

TERMS OF REFERENCE
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE
GLOBAL COMPANY SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

The ILO is undertaking a first extensive global study on diversity and inclusion (D&I) within companies with aims to raise awareness on opportunities and barriers to D&I among ILO constituents and address gaps in the current research¹. Worldwide, the conversation around workplace D&I is moving beyond gender equality to advancing equal opportunities among all diverse employees and reaping the benefits of diversity of thought. Companies are making efforts to hire employees that are diverse in terms of characteristics that are observable - *gender, race, age, disability², nationality, ethnicity, migrants, and other minorities* etc - and non-observable - *socio-economic status, career path, academic background, geographical origin, persons living with HIV and AIDS, religion, belief, and sexual orientation*. These employees bring different backgrounds, identities and perspectives to the workplace, and creates workplaces that are reflective of the society they exist in and the customers they serve.

The overall objective of the global study is to provide an evidence-based, authoritative report that shows how D&I works within companies, assess current company practices and the factors influencing and driving company action, and critically develop a better understanding of the barriers to progress on D&I.

As a first step to developing this global report, the ILO commissioned a background paper that analysed over 100 different written sources to consider how diversity across age, disability, country of origin, gender, race, ethnicity, people living with HIV and AIDS and nationality are considered in company approaches to D&I.³ The background paper found that companies making progress on D&I focus on the following elements:

- Approach D&I as a *strategic culture* change programme, adopting an inclusive process and approach to *change*.
- Embrace the importance of D&I in every aspect of *organisational practice and activity*.
- Recognise that *leadership* is key to success applying a bold approach to setting vision, being *responsible and accountable* for progress and role modelling the behaviours and actions being sought amongst all employees in the company.
- Understand the importance of applying different actions and approaches to meet the different needs of employee groups and parts of the business according to their local context.

However, progress on D&I remains slow and limited, and difficult to track. Whilst much emphasis has been placed in recent years on building a business case for D&I as a way to influence and drive company action, it appears that too much emphasis has been placed on the business case as a panacea

¹ The report takes an interdisciplinary approach and will be jointly produced by ACT/EMP and GED with technical support from FUNDAMENTALS.

² Some forms of disability are non-observable.

³ ILO commissioned internal background paper, *Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace: A global study of practices, opportunities and challenges* (2020)

for change and the route to greater D&I. Achieving progress in practice appears more complex influenced by a company's context, different stakeholders involved and the approach taken to change. How these elements feature, influence and shape outcomes on D&I have not yet been fully explored.

BACKGROUND: NEED FOR A GLOBAL SURVEY

The aforementioned background paper finds six significant gaps in current available global research on D&I, which could be addressed through an evidence collecting process.

- **Comparisons across region, sector, size and diversity groups** – not enough global research considers D&I in SME companies, particularly in lower income economies or generally in relation to disability, age, religion or belief or people with HIV and AIDS. Very little research addresses intersectionality, that is, the experience of employees and approaches of employers for people belonging to multiple diverse groups.
- **Relationship between context and diversity and inclusion outcomes** - Whilst most research on D&I acknowledges aspects of the national culture(s) of the companies in the study, little detail is included and almost no attempt is made to understand or analyse results in relation to the company's internal and external context.
- **Factors driving companies to take action on diversity and inclusion** - Very little research exists to help understand the factors that drive companies to take action on D&I.
- **Change process and approach** - More research is needed on the change process approach being applied to D&I and its relationship to outcomes achieved, in addition to the specific actions being taken.
- **Insights from a range of stakeholders** - The majority of survey research involves senior executives, HR or D&I professionals and/or employees. Almost no research draws on the experience of line managers who have been identified as critical to the success of D&I programmes. Only a small proportion of research considers the similarities and differences in responses by diversity group or role/level in the organization.
- **Learning from challenges as well as success** - More of a learning approach is required in research on D&I. Most D&I research tends to report on what is being done and case study research focuses on success stories. More work is needed to understand the barriers companies face in achieving progress on D&I and how these are being overcome.

