

▶ Appendix III – Implementation Plan supplementing the Abidjan Declaration adopted by the 14th African Regional Meeting

1. Introduction

1. The ILO 14th African Regional Meeting, held in Abidjan in December 2019, adopted the Declaration Advancing Social Justice: Shaping the future of work in Africa (the Abidjan Declaration). In its paragraph 2, the Declaration requests the Office to provide constituents with enhanced support to achieve the priorities identified therein by developing an implementation plan that will be presented to the 338th Session (March 2020) of the Governing Body. It further clarifies that the implementation plan (“the Plan”) shall contain the following:
 - (a) specific and concrete actions for creating an enabling environment for sustainable businesses;
 - (b) measures to enhance productivity growth;
 - (c) comprehensive policy guidance and technical support for skills development;
 - (d) comprehensive measures for removing policy and regulatory barriers to formalization, in line with the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), and enhancement of competitiveness and sustainability of formal sector enterprises;
 - (e) comprehensive measures for progressive extension of social protection coverage;
 - (f) measures to address gender inequality and discrimination;
 - (g) comprehensive measures for a just transition;
 - (h) capacity-building of social partners; and
 - (i) decent work and the reduction of inequalities.
2. The Abidjan Declaration further stipulates that “the implementation plan will be presented to a special meeting of the African Tripartite Group at the beginning of the 338th Session (March 2020) of the ILO Governing Body” (paragraph 3) and that “the adopted plan will be part of the document to be presented to the Governing Body as per requirement” (paragraph 4). The present paper has been prepared in accordance with the above decisions.
3. The Plan presented in this document is fully aligned with the 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work. It aims to contribute to the delivery of that Declaration’s priorities, within the framework of the Organization’s biennial programme and budget, starting with that for 2020–21. It also takes existing global and continental frameworks into account, principally:
 - the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), in particular those Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), targets and indicators that are most relevant to ILO’s programme of work, as indicated in the programme and budget;

- the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and its First Ten-Year Implementation Plan 2013–23, which gives priority to employment generation, in particular for young people and women, and to social protection;
 - the African Continental Free Trade Area, which became operational in July 2019 and aims at boosting employment through the promotion of trade among African nations;
 - the AU revised Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action 2018-2030;¹
 - the United Nations (UN) reform agenda, in particular its development component, which calls for a new generation of UN country teams and for synchronization and alignment between the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and entity-specific country programmes, such as the ILO's Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs).
4. The original version of the present Plan had been drafted in January 2020, when the coronavirus outbreak was confined to China only. The outbreak has since then evolved into a global pandemic which is having dramatic negative impact on workers, enterprises and institutions on the African continent. This impact, as well as possible response measures, are reflected, to the extent possible, in an annex to the present version of the Plan.

2. Design principles

5. The present Plan has been designed taking into account the principles set out below.
- **Focus:** The Plan will concentrate on the areas of work identified in the Abidjan Declaration, as well as on three priority population groups (see section 3).
 - **Results-orientation:** The implementation of the Plan will contribute to the achievement of results as set in the ILO Programme and Budget for 2020-21 and that for 2022–23. Progress will be measured through the indicators established in the corresponding results frameworks.
 - **Multilevel implementation:** The Plan will be implemented simultaneously at regional² and national levels, thereby also contributing to regional integration on the African continent.
 - **Alignment:** The Plan is informed by all relevant global and continental frameworks, in particular those listed in paragraph 3 above.
 - **Joint effort:** The Office will enhance partnership and collaboration with ILO constituents for an effective implementation of the plan.
 - **Conflict-sensitivity and disaster resilience building:** The Plan will be informed by the analysis of conflict drivers and fragility factors with the aim of contributing to peace and resilience building.

¹ AU, Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action 2018–2030.

² For the purpose of this document the term “regional” refers both to the whole continent and to the geographic areas of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

3. Priority target groups

6. The Plan gives a special attention to three target groups that face a higher incidence of labour market challenges in Africa, namely:
 - (a) young women and men in the age bracket 15 to 34 years (representing 33.9 per cent of the total African population);³
 - (b) workers in the informal economy (85.8 per cent of total employment in Africa, agriculture included);⁴
 - (c) migrant workers (1.4 per cent of the total African population, 2.7 per cent of total workers, 3.4 per cent among men, 1.9 per cent among women).⁵
7. There are large overlaps in the composition of these groups. In all three groups, female workers and entrepreneurs, as well as persons in vulnerable situations (including persons with disabilities, indigenous minorities, people living with HIV and AIDS, and crisis-affected populations)⁶ will receive special attention.

