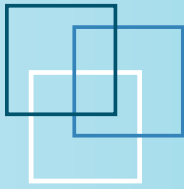




International
Labour
Organization



The Labour Principles of the United Nations Global Compact **A Guide for Business**

The Labour Principles
of the United Nations Global Compact
A Guide for Business

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of the United Nations Global Compact
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First published 2008
Reprinted 2010

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The Labour Principles of the United Nations Global Compact: A Guide for Business / International Labour Office. - Geneva: ILO, 2008
ca. 30 p.

ISBN: 978-92-2-121823-4 (print); 978-92-2-121824-1 (web pdf);

workers' rights / equal employment opportunity / discrimination / forced labour / child labour / ILO Declaration / corporate responsibility / enterprise

04.02.5

Also available in Spanish: *Principios laborales del Pacto Mundial de las Naciones Unidas. Guía para empresas* (ISBN: 978-92-2-321823-2 (print), 978-92-2-321824-9 (web pdf), Geneva 2010)

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

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Preface

The labour principles of the UN Global Compact may be among the most specific of the initiative's ten principles, but that does not mean that they are the easiest to implement. Many companies face difficulties in knowing what is expected of them and what more can be done to uphold these principles. There is thus much scope for learning, dialogue and collective action, including partnerships, as ways to complement other approaches aimed at bringing about responsible labour practices. This is the contribution that the UN Global Compact seeks to make. Today, the UN Global Compact is the largest corporate citizenship initiative with over 6,000 business participants and other stakeholders involved in more than 130 countries.

Thankfully, some excellent guidance materials have now been developed to help businesses of all sizes and from all sectors and locations. It is our hope that this Guide – an output of the newly established Global Compact Labour Working Group – will help raise further awareness of the existence of these materials and be a very useful Guide for business everywhere.

Georg Kell
Executive Director
UN Global Compact Office

Foreword

The International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) share the conviction that government has the fundamental obligation to ensure that the rights of its citizens, including workers and employers, are protected. They also agree that public action by the State is essential if the environment is to be respected and sustainable development is to be achieved. In the area of labour standards, employers' and workers' organizations have participated in developing and adopting international labour standards since the creation of the tripartite International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1919.

We understand that adopting standards or laws is not sufficient to ensure that they are respected. In the area of labour standards, that requires efficient, honest, and effective labour inspection and systems of justice. In fact, rule of law is vital to ensuring that citizens, employers, and workers and their trade unions have their rights fully respected in all of the areas covered by the 10 United Nations Global Compact principles.

The ITUC and the IOE see the United Nations Global Compact as one way to engage in dialogue that will help to achieve adequate governance so that public authority is credible, and so that government is fair and functions well for everybody. Only governments have the political legitimacy and responsibility to legislate and enforce. We seek to make governments more responsible rather than shifting those responsibilities to private parties.

We recognize, however, that companies can play an important and positive role by taking on board some of the principles contained in international labour standards. The Global Compact incorporates some of the most vital ones, including those that are considered to be human rights principles. The **[ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#)** is the source of these principles.

This **Guide** includes a brief description of each of the four Global Compact labour principles: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. It also contains an inventory of key ILO materials concerning these principles.

There are a number of other principles derived from international labour standards, including those in the important areas of occupational health and safety, employment, and training. Several of these principles are contained in the ILO **Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy**. The IOE and the ITUC join together in recommending the use of that declaration as a source of guidance.

The ITUC and the IOE appreciate the valuable assistance, time, consultation and, at times, patience, from the ILO in the preparation of this Guide. As can be expected from autonomous organizations representing the interests of workers and employers, there is not automatic or easy agreement on every detail in this Guide and we would have, independently, worded certain things differently. We hope, nevertheless, that this Guide makes it easier for companies to understand the principles and facilitates their respect.

The ILO is developing experience working directly with companies. It has long supported employers' and workers' organizations to engage with companies. It welcomes the opportunity to make these materials available to companies, workers' and employers' organizations. We also commend these materials to the UN Global Compact Local Networks and any other organizations interested in strengthening their capacity to give effect to the UN Global Compact Labour Principles.

This Guide is the first publication produced by the UN Global Compact Labour Working Group. The Labour Working Group was established in 2008 at the initiative of the International Organization of Employers and the International Trade Union Confederation to give more visibility to the labour principles, promote a common understanding and help ensure a consistent approach to their implementation. It also will help to strengthen collaboration between the ILO and the UN Global Compact Office; to develop more fully the important role of dialogue and consultation in promotion of the UN Global Compact and the functioning of the Local Networks; and to enhance dialogue by strengthening the involvement of the social partners.

