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Institutional Section

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THIRD ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Matters arising out of the work of the 107th Session (2018) of the International Labour Conference

Follow-up to the resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism

Purpose of the document

This document proposes a plan of action on social dialogue and tripartism for the period 2018–23, to give effect to the conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2018.

The Governing Body is invited to provide guidance on the proposed plan of action (see draft decision in paragraph 20).

Relevant strategic objective: Social dialogue and tripartism.

Main relevant outcome/cross-cutting policy driver: Cross-cutting policy driver: Social dialogue.

Policy implications: The plan of action will guide the Office's work in the area of social dialogue and tripartism for the next three bienniums (2018–23). It will shape the assistance provided to constituents by the Office and underpin the action of the Organization in the field of social dialogue and industrial relations over this period.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: See paragraph 19.

Follow-up action required: Implementation of the plan of action, taking into account the guidance provided by the Governing Body.

Author unit: Social Dialogue and Tripartism Unit (DIALOGUE), Governance and Tripartism Department (GOVERNANCE).

Related documents: Resolution and conclusions concerning the recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism, 107th Session (2018) of the International Labour Conference; Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2018–19; Matters arising out of the work of the 107th Session (2018) of the International Labour Conference: Follow-up to the resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, GB.334/INS/3/1.

Background and context

1. The International Labour Conference, at its 107th Session (2018), adopted a resolution and conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism, under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.¹ The conclusions set out a framework for action to guide the Organization and the Office in their work in this area. In the resolution, the Director-General is requested to: prepare a plan of action to give effect to the conclusions for consideration by the Governing Body; communicate the conclusions to relevant global and regional organizations and to the Global Commission on the Future of Work for their attention; take into account the conclusions when preparing future programme and budget proposals and mobilizing extra-budgetary resources; and keep the Governing Body informed of their implementation.
2. The proposed plan of action covers the period 2018–23, in anticipation of a third recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism in 2024. It has been prepared in the context of significant global developments and milestones for the ILO, its constituents and the broader world community, including the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the Centenary of the ILO in 2019, associated debates on the future of work at the national and global levels, and the other ILO Centenary Initiatives; and the reform of the United Nations Development System (UNDS).
3. Social dialogue, based on respect for freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, has a crucial role to play in designing policies to promote social justice. It is a means to achieve social and economic progress and is essential for democracy and good governance. Social dialogue comes in various forms and at different levels. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to organizing and strengthening social dialogue; however, collective bargaining remains at its heart.
4. The plan of action comes at a time of profound change sweeping through the world of work, which presents both serious challenges and new opportunities for social dialogue and tripartism as tools to facilitate the transition to a just and sustainable future of work. Many countries fail to fully protect the right to collective bargaining. Other challenges include the increasing inequality and profound vulnerability of large segments of the working population, climate change, demographic shifts, emergence of new forms of employment associated with digitization and other technological advances, and pressures on public finances linked to lower rates of economic growth. Against this backdrop of massive change, questions have been raised about the ability of social dialogue to rise to these challenges and deliver sustainable policy outcomes.
5. It is therefore critical that the ILO should redouble its efforts to help revitalize the institutions of social dialogue at all levels so that they remain relevant, effective and fit for purpose and so that they contribute fully to achievement of the SDGs.

The proposed plan of action

6. The overall objective of the plan of action is to equip ILO constituents to ensure the enhanced relevance and effectiveness of inclusive, gender-responsive social dialogue and tripartism as tools of governance in the changing world of work. It contains four interrelated components corresponding to the framework for action: (1) building the capacity of constituents and

¹ ILO: [Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism](#), International Labour Conference, 107th Session, Geneva, 2018.

strengthening development cooperation; (2) research and training; (3) standards-related action; and (4) enhancing policy coherence.

7. Recognizing that social dialogue is a cross-cutting policy driver in the current ILO programme and budget, the plan of action reflects the combined efforts of the Office as a whole, through the mainstreaming of social dialogue across all policy outcomes, Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and development cooperation programmes and projects. Particular attention is given to the need, highlighted by constituents, to ensure that the Office's diverse activities and outputs (as summarized in the appendix) are coherent and coordinated, and that duplication and piecemeal activities are avoided, so as to achieve maximum impact with the limited resources available. The visibility of social dialogue and its outcomes will be enhanced through effective means of communication.
8. Existing partnerships will be strengthened and new ones initiated at the national and global levels to support the implementation of the action plan, including through the mobilization of additional resources where required, in the context of the ILO's overall results framework.