4. Implementation strategy by area of work

8. As mentioned above, where appropriate, the Plan will be implemented simultaneously at regional and national levels in order to take advantages of scale effects through synergies. Activities at regional level will aim to enhance the capacities and capabilities of the ILO's tripartite constituents in Africa to contribute to the design and implementation of continent-wide strategies, policies and programmes as frameworks for action for the eight AU-recognized Regional Economic Communities (RECs).⁷ They will prioritize the exchange of knowledge and experiences (intra-African South-South cooperation), the establishment of joint institutions, and the facilitation of partnerships, joint ventures and communities of practice. Activities at country level will focus on concrete projects, programmes and policies that directly benefit the priority target groups identified in section 3 above.
9. The table in the appendix summarizes the prioritized areas of work, which are derived from paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Abidjan Declaration. These areas are largely interrelated and mutually reinforcing. For example, improved skills and technology as well as the establishment of a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises will enhance entrepreneurship and decent (self-) employment opportunities for Africa's youth. The effective application of international labour standards, the extension of social protection for all and inclusive social dialogue will greatly improve the living and working conditions in the informal and rural economies. That in turn will foster the transition to formality and help address decent work deficits for young people unable to find employment in

³ Source: *Africa Demographics*.

⁴ ILO, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*, third edition, Geneva, 2018.

⁵ ILO, *ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology*, second edition, Geneva, 2018.

⁶ According to the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), this includes: children, young persons, persons belonging to minorities, indigenous and tribal peoples, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, migrants, refugees and other persons forcibly displaced across borders.

⁷ Namely: Arab Maghreb Union (UMA); Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD); East African Community (EAC); Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

the formal economy, but also improve the business environment by reducing the scale of competition from informal enterprises. Tripartism and social dialogue are essential implementation modalities of the Plan. The following paragraphs summarize the overall implementation strategy for each area of work of the Plan.

Work area 1: Decent jobs for Africa, in particular for young women and men

10. Africa's employment challenge affects all population groups, but young women and men are the hardest hit. This justifies a focus on youth employment, which cannot be tackled in isolation, but must be addressed through a comprehensive pro-employment approach.
11. Youth employment strategies in Africa must focus on the demand side of the labour market, by creating new opportunities for decent wage employment in the public and the private spheres, and improving the environment for individual or collective self-employment. They must be complemented by appropriate labour market policies to match supply to demand. The corresponding measures include:
 - (a) promoting the formulation and implementation of comprehensive pro-employment policies, covering macroeconomic, sectoral, investment, and trade policies, driving a process of inclusive structural transformation, targeting the generation of large-scale employment for young women and men, including the most vulnerable groups (persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV, indigenous people);
 - (b) mainstreaming decent and productive employment in national planning and budgets;
 - (c) integrating entrepreneurship education into national education systems;
 - (d) supporting value chain development, as well as private-sector entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) development in sectors and industries that have the potential to create jobs for youth;
 - (e) facilitating collective self-employment through the promotion of cooperatives and the wider social and solidarity economy;
 - (f) promoting public and private employment-intensive investments at a large scale, including in non-infrastructure works and services, to maximize employment opportunities and create sustainable livelihoods for the poor, leveraging innovations, new technologies and digital transformation;
 - (g) enhancing productivity through improving the business environment, promoting sustainable product and process innovations, plant and equipment improvements, and appropriate technology;
 - (h) supporting the design and implementation of active labour market policies and employment services.
12. These measures should be complemented by access to good quality public services and comprehensive skills and technology programmes (work area 2), as well as by measures to enhance the entrepreneurial capacity and business management skills of young women and men (work area 3). In addition, governments should establish a comprehensive support infrastructure for youth enterprises by taking concrete measures to improve public procurement policies and procedures, to ensure full involvement of community-based organizations, encourage the use of local resources, and facilitate access of local businesses to employment-intensive investment works.