This is the first edition of **The Labour Principles of the United Nations Global Compact: a Guide for Business.** As such, it is a work in progress, which will be updated and expanded periodically based on experience with its use and as new tools and resources become available.

Antonio Peñalosa
Secretary-General,
International Organisation of Employers (IOE)

Sharan Burrow
General Secretary,
International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact

Principles 1-2

Human Rights Principles

- Principle 1** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.
- Principle 2** Businesses should ensure that their own operations are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Principles 3-6

Labour Principles

- Principle 3** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.
- Principle 4** Businesses should uphold the elimination of forced or compulsory labour.
- Principle 5** Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.
- Principle 6** Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Principles 7-9

Environment Principles

- Principle 7** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.
- Principle 8** Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.
- Principle 9** Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Principle 10

Anti-Corruption Principle

- Principle 10** Businesses should work against all forms of corruption, including extortion and bribery.

Introduction

Large numbers of businesses are recognizing that their sustainability is linked to the larger sustainability of society. Management policies and practices are determined at different levels and can receive guidance from numerous sources.

The UN Global Compact provides the opportunity to work with the United Nations, share experiences with businesses and their organizations around the world, and engage in dialogue with trade unions and other groups. It asks companies to integrate into their daily practices and promote within their spheres of influence ten principles that have long been recognized by the international community as universal through authoritative treaties and declarations.

By supporting the UN Global Compact, participants choose to become part of a network of companies that are committed to improving business practices in four areas that can help to make globalization fairer and more inclusive: human rights, labour standards, environmental protection and the fight against corruption. They are also engaging in dialogue aimed at furthering the goals of the UN and helping to further larger goals of society, including sound legislation in the 10 areas covered by the principles, better rule of law, and good governance.

The purpose of this Guide is to increase the understanding of the four labour principles of the UN Global Compact (principles 3, 4, 5 and 6) as well as to provide an inventory of key resources to help integrate these principles into business operations.

Box 1

The Labour Principles of the UN Global Compact

Companies are asked to:

- uphold freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.
- uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.
- uphold the effective abolition of child labour.
- uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

(UN Global Compact Principles 3, 4, 5 and 6)

This Guide begins by explaining the origin of the four labour principles of the UN Global Compact which derive from the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The subsequent section contains a more detailed explanation of each principle and some ideas on how to put it into practice. There are many ways to put the principles into practice, and each company must decide the manner that makes the most sense in the context of its own operations and circumstances. The final section provides an inventory of key materials developed by the ILO.

Box 2

The United Nations Global Compact Labour Working Group

The United Nations Global Compact Board established a Labour Working Group in June 2008. It is co-chaired by the Secretary-General of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and supported by the International Labour Office (ILO).

It aims to:

- Raise the profile, relevance of, and respect for the four labour principles among UN Global Compact companies and networks.
- Help ensure a consistent approach is taken to the application and understanding of the four principles, drawing on ILO, ITUC, and IOE information and experience.
- Develop tools, information exchange, and forums for UN Global Compact companies' engagement on the four labour principles.

The Labour Principles

Where the UN Global Compact labour principles come from: The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations agency that was established for the purpose of setting international labour standards. The ILO has a tripartite structure and is governed by representatives of governments, employers and workers. Labour principles derive from ILO Conventions and Recommendations, which set international labour standards on a broad range of subjects related to the world of work, including human rights at work, occupational safety and health, employment policy and human resources development. Increasing concerns about the social impact of globalization led the members of the ILO - representatives of government, employers and workers at the international level - to recognize in 1995 that there were four categories of labour principles and rights, expressed in eight conventions (the so-called “core conventions”), that should be considered as fundamental because they protect basic workers’ rights. These categories are:

- a) Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- b) The elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;
- c) The effective abolition of child labour; and
- d) The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

The process culminated in 1998 with the adoption of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. This Declaration affirms that all ILO members States, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization to respect, to promote and to realize the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of those Conventions.¹

¹ For further information about the Declaration, please visit: <http://www.ilo.org/declaration>.

Box 3

Core Labour Conventions²

Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining

- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention (No. 87), 1948
- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98), 1949

Forced Labour

- Forced Labour Convention (No. 29), 1930
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105), 1957

Child Labour

- Minimum Age Convention (No. 138), 1973
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182), 1999

Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation

- Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), 1951
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), 1958

The adoption of this Declaration has underlined the international community's determination to take up the challenges posed by globalization. The Declaration aims to ensure that social progress goes hand in hand with economic progress and development. It provides benchmarks for responsible business conduct and is therefore often referred to in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives such as the UN Global Compact.