To address these gaps, the ILO will engage a service provider to facilitate **online survey fieldwork with companies globally on diversity and inclusion in the workplace**. The survey findings will feed into an foreseen ILO report on D&I to be released in 2021. The survey will be an opportunity to collect the views and experiences from all types of businesses including SMEs, and with particular focus on lower income economies and employee groups that have not yet been well represented on D&I but also address issues, particularly around the factors underlying limited progress on D&I – leadership; behaviour and culture change; and strategy, that are not yet well understood, and in learning from challenges as well as good practice. Approached in this way, the research is expected to be powerful in identifying the steps to be taken in supporting companies to make further progress on achieving transformational change on D&I.

The insights and information gained from the survey and eventual global study will allow the ILO to better inform companies and national employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs_

and other stakeholders on advancing D&I in the workplace and also assist in shaping out ILO's development cooperation programmes as well as informing ILO's policy oriented work.

SERVICE PROVIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES: SURVEY REQUIREMENTS

The ILO is seeking to collect a **large evidence-base** by working with a service provider who has the ability to work globally and survey companies using their own enterprise panel data, and merge survey data collected through the ILO employers' constituents and other appropriate channels (e.g. members of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network, private sector members of the Equal Pay International Coalition).

The ILO has experience in executing enterprise surveys through EBMOs to assess the views and practices of member companies. However, the return tends to vary depending on the current priorities and interests of EBMOs and their members. Working with a service provider will enable the ILO to minimize the risk of having a small sample size, offer statistical power to the evidence collected, and make the findings more representative as a diversity of companies (size, locations, sectors, type of respondent) can be targeted.

[Survey methodology]

In order to gather understanding at the global level, the service provider would be expected to collect at least **10,000 survey responses through an online survey**. As much as possible, the survey will be conducted online i.e. remotely through a virtual survey platform. The service provider may use its own virtual survey platform or use the ILO provided survey platform ([Qualtrics](#)). If deemed difficult to collect all the responses through an online survey, a blended approach of online and face-to-face interviews can be considered if COVID-19 health restrictions do not exist and the cost to conduct face-to-face interviews are equivalent to online surveys. The preferred method of executing the survey is online.

In particular, the service provider will be expected to deliver the outputs outlined below during each of phase in the process. The service provider will work with an ILO team to ensure the programming, dissemination, data collection and cleaning is conducted in a timely matter.

[Phase 1: Survey programming]

The service provider would be required to programme, disseminate and coordinate responses from companies to ensure a good response rate. The ILO will provide the finalized survey questionnaire/tool to the service provider.

- **Technically review the survey tool and** offer suggestions for improvement (reduce response bias, enhance the flow and presentation of the tool, offer recommendations to the overall survey design).
- Provide translation of the finalized survey questionnaire (approximately 2,500 words) from English to **various languages**, including Spanish, French, Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Portuguese, Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Serbian (and up to 10 additional languages according to country selection) and ensure that the survey is accessible for persons with disabilities (through all survey access points: PC screen, laptop, mobile phone) in accordance with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#).

- While the service provider is expected to **work extensively through their own company database, networks or panels**, the survey should be available via a **dynamic link** which can be distributed to EBMOs and their membership and other ILO business networks. The service provider would be expected to incorporate these external completes into the final dataset. The collection of approximately 3,000 responses are envisioned through the ILO's networks. The ILO will be responsible for disseminating the survey tool to EBMOs and ILO business networks. The anticipated 3,000 responses from ILO networks do not constitute part of the service provider's scope of work which entails the collection of 10,000 survey responses.
- The survey will largely focus on **lower to middle income** countries with a few in high-income countries— achieving a global spread and a representative regional spread. Regional coverage will follow the [ILO taxonomy](#):
 - Africa
 - Arab States
 - Asia and the Pacific
 - Americas
 - Europe and Central Asia
- Countries covered through the survey should meet 3 of the following 7 criteria:
 - Lower to middle income country.
 - Active employer and business membership organization (EBMO) to enable future follow-up work (e.g. awareness raising, national or regional level reports). Past policy work on diversity issues is a plus.
 - Known demand or pressure from EBMO members to pursue analytical research or offer services on D&I.
 - Presence of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network
 - Good internet penetration and access (using secondary sources such as Our World Data)
 - Balanced representation of diverse and less diverse countries (using secondary sources such as the [World Population Review](#))
 - Optimal cost-efficiency (i.e. countries with survey costs that exceeds USD 15 per survey/interview will be excluded).
- List of suggested countries (total 56) by region:
 - Africa (18): South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Cameroun , Egypt, Mozambique, Angola, Botswana, Madagascar, Ghana, Zambia, Seychelles, Cote D'Ivoire, Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco, Tunisia
 - Arab States (4): Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, UAE
 - Asia and the Pacific (10): Thailand, Fiji, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, China, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh
 - Americas (13): Mexico, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Peru, Honduras, Bahamas, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Canada* and the United States*
 - Europe and Central Asia (11): Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine, Georgia, Uzbekistan, United Kingdom*, France*, Germany*, Spain*, and Italy*.
 - *Note:* The service provider will discuss the feasibility of conducting online surveys in the countries listed above and may propose alternative countries for consideration by the ILO.