Work area 2: Improved skills and technology

13. The supply side of the labour market must be strengthened through the establishment of inclusive skills ecosystems which recognize that education, training and lifelong learning are fundamental, and form an integral part of economic, fiscal, social and labour market policies and programmes that create decent and productive employment and enable all individuals to have access to skills development. Skills programmes and skills institutions must be informed by effective labour market information systems to align skills offer to demand; and anticipate skills needs in a rapidly changing world of work. The engagement of multiple government institutions and the social partners is crucial to designing and delivering flexible learning options that respond to changing labour market needs, and facilitate the recognition of training delivered by government agencies and the private sector through flexible qualification and skills recognition systems, including apprenticeships.
14. Low productivity remains a challenge to enterprise growth and sustainability, and thus inhibits the attainment of decent work. Productivity gains, if shared equitably between capital and labour, provide capital, contribute to reducing informality and working poverty and improve conditions of work. It is therefore indispensable to increase investments in technology and innovation, in particular digital technologies leveraging on the greatly improved internet and mobile telecommunication infrastructure on the African continent. The continent's skills institutions should therefore pay much greater attention than hitherto on imparting information and communication technology skills, covering both hardware and software.

Work area 3: Inclusive transformation for decent work in the informal and rural economy

15. The overwhelming majority of the African labour force is employed in the informal economy (including subsistence agriculture), where pronounced decent work deficits prevail. Moreover, the majority of enterprises in Africa are in the informal economy and are characterized by low productivity and low wages. Recommendation No. 204 provides guidance to Member States on measures to foster a transition to formality as a means for achieving decent work for all. In line with Recommendation No. 204, the ILO has developed diagnostic tools to assess informality among enterprises as a basis for the design of measures to reduce barriers to enterprise registration, encourage formalization, improve productivity, facilitate dialogue between formal and informal operators, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms and compliance with national regulatory frameworks. These measures will be applied through the Plan at national level and, where applicable, at regional level.
16. Around 60 per cent of the African population lives in rural areas, and 55 per cent of the African labour force is engaged in rural occupations that are characterized by high levels of informality, decent work deficits and vulnerability to climate change. Moreover, social protection coverage is lower in rural than in urban areas, and many rural producers (especially subsistence farmers) are excluded from any form of social dialogue. This situation calls for a process of inclusive structural transformation as envisaged in the AU Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). This programme needs to be concretized at national level through rural employment strategies that prioritize productivity growth and economic diversification, and at the regional level through the removal of barriers to agricultural trade. Greater public and private investments into agriculture are essential.

17. The ILO *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*⁸ offer principles and policy entry points to help constituents design integrated and coherent strategies for a just transition that maximizes decent work opportunities while ensuring social justice, in line with the recently launched [Climate Action for Jobs Initiative](#). Within this framework the Plan will:
- enhance capacities to assess the employment, social and economic impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and resilience;
 - enhance capacities to develop coherent policies and programmes for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies at the national, sectoral or local levels, including green entrepreneurship and value chain development;
 - strengthen mechanisms for social dialogue and policy coherence on a just transition.

Work area 4: A conducive environment for sustainable enterprises

18. The ILO has built considerable expertise in the assessment of the Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (ESEE). Assessments have already been carried out in 12 African countries. However, there is a need for strengthening the implementation of the recommendations arising from the ESEE assessments so that the solid base for creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises that these assessments provide get translated into concrete actions. It is also important to undertake regional and subregional comparative assessments of the business environment in order to build knowledge concerning best practices and to foster learning and experience sharing among countries. The Programme and Budget for 2020–21 prioritizes action to increase the capacity of Member States to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises, as well as to support enterprises in adopting new business models, technology and techniques to enhance productivity and sustainability, including for cooperatives and social and solidarity economy organizations.
19. Enterprise promotion and support agencies exist in many African countries, but they should be strengthened and expanded, firstly by broadening their target groups, which should include not only traditional SMEs but also microenterprises in the informal economy with a view to facilitate their transition to the formal economy, as well as social and solidarity economy enterprises. And secondly by enlarging the scope of services to cover access to productive resources and inputs, to knowledge, financial services including access to credit, to foster linkages with domestic and global markets, and to create opportunities for value addition and innovation.
20. The ILO will continue promoting the full implementation of the 2017 ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration), including through support to the tripartite constituents on the African continent.
21. Regarding productivity, the ILO takes an integrated approach that addresses productivity and decent work deficits at three distinctive but inter-related levels:
- at enterprise level the approach includes management training, skills development, innovation, occupational safety and health, the promotion of workplace cooperation and productivity gain-sharing between workers and employers;

⁸ Available on the ILO [website](#).

- at sectoral level the approach seeks to enhance access to information and market linkages for sustainable growth, and to strengthen the vocational training and skills development system;
 - at national level the approach leverages strategic partnerships, promotes the coordination for macro level policies, laws and regulation through tripartism and social dialogue in order to create a conducive environment for productivity growth.
22. This approach should be adopted by the national Productivity Centres, though these currently exist in only eight African countries. In addition to strengthening the capacity of the existing centres in Africa, it would be important to establish such centres in other African countries.

Work area 5: Effective and inclusive tripartism and social dialogue

23. Social dialogue requires free, independent, strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations, able to exercise the right to freedom of association and enjoy the right to collective bargaining. It also requires effective and adequately resourced labour administrations that have problem-solving and compromise-seeking capacities, and robust social dialogue institutions. In the African context, over 85 per cent of workers engaged in the informal economy. Hence, it is important to encourage and support trade unions and employers' organizations in order for them to integrate informal economy organizations and proactively engage and associate with them. It is also important to enhance the capacity of labour administrations in order to address the persistent decent work challenges in the informal economy.
24. More specifically, programmes to be developed under the Plan will:
- strengthen the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations at national and regional levels, in line with the ILO-wide strategy for institutional capacity development (GB.335/INS/9), including through their active involvement in project design and implementation, as well as in UN reform processes;
 - strengthen the capacity of labour administrations to enable them promote and participate in social dialogue processes;
 - strengthen the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations to extend their services and membership to informal economy workers and economic units;
 - improve mechanisms for effective and inclusive social dialogue, strengthening the capacity and impact of the various forms of social dialogue, including at cross-border level;
 - develop social partners' initiatives at REC level; and
 - provide advice and assistance on involving informal economy actors in social dialogue processes.

Work area 6: Social and labour protection for all

25. Only 18 per cent of the African population receive at least one social protection benefit. Most of those excluded work in the informal economy and many are locked in a vicious cycle of vulnerability, poverty and social exclusion. To provide universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection, it is necessary to:

- develop national social protection strategies that are underpinned by political and budgetary commitments and based on effective social dialogue;
 - implement both contributory and non-contributory, gender and HIV-sensitive schemes that protect people from life-cycle risks and prevent poverty and vulnerability; and
 - build and improve the financial and administrative governance of national social protection systems to ensure their long-term sustainability.
26. These measures will be implemented through a systemic approach, including under the ILO's [Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All](#).
27. The ILO estimates the number of migrant workers in Africa at 13 million,⁹ a number which is likely to grow in view of demographic shifts and as a consequence of climate change. There is a need for more inclusive labour institutions to provide for the equal treatment of migrant workers and to ensure the effective protection of their rights and working conditions. Fair and effective labour migration frameworks need to be developed, through social dialogue and intergovernmental cooperation within and across borders, to advance equality of treatment for migrant workers, prevent human rights abuses and social dumping and promote compliance with international labour standards. The Office will work to enhance constituents' capacity to develop fair and effective labour migration frameworks, institutions and services to protect migrant workers, as further detailed in output 7.5 of the Programme and Budget for 2020–21.

Work area 7: Effectively applied up-to-date labour standards and promotion of gender equality

28. The effective implementation in law and practice of international labour standards creates a virtuous, human-centred development cycle that enhances productivity and raises standards of living. Importantly, standards and their ratification must respond to the changing patterns in the world of work and support a transformative agenda for gender equality. The Office will continue to promote the ratification and application of international labour standards by African governments, with an emphasis on fundamental and governance standards, and on replacing outdated instruments with up-to-date standards. It will provide technical assistance responding to constituent needs, strengthen the capacity of labour administrations to develop and enforce legislation for effective labour market governance, and to report on the application of international labour standards. This will also include capacity development initiatives for social partners and social dialogue structures.
29. According to ILO estimates, some 72.1 million African children are engaged in child labour, of whom 31.5 million work under hazardous conditions. Moreover, 3.7 million Africans are victims of forced labour.¹⁰ To address this problem the AU (3rd AU Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-3) adopted in December 2019 a Ten Year Action Plan to Eradicate Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. Through the present Plan the Office will support the implementation of the action plan at the country and regional

⁹ ILO, *ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers* 2018.

