



## Governing Body

328th Session, Geneva, 27 October–10 November 2016

GB.328/POL/8

**Policy Development Section**  
*Social Dialogue Segment*

**POL**

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### EIGHTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Review of the Sectoral Policies Department

#### Purpose of the document

The Governing Body is invited to provide guidance regarding the approach to be pursued by the Office in its follow-up to the current review of the Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR) and the implementation of the recommendations of the 2012 independent evaluation on the ILO's strategy for sector-specific decent work (see draft decision in paragraph 9).

**Relevant strategic objective:** All.

**Policy implications:** None.

**Legal implications:** None.

**Financial implications:** None.

**Follow-up action required:** The Office will need to implement the guidance provided.

**Author unit:** Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR).

**Related documents:** GB.316/PFA/7/2; 2012 *Independent evaluation of the ILO's sector-specific approach to Decent Work*; GB.326/POL/5.



## I. Background

1. At its 316th Session (November 2012), the Governing Body discussed the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the ILO's sector-specific approach to decent work.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the ILO's strategy for achieving a sector-specific approach to decent work using as the point of departure the strategy as described in the Programme and Budget for 2010–11, while taking into account the evolution of the ILO strategy and indicators as outlined in the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15.
2. The specific findings and lessons learned from the independent evaluation resulted in 11 recommendations, which were endorsed by the Governing Body in November 2012. The Governing Body at that time requested the Director-General to take into consideration the findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the independent evaluation and ensure their implementation. Follow-up to high-level evaluations is overseen by both the Evaluation Office and the Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC). The EAC – a mechanism to promote institutional follow-up on independent evaluation findings – discussed this evaluation twice (July 2013 and January 2014) and concluded that all the recommendations had been implemented, but that the ongoing review of the Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR)<sup>2</sup> would need to address some of the structural and governance issues identified in the evaluation. The recommendations and the follow-up action to date are reflected in Appendix I.
3. Subsequently, in February 2013, and as part of an Office-wide reform plan, the Director-General announced a review of SECTOR with the aim to “maximize the impact of the sectoral approach to promoting decent work; both in terms of governance and content of the activities of SECTOR”.
4. The review process comprised consultative meetings with the Workers', Employers' and Government groups separately as well as an informal tripartite brainstorming meeting held on 21 July 2015. The brainstorming meeting proposed a set of recommendations for consideration by the Director-General. An overview of the recommendations and their follow-up is reflected in Appendix II. Recommendations made in relation to the revision of formats and standing orders for meetings were discussed in the Governing Body at its 326th Session (March 2016),<sup>3</sup> and a further discussion on this issue is scheduled to take place in the Governing Body at its 329th Session (March 2017).<sup>4</sup>
5. The Governing Body further requested the Office to provide information on the implementation of the recommendations of the 2012 *Independent evaluation of the ILO's sector-specific approach to Decent Work* and on the ongoing review of SECTOR.<sup>5</sup> A paper on this aspect was requested for discussion at the present session of the Governing Body, with a view to permitting it to provide more inputs to the SECTOR review process and, in

<sup>1</sup> GB.316/PFA/7/2, paras 74–93, provide a summary of the evaluation's findings and recommendations together with the Office response presented to the Governing Body in November 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Whereas the acronym SECTOR continues being used unchanged, the name of the Department was changed in 2016 to Sectoral Policies Department.

<sup>3</sup> GB.326/POL/5 on a review and possible revision of formats and standing orders for meetings.

<sup>4</sup> GB.326/PV, para. 404.

<sup>5</sup> GB.326/PV, para. 400.

particular, to allow for synergies to be achieved between the preliminary discussion of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2018–19 and the development of the programme of sectoral meetings through the sectoral advisory bodies.<sup>6</sup>

6. Both the 2012 independent evaluation as well as the review of SECTOR highlighted issues concerning coherence and alignment of sectoral work with the wider organizational priorities. The common conclusion was that an integrated sector-specific approach would lead to greater synergies and better interaction between the Department and other ILO units, both at headquarters and in the field, thereby enhancing the impact of the work of SECTOR as well as that of the Office as a whole in the promotion of decent work.
7. Greater alignment and coherence of sectoral work with wider organizational priorities could be achieved in different ways, which are not mutually incompatible. The Governing Body is accordingly invited to provide guidance on the following approaches:
  - Alignment and coherence within the Office could be promoted by an enhanced Office-wide effort to make sectoral tools, guidelines, conclusions and recommendations of sectoral meetings, and other sectoral approaches accessible to other ILO units, both at headquarters and in the field, including through an online repository of information and other practical advice, producing compendia of good practices from sector-specific interventions, organizing information sessions and webinars and undertaking other relevant sectoral guidance.
  - Additional synergies between SECTOR and other ILO units could be created by greater adaptation of SECTOR's focus to current ILO priorities. In the biennium 2018–19, SECTOR could, in particular, align its research agenda with the ILO's Future of Work Centenary Initiative by conducting evidence-based research on changes in the organization of work and production in different sectors and their implications for the quality of working life and for decent work. This would enable the Office to tailor its policy recommendations on a wide range of issues based on sector-specific data. In so doing, the ILO could make unique sector-specific contributions to the global debates about the future of work, including the impact of technology, poverty reduction, changes in the employment relationship, and women's employment. At the same time, sectoral meetings could focus attention on specific Future of Work issues, including policy questions generated by SECTOR's research.
8. The first approach builds on efforts already described to help the department and other units within the ILO make greater use of the work by SECTOR. These efforts are ongoing; experience has shown that incorporation of a sectoral approach in this manner is incremental, in part because of the need to merge different substantive areas of focus. For this reason, the second approach would be highly important, both to enhance the value of sectoral tools and other information, and to provide inputs to the Future of Work Initiative. More fully aligning SECTOR's priorities with ILO priorities will create greater demand throughout the Department and other units for SECTOR's work products and expertise in order to strengthen understanding of the challenges facing constituents in the world of work.