Component 1: Building the capacity of constituents and strengthening development cooperation

9. This component entails the delivery of a set of capacity development activities using existing and new policy and training tools. Free, independent, strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations are essential for effective social dialogue, and strengthening their capacity to represent and serve a broad-based membership and to engage in social dialogue and collective bargaining is a top priority. Activities aim also to strengthen national tripartite institutions, labour administrations and dispute prevention and resolution bodies, as well as workplace cooperation and cross-border social dialogue. Priorities for strengthening the capacity of constituents include: the transition from the informal to the formal economy; the inclusion in social dialogue and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining of workers in employment relationships that have traditionally been less included and those in new and emerging forms of employment; empowering women in the rural economy; and labour market policies for the future of work, including on skills development, labour migration and social protection. Capacity building will incorporate gender equality issues and issues related to combating other grounds of discrimination and exclusion such as disability, HIV and AIDS status or ethnic origin.
10. The institutional capacity development of social dialogue actors and mechanisms will be integrated across all ILO policy outcomes and DWCPs. Capacity development and training will be delivered in the regions and via distance learning by the International Training Centre of the ILO and by ILO specialists and other experts, in response to the needs and priorities identified and articulated by constituents.

Component 2: Research and training

11. Rigorous empirical and comparative research to generate knowledge and underpin policy advice on all forms of social dialogue is the second component. Widespread dissemination through a variety of media, and forums for mutual learning and exchange of experience, will allow research outputs to reach the maximum number of users, including policy-makers. A new annual flagship report on social dialogue and tripartism, covering on a regular basis the topic of collective bargaining, will increase the visibility and impact of this area of the ILO's work.

12. Databases on industrial relations and social dialogue will be expanded, facilitating the monitoring and assessment of trends, outcomes and impact. User-friendly policy and training tools will be developed based on the findings of research and testing, to underpin the capacity building of constituents.

Component 3: Standards-related action

13. The Office will increase its efforts to support the campaign for universal ratification and effective application of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), and the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), helping member States to overcome obstacles to the ratification and application of these and other relevant labour standards. Technical assistance will be offered to countries undertaking reforms to their legal frameworks in support of freedom of association, collective bargaining, social dialogue and tripartism.
14. A high-level event on freedom of association and collective bargaining during the ILO's centenary year, bringing together tripartite constituents, academics, practitioners and other partners, will provide an opportunity to promote these fundamental rights as well as to mark the 70th anniversary of Convention No. 98.

Component 4: Enhancing policy coherence

15. In order to realize the full potential of social dialogue as a cross-cutting policy driver across all ILO activities, internal coordination between all relevant units and field offices with respect to examining and promoting social dialogue will be strengthened.
16. Furthermore, inclusive social dialogue will be actively advocated and promoted through strategic partnerships with the broader UN and development communities at the global, regional and national levels. The crucial importance of governments working with the social partners to deliver on the SDGs and of a continued role for tripartism in the reformed UNDS will be emphasized.

Coordination, monitoring and review of implementation

17. A small coordination team will be established to: operationalize the plan of action, including through the elaboration of a detailed workplan and targets; coordinate, monitor and support its implementation; and report on achievements, challenges and lessons learned. Progress will be reviewed on a regular basis, and adjustments made as necessary.

Risks and assumptions

18. The plan of action may require review and adjustment, especially in the light of:
- (a) the outcomes of the 108th Session (2019) of the International Labour Conference;
 - (b) evolving national priorities; and
 - (c) the UN reform and other global developments, including progress in respect of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

19. The proposed plan of action has significant resource implications. Within three months of endorsement of the plan by the Governing Body, the Office will prepare cost estimates and calculate resource gaps for each work item, and formulate priorities for action. Full implementation will require, in many instances, the reallocation of existing funds, and will also depend on the mobilization of extra-budgetary resources.

Draft decision

20. *The Governing Body requested the Director-General to:*

- (a) take account of its guidance in implementing the plan of action on social dialogue and tripartism for 2018–23 as set out in document GB.334/INS/3/2; and*
- (b) consider the plan in the preparation of future programme and budget proposals.*

Appendix

Plan of action on social dialogue and tripartism 2018–23

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
Component 1: Building the capacity of constituents and strengthening development cooperation (para. 5 of the framework for action)				
Social dialogue forms				
(d),(i)	Tripartite social dialogue	7.3	16.6 16.7	2018–23
	(i) Comprehensive training and policy advice to national tripartite social dialogue institutions to strengthen their effectiveness and inclusiveness, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the development and rollout of an assessment tool for diagnosis and action planning; – subregional forums to exchange experiences and good practice on social dialogue and policy-making; – documentation and dissemination of innovative policy consultation mechanisms and practices including on the future of work and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 			
	(ii) Intensified collaboration between the ILO and the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions through a cooperation agreement for 2018–24.			
	(iii) Support for strengthened social partner participation in tripartite management boards, for example those of public employment services or social security schemes.			
(b), (c)	Collective bargaining	1.5 7.3 8.2	3.3 5.1 8.5 8.8 10.2	2018–22
	(i) Capacity-building programme on collective bargaining covering, as a minimum, the issues of wage fixing, working time and gender equality, as well as on different forms of discrimination at work.			
	(ii) Development and testing of innovative collective bargaining approaches for workers and employers in the informal economy, in new and emerging forms of employment and in employment relationships where these rights have traditionally been less available.			
(g)	Workplace cooperation	7.1 7.2 7.3	8.8	2019–21
	(i) Policy and training tools on workplace cooperation that respects collective bargaining and its outcomes and does not undermine the role of trade unions.			
	(ii) Training programmes at the workplace level and training-of-trainers on workplace cooperation.			
	(iii) Revised knowledge materials for workers' organizations on occupational safety and health committees.			

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
(j)	Labour dispute prevention and resolution	7.2	16.3	2018–22
	(i) Strengthen mechanisms for labour dispute prevention and resolution, including through:	7.3	16.6	
	– policy and training tools, including on grievance handling in the workplace;			
	– certification courses for conciliators;			
	– promotion of the company–union dialogue procedure of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration);			
	– research and dialogue on and piloting of alternative mechanisms for handling individual disputes;			
	– subregional networks and workshops for dispute-resolution agencies and practitioners.			
(h)	Cross-border social dialogue	7.3	8.8	2018–21
	(i) Meeting of experts and implementation of the conclusions.	4.3	17.1	
	(ii) Support to home-host country dialogues based on the MNE Declaration.			
	(iii) Tripartite dialogue and training on labour provisions in trade and investment arrangements.			
	(iv) Dissemination of lessons learned on the implementation of international framework agreements.			
	(v) Dissemination of lessons learned on voluntary initiatives that include or engage in cross-border social dialogue.			
(i)	Employers' and workers' organizations	10.3	5.5	2018–23
	(i) Comprehensive support to strengthen the capacity of workers' organizations to uphold rights, expand membership, negotiate and implement collective agreements and influence national policies.	10.4	10.2	16.7
	(ii) Comprehensive support to strengthen the capacity of employers' organizations to expand membership, negotiate and implement collective agreements and influence national policies.			
	(iii) Promotion of women and other under-represented groups in employers' and workers' organizations.			
	Labour administration	7.2	16.6	2018–23
	(i) Comprehensive support to strengthen the capacity of national labour administrations to engage in and facilitate social dialogue, and to ensure compliance with laws and collective agreements.			

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
Social dialogue in a changing world of work				
(a)	Transition from the informal to the formal economy	6.3 10.2 10.4	8.3	2018–21
	(i) Strengthen the capacity of the social partners to extend membership and services to workers and economic units in the informal economy, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a set of tools including: a compendium of social partners’ practices regarding engagement with organizations of workers and economic units in the informal economy; a trade union guide on organizing informal economy workers in the trade union movement; guidelines for employers’ and business membership organizations on the transition to the formal economy; – knowledge-sharing events, including South–South cooperation regarding representation, services and other relations with workers and economic units in the informal economy; – policy brief on social dialogue for defining and implementing a national formalization strategy. 			
(b)	New and emerging forms of employment	7.3 10.4 10.5	8.5 8.8	2018–21
	(i) Technical guidance on the identification of workers in an employment relationship in accordance with the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198).			
	(ii) Resources and training materials on organizing workers and employers in new and emerging forms of employment and other hard-to-organize groups and including them in social dialogue.			
	(iii) Support social partners’ initiatives to organize these groups, documenting and disseminating lessons learned.			
(f)	Crisis prevention, recovery, peace and resilience	1.4 10.3 10.5	8.5 8.7 8.8	2018–21
	(i) Social dialogue is integrated in the implementation of the Jobs for Peace and Resilience programme at the global and national levels.			
	(ii) Capacity-building programme for workers’ and employers’ organizations on the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), and promotion of the Sustainable and Resilient Enterprises Platform.			
	(iii) Global research on the role of social partners in conflict and disaster management and risk reduction through social dialogue.			
(e), (k)	Labour market policies	1.3 3.1 10.3 10.5	1.3 4.4 8.5 8.b	2018–23
	(i) National tripartite dialogue methodology for the extension of social protection is widely applied.			
	(ii) Capacity building to strengthen social partners’ engagement and influence in national policy debates and implementation, including with regard to employment, education and skills, and labour migration.			

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
Other capacity development				
	(i) Global and regional training programmes and academies on, among other things: social dialogue and industrial relations, negotiation skills, social dialogue and the future of work, workplace cooperation, transition to the formal economy and labour inspection and labour administration; Master's in industrial relations.	Various, including: 1.4 1.5 7.3	3.3 8 10.7 16.7	2018–23
	(ii) Expanded social dialogue modules developed and mainstreamed across all ILO technical training delivery.	9.1	17.9	
	(iii) National follow-up dialogues on the future of work, including the role of social dialogue in the future governance of work.	A.3		
	(iv) Global and Regional Meetings and global dialogue forums on specific sectoral issues as prioritized by the Governing Body.			
	(v) Tripartite dialogues at different levels on key thematic issues such as climate change, just transition and labour migration and mobility.			
	(vi) Intensive support to revitalize and bolster national social dialogue institutions and mechanisms in the context of the United Nations (UN) system reform, the SDGs, Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and other national policy processes.			
Strengthened development cooperation				
	Partnerships to promote social dialogue and tripartism	7.3 C.2 C.3	17.3	2018–23
	(i) Advocacy and partnerships at all levels to promote the role of the social partners, social dialogue and tripartism in the development and implementation of sustainable policies for decent work and in the delivery of the SDGs.			
Component 2: Research and training (para. 6 of the framework for action)				
Knowledge production, analysis, reporting and dissemination				
(a), (e)	Key publications	A.1 1.5 7.3	8 16	2019–23
	(i) Flagship report on social dialogue and tripartism produced annually. The first such report could be envisaged for 2021 upon allocation of adequate resources. In 2020, as a transitional measure, the Global Wage Report (GWR) would focus on collective bargaining, wage inequality and working conditions. Subsequent flagship reports, distinct from the GWR, would cover other themes as indicated in the resolution.			
	(ii) Expanded series of policy briefs on social dialogue and industrial relations themes.			
	(iii) Evidence-based, analytical research on freedom of association and collective bargaining for gig economy and digital platform workers.			
	(iv) Updated guide on national tripartite social dialogue (e-publication).			
	(v) Guide on the representativeness of social partner organizations. ²			

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
(a), (d), (e)	High-quality thematic research on traditional work and future of work-related issues	Various, including:	8.3	2019–23
	(i) Wide-ranging programme of research on issues including, among other things:	A.1	8.5	
	– wage-setting for gender equality;	1.5	8.8	
	– social dialogue for a just transition and in the rural economy;	5.3	10.3	
	– drivers of informality and paths to formalization, including social dialogue and collective bargaining for the extension of social protection;	6.3		
	– cross-border social dialogue in the context of global supply chains and of regional trade agreements;	7.3		
	– social dialogue and the future of work in specific sectors;	8.2		
	– access to freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining for gig economy, digital platform and self-employed workers;	10.2		
	– mapping the implementation of the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), in practice;	10.4		
	– social dialogue on the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169);			
	– legal regulation of employment relationships in low- and middle-income economies.			
(b)	Measurement and databases	A.2	8	2019–23
	(i) Expanded coverage and scope of the EPLex, IRData and IRLex databases, with new tools for collection and use of data.	1.5	17.9	
	(ii) Expanded databases on national tripartite social dialogue institutions and on transnational company agreements. ²	7.3		
	(iii) Internationally agreed methodology to measure national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining), in line with SDG indicator 8.8.2.			
	(iv) Indicators and methodology for assessing the impact of different forms of social dialogue.			
Training tools and delivery				
(c)	Training tools	1.3	8	2018–21
	(i) Evidence-based training tools, matching constituents' needs on, among other things:	1.5		
	– good practice, highlighting innovation, in all forms of social dialogue;	7.3		
	– social partners' engagement in skills development policy and governance;	and others		

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – assessing and improving national capacity on social dialogue and occupational safety and health; – social dialogue in the public service. 			
(f)	Accessible, decentralized training and capacity building	1.5	8	2018–23
	(i) Tailor-made training activities held in the regions or delivered through distance learning.	7.2	17.9	
	(ii) Capacity building on social dialogue, including training-of-trainers, integrated in development cooperation projects across all policy outcomes.	7.3 10 A.3		
Component 3: Standards-related action (para. 7 of the framework for action)				
Ratification and implementation of relevant international labour standards				
	(i) Intensified support for the universal ratification and effective implementation of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) and Convention No. 144, and promote implementation of other relevant instruments.	2.1 2.2 8.5 10.6	8.8 16.6 16.10 16.b	2019–23
	(ii) Capacity development on social dialogue in national labour law reform processes.			
High-level event on freedom of association and collective bargaining				
	(i) Global symposium on freedom of association and collective bargaining to mark the ILO Centenary.	1.5 2.1, 2.2 7.3	8.8 16.3 16.10	2019
Component 4: Enhancing policy coherence (para. 8 of the framework for action)				
Internal coherence				
(a), (b)	Coherent Office-wide strategy on social dialogue and tripartism	1.5 7.3 C.2	8.5 8.8 16.6	2018–23
	(i) Develop and implement Office-wide strategy to ensure effective coordination, optimal resource use and a coherent approach to the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism.			
	(ii) User-friendly guide to mainstreaming social dialogue across ILO policy outcomes, in DWCPs and development cooperation programmes.			

Subparagraph ¹	Selected key outputs	Programme and budget indicator (2018–19)	SDG target	Time frame
External coherence				
(c)	<i>Pilot policy coherence initiatives involving tripartite constituents and social dialogue</i>	1.1, 1.2 6.1, 6.2 6.3 and others	8.3 8.5	2019–20
	(i) Policy coherence initiatives involving tripartite constituents, all relevant authorities, regional and international organizations, piloted at the national level, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – voluntary tripartite peer reviews of national employment policies; – multi-stakeholder processes to support the transition to formality, in line with the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204). 			
(d), (e), (f)	<i>SDGs, UN reform and global partnerships</i>	A.3 1.5 7.3 and others	8.5 8.8 10.2 16.8 and others	2018–23
	(i) Support the active engagement of the social partners in SDG implementation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms.			
	(ii) Regional or subregional tripartite forums to share experience on social dialogue and the SDGs.			
	(iii) Support social partners' involvement in existing and new ILO global partnerships.			
	(iv) Ongoing capacity building for constituents using the DW4SD Resource Platform, and regarding the UN reform process.			
	(v) Intensified collaboration with the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the UN Economic and Social Council, regional organizations and labour dispute resolution agencies.			
(g)	<i>Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration</i>	9.1, 9.2 9.3	8.8 10.7	2018–23
	(i) Support ILO constituents' active participation in the implementation of the Global Compact, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – regional and interregional tripartite dialogues for countries of origin, transit and destination on labour migration governance; – tripartite research, consultation and programme development and implementation. 			
	(ii) Continuous advocacy for the integration of decent work, social dialogue and tripartism in all aspects of the implementation of the Global Compact.			

¹ This column indicates the relevant subparagraph(s) of the framework for action contained in the conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism, International Labour Conference, 107th Session, Geneva, 2018.

² Outputs carried over from the 2013 plan of action on social dialogue (GB.319/POL/3(Rev.1)).