, the ILO continues to support countries in the development and implementation of national policies and programmes. Specific actions related to strengthening the institutional responses to child labour and forced labour include (note, ratifications were mentioned in section 2.2.2):

- National Action Plans on the elimination of child labour were developed through cooperation and multi-stakeholder consultations in **Nepal, Myanmar** and **Thailand**.
- Four municipalities carried out a “green flag” campaign to end child labour in **Nepal**.
- The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government in **Pakistan** set up a permanent Child Labour Unit. The Punjab and Balochistan Governments in Pakistan started self-funded child labour projects in three provinces.
- Private public partnerships were strengthened in **Sri Lanka** and social protections were also increased to prevent child labour.
- A module on child labour was included in the **Philippine’s** Conditional Cash Transfer Programme and interventions were made to increase the capacity of the labour laws compliance system to identify cases of child labour.
- Child labour surveys were conducted in both **Bangladesh** and **Pakistan** and the survey implementation processes began on such surveys in **Thailand** and **Viet Nam** in 2018.
- A guide to help businesses identify forced labour in the apparel supply chain was launched in **Viet Nam**.
- Capacity-building exercises were held with key institutions to eliminate child labour, including among Syrian refugees, in **Jordan, Lebanon** and **Syria**, including with development of child labour and occupational safety and health (OSH) training manuals. For action taken in Qatar, see box 3.

Box 3. Action to eliminate forced labour: Qatar

In October/November 2017, the ILO Governing Body decided to support the agreed technical cooperation programme between Qatar and the ILO and its implementation modalities. This programme reflects the common commitment of Qatar and the ILO to cooperate on ensuring compliance with ratified ILO conventions, as well as achieving fundamental principles and rights at work in a gradual manner during the period 2018–20. The actions taken under the cooperation programme within the reporting period include the following:

- In November 2017, with technical expertise provided under the cooperation programme, Qatar adopted a temporary minimum wage. An ad hoc Minimum Wage Commission became operational in September 2018.
- An assessment of the labour inspection system was completed with a view to the preparation of a targeted action plan.
- A law for the suppression of exit visa for workers was signed to ensure that, with certain exceptions, migrant workers will be able to leave the country without having to obtain a permit from their employer.
- A number of initiatives were undertaken to bolster support for fair recruitment practices in line with the ILO’s General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, primarily through partnerships with private companies and tailor-made capacity-building activities.
- The ILO facilitated a workshop for the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and conducted initial discussions with selected judges from civil and criminal courts with a view to enhancing judiciary training programmes related to forced labour and human trafficking.
- In 2018, a Workers’ Dispute Settlement Committee was established within the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs.
- In 2018, a draft ministerial decree on the organization and procedures for the formation of joint worker committees was elaborated, and the establishment of joint committees at the enterprise level was considered or pilot tested by a number of companies.

2.3.3 Equitable and transparent labour market governance and social dialogue

a. Strengthening social dialogue and tripartism (paragraph 12)

Tripartism and social dialogue are integral components of the Decent Work Agenda of the ILO and essential channels for achieving it. The overriding challenge for countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and also in the Arab States, is to engineer effective social dialogue frameworks that are not just inclusive but also broad enough in scope to retain relevance in the rapidly changing world of work. In many countries in the regions, the near absence of bi-partite social dialogue and workplace grievance handling mechanisms continue to be the weak links in industrial relations which then lead to industrial disputes being piled up in the judiciary for resolution. Dispute resolution via judiciary promotes compliance with law but in the longer run, it is not an effective means to promote cultures of social dialogue and cooperation that could lead to mutually acceptable and more stable solutions to industrial relations.

While there cannot be a “one size fits all” approach to creating social dialogue systems across countries given the considerable diversity in institutional arrangements, legal landscapes, and practices of social dialogue, the underlying core principles that must guide their formulation, i.e. freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, remain the same. Effective bipartite social dialogue reduces not just conflict but also promote safe workplaces and productive and innovative enterprises. A consultations culture can help develop greater trust and constructive industrial relations that can promote compliance and decent work for all. It is towards this end that the ILO has been working. A large number of countries reported results in the area of social dialogue and tripartism in the 2016–17 Programme and Budget reporting period, with most outcomes related to increasing capacities of workers’ and employers’ organizations to engage in dialogues and influence policy-making on relevant world of work issues.