² The texts of all ILO Conventions and Recommendations can be found at www.ilo.org/ilolex.

The broader set of labour principles companies should be aware of

The ILO's main instrument for promoting labour standards and principles in the corporate world is the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (ILO MNE Declaration). The ILO MNE Declaration is unique in this area as it was developed by representatives of governments, employers, and workers, and is the most comprehensive instrument in advancing the labour dimension of CSR.

The ILO MNE Declaration contains recommendations on how companies should apply principles deriving from international labour standards in the areas of general policies, employment promotion and security, equality of opportunity and treatment, training, wages and benefits, minimum age, occupational safety and health, and industrial relations. As such, it provides more detailed guidance on labour issues and a more complete picture of how companies can maximize their positive contribution to society, and minimize any negative impacts.

The relationship between labour principles and business

ILO Conventions are international treaties, which, upon ratification by a member state, become an obligation that they are transposed into national legislation which ultimately binds companies' operations. **Companies must respect national law in their efforts to advance the labour principles.**

Although only member States ratify conventions, conventions and recommendations contain principles and valuable guidance which may also be relevant to companies seeking to improve their workplace practices beyond legal compliance. The ILO MNE Declaration takes the principles underlying certain international standards addressed to governments and expresses them as expectations concerning the behaviour of business. A summary of the ILO MNE Declaration principles for companies is provided in the Annex.³

³ The text of the ILO MNE Declaration and more information can be obtained at www.ilo.org/multi.

The ILO MNE Declaration can provide guidance to UN Global Compact participants concerning not only the four labour principles but also other key areas. The ILO MNE Declaration is based on the recognition that certain principles derived from international labour standards are relevant to enterprises.

The UN Global Compact labour principles are based on a limited number of standards, those related to fundamental rights. In order to have a deeper understanding of expectations for corporate conduct, the ILO MNE Declaration and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, as well as their respective interpretations and clarifications, serve as authoritative references for corporate conduct.

Understanding and applying the labour principles

Uphold freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining *(UN Global Compact Principle 3)*

What does freedom of association mean?

Freedom of association implies a respect for the right of all employers and all workers to freely and voluntarily establish and join groups for the promotion and defence of their occupational interests.

Workers and employers have the right to set up, join and run their own organizations without interference from the State or any another entity.

Employers should not interfere in workers' decision to associate, try to influence their decision in any way, or discriminate against either those workers who choose to associate or those who act as their representatives.

What does collective bargaining mean?

The right of workers to bargain freely with employers is an essential element in freedom of association. Collective bargaining is a voluntary process through which employers and workers discuss and negotiate their relations, in particular terms and conditions of work. Participants include employers themselves or their organizations, and trade unions or, in their absence, representatives freely designated by the workers.

Collective bargaining can only function effectively if it is conducted freely and in good faith by all parties. This implies:

- Making efforts to reach an agreement;
- Carrying out genuine and constructive negotiations;
- Avoiding unjustified delays;
- Respecting the agreements concluded and applying them in good faith; and
- Giving sufficient time for the parties to discuss and settle collective disputes.

Bargaining in good faith aims at reaching mutually acceptable collective agreements. Where agreement is not reached, dispute settlement procedures ranging from conciliation through mediation to arbitration may be used.

Workers' representatives should be given appropriate facilities, taking account of the needs, size, and capabilities of the enterprise involved, that will enable them to do their work effectively and allow them to perform their role without interference. Workers' representatives should be provided with information required for meaningful negotiations.

The collective bargaining process also covers the phase before actual negotiations – information sharing, consultation, joint assessments – as well as the implementation of collective agreements. Collective agreements should include provisions for the settlement of disputes.

In order to facilitate negotiations, the use of conciliation and mediation that is voluntary or established by law, may be accepted. On the other hand, arbitration is only legitimate if requested by both parties or required by law.

What is the responsibility of government?

To realise the principle of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining in practice requires a legal basis which guarantees that these rights are enforced. It also requires an enabling institutional framework, which can be tripartite, between the employers' and workers' organizations, or combinations of both. Individuals who wish to exercise their right to have their voice heard also must be protected from discrimination. And employers' and workers' organizations must accept each other as partners for solving joint problems and dealing with mutual challenges.

Governments have the responsibility for ensuring that the legal and institutional frameworks exist and function properly. They should also help to promote a culture of mutual acceptance and cooperation.

Where governments do not honour their international obligations, efforts should be made to improve legislation and governance. In the absence of legislation that conforms to international labour standards, employers and trade unions should make every effort to respect the principles, at least in countries where honouring them is not specifically prohibited. In countries in which legislation protects rights, but implementation is poor due to inadequate enforcement, employers should, nevertheless, obey the law.

Freedom of association is a principle that has great impact on the development and strengthening of democracy. It is an enabling right on which the existence of real, independent civil society depends. Free trade unions and employer organizations, as major and representative actors in society, open up the space for others to freely engage with governments and to function without interference. Industrial relations constitute an important element of "self-regulation" independent of the State. For all of these reasons and more, freedom of association underpins and supports the other nine UN Global Compact principles.

Why are freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining important?

In addition to being a right, freedom of association enables workers and employers to join together to protect better not only their own economic interests but also their civil freedoms such as the right to life, to security, to integrity, and to personal and collective freedom. As an integral part of democracy, this principle is crucial in order to realize all other fundamental principles and rights at work.

Collective bargaining is a constructive forum for addressing working conditions and terms of employment and relations between employers and workers, or their respective organizations. It is often more effective and more flexible than state regulation. It can help in anticipating potential problems and can advance peaceful mechanisms for dealing with them; and in finding solutions that take into account the priorities and needs of both employers and workers. Sound collective bargaining benefits both management and workers, and promotes peace and stability which benefits society more generally. Collective bargaining can be an important governance institution – it is a means of increasing the consent of the governed by involving them in the decisions that affect them directly.

How can companies uphold freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining?

Businesses face many uncertainties in this rapidly changing global market. Establishing genuine dialogue with freely chosen workers' representatives enables both workers and employers to understand each other's problems better and find ways to resolve them. Security of representation is a foundation for building trust on both sides. Freedom of association and the exercise of collective bargaining provide opportunities for constructive dialogue and resolution of conflict, and this harnesses energy to focus on solutions that result in benefits to the enterprise and to society at large. The meaning of freedom of association has been defined to a greater extent than any other right by the ILO supervisory machinery. In many, but not all cases, these decisions are useful to employers in order to understand them. The following list outlines some of the relevant principles.

IN THE WORKPLACE

- Respect the right of all workers to form and join a trade union of their choice without fear of intimidation or reprisal, in accordance with national law.
- Put in place non-discriminatory policies and procedures with respect to trade union organization, union membership and activity in such areas as applications for employment and decisions on advancement, dismissal or transfer.
- Provide worker representatives with appropriate facilities to assist in the development of an effective collective agreement.

AT THE BARGAINING TABLE

- Recognize representative organizations for the purpose of collective bargaining.
- Provide trade union representatives with access to real decision makers for collective bargaining.
- Provide information needed for meaningful bargaining.
- Address any problem-solving or other needs of interest to workers and management, including restructuring and training, redundancy procedures, safety and health issues, grievance and dispute settlement procedures, and disciplinary rules.

IN THE COMMUNITY OF OPERATION

- Take into account the role and function of the representative national employers' organizations.
 - Take steps to improve the climate in labour-management relations, especially in those countries without an adequate institutional and legal framework for recognizing trade unions and for collective bargaining.
 - Inform the local community, media and public authorities of company endorsement of the UN Global Compact and the company's intention to respect the provisions, including those on fundamental workers' rights.
-

Uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour (UN Global Compact Principle 4)

What does forced labour mean?

Forced or compulsory labour is any work or service that is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty, and for which that person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily. Providing wages or other compensation to a worker does not necessarily indicate that the labour is not forced or compulsory. By right, labour should be freely given and employees should be free to leave, subject to previous notice of reasonable length.

Forced labour is a fundamental violation of human rights. It presents a challenge to virtually every country in the world. The ILO estimates that at least 12.3 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide, 80 per cent of which is exacted by private agents. Most victims receive little or no earnings, and work for long hours in extremely poor conditions of health and safety. Forced labour is a truly global problem, also present in developed countries where it affects mainly trafficked migrant workers. It affects men, women and also children who represent at least 40 per cent of all victims.

Labour exploitation can occur in many forms, but forced labour is something quite distinct. It occurs where work or service is exacted by the State or individuals who have the will and power to threaten workers with severe deprivations, such as withholding food, land or wages, physical violence or sexual abuse, restricting peoples' movements or locking them up.

While companies operating legally do not normally employ such practices, forced labour can become associated with enterprises through their business links with others, including contractors and suppliers. As a result, all managers should be aware of the forms and causes of forced labour, as well as how it might occur in different industries.

Both governments and private agents have been implicated in the use of forced labour. State-imposed forced labour includes certain forms of compulsory participation in public works, and the imposition of forced labour for ideological or political purposes. Circumstances, such as when prisoners are linked to commercial activities without their free consent, are the object of serious debates.

Slavery, bonded labour or debt-bondage, and different forms of coercion in employment involve forced labour exploitation by private agents. Employers need to be aware that forced labour can be connected to different practices, such as those listed in Box 4.

How can companies contribute to the elimination of forced labour?

Understanding the causes of forced labour is the first step towards taking action against it. The following table can help companies identify forced labour in practice.

Box 4**Identifying forced labour in practice****Lack of consent to work
(the “route into”
forced labour)**

- Birth/descent into “slave” or bonded status
- Physical abduction or kidnapping
- Sale of person into the ownership of another
- Physical confinement in the work location – in prison or in private detention
- Psychological compulsion, i.e. an order to work, backed up by a credible threat of a penalty for non-compliance
- Induced indebtedness (by falsification of accounts, inflated prices, reduced value of goods or services produced, excessive interest charges, etc.)
- Deception or false promises about types and terms of work
- Withholding and non-payment of wages
- Retention of identity documents or other valuable personal possessions

**Menace of a penalty
(the means of keeping someone
in forced labour)**

- Physical violence against worker or family or close associates
- Sexual violence
- Imprisonment or other physical confinement
- Financial penalties
- Denunciation to authorities (police, immigration, etc.) and deportation
- Exclusion from future employment
- Exclusion from community and social life
- Removal of rights or privileges
- Deprivation of food, shelter or other necessities
- Shift to worst working conditions
- Loss of social status

Forced labour is, for the most part, rooted in poverty, inequality, and discrimination. However, in some parts of the world, it derives from political factors. For users of this Guide, the abuse will most likely be indirect through business relationships such as suppliers and their sub-contractors, and will require the exercise of due diligence in managing these relationships.

Taking action to eradicate forced labour requires a comprehensive set of interventions to address not only the needs of individual forced labourers but also the needs of their families. When forced labour is identified, these individuals should be removed and facilities and services should be provided to enable them to have adequate alternatives.

In general, a combination of workplace and community actions is needed to help ensure the eradication of forced labour practices.

IN THE WORKPLACE

- Adhere to provisions of national laws and regulations concerning forced labour, and where national law is insufficient, take account of international labour standards.
- Within company operations and dealings with other businesses, ensure that employment contracts are provided to all employees stating the terms and conditions of service, the voluntary nature of employment, the freedom to leave (including the appropriate procedures) and any penalties that may be associated with a departure or cessation of work.
- Institute policies and procedures to prohibit the requirement that workers lodge financial deposits with the company.
- Encourage managers to review Box 4 and take action as appropriate.
- If forced labour is found within the company's sphere of influence, provide for the removal of such workers from the workplace with adequate services. To the extent possible, assist with workers' access to viable alternatives.
- Exercise due diligence in dealings with other businesses.

IN THE COMMUNITY OF OPERATION

- Companies may also wish to contribute, where possible, to broader community efforts to eliminate forced labour and help workers freed from forced labour to find freely chosen work.
- Work in partnership with other companies, sectoral associations and employers' organizations to develop an industry-wide approach to address the issue, and build bridges with trade unions, law enforcement authorities, labour inspectorates and others.
- Establish or participate in a task force or committee on forced labour in your representative employers' organization at the local, state or national level.
- Support the development of a National Action Plan against forced labour as part of key policy and institutional mechanisms to combat forced labour at the national level.

- Within the company's sphere of influence, participate in prevention and re-integration programmes for former victims of forced labour by providing skills development and job training opportunities.
 - Where possible, participate in national and international programmes, including media campaigns, and co-ordinate with local and national authorities, workers' organizations and other stakeholders.
-

Uphold the effective abolition of child labour

(UN Global Compact Principle 5)

What constitutes child labour?

ILO conventions (Minimum Age Convention No. 138 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182) provide the framework for national law to prescribe a minimum age for admission to employment or work that must not be less than the age for completing compulsory schooling, and in any case not less than 15 years. Lower ages are permitted for transitional periods – generally in countries where economic and educational facilities are less well-developed the minimum age is 14 years and 12 years for “light work”. On the other hand, the minimum age for hazardous work is higher, at 18 years for all countries.

Box 5

Minimum Age for Admission to Employment or Work

	Developed Countries	Developing countries
Regular Work	15 years	14 years
Hazardous Work	18 years	18 years
Light work	13 years	12 years

Child labour should not be confused with “youth employment”; as from the minimum working age, young people should be able to engage in decent work, but still need protection from hazardous work and other worst forms of child labour.

Child labour is a form of exploitation that is a violation of human rights. It is recognized and defined by international instruments. It is the declared policy of the international community and of almost all governments to abolish child labour.

ILO Convention No.182 calls for governments to take urgent and immediate action when certain types of work are undertaken by children under the age of 18 years. They are:

- all forms of slavery - this includes the trafficking of children, debt bondage, forced and compulsory labour, and the use of children in armed conflict;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic purposes;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular the production and trafficking of drugs; and
- work which is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the child as a consequence of its nature or the circumstances under which it is carried out.

Companies should make efforts to eliminate all forms of child labour. Efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour should not be used to justify other forms of child labour.

Why should companies be concerned about child labour?

Child labour damages a child's physical, social, mental, psychological and spiritual development. Child labour deprives children of their childhood and their dignity. They are deprived of an education and may be separated from their families. Children who do not complete their basic education are likely to remain illiterate and never acquire the skills needed to get a job and contribute to the development of a modern economy. Consequently, child labour results in under-skilled, unqualified workers and jeopardises future improvements of skills in the workforce.

Children enjoy human rights no less than adults. However, by virtue of their age and the very fact that they are still growing and gaining knowledge and experience, they have some distinct rights as children. These rights include protection from economic exploitation and work that may be dangerous to their health, safety or morals, and that hinders their development or impedes their access to education. The complexity of the issue of child labour means that companies need to address the issue sensitively, and not take action which may force working children into more exploitative forms of work. Nevertheless, as Principle 5 states, the goal of all companies should be the abolition of child labour within their sphere of influence.

Association with child labour will likely damage a company's reputation. This is true in the case of transnational companies who have extensive supply and service chains, where the economic exploitation of children, even by a business partner, can damage a brand and have strong repercussions on profit and stock value.

What can companies do to uphold the effective abolition of child labour?

Child labour should be a concern for every company. It is a serious issue today in many developing countries; but it also exists less visibly in developed, industrialised countries where it occurs, for example, in some immigrant communities.

Developing an awareness and understanding of the causes and consequences of child labour is the first step. This means identifying the issues and determining whether or not child labour is a problem within the business. Companies sourcing in specific industry sectors with geographically distant supply chains need to be particularly vigilant. Part of conducting due diligence should include review of ILO and other research to be aware of sectors prone to child labour problems in areas where a company operates.

IN THE WORKPLACE

- Adhere to minimum age provisions of national labour laws and regulations, and where national law is insufficient, take account of international labour standards.
- Use adequate and verifiable mechanisms for age verification.
- When children below the legal working age are found in the workplace, take measures to remove them from work.
- To the extent possible, help the child removed from the workplace and his/her family to access adequate services and viable alternatives.
- Exercise influence on subcontractors, suppliers and other business affiliates to combat child labour.

IN THE COMMUNITY OF OPERATION

- Companies may also wish to contribute, where possible, to broader community efforts to eliminate child labour, and to help children removed from work access quality education and social protection.
- Work in partnership with other companies, sectoral associations and employers' organizations to develop an industry-wide approach to address the issue, and build bridges with trade unions, law enforcement authorities, labour inspectorates and others.
- Establish or participate in a task force or committee on child labour in your representative employers' organization at the local, state or national level.
- Support the development and implementation of a National Action Plan against child labour as part of key policy and institutional mechanisms to combat child labour at the national level.
- Within the company's sphere of influence, participate in prevention and re-integration programmes for former child labourers by providing skills development and job training opportunities.
- Where possible, participate in national and international programmes, including media campaigns, and coordinate with local and national authorities, trade unions and others.

Uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (UN Global Compact Principle 6)

What does discrimination in respect of employment and occupation mean?

Discrimination in employment and occupation occurs when a potential candidate is treated differently or less favourably because of characteristics that are not related to his/her merit or the inherent requirements of the job. These characteristics commonly include in national law: race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin. In addition, some countries have extended protection to other areas to include sexual orientation, age, HIV/AIDS, