

COMMUNIQUE

Decent Work in Middle-Income Countries – A Strategy for Africa

We, the participants in the tripartite validation workshop on “Decent Work in Middle-Income Countries – A Strategy for Africa”, assembled in Praia, on 27 and 28 June 2016, to build consensus on the key priorities, common implementation principles and resource requirements to advance the Decent Work Agenda in Africa’s middle and high-income countries, and to commit to its implementation through concrete action.

Together we have examined a wide range of topics, including:

1. Structural transformation and productive employment in middle-income countries;
2. Decent Work in Middle-Income Countries – An ILO strategy for Africa;
3. Domestic resource mobilization and effective partnerships for promoting Decent Work in Middle-Income Countries;
4. Effective governance of the labour market;
5. Social dialogue and tripartism – issues, trends and opportunities in Middle-Income Countries; and
6. Towards the Future of Work in Africa.

Acknowledge that the term “middle-income” is a label that applies indiscriminately to countries exhibiting a great diversity of country-specific conditions in terms of income levels, economic structure, government capacity, social progress, environmental factors, and exposure to fragility we welcome the Office’s efforts to develop a refined intervention strategy that takes into account the individual context of each Africa middle-income country.

We, the government, employers’ and workers’ representatives, brought together by the Regional Office for Africa of the International Labour Office (ILO) on this occasion, support the Strategy entitled “Decent Work in Middle-Income Countries”. To achieve the overarching goal of making Decent Work a reality in Africa, the strategy pursues three main objectives:

1. To adapt the Office’s programme priorities to the needs and capacities of Middle-Income Countries;
2. To adapt the Office’s implementation modalities to the structures and characteristics of Middle-Income Countries;
3. To mobilize resources for the Office’s interventions in Middle-Income Countries.

We further endorse the common implementation principles that must guide the Office’s interventions in Middle-Income Countries, namely:

1. The pursuit of development effectiveness;
2. The full respect of national ownership, as well as the preferred use of national capacities, systems and structures for project implementation;
3. The strategic use of non-earmarked resources for priority interventions;
4. The active participation of the Office in joint UN efforts;
5. The prioritization of countries whose needs are greatest with regards to Decent Work deficits.

These principles must be underpinned by efforts to enhance the Office's visibility and presence in non-resident Middle-Income countries.

We urge national governments, social partners, regional economic communities, and the international community to contribute to ensuring that this strategy is realized through joint, as well as individual concrete endeavours geared towards promoting job-rich inclusive growth, sustainable enterprises, greater social justice, full respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work, the extension of social protection, and vibrant social dialogue, as well as the effective governance of democratic labour market institutions and the rapid formalization of the informal economy. Moreover, we call upon our governments to make Decent Work a central goal of national development plans and strategies.

Acting on these commitments requires dedication, capacity building and partnerships at the national, regional and international levels, including the governments, employers' and workers' organizations. We encourage our citizens and the media to promote the objectives of the strategy and to disseminate good practices.

We note with concern that the amount of Official Development Aid (ODA) available to Africa's middle-income countries is likely to shrink over time, and call upon the Office to mobilize alternative source of funding, including domestic resources, funding from the private sector, as well as newly established climate change finance facilities, to pursue and expand its projects and programmes in our nations. To achieve this goal the Office should adapt its financial and administrative rules and regulations to the requirements and characteristics of domestic development funding.

We are convinced of the virtues of South-South and Triangular cooperation and declare our willingness to actively cooperate with other countries from the global South, both as providers and as recipients of development cooperation efforts, to further the Decent Work Agenda in our nations.

We are committed to working together to demonstrate that through national commitment and international solidarity we can build a better future and enhance the prospects for prosperity and welfare in Africa.

Adopted in Praia on 28 June 2016