



## Governing Body

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Institutional Section

INS

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**FOR INFORMATION**

## Update on the internal reform

**Summary:** Report on progress made in respect of the implementation of the internal reform agenda.

**Author unit:** Office of the Deputy Director-General for Management and Reform (DDG/MR).

**Related documents:** ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, and the accompanying resolution on strengthening the ILO's capacity to assist its Members' efforts to reach its objectives in the context of globalization, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008; GB.322/INS/13/1; GB.322/POL/6; GB.322/PFA/9.



## Introduction

1. The reform, launched two years ago, has yielded significant benefits which provide a sound foundation on which to continue building an ILO that is better able to deliver its mandate and respond to the needs of its constituents in the twenty-first century. A primary reform focus has been on improving efficiency. This has paved the way for the progressive shift of resources to strengthen the Office's technical capacity, a shift which is clearly reflected in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2016–17. Efforts to achieve more collaborative working methods among policy departments and between headquarters and the regions in a coherent framework have been sustained with the aim of improving the relevance, quality and impact of technical outputs. These efforts were also instrumental in maintaining an effective ILO presence in key international forums.
2. The focus is now on implementing the decisions arising from the field operations and structure and the communications reviews, while preparing to amplify the scale and scope of the review of administrative services with a view to ensuring that the ILO's internal business processes are as effective and efficient as possible.

## Management and Reform Portfolio

3. In the Management and Reform Portfolio, departments were reorganized along functional lines, eliminating overlapping or similar functional responsibilities and fragmentation between units, thereby enhancing efficiencies and clarifying roles and responsibilities. Structural and managerial inefficiencies were addressed by the logical grouping of functions, laying the foundation for in-depth business process reviews.

## Administrative services

4. A comprehensive review has been launched to identify the most cost efficient and effective service delivery models and working methods for administrative and support functions across headquarters' departments and the field. The expected improvement would enable a further reallocation of resources from administrative to technical functions. This shift, along with more efficient support to the technical functions, should enhance delivery. An external consulting firm with expertise in business process analysis, modelling and re-engineering is being engaged to assist this programme.
5. Payroll processing has been consolidated in Geneva creating significant savings for individual field offices and the Office globally. The roll-out of global information technology (IT) applications to the field has also been accelerated.

## Human resources (HR)

6. Priority for HR reforms within the framework of the agreed HR strategy has been on recruitment and selection procedures, including improvements in mobility and regional and national diversity in the Office. In addition, reform initiatives have been launched in the areas of contract policy, industrial relations, staff development, rewards, and recognition and harassment. Updates on these initiatives have been provided in documents previously presented to the Governing Body, most recently in document GB.322/PFA/9.

## Communications

7. The ILO's new global communication strategy follows the recommendations of the communications review carried out in 2013. The strategy supports the overall organizational goal of reinforcing the influence of the ILO and making it a global reference for the world of work.
8. The three pillars of the strategy – relevance, profile and engagement – will help to ensure that the ILO is seen to be relevant by making quality ILO content available at the right time, in the right place, and in an accessible form, to constituents and to broader audiences. It will also raise the profile of the ILO by making this content more visible. It aims for better engagement with ILO constituents through new ways of creating a continuous “dialogue” to share information, as well as to receive views and feedback. It will also carefully target other audiences whose support can help to advance ILO objectives. Established communication channels will be used, while present initiatives to draw on and develop the potential of new channels including social media will be sustained.
9. The internal communications function remains a priority to ensure effective two-way communication channels with staff and to connect staff across the Organization. Within the framework of an internal communications strategy, activities have included, in November 2014, a “Town Hall” meeting, which brought together staff from headquarters and regional offices by video link for a discussion on implementation of the field reforms with the Deputy Directors-General. Staff communications using a range of channels have been conducted on other key initiatives associated with the reform process, for example the roll-out of the new staff mobility policy.
10. A new ILO intranet landing page provides staff with an attractive communication channel which highlights stories of interest to staff, many showcasing staff team work. A collaborative communication platform is being piloted to provide directors in the regions with an online tool for sharing information – from practical information on directors' profiles and contacts, to mission plans and reports, outcomes of key meetings and good practices across the regions. Another online collaborative platform, accessible to all staff, continues to be the strategic planning hub for ILO communications, permitting officials in the regions and headquarters to access the global calendar, message bank, tools and documents to help ensure consistent and coordinated ILO communication.
11. Communications capacity building will be extended from department directors to include all staff involved in communications, and a skills audit to identify gaps will be undertaken. An information session on communications will be offered to participants at the Development Cooperation Academy that will take place at the Turin Centre in April.
12. The new version of the ILO public website went live at the end of 2014 as planned. This version incorporates a fresh design and features that enable it to adapt automatically to different screen formats – PCs, tablets and mobile devices.