Certain examples of interventions of capacity-building exercises are provided in box 4, while examples of social dialogue and industrial relations in practice during the period under review follow:

- In the **Philippines**, the ILO supported a review of collective bargaining policy – both in research and social dialogue with a view to promote multi-employer collective bargaining. Using the 2015 ILO *Guidelines on just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies*, the ILO assisted workers organizations (through meetings and workshops) to come up with a comprehensive framework and proposals on Just Transition in the context of mine closures.
- The Union of **Myanmar** Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) developed structured detailed positions on labour laws under amendment – including labour organization law, minimum wage law, settlement of labour dispute law, occupational skills development law – and accordingly increased its participation in national labour and social policy dialogue.
- The **Viet Nam** Chamber of Commerce and Industry committed to tackling forced labour in the garment sector and worked to identify responses. This project was facilitated by the ILO’s Better Work Viet Nam Programme and attracted international media attention. Likewise, the employers’ organizations of **Nepal**, **Samoa** and **Sri Lanka** engaged in advocacy of its members’ positions in policy debates.
- In **Indonesia**, a new trade union network in the palm oil sector of Indonesia (JAPBUSI) was formed in December 2018. The network, which now counts more than two million

members, has paved the way for the development of a national platform for bipartite dialogue in palm oil plantation sector.

- In **Bangladesh**, the National Coordination Committee for Workers Education and InstriALL Bangladesh-affiliated unions in the ready-made garments sector established a Workers' Resource Centre to provide capacity building and services to workers and unions on organizing, collective bargaining and labour disputes. It also engages in awareness and training activities on OSH to ensure safer workplaces for women.

Box 4. Strengthening capacity-building programmes for employers' and workers' organizations

Numerous engagements have been supported with the direct aim of strengthening the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations to support their stakeholders to navigate through relevant world of work issues. The following are a sample of activities held over the period:²⁰

- In August 2017, the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), the Country office for the **Philippines** (CO-Manila) and Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) held a joint workshop to discuss the role of business and its organizations in building a resilient future in circumstances of frequent crises and disasters that mark the territory of Mindanao.
- The Employers' Federation in **Pakistan** elected new office bearers to its board and created strategies to reform the federation in January 2017. It held consultations with members and stakeholders to ascertain good practices regionally and internationally and set up a legal help desk service for its member companies.
- In June 2018, a workshop titled "Trade Union workshop on Just Transition Guidelines of ILO for Sustainable Economies and Societies for All: Trade union agenda and proposals for social dialogue in mining sector" was held in the **Philippines**.
- A sub-regional Conference on The Future of Work We Want: Workers' perspective in South Asia was held in **India** in April 2018 to build the capacity of trade unions to discuss future of work issues effectively with governments and employers' groups. A similar event was hosted for South-Eastern Asian countries in Thailand in July 2017.
- A consultation of **Indian** businesses and the European Union was held in Brussels in October 2018 with the aim to address the challenges faced by employers on issues of skills shortages and talent mobility. The consultation was supported by the International Organization of Employers (IOE) and the ILO's International Training Centre.
- Foundation of Economics and Statistics, training for trade unions, Siem Reap, May 2018. The course was designed to provide hands-on exposure to basic data management and analysis.
- With the technical support of the ILO/ACTEMP Myanmar project, the Union of **Myanmar** Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) established in 2016 an Employer Organization Department that is tasked to provide a suite of services for business members and affiliated associations on labour related matters. The services include trainings, advices and information, on site assistance in case of labour disputes and a labour audit. The service offer of UMFCCI has recently expanded in the area of OSH. The department is also in charge of following up the labour law reform process by collecting members' views, consolidating employers' positions and advocating for those in technical tripartite working groups.

One other means of revitalizing the institutions of social dialogue is through exchanging experiences and good practices. To this end, the ILO organized the Eighth Tripartite Regional Seminar on Industrial Relations in the ASEAN Region in November 2017 with the support of Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the ASEAN Secretariat. Among the topics

²⁰ The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) - Asia Pacific undertook a survey of trade union partners in member States in 2019 to get their views of activities undertaken and support received since the adoption of the Bali Declaration. The report is available on website: <https://www.ituc-ap.org/highlights/Inpost?postid=47>. A similar exercise was organized by the ACTRAV Specialist of the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. This "trade union implementation report" will be finalized and made available by the end of the year.

on the agenda were non-standard forms of work and industrial relations in small and medium-sized enterprises. A national spin-off of the regional meeting took place in Indonesia, where a tripartite forum on industrial relations amidst changing forms of employment and industrial transformations was held in July 2018.

