



International  
Labour  
Organization

## DECENT WORK: AN ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE ILO public-private partnerships in the spotlight

### FOREWORD



*"This publication illustrates the extraordinary diversity of the ILO's public-private partnerships, provides examples of successful PPPs, and looks to the future."*

Guy Ryder  
Director-General

The 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization calls for ILO action to develop "new partnerships with non-state entities and economic actors, such as multinational enterprises and trade unions operating at the global sectoral level in order to enhance the effectiveness of ILO operational programmes and activities" for the promotion of the Decent Work Agenda.

The Organization has since increased its endeavours to develop public-private partnerships (PPPs), resulting in a significant number of partnerships with a wide variety of actors around the world: enterprises, including multinational enterprises, foundations, universities, research and knowledge centres, employers' and workers' organizations, as well as other non-state actors.

Specific guidelines have been developed and applied since 2009 to sustain this effort. They have ensured an internal coordination of efforts, and also a sound internal clearance mechanism, which requires compliance with a thorough consultation process with representative national and international employers' and workers' organizations in the case of each partnership.

This publication has been prepared under the refined PPP strategy. It promotes a coordinated, coherent and proactive approach to PPPs and a need for knowledge sharing and communication – endorsed by the ILO Governing Body in March 2014.

For the ILO, public-private partnerships are not focused exclusively on human or financial resources.

They have also helped enhance the ILO's advocacy and visibility, creating new opportunities to influence public and private sector investment policies and practices with a view to attaining sustainable growth and poverty reduction.

PPPs have also been a means to share and expand knowledge on labour issues – a key element for the ILO's mandate – and have contributed to a continuous learning process on the action required to promote sustainable and healthy growth.

The ILO continues to promote the development of PPPs and alliances as an effective and collaborative way to leverage the ILO's values, principles and standards, keeping close to the reality of today's world of work. The tripartite nature of the ILO gives the organization an advantage in building such partnerships, particularly through its direct relationship with its constituents in the private sector. PPPs are an element of the ILO's wider engagement with the private sector, covering a range of activities with companies to advance the priorities of the ILO.



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Over the last few years there has been a steady increase in the number of PPPs with companies, which now represent the majority of ILO partners. A number of partnerships started with small-scale initiatives have evolved into more structured joint interventions over the years. Companies prefer a safe setting in which they can collaborate, and trust building has been a key element in developing cooperation and dialogue.

Among the main advantages companies see in partnering with the ILO, they highlight that the ILO is the custodian of a sound and effective set of international labour standards, has diverse and extensive expertise in all areas related to the challenges of today's world of work, knowledge of labour markets and a broad field presence, as well as a neutral and objective approach that grants it authority in bringing together different actors. Companies also regard the ILO's tripartite structure as particularly valuable in tackling today's world of work challenges, which are often systemic and cannot be addressed through isolated action. Moreover, companies see that decent work is good for business, and witness how sustainable practices are conducive to gains in productivity, competitiveness, and access to new markets.

Thereby, the ILO has been able to use PPPs as a means to promote social dialogue, fundamental rights, employment and social protection – its four strategic objectives.

This publication illustrates the extraordinary diversity of the ILO's public-private partnerships, provides examples of successful PPPs, and looks to the future. Shared principles, common objectives and mutual interest are the key ingredients of the successes presented.

Let us work together to build on the lessons learned and create new alliances for the future of decent work.

**Guy Ryder**  
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