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<sup>6</sup> Sectoral advisory bodies (composed of governmental regional coordinators, coordinators of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and representatives of relevant Global Union federations and IOE sectoral partners, and supported by the Office) were established in 2007, to deepen the consultation process on reviewing the content and type of sectoral activities, making recommendations in order to assist the Office in setting priorities for sectoral work (see GB.298/12(Rev.), para. 40).

**Draft decision**

9. *The Governing Body requests the Director-General to take into consideration its guidance in giving effect to the recommendations of the 2012 independent evaluation and the review of the Sectoral Policies Department.*



## Appendix I

### Recommendations from the 2012 independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy for sector-specific decent work

Recommendations	Follow-up
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p>In order to address the “dual governance” issue, the Programme and Budget (P&amp;B) and the Sectoral Activities Programme (SAP) “strategies” for sector-specific decent work should be harmonized.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>The Office brought this recommendation to the attention of the advisory bodies at its session in October 2014. The sectoral programme of work for 2014–15 and 2016–17, approved by the Governing Body, acknowledged that the Office, by virtue of its mandate, is tasked to undertake certain work items, the so-called “recurrent and statutory work”. They are: (i) promotion of sector-specific standards and tools; (ii) implementation of conclusions and recommendations of sectoral meetings and other ILC/GB decisions; (iii) supporting country programme outcomes; and (iv) fostering policy coherence with other UN agencies and multilateral organizations. At the same time, the Governing Body approved the proposals for sectoral meetings and preparatory work for future meetings made by the advisory bodies. Additional recommendations concerning the functioning of the advisory bodies will be implemented at the next session of the advisory bodies in January 2017.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p> <p>Roles and responsibilities for management and governance of the ILO's sectoral work should be reviewed and clarified.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>SECTOR and Better Work work closely together (e.g., through ongoing consultations, exchange of information).</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p> <p>Ways to integrate SECTOR and Better Work, which currently work separately, should be explored in order to realize synergies and economies of scale.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>Gender audit recommendations have been followed up. Gender equality has been highlighted in different sectoral meetings and research carried out. Additional work is planned for the current biennium to continue mainstreaming gender equality in sectoral work.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p>A gender audit recommended that more attention to gender equality may positively affect the gender mainstreaming performance of SECTOR.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>Several activities have been jointly organized, including the Rural Academy in 2015. ITC–ILO has participated in several sectoral meetings to identify possible follow-up action, and contributed to the elaboration of new sectoral tools.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b></p> <p>As a way of getting its work out into the field, SECTOR and the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC–ILO) should continue to collaborate on sectoral activities, and in particular those that take place in the regions.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>SECTOR has developed tools and works more closely with the regions to better address member State needs, in particular in relation to the ratification and implementation of sectoral standards and tools. This has resulted in a better alignment of the 2014–15 and 2016–17 workplans to the DWCPs' priorities.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b></p> <p>In order to integrate the sectoral work of the various units that contribute to outcome 13, where and when appropriate, the ILO should consider a sector-based approach to Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs).</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>Please see relevant proposals in Appendix II under “coherence and alignment”.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b></p> <p>The ILO should continue to seek a balance between the sector-specific perspectives required by the constituents and the more cross-sectoral orientation of many of the ILO's technical departments.</p>	

**Recommendations****Follow-up**

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**Recommendation 8**

The P&B results framework for measuring the contribution to sector-specific decent work should be reviewed to promote collaboration among departments contributing to decent work at the sectoral level and to reduce competition.

**Recommendation 9**

The Strategic Management Module could be reviewed to accommodate useful quantitative and qualitative monitoring information that appropriately values the cross-cutting nature of the ILO's sector-specific decent work.

**Recommendation 10**

SECTOR should specifically define "follow-up" and clearly communicate how it will proceed following a sectoral meeting in order to improve the impact of its work.

**Recommendation 11**

The difficulties of valuing its sectoral work, which is, by and large, normative in nature, may require the ILO to do research and development on methods that allow such work to be appropriately valued in the UN development system of the future.

**Completed**

This recommendation was brought to the attention of concerned units and tools were developed.

**Ongoing**

Please see relevant proposals in Appendix II under "coherence and alignment".