¹⁰ Sources: ILO Statistics on Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and ILO Global Estimates of Child Labour.

levels, with the technical support of the Global Flagship Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour and Forced Labour (IPEC+).

30. ILO research shows that persistent gender gaps remain in the African labour market, as shown in the table below.

► **Gender gaps in African labour markets** (pan-african averages, in percentage)

Indicator	Female	Male
Labour force participation rate	54.3	72
Employment-to-population ratio	50.1	67.5
Not in employment, education or training (NEET)	25.6	15.5
Employment in the informal economy	89.7	82.7
Share of women in managerial positions	20.3	79.7

Source: ILOSTAT

31. To address this situation, and in line with the priorities set under outcome 6 of the Programme and Budget for 2020–21, activities under the Plan will:

- promote a transformative agenda for gender equality, which acknowledges the relationship between unpaid care work and paid work, recognizes, reduces and redistributes unpaid care work, and rewards and represents care workers;
- contribute to ending violence and harassment in the world of work as demanded by the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190);
- promote and implement the Domestic Workers’ Convention, 2011 (No. 189);
- increase constituents’ capacity to promote and ensure equal opportunities, participation and treatment for women and men, including equal remuneration for work of equal value.

5. Implementation responsibilities

32. Through the Abidjan Declaration the constituents on the African Continent committed themselves to “making decent work a reality for Africa’s youth, developing skills, technological pathways and productivity for a brighter future in Africa, transforming Africa’s informal and rural economy for decent work, and respecting international labour standards, promoting social dialogue and ensuring gender equality”. Consequently, primary responsibility for the achievement of the priorities identified in the Declaration lies with the constituents: the African governments, employers’ organizations and trade unions. With enhanced support from the Office, governments should ensure that the priorities of the Plan are duly reflected in national development strategies and budgets, and that the employers’ and workers’ organizations are effectively involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of projects and programmes launched under the umbrella of the Plan. Moreover, constituents should ensure that the Plan’s priorities are reflected in new and existing DWCPs.
33. The Office will support the constituents through the delivery of the outputs defined in the Programme and Budget for 2020–21 and in that for 2022–23. It will also assist Member States in designing and implementing national and regional development

cooperation projects that are in line with the Abidjan Declaration and this implementation plan, guided by the ILO-wide strategy for institutional capacity development,¹¹ and the Development Cooperation Strategy for 2020–25. The Office will further enhance and diversify its efforts to mobilize resources for development cooperation in Africa, including by accessing non-traditional funding sources such as the emerging economies from the Global South, private entities, development banks and domestic funding. It will ensure that the constituents are effectively associated with the design, implementation and monitoring of such projects, and that all relevant projects include elements of capacity-building for constituents.

34. The implementation of the Plan will require strong and focused partnerships at national, regional and global levels. Partnership building is central to the 2030 Agenda (Goal 17), to the AU Agenda 2063 (Goal 19), to the Centenary Declaration and to the Decent Work Agenda. The following partnerships in support of the Plan should be harnessed at national level:
 - members of the UN country teams;
 - international financial institutions;
 - thematic development partners' groups on employment and social protection;
 - inter-ministerial coordination committees;
 - social dialogue institutions;
 - parliamentarians;
 - the academia; and, where appropriate,
 - civil society organizations.
35. The 13 ILO Country Offices in the region will play a key role in initiating and nurturing such partnerships.
36. Partnership with the African RECs is central to the Plan; the ILO has concluded formal partnership agreements with five of the eight AU recognized RECs, namely EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC; the memoranda of understanding with EAC and SADC were renewed in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Cooperation with RECs could be intensified through regional Decent Work Programmes, such as the one agreed with SADC, and those under preparation with EAC and ECOWAS. The Office will further strengthen its cooperation with, and support to, the three African labour administration training centres (African Regional Labour Administration Centre, Centre Régional africain d'administration du travail, and Arab Centre for Labour Administration), as they can play an important role in supporting the Plan.
37. The Office will expand and intensify the already vibrant cooperation it enjoys with Pan-African institutions, including the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the African Development Bank, and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Partnerships with these institutions will play an essential role in implementing the continental components of the Plan.