In the Arab States, the expansion of social dialogue and recognition of the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining remain a major challenge, and social dialogue institutions play only a limited role in the governance of the labour market. Nevertheless, a number of initiatives are noteworthy in the period under review:

- In the **Occupied Palestinian Territory**, the Palestinian Authority established a Tripartite National Team for Labour Law Reform with ILO support, and it has identified labour law reform as a priority in its National Policy Agenda for 2017–22. The ILO continued to support the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Union in developing its structures and strengthening its capacities to provide improved services to its members.
- The General Federation of **Jordan** Trade Unions (GFJTU) and its affiliates in the numerous sectors enhanced their organizational capacity and representativeness among informal workers, including migrant workers and refugees, for more effective engagement in sectoral collective bargaining processes. As a result, in 2017, the GFJTU adopted a strategy on organizing construction workers using OSH as an entry point. In May 2017, the GFJTU also established a national committee on migrant workers and refugees, which subsequently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Labour to support the formalization of employed Syrian refugees in Jordan, mainly in the construction sector.
- In **Lebanon**, the ILO has supported the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers (CGTL) and the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI) to effectively participate in policy dialogue around social protection, social security law reform and the development of the decent work country program as well as developing their capacities to deal with workers' issues in the informal economy. In late 2017, Lebanon's Council of Ministers reactivated its Economic and Social Council and appointed 71 new members.
- A good example of progress in establishing a legal framework for the expansion of freedom of association is **Iraq** with its ratification of ILO Convention No. 87 in 2018.

b. Strengthening labour administration, including labour inspection and mechanisms to promote safe work (paragraph 13)

Labour administration is the mechanism through which governments fulfil their responsibilities towards social issues. For effective application of labour standards, it is vital that each country maintain a viable and active labour administration system responsible for all aspects of national labour policy formulation and implementation. In Asia and the Pacific, the ILO continues to work with constituents to support the implementation of effective labour inspection systems. For the reporting period, the majority of interventions relate to institutional strengthening (reported in **China, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines, Sri Lanka** and **Viet Nam**; some examples below), followed by drafting and passing legislation (**Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Myanmar,**

Pakistan, Samoa and Viet Nam²¹) and work towards national and tripartite guidelines and action plans (**Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam**).

With technical support from the ILO, the Government of **Lao People's Democratic Republic** developed in 2017 a national, gender responsive labour inspection plan, based on tripartite consultation, including a results-based management approach. Capacity building and implementation of the Ministerial Agreement and the national inspection plan is being carried out by the Laos Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare nationwide. Notable progress was achieved in rolling out labour law guidance training to factories and in implementing labour inspections in the garment sectors.

Through the Safeyouth@Work project in **Viet Nam**, knowledge and awareness of OSH hazards and risks which young workers face at work were raised in the development process of a Safeyouth@Work Action Plan, which now serves as a guide and catalyst for ILO tripartite partners, youth organizations and young people themselves. Additionally, in realization of the Action Plan, a series of communication activities were organized on the occasion of the ILO SafeDay 2018 and Vietnamese National Action Month, including a tripartite forum on OSH for young workers.

In **China**, efforts to ensure workplace compliance and promotion of OSH were scaled up in the period under review. For example, the ILO supported the Maritime Safety Administration of China to increase the capacity of about 72,000 maritime inspectors, employers and seafarers during the 2017–19 period, as follow up to the country's ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC) in 2015. Also, the State Administration of Work Safety continued to make use of ILO SCORE methodology to increase the spread of labour inspection expertise, including e-inspection, to an increasing number of SMEs in a widening array of provinces. In 2016–17, provincial federations of the ACFTU in Liaoning, Hubei, Shanghai, and Guangdong adopted action plans to promote Ergonomic Checkpoints in SMEs.

In **Myanmar**, in February 2017, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (MOLIP) submitted a new OSH law to Parliament, incorporating technical comments from the ILO and the social partners. This law, once adopted, is expected to expand the mandate of the Ministry of Labour on labour and OSH inspection beyond the manufacturing factories to other sectors such as agriculture and construction.²² **Cook Islands** and **Samoa** both ratified the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) in 2018, while **China, Mongolia** and **the Philippines** continued to make progress in preparation for its future ratification.

Bangladesh, Mongolia, Pakistan and **the Philippines** enhanced their data sharing capabilities in relation to compliance with labour laws. In Mongolia, the General Agency for Specialised Inspection launched an online system for reporting on occupational accidents and acute poisoning. In the **Philippines**, there was increased cooperation between government

²¹ For instance, **Viet Nam** reported the issuing of government decrees in line with current OSH laws: decree on organization and operation of labour inspectorate, decree on safety inspection of equipment, OSH training and monitoring of occupational environment, decree on compulsory employment injury insurance, decree on detailing the implementation of articles of the Law on Occupational Safety and Health, decree on penalties for administrative violations against regulations on labour, social insurance and overseas manpower supply. In **Pakistan**, the Sindh Provincial Assembly passed the Occupational Safety and Health Bill 2017, extending the coverage of OSH legislation to all workplaces except mines in the province. The development of the Act was guided by the Occupational Safety and Health Convention 1981 (No. 155) and its Protocol.