Phase 1 deliverables:

- *Technical review of draft ILO survey tool*
- *Finalization of country coverage together with the ILO (approximately 40 countries)*
- *Translation of survey tool into all required languages and submission in MS word to the ILO.*

[Phase 2: Survey dissemination and data collection]

The service provider will ensure regular follow up and coordination of responses from their own networks to meet the set regional targets (see table 1). The service provider will provide a dynamic link in all available languages to be disseminated, including for EBMOs and other ILO networks. The service will also ensure **balanced spread** of respondents across regions, countries, business-size, and position of the survey respondent as far as possible.

- The survey respondents should be largely from **large local companies** (some 30 per cent of the sample will come from SMEs; and the remaining 70 per cent of the sample will come from large local companies- not MNCs). For the selected few high-income countries (listed previously under Europe and Central Asia, and the Americas in asterisk*), survey respondents should come from 50 per cent SMEs and 50 per cent large local companies. Per country, the balance of company size will be achieved. Local companies are considered to be indigenous to the country being surveyed (i.e. incorporated or having head offices in the country). The following definition will be used to categorize enterprise size.
 - Micro enterprises: up to 10 employees (for the purpose of the survey, micro enterprises will be excluded)
 - Small enterprises: 10 to 100 employees
 - Medium enterprises: 100 to 250 employees
 - Large enterprises: Over 250 employees
- The survey will be disseminated to **broad sectors** and achieve a reasonable balance across sectors listed in the OECD [ISIC Rev.4 classification](#).
- The survey will reach **different stakeholders** including company decision makers, professionals working on D&I or HR, line managers, and employees. Per country, the service provider will ensure a 40 to 60 per cent response rate from general employees (non-management), and company managers/decision makers.
- The targeted respondent within the companies should have good insight of the company's diversity policies and/or practices (otherwise, responses should be screened out).
- The following regional targets will be achieved (a 10 per cent adjustment can be made among regions). A range of 5-10 countries per region with a minimum total of 10,000 global responses are expected by the service provider. Per country, the range of survey numbers will be between 100 to 300. The service provider shall provide the expected survey responses by country, i.e. number of completes, (respecting the 100 to 300 range) as well as the estimated survey cost per survey interview.

Table 1. Anticipated survey responses by region

Region	Survey count
Africa	2,000
Asia and the Pacific	2,500
Europe and Central Asia	2,000
Latin America	2,500

Arab States	1,000
Total	10,000

During this stage, the service provider will provide the following:

- Concise and regular weekly updates on the progress of the survey collection with the ILO.
- Before rolling out the survey to all regions/countries, a short pilot phase will be conducted to verify the quality of the data. During this pilot phase, the service provider will share with the ILO an initial extract of the micro-level data in Microsoft Excel format (.xlsx) containing a small number of responses (30-50) no later than 4 weeks after establishing the contract. The format for this – and especially the variable names used – must be the same at this stage as they will be in the final submission of the complete micro-level data. The purpose of this will be to allow the data analysis team within the ILO to begin writing the code for the analysis itself immediately so as to save time later on and complete much of the time-consuming coding work before the survey is even complete. Some minor improvements to the data collection format (e.g. variable names used) may also be suggested by the ILO at this stage that the service provider will be expected to comply with.
- Any necessary follow-up and coordination activities should be conducted by the service provider at this stage to ensure an adequate response is obtained from within its own networks. Any significant problems or risks encountered should be communicated to the ILO immediately.
 - The service provider will provide the ILO with a risk management plan to ensure that the number of total survey completes reaches 10,000.
- The open-ended short-answer responses to some of the survey questions (only used in certain cases for responses labelled ‘other, please specify’ or such) should be translated into English and recorded alongside the original-language answers in a separate column in the data. Open-ended responses will be kept to a minimal.

Phase 2 deliverables:

- *Initial 30-50 responses of the survey and requested adjustments made by the ILO as applicable.*
- *Weekly updates of survey status.*

[Phase 3: Data delivery]

The following outputs will be delivered during this ultimate stage. **Phase 3 deliverables:**

- Provide the ILO with a comprehensive **spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel format (.xlsx)** containing the complete micro-level data from the survey in a clean format free from errors or gaps. The variable-names and format found here should adhere strictly to those established under those established above.
- A comprehensive and **legible codebook** will also be provided to help the ILO decipher the data and complete its analysis later on. Ideally, this should be submitted as a STATA ‘do-file’ (.do) providing the necessary code that will label the different variable codes (1, 2, 3, etc.) to the actual survey answers (‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, etc.). As a next-best alternative, this output can be submitted as a clear and comprehensive codebook – most suitably in Microsoft Excel

format (.xlsx) – detailing the variable codes used in the micro-data files and the survey answers (in English) that they cohere to.

- Tables with up to 10 banners (i.e. sub-group for data analysis) per country will be provided to summarize existing data.

Throughout all stages, the service provider will be expected to work virtually with a team of ILO specialists and an ILO external collaborator who will be tasked to perform the data analysis of the survey.

ILO'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- The survey will be designed by the ILO in English. The questionnaire will be up to **25 questions** (predominantly closed questions).
- The ILO will work with the service provider to finalize the online survey tool and provide technical comments as appropriate.
- The ILO will provide access to the online survey platform ([Qualtrics](#)) as appropriate.
- The ILO will disseminate the finalized online survey tool via EBMOs and ILO business networks (to reach the target of 3,000 completes).
- The ILO will coordinate follow up of responses with EBMOs and ILO business networks.
- The ILO will also carry out all of the necessary further data analysis.

SCHEDULING AND REPORTING

D&I research survey schedule		2021													
Month		February	March				April				May				June
Week			1-5 March	8-12 March	15-19 March	22-26 March	5-9 April	12-16 April	19-23 April	26-30 April	3-7 May	10-14 May	17-21 May	24-28 May	4-Jun
Survey tool design	Contracting survey firm	x	x	x											
	Survey programming			x	x										
	Survey translation (in all required languages)				x										
Data collection	Survey dissemination				x		x								
	reporting of first 30-50 responses (pilot phase)						x								
	weekly progress reports						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Data delivery	Data cleaning												x	x	
	Full data delivery												x	x	x

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Overall target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 10,000 responses collected from service provider's panel data • Ability to generate a dynamic link and merge approximately 3,000 responses collected from the ILO's networks to the overall survey completes
Global coverage	All 5 regions (according to ILO taxonomy)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 40 countries • Per country between 100-300 responses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target developing and emerging economies – if countries listed by the ILO cannot be reached, suggestions should be made for alternative countries
Survey respondent characteristics	SMEs and local companies (at least 50 per cent for high income countries in asterisk and 30 per cent for medium and low income countries)
	Formal economy (registered companies)

	<p>Respondents should be decision makers, HR directors, D&I leads, line managers, general employees. The reach of employees vs non-employees (i.e. management or decision making level) should be between 40 to 60 per cent.</p>
	<p>All sectors (with no one sector dominating; fair distribution between manufacturing and services sector)</p>
<p>Risk management</p>	<p>A descriptive plan on how regional quotas will met. The service provider should also indicate actions it will take to meet the total survey number of 10,000 should a situation arise where regional targets are difficult to meet.</p>
<p>Budget</p>	<p>Budget line detailed by country, programming requirements and other technical needs.</p>
<p>Overall management</p>	<p>Relevant experience of survey management that requires global coverage, experience with international organizations</p>