## Policy Portfolio

13. The restructured departments within the Policy Portfolio have created a critical mass by bringing together larger groups of technical experts and the establishment of flexible teams better able to respond to constituent demands with agility and flexibility. They allow planning of longer term work by larger teams to address labour market challenges in more ambitious and integrated ways.

14. Analytical work, policy development and policy advice are now coordinated through a policy senior management team which takes collective responsibility for developing timely, empirically based knowledge, policy advice and service delivery that is coherent, accessible and adaptable to different country circumstances.
15. ILO analytical work and policy advice are now more actively sought across a range of high, middle and low-income countries. The ILO has become a full partner, along with other international organizations, in servicing the G20, providing advice on the full range of labour market and related issues. This enhances the impact of ILO knowledge and policy tools that are developed for country, regional and global application.
16. The ILO has actively sought working partnerships with other international organizations in areas of shared responsibility. Collaboration with the World Bank Group in particular has expanded and deepened in highly productive ways in diverse contexts providing opportunities to bring the ILO's decent work perspectives to the issues at stake. New joint work with sister agencies such as the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on the relationship between trade and employment, and with the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, on the causes of gender gaps across different countries, are meant to offer coherent knowledge and policy options that draw on the complementary expertise, data and experience of the different agencies.
17. The ILO has also been able to make robust, data and evidence-based contributions to discussions of the post-2015 development agenda, supported by the work of the Statistics and Research Departments.

## Field Operations and Partnerships Portfolio

18. The review of field operations and structure was initiated in 2013. The overall objective was to increase ILO presence, influence, and impact on the ground. Since October 2014, implementation of the decisions taken by the Director-General has been ongoing in all four identified areas (strategic management and programming; delivery of services to constituents; investing in our staff; and presence and partnerships). Details on implementation deliverables were presented at the 322nd Session of the Governing Body.<sup>1</sup>
19. A guiding principle of the field review was to bring the ILO closer to its constituents, implying a presence in specific geographical locations with a stronger technical capacity. While the current number and location of Decent Work Technical Support Teams (DWTs) will be retained in all regions, technical positions are being redeployed and re-profiled to improve ILO responses in the regions.
20. The Programme and Budget proposals for 2016–17 provide for a strengthening of the technical capacity of the Office through a resource shift to the regions as well as to the Policy Portfolio. Certain administrative and managerial positions within organizational units are being re-profiled and new technical positions established. The Office policy on decentralization of the management of technical cooperation is being implemented.
21. In keeping with the field review, a limited number of large, high-impact programmes designated as “Flagship Programmes”, will be a major component of the ILO's development cooperation portfolio. The Office is also developing differentiated strategic

<sup>1</sup> GB.322/INS/13/1.

approaches in order to respond better to the diverse environments and needs within member States, as identified in the field review.

22. The new staff mobility policy which facilitates geographical and functional mobility will also contribute to more effective service delivery.

## Reform monitoring framework

23. A reform monitoring framework is being developed to monitor the implementation and impact of reforms across the Office. The objective of the framework and the associated key performance indicators is to:

- link reform objectives and activities in a meaningful way;
- provide information on both the progress of reform activities and the impact of reform on the ILO's activities;
- communicate progress on reform to different audiences and support effective decision-making by the Governing Body, senior management team, reform teams and ILO staff.

24. Work is now under way to determine the indicators, baselines, targets and ownership responsibilities in relation to the key objectives of reform.

## Conclusion

25. With considerable effort having been invested in the reform process to date, and concrete results obtained, a critical challenge at the current juncture is to maintain the momentum and commitment, with a sharp focus on the objectives that the reform agenda was designed to achieve. The Programme and Budget proposals for 2016–17 provide a more streamlined framework for the ILO's action and can facilitate further improvements, as can the lessons learned from the earlier phases of reform.

Geneva, 12 March 2015