²² The law was enacted in April 2019.

departments on the promotion of compliance through a cloud-based inspection database. The government of Punjab in **Pakistan** established a Labour Inspection Management Information System providing real-time information on working conditions.

In **Jordan**, the ILO organized a tripartite workshop on the national OSH Strategy and contributed to the drafting process. At the factory level, the ILO, through the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme, delivered trainings on workplace communication for workers and managers. In August 2017, BWJ and the Social Security Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote enterprise compliance with labour law and social security law through strengthening OSH measures in the workplace. BWJ also signed a MoU with the Jordan Chamber of Industry in April 2017 to improve the economic performance of local enterprises by improving working conditions. In July 2017, the BWJ launched a “transparency portal” where the compliance status of Jordanian factories on selected critical issues is posted regularly.

In **Iraq**, the ILO built the capacities of Iraqi officials on the implementation of national labour policies and on the Promotional Framework for the OSH Convention (C187). A Labour Inspection assessment was conducted, and technical advice was provided on the recommendations of the assessment, action plan, and on updating the national OSH profile. In **Kuwait**, the ILO prepared an assessment of the OSH situation and conducted a training workshop on national programmes and systems on OSH, which was attended by representatives of the Public Authority of Manpower and the Human Rights Society. The ILO also supported the non-governmental organization, Hemaya, to produce awareness-raising materials on OSH and relevant international labour standards in five languages.

2.3.4 Enhancing compliance with international labour standards at a time of global integration

a. Promoting decent work in supply chains (paragraph 9)

There is an increasing interest on the part of the donor community to encourage ILO member States to maximize the positive contributions of participation in global supply chains (GSCs) while mitigating negative aspects that could arise, for example, in exposure to vulnerabilities in global trade patterns and unequal application of labour standards. The ILO strives to ensure the achievement of decent work in such chains through building capacity for sound labour relations, ensuring recognition of the right to bargain collectively, and promoting broader social dialogue.

Due to the complexity of labour relations and the different actors involved in GSCs, the ILO helps to facilitate dialogue between countries in which suppliers to GSCs are located and major investor countries. One example is **Viet Nam**, where this dialogue is facilitated as part of the implementation of a Joint Action Plan (JAP). The JAP addresses: the marginalization of Vietnamese enterprises (especially SMEs) in the global electronics value chain; the shortage of relevant skills in the local labour market; the lack of effective vocational and training institutions; inadequate working conditions, especially in Vietnamese SMEs; and the need for increased policy coherence and inter-ministerial coordination.

Other action associated with GSCs link to progress on strengthening labour inspection and effective monitoring for compliance with OSH rules addressed already in section 2.3.3-b, especially in relation to the garments sector.

Awareness raising of compliance and adherence to the vision of sustainable GSCs has been the focus of numerous national outcomes. For example:

- On 13 September 2018, the ILO and the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business hosted a Responsible Business Seminar in Yangon, with focus on decent work issues. The seminar intended to provide **Myanmar** and foreign businesses with practical advice and facilitate dialogue on how to promote effective industrial relations and workplace dialogue as an essential part of responsible supply chains.
- A National Capacity Building Workshop on the Sustainable Global Supply Chains project was conducted in October 2018 in **Nepal** to build the capacity of trade unions and community/ membership based organizations to engage with workers in lower tiers of economy including the home workers and home-based workers.
- On 27–28 September 2018 in Hanoi, Viet Nam, the ILO and the ASEAN Secretariat conducted the 7th ASEAN Labour Inspection Conference on the theme “Strategic labour inspection for decent work including Global Supply Chains”.

In Jordan, the collaboration agreement between the Ministry of Labour of **Jordan** and ILO Better Work Jordan was renewed and expanded to provide a framework for joint activities, training and the zero-tolerance protocol regarding working conditions. As of June 2017, 19 Labour inspectors have participated in BWJ-MOL joint factory visits, allowing them to learn first-hand from BWJ Enterprise Advisors.

b. Promoting fair migration (paragraph 8)

Labour migration, along with GSCs, is a topic that attracts the attention of the donor community. With an increasing numbers of projects in place, the ILO continued to increase its role and strengthen its outreach in support of promoting fair migration in the two regions. As of December 2018, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific had 20 current projects related to labour migration. Between the project teams, technical specialists and through partnerships with other UN organizations, ILO action to support constituents in taking forward the Bali Declaration action area on fair migration over the next few years remains strong.