¹¹ GB.335/INS/9.

6. Monitoring and reporting

38. The Office will continuously monitor progress in the implementation of the Plan and report on its achievements as part of its biennial programme implementation report.
39. The Office will prepare a report on the implementation of the Plan for review by the 15th African Regional Meeting (2023).

▶ Annex

Areas of work	P&B 2020–21 outputs	Major activities	
		Regional level	Country level
1. Decent jobs for Africa, in particular for young women and men	3.1 3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate policy guides on pro-employment macroeconomic and sectoral policies for African countries • Formulate an AU-ILO youth employment strategy for Africa • Organize knowledge-sharing and mutual assistance in mainstreaming decent work and in formulating national employment policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support governments to mainstream employment in national policy and budget frameworks • Support ratification of C.122 and formulation and implementation of national employment policies • Support enterprise development agencies to provide services to youth entrepreneurs, including in the social and solidarity economy
2. Improved skills and technology	5.1 5.2 5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to implementation of the AU Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET), in particular through increased involvement of social partners, including the establishment of regional multilingual skills training institutions open to students from all African countries • Advocate for the inclusion of skills recognition and cooperation as an element of regional integration in the work of RECs • Facilitate the cooperation at AU level with the UN Technology Bank and the Science, Technology and Innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries, and promote the exchange of technology through RECs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support formulation and implementation of inclusive and comprehensive skills and life-long learning policies • Advocate for increased investments in skills development • Take active measures to reduce the skills mismatch in the labour market, including through consultation with the tripartite constituents • Promote the reduction of skills mismatches through labour-market information systems • Facilitate the introduction of innovative schemes such as work-based learning and high quality apprenticeships • Promote credit facilities, waiver of import duties, training and technology support to facilitate the use of modern technology
3. Inclusive transformation for decent work in the informal	3.1 3.2 3.3 4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the AU-ILO continental programme “Decent Work for Transformation of the Informal Economy in Africa”, including the organization of regional knowledge-exchange forums on formalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the design and implementation of national programmes for the formalization of the informal economy in line with R.204

Areas of work	P&B 2020–21 outputs	Major activities	
		Regional level	Country level
and rural economy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Formulate and implement a continental programme on the Blue Economy in African Island States Design and implement regional and cross-border Green Jobs programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the formulation and implementation of rural employment strategies, including the promotion of non-farm activities Support African Member States to design and implement green jobs strategies
4. A conducive environment for sustainable enterprises	4.1 4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for full implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) and for the free movement of persons throughout the AU Support RECs in their efforts to foster regional economic integration and joint ventures Promote the development and dissemination of knowledge and best practices for the promotion of an enabling business environment Facilitate regional cooperation between national agencies in charge of supporting SMEs and between productivity centres Strengthen the Pan-African Productivity Association (PAPA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support policy, regulatory and institutional reforms for enhancing the development, productivity and growth of sustainable enterprises Contribute to the establishment and strengthening of support agencies to promote and formalize SMEs Increase knowledge and capacity of ILO's constituents on key drivers for productivity growth Support national productivity centres to implement productivity and workplace cooperation programmes
5. Effective and inclusive tripartism and social dialogue	1.1 1.2 1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the capacity of regional and subregional workers' and employers' organizations including BusinessAfrica, ITUC-Africa and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) to implement the Abidjan Declaration Strengthen the AU STC tripartite structure and capacity in promoting social dialogue through technical assistance Establish or strengthen workers' and employers' organizations at REC level, as well as supporting sound and effective regional social dialogue institutions Promote the participation of youth, disabled persons and informal economy organizations as observers to the AU STC-SDLE and to regional social dialogue institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations at the national and level Associate national workers' and employers' organizations with all the activities carried out to implement the Abidjan Declaration. Extend the mandate and competence of social dialogue institutions to cover all areas related to economic and social development. Enhance the effectiveness and inclusiveness of national social dialogue institutions and mechanisms, and establish them where they do not yet exist; provide for the effective representation of the interests of youth, disabled persons and informal economy actors in social

Areas of work	P&B 2020–21 outputs	Major activities	
		Regional level	Country level
6. Social and labour protection for all	7.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue implementing the AU “Social protection plan for the informal economy and rural workers” (SPIREWORK) at continental level 	<p>dialogue institutions and processes; within the framework of R.204 and the 2018 resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support improvement of the coverage, adequacy and governance of social protection systems, including towards workers and SMEs in the informal economy
	8.1 8.2 8.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize regional exchange of knowledge, experiences and systems on: (i) the extension of social protection coverage; and (ii) cash transfers to the most vulnerable population groups Continue and expand the AU-UNECA-International Organization for Migration (IOM)-ILO joint labour migration programme Advocate for effective regulations that facilitate the movement of workers within RECs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the design and implementation of cash transfer programmes to households living below the national poverty line and to vulnerable groups Contribute to the design and implementation of national labour migration policies and institutions
7. Effectively applied up-to-date labour standards and promotion of gender equality	1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize, through AU STC-SDLE and through RECs, the exchange of knowledge and experience on international labour standard supervision and reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen labour administrations, in particular labour inspectorates, to ensure the effective supervision and reporting of international labour standards.
	2.2 2.3 6.3 7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the AU action plan on forced labour and child labour, including through the design of regional programmes Advocate for full implementation of the AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment 2018-2028 Promote the adoption of regional programmes on gender equality in the world of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development and implementation of appropriate policies, programmes and legislation aimed at the elimination of forced labour and child labour Contribute to the development of appropriate laws, institutions and programmes aimed at achieving gender equality at work Enhance the involvement of women in business and management

▶ COVID-19 response relevance

Work area	Impact of COVID-19 on the work area	Possible response measures	Resources
Decent jobs for Africa, in particular for young women and men	Young women and men will be particularly affected by the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic A dedicated website of the Decent Work for Youth Initiative gives five reasons to provide evidence for this statement. The ILO estimates that one in six young people will be out of work due to COVID-19	In response to the 2007–08 global financial crisis the ILO developed a Global Jobs Pact which was later endorsed by the UN. Many of the policy prescriptions contained therein are applicable to the COVID-19 response as well. Active labour market policies are likely to constitute a key response strategy, in particular in countries with a high proportion of rural/informal workers;	The ILO has published guidelines on how to assess the employment impact of the COVID-19 crisis . Following the adoption of the Global Jobs Pact in 2009 some 20 related policy briefs were published. The ILO Employment Department has assembled COVID-19 specific material and tools on its resource page . A second resource page focuses on the employment-Intensive investment-programme's response to COVID-19. The impact of COVID-19 on youth has been documented here . The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth is carrying out a global survey on youth and COVID-19.
Improved skills and technology	The pandemic is having a profound impact on skills transmission. As classroom training has been suspended in many countries, students must rely on web-based skills training systems, which require expensive equipment that poorer households cannot afford. Apprenticeships, including those in informal settings, are being disrupted because of lockdowns. The COVID-19 pandemic could have a positive impact on the spread of new technologies, in particular those that enable web-based collaboration (labour	The crisis provides an opportunity for the development of more flexible learning solutions that make better use of distance learning and digital solutions, provided that sufficient human and financial resources are mobilized to ensure universal access to digital technologies. The pandemic will cause permanent changes in the world of work, in particular an expansion of home-office work which may, in the long term, enhance labour productivity. The shortening of supply chains may, in the short term, reduce total factor productivity, but will make production more resilient in the longer term.	COVID-19 specific material on skills and employability, including policy briefs and guidance notes, have been assembled under a dedicated web page The ILO portal on COVID-19 and the world of work includes selected tools and resources on the relationship between the pandemic and technology and innovation.

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	platform, gig economy), automation and decentralized production (3D printing).		
Inclusive structural transformation for decent work in the informal and rural economy	<p>Informal economy workers and operators will be most affected by the pandemic because they: (a) are not protected by social safety nets; (b) are not covered by health insurance; (c) cannot sufficiently protect themselves against infections; and (d) are at greatest risk to fall into poverty.</p> <p>Restrictions on movement may prevent farmers from accessing markets, thereby reducing rural incomes; as restaurants, hotels, bars and schools are closed, rural producers are confronted with declining demand. The pandemic may also have a serious impact on labour-intensive crop production and processing due to labour shortages and border closures. Additional challenges arise from farmworkers' increased exposure to various safety, health, environmental, and biological hazards.</p>	<p>The possible expansion of the informal economy caused by COVID-19 calls for even greater efforts to stabilize incomes and livelihoods in, and extend social protection, social dialogue and labour rights to, the informal economy, in line with the Recommendation concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy (R.204).</p> <p>The pandemic has brought to light the essential nature of agriculture and rural production; this may incite governments to invest, after the pandemic, in rural development so to decrease dependency on global markets.</p>	<p>Several COVID-19 specific policy briefs and tools have been published in recent months, including “COVID-19 crisis and the informal economy”, an estimate on the “Impact of lockdown measures on the informal economy”, and a tool to assess the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy.</p> <p>A policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on agriculture and food security has been published recently. Further guidance is available at the relevant website of the FAO.</p>
A conducive environment for sustainable enterprises	The pandemic has a dramatic negative impact on enterprises of all sizes, with micro and small enterprises being the most severely affected.	Enterprise stabilization, recovery, development and expansion will contribute to economic and employment recovery once the pandemic is under control. This may also include unconventional options such as the takeover by workers of bankrupt enterprises.	The ILO Library has compiled several research guides related to enterprises and cooperatives. Specific COVID-19 Enterprises Resources are being published regularly.

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Effective and inclusive tripartism and social dialogue	Social dialogue processes and institutions are disrupted by lockdowns and social distancing measures.	Social dialogue is an indispensable mechanism to attenuate the catastrophic impact of the pandemic on jobs and enterprises, and to design a common strategy for the post-recovery reconstruction. This in turn requires strong and effective workers' and employers' organizations and labour administrations. Social dialogue constitutes the fourth pillar of ILOs recommended policy response to the Covid-19 pandemic.	A policy brief on the role of social dialogue in addressing the COVID-19 crisis has been published recently.
Social and labour protection for all	<p>Social protection systems have been put under enormous strain by the pandemic. This includes the obvious impact on health systems and health insurances, as well as the need to pay unemployment benefits or provide social assistance to a rapidly growing number of jobless persons.</p> <p>Occupational safety and health (OSH) is an area most affected by the pandemic; the measures taken to protect workers and customers (closure of businesses, social distancing etc.) are having severe repercussions on the economy.</p>	<p>The pandemic has shown that countries with comprehensive, universal social protection systems weather the crisis much better than others. This will motivate governments to invest more in social protection, and to build national social protection floors, once the pandemic has ebbed. Social protection measures have been included in pillars 2 and 3 of ILOs recommended policy response to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Governments, companies, workers and the public will draw lessons from OSH-related measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus; this is likely to improve the protection of all against viral infections, and will inform the response pandemics in the future. "Protecting workers in the workplace" constitutes pillar 3 of the consolidated ILO response to COVID 19</p>	<p>The ILO maintains a dedicated monitor to record the social protection responses to COVID-19 around the world, and published a related policy brief</p> <p>COVID-19 specific guidance on OSH-related issues is being published on related pages of ILO's COVID-19 portal.</p>

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Effectively applied up-to-date labour standards and promotion of gender equality	<p>Three possible effects of the pandemic on international labour standards may occur: (i) labour inspectors may no longer be able to supervise the application of standards due to lockdowns and travel restrictions; (ii) growing unemployment may incite unscrupulous employers to suspend or loosen the application of international labour standards; (iii) because of shifting priorities, governments may delay the ratification of standards.</p> <p>Social distancing measures imposed due to the pandemic have a large impact on sectors with high female employment. Closures of schools and day-care centres have massively increased child-care needs, which has a particularly large impact on working mothers.</p>	<p>International labour standards cover every aspect of the world of work and provide guidance on a vast array of topics. Of particular relevance is the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) which offers advice on implementing coherent and comprehensive strategies for recovery and resilience.</p> <p>The challenges associated with the pandemic have brought to light the crucial role of professions in which female workers form a majority: health services, care industry, domestic workers, retail business etc. This may entail the revalorization of such professions. The flexible working arrangements introduced by many companies may benefit women in the long run.</p>	<p>A recent ILO policy brief summarizes the key provisions of international labour standards relevant to the COVID-19 outbreak.</p> <p>Specific guidance and practical tools on the relationship between COVID-19 and gender equality has been produced recently, as well as a guidance note on avoiding stigma and discrimination of people infected by the coronavirus.</p>