**Completed**

The Office continues to promote global policy coherence on decent work in specific sectors through strategic partnerships with other UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations. Moreover, sectoral work will contribute to several sustainable development goals (SDGs), as reflected in the Office-wide Sustainable Development Plan.

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## Appendix II

### Recommendations of the 2015 tripartite informal brainstorming meeting

Recommendation	Follow up
<p><b>Functioning of advisory bodies</b></p> <p>To enhance coherence, it was proposed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) advisory bodies be established by the Governing Body and convened after the preview of the P&amp;B, typically at the Governing Body sessions in November;</li> <li>(ii) a final sitting of the advisory bodies should be held to assess all proposals made during the preceding sector-specific sittings;</li> <li>(iii) a government representative should chair the advisory bodies.</li> </ul> <p>In order to be able to reassess, from time to time, the question of whether changes to the currently used definitions of sectors might be necessary in the future, it was recommended that the advisory bodies should periodically examine this issue and, if necessary, make recommendations to amend the structure and definitions of sectors for future sectoral work.</p> <p>The advisory bodies should also have input into the programming of statutory and recurrent work (a category created in response to the 2012 evaluation).</p> <p>In order to ensure clarity as to which sections of the revised Standing Orders would be applicable to a specific meeting, it was recommended that the advisory bodies discuss this issue with a view to choosing the most appropriate means to achieve the expected outcome and make clear proposals to the Governing Body regarding the nature of a proposed meeting and its mandate.</p>	<p>These recommendations will be implemented beginning with the next session of the advisory bodies (January 2017).</p> <p>The issue will be included as a standing item on the agenda of the 2017 session and future sessions of the advisory bodies.</p> <p>The recommendation will be considered in the final sitting of the advisory bodies to be established for the first time during the January 2017 session of advisory bodies.</p> <p>Once the ongoing revision of formats and standing orders has been concluded, the Office will develop the guidance. Until then, the current practice of encouraging the advisory bodies to recommend a specific format of meeting (sectoral, meeting of experts or global dialogue forum), will be continued.</p>
<p><b>Meetings</b></p> <p>In order to allow for emerging developments to be addressed in a timely fashion, it was recommended that an allocation of resources be kept in reserve to allow for one additional meeting per biennium to be convened with a shorter lead-time (such as six months).</p>	<p>The Office will reflect this recommendation in its preparations for the session of the advisory bodies to be held in January 2017.</p>
<p><b>Coherence and alignment</b></p> <p>The Director-General should provide Office-wide guidance on creating joint-responsibility frameworks for the implementation of and follow-up to conclusions and other recommendations of sectoral meetings.</p> <p>The Office should take steps to enhance synergies and collaboration with other ILO units through formalizing/ institutionalizing collaboration on sectoral issues, as well as SECTOR's cross-sectoral work (such as Decent Work in Global Supply Chains, Decent Work in the Rural Economy, Decent Work for Food Security, employment relationships and contractual arrangements in specific sectors, education and public services).</p>	<p>Modalities and procedures are under consideration.</p>

Recommendation	Follow up
<p>The Office should set up structures to raise awareness and build capacity to effectively use and disseminate sectoral tools, guidelines and approaches in other departments, regions and field offices.</p>	<p>Between November 2012 and March 2014, SECTOR prepared an overview of selected highlights of sectoral work for the March and November Sessions of the Governing Body; following consultations with constituents and other users, the format was modified and biennial brochures on selected sectoral work have been published starting with 2014–15.</p> <p>The Office has started to organize information sessions and webinars open to all members of staff to share the outcomes of sectoral meetings and provide information in particular on any new tools adopted.</p> <p>The Office is currently also developing training courses at the ITC–ILO for staff on sectoral approaches (including on the use of sectoral tools and to disseminate lessons learned) to ensure that such lessons learned and good practice continue to feed into the programming and implementation of sector-specific work.</p>
<p>The Office should foster collaboration between SECTOR and the Research and Statistics Departments on developing evidence-based knowledge on sectoral trends and developments.</p>	<p>The Governing Body may wish to request the advisory bodies to discuss and recommend on how the sectoral dimension of decent work could be aligned with the “Future of Work” Centenary Initiative, including through research on sectoral trends and developments.</p>
<p><b>Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs)</b></p>	<p>Modalities and procedures are under consideration.</p>
<p>Regional and national level programming of ILO work, including on sectoral priorities, should incorporate inputs from national sectoral social partner organizations. To this effect, mechanisms to give DWCPs a greater sectoral dimension should be developed.</p>	<p>Since 2012, the Office has further increased efforts towards better policy coherence and strategic partnerships with the UN and other multilateral organizations. SECTOR will contribute directly to the implementation of SDG8 and other SDGs with a sectoral focus.</p>
<p><b>External partnerships</b></p>	<p>PARDEV consults SECTOR during the appraisal process of new development cooperation proposals with a sectoral approach. Also, SECTOR collaborated on the implementation of several projects backstopped by other departments. In relation to decentralized projects, collaboration should be defined at country level, in conjunction with the work described above.</p>
<p>Sector-specific work to foster policy coherence with other UN organizations should continue to be pursued.</p>	
<p>Collaboration in the design and implementation of development cooperation projects should be strengthened.</p>	