The primary areas of action include implementation of fair recruitment principles and guidelines, protection to all migrant workers, supporting ASEAN Trade Union Congress (ATUC) and ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) to adopt a joint statement for sustainable labour migration and protection of migrant workers in 2017, supporting development of joint minimum standards and mutual recognition approaches to skills and regional cooperation on migration governance and development of statistics.

Also in the Arab Region, a number of projects and initiatives were undertaken to promote fair migration principles. In Jordan, with support from the Government of the United Kingdom, and following ILO’s contribution to the draft Anti-Trafficking Law, the Government developed the Anti-Trafficking Strategy and Action Plan 2017–20. In addition, following an agreement with the ILO to provide technical inputs, the Government piloted a revised sampling methodology and modified questionnaire in the labour force survey, which is conducted on a quarterly basis, to capture more detailed information on migrant workers and refugees and their working conditions, including in the informal economy.

Meanwhile in **Lebanon**, the founding committee of the Domestic Workers Union developed a plan of action for activities and services to offer to its members, including migrant workers.

The plan of action was adopted in March 2017 and aims to produce a clear, transparent and efficient operational structure, an increase in membership and services provided, as well as recognition by the government. Together with the Turin Centre, the ILO supported members of recruitment agencies in Lebanon (SORAL) to attend regional meetings on fair recruitment.

Following ILO assistance, the **United Arab Emirates** adopted a law on working conditions for domestic workers and took efforts to improve its dispute resolution case management system, while **Kuwait** introduced a law to establish a publicly co-owned company to improve the system of recruitment of domestic workers. Kuwait also introduced the first minimum wage for domestic workers in the Arab States. With support from the ILO, **Qatar** has also taken a number of measures to improve the protection of migrant workers, including the adoption of new laws concerning labour dispute resolution and domestic workers (see also box 2). Qatar also passed a law to abolish the exit permit for most foreign workers, and Bahrain has also recently launched pilot “Flexi Visas” for some categories of foreign workers, enabling them to change employers and enhancing their labour market mobility. **Saudi Arabia** also introduced regulations to make it easier in some cases for migrant workers to transfer from one sponsor to another.

2.3.5 Effective knowledge management for the promotion of decent work

a. Improving labour market information and analysis

Defining effective labour market strategies at the country level requires first and foremost the collection, dissemination and assessment of up-to-date and reliable labour market information, and in line with agreed international measurement standards. ILO statistical activities in support of member States focus on three main areas: (1) capacity building in labour statistics and decent work indicators, especially in support of the recent standards of the 19th and 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians; (2) technical cooperation with, and technical assistance to national statistics offices for implementation of labour force surveys (LFS) or other data collection exercises, including building statistical systems for annual or sub-annual LFSs; and (3) support to the measurement of the ILO custodial SDGs indicators, in line with the most recent international standards.

Some highlights in the area of improved labour market information and analysis since December 2016 include:

- Completion of national LFS 2017 in **Lao People’s Democratic Republic**, the first of its kind since 2010.
- Completion of national LFS 2017–18 in **Nepal**, the first of its kind since 2008.
- Regional Capacity Building Workshop of Asia-Pacific Countries on Work Statistics in Rural Areas, Bangkok, 11–15 September 2017 with ten countries.
- In 2018, **China** published for the first time its survey-based urban unemployment statistical data, which followed a number of training sessions organized by the ILO.

A number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region have started to establish country-specific indicator frameworks, inspired by the global SDGs indicator framework, which will be used as basis for national statistical programming. The ILO has provided support to developing these frameworks in a number of countries in the region, with regional training on indicators (for example, the regional training on *SDG Indicators: Measuring decent work in the context of the SDGs*, Chiba, 19–22 November 2018 (15 countries), organized in collaboration with UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) and also more directly at the national level

(for example, in Mongolia, where over the course of 2018, the ILO supported the national statistics office's effort to compile in one document all available data on decent work and SDG-related statistical and legal indicators, with the aim to identify gaps and amend the future LFS to better capture decent work indicators for reporting on the SDGs).²³

In the Arab States, the ILO has contributed to improving labour market information and analysis by supporting and conducting several endeavours:

- In **Lebanon**, in order to provide much-needed socio-economic indicators and statistical data on the labour force and living conditions, the ILO, in partnership with the national Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), conducted the Labour Force and Households Living Conditions Survey (LFH LCS), which will provide an evidence base for decision makers and donors to design appropriate policies and target needed interventions.
- In **Iraq**, the ILO carried out a rapid needs assessment for the Central Statistics Office on labour and child labour statistic and an assessment of Labour Inspection and OSH in 2017. In addition, the ILO supported the launch of a LFS, which will provide Iraq with reliable labour market data to address immediate needs for livelihoods and emergency employment, as well as medium-to-longer term requirements of addressing the structural labour market challenges and decent work deficits in the country.
- In **Jordan**, the ILO provided technical support to the Department of Statistics to develop the questionnaire and the statistical tools of the Employment and Unemployment Survey in order to better capture migrant and refugee populations.
- In **Yemen**, the ILO assisted the constituents in the assessment of damage and needs resulting from armed operations, with a focus on the situation of the labour market, vocational training institutions and SMEs in Sana'a City and its suburbs.

b. Data-driven and evidence-based research

The production and dissemination of timely policy-oriented research is an important component of ILO action in advocating for decent work and for advising member States at the national, regional and global levels. Some of the most relevant research pieces that emerged over the past two years, beyond those mentioned in other sections of this update, include the following:

- *Asia-Pacific Employment and Social Outlook 2018: Advancing decent work for sustainable development* (Bangkok, ILO, 2018). The report pulls together the most recent statistics to take stock of developments in labour markets across the most populous region of the world. The report argues that the 2030 Agenda offers an important opportunity to refocus attention on decent work as an accelerator of inclusive growth, but a significant amount of work remains to translate commitments to positive achievements towards SDG 8. The APESO report will be published as a regular series on a semi-annual basis.
- *India Wage Report: Wage policies for decent work and inclusive growth* (ILO, 2018).
- *Labour migration in Asia: Increasing the development impact of migration through finance and technology* (Manila, ADBI, OECD and ILO, 2018).

²³ The report was finalized in 2019. See ILO: *Accelerating the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals through decent work: SDG monitoring and country profile for Mongolia* (Ulaanbaatar, 2019).

- *Game changers: Women and the future of work in Asia and the Pacific* (Bangkok, ILO, 2018).
- *Ageing and social protection in Asia and the Pacific* (Bangkok, ILO, 2017).

In **Syria**, the ILO supported a UN interagency study on *Gender barriers, social and cultural factors affecting women and youth accessibility to and employability in the labour market*.

2.4 Partnerships

The ILO operates a wide range of programmes and projects in partnership with other UN organizations, regional organizations, international financial organizations and the private sector. The overall purpose of this development cooperation is to support implementation of the decent work agenda in each country. This section highlights some interesting developments over the period under review.

ILO participation within national UN strategic frameworks were highlighted in section 2.2.1. This section thus concentrates on partnerships with other organizations, and with the private sector. First, in the Asia-Pacific region, the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN member States with ILO support have been tackling common challenges in many critical areas in the world of work. The ILO-ASEAN Work Programme 2016–2020 includes joint work items on the following themes: green jobs promotion, labour inspection, business and human rights, social protection, skills development, gender mainstreaming, OSH and migration. Joint actions were made in areas, with a small sample listed here:

- 11th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour, 29-30 October 2018, Singapore: “Digitalization to Promote Decent Work for Migrant Workers in ASEAN”;
- ASEAN Forum on Green Job Promotion, 14–15 September 2017, Bangkok, Thailand;
- Workshop on Sustaining Financing Mechanism for Social Insurance: Sustainability of Pension Systems in ASEAN, 21–22 September 2017, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam;
- ASEAN-OSHNET Workshop for the Improvement of OSH Scorecard and Information System, 27–28 September 2017, Bangkok, Thailand;
- 7th ASEAN Labour Inspection Conference, 27–28 September 2018, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam: “Strategic Labour Inspection for Decent Work Including in Global Supply Chains”.

Another key partner for the ILO is Alliance 8.7, a global partnership to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour with a focus on four areas: to accelerate timelines, better coordinate research and knowledge sharing, drive innovation and increase and leverage resources. In August and September 2016, the SDG Alliance 8.7 organized sub-regional consultation workshops on achieving SDG Target 8.7 in Bhutan and in Bangkok, Thailand. An Alliance 8.7 workshop also took place in Nadi, Fiji in October 2017, and more recently in June 2018, a technical consultation on Alliance 8.7 was held in Nepal. The aim was to strengthen commitments and engage in discussions centred on making it operational in Nepal.

The volume of development cooperation (DC) in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) has been steadily increasing since 2016. The number of individual projects has decreased while the volume of DC funds have increased, indicating a trend towards fewer projects but with larger resource allocation (figure 1).

Figure 1. Budgetary sources, ROAP, 2016–19



Extra-budgetary resources are essential in financing the decent work agenda, and efforts are made to diversify ROAP’s funding base. As table 3 shows, the share of funds mobilized from private/ non-state actors as well as the UN increased from a combined total of 7 per cent of the total budget in 2016 to 14.8 per cent of the total budget in 2018 (with the increase continuing in 2019).

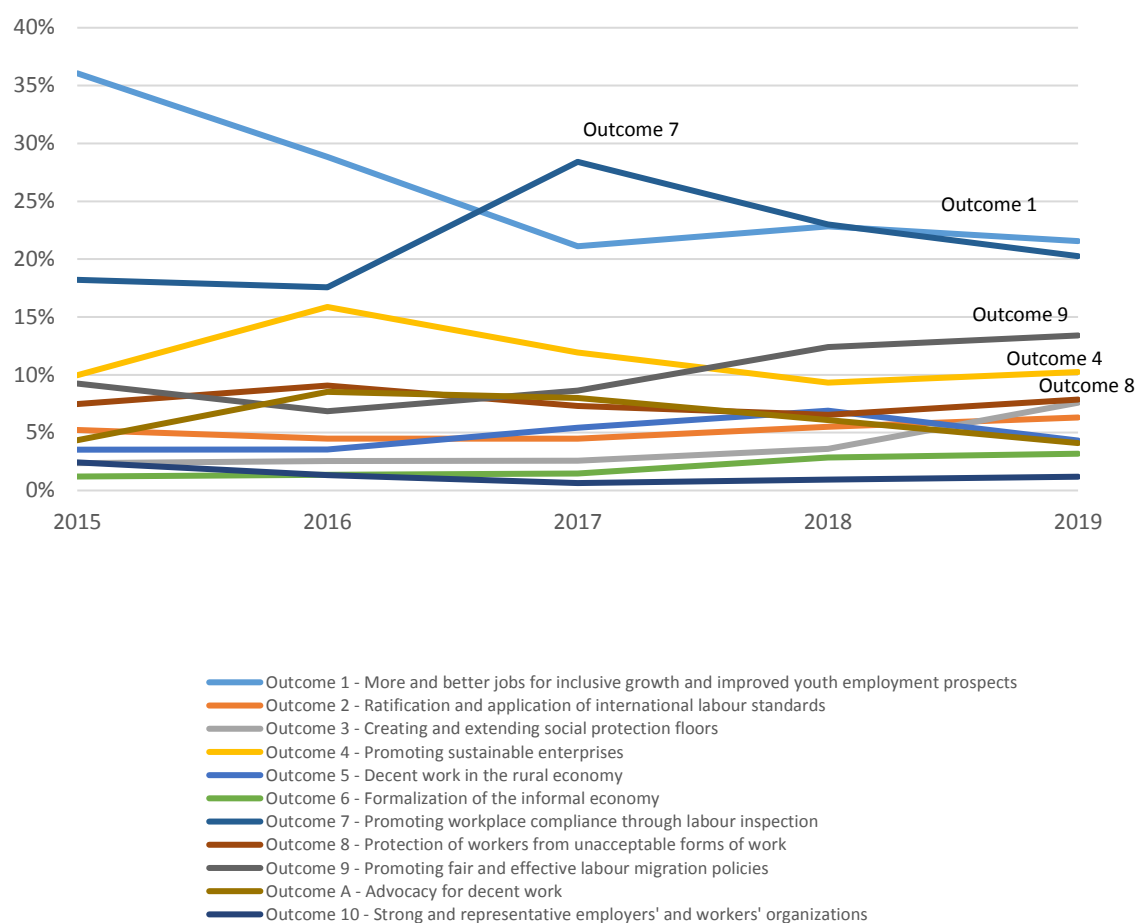
Table 3. Extra-budgetary resources by source, ROAP, 2016–19

Row Labels	2016	2017	2018	2019
Core voluntary funds (RBSA)	4.10%	3.71%	1.85%	5.11%
Direct Trust Funds	1.10%	0.93%	0.66%	0.59%
International Financial Institutions	8.04%	3.61%	3.08%	1.10%
Multi-Bilateral Donors	72.62%	72.70%	66.89%	56.24%
Other Inter-Governmental Organizati	7.09%	9.65%	12.67%	16.66%
Private / Non-State Actors	3.72%	7.31%	10.71%	12.46%
United Nations	3.33%	2.09%	4.13%	7.84%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

By 2017, the dominance of DC funds linked to Outcome 1 (more and better jobs) as a share of total DC funds was finished, with Outcome 7 (labour inspection) taking the largest share for a short period (figure 2). The 2016–18 period also saw the continuing decline of funds accruing to Outcome 8 (protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work – notably forced and child labour), Outcome 4 (sustainable enterprises) and Outcome 10 (strong workers’ and employers’ representatives).²⁴ On the increase were Outcomes 9 (fair migration) and Outcome 5 (rural economy), while the remaining outcomes have more or less steady over the 2016–18 period.

²⁴ According to the ILO Development Cooperation Dashboard, the budget allocated to Outcome 10 decreased significantly from USD\$1 million to nearly USD\$485,000 between 2016 and 2017 before increasing again to USD\$785,000 in 2018.

Figure 2. Share of DC funds by outcome (per cent), ROAP, 2015–19



3. Moving forward

This report is issued already well into the second half of the Bali Declaration coverage period, which allows for a clear identification of what factors are already influencing the progress on priority areas and providing hints as to what will be the likely influences through 2020. The factors influencing the Bali Declaration and its delivery going forward are summarized here:

- Decent Work Country Programmes

There is a new momentum in the development of DWCPs. More countries are expected to finalize DWCPs in the 2019–20 period. Efforts will be made to strengthen tripartite governance of DWCP, including ownership in the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The national dialogues on the future of work revealed a heightened sense of awareness among member States to the challenges, and a need for policies and programmes to stay on track on their objectives of inclusive economic growth. In this context, and in light of the Centenary Declaration (see below), the Office will support constituents to integrate the objective of a just transition to a future of work in the existing DWCPs and those in formulation. In doing so, the Office will continue to build the capacity of social partners to play an influential role in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, with which the DWCPs align.

- **The ILO centenary and the human-centred agenda for the future of work**

In response to the challenges associated with the future of work, and to mark 100 years since the ILO's founding, a Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work was adopted in 2019 at the 108th session of the International Labour Conference. The Declaration calls for a "human-centred agenda for the future of work" that focuses on increasing investment in people's capabilities, increasing investment in the institutions of work and increasing investment in decent and sustainable work. There is considerable overlap between the priority areas agreed in the Centenary Declaration and the Bali Declaration. The mapping will need to be made in the final Bali Declaration implementation report, especially as the ILO Programme and Budget 2020–21 will be the first to operationalize the Centenary Declaration through a streamlined set of agreed outcomes that correspond to the Declaration. The challenge will be to highlight the nexus of the numerous strategic visions captured in the Centenary Declaration, the Bali Declaration and the 2030 Agenda and the expectation for their operationalization in the DWCPs that occasionally pre-date them.

- **Responding to issues of critical importance**

The 2016–17 policy outcome on fair and effective labour migration policies has enabled the ILO to position itself centrally in the global policy debate on migration, which has gathered increased momentum with the preparations for a UN global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which was adopted in 2018. Linked to this is the increased interest on the part of many Asian countries and donors to support fair migration, which has been reflected in both the Asia-Pacific and Arab States regions in the increased amount of DC resources allocated to delivery on the outcome. Likewise, global supply chains has attracted a good share of DC funding since the APRM, thus increasing the ILO's capacity to support countries on compliance of labour standards and labour inspection. Responding to future of work issues, including climate change and governance of digital technologies, is also likely to increase in importance as an area of critical importance. Going forward, the ILO will continue to enhance capacity of the constituents to meet many of these critical issues as part of their national development agenda.

- **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The 2030 Agenda gives decent work a central place as a goal and as an instrument of sustainable development, such that the ILO has an unparalleled opportunity to take a leadership role in its promotion. As noted in section 2.2.1, all DWCPs drafted in the reporting period link ILO country outcomes to SDG targets. In numerous cases, the ILO has been designated a leading role as implementation partners in national SDG planning frameworks, especially on SDG 8. The final implementation report will identify the ILO's role in national SDG-related policy-making, including capacity-building of constituents to engage in SDG national voluntary reporting.

Evidence to date reveals that insufficient progress is being made towards achievement of the SDGs. This, coupled with the significant changes necessary to attain Goal 8 and other decent work-related Goals of the SDGs, effectively means that the achievement of results in countries requires – even more than before – the commitment and contributions of many actors, first and foremost the constituents themselves.

- **UN reform**

The ILO has expressed strong support for the Secretary General's continuing process of reform of the UN Development System and participated energetically in the continuing efforts to make the system fit for purpose to deliver the 2030 Agenda. The ILO has subscribed to the aim of overcoming fragmentation and improving coherence in the system while underlining the need to respect and harness the tripartite and normative foundations of the Organization and its mandate. The final implementation report will review challenges and opportunities for delivery of the ILO mandate that result from the UN reform and its aim for integration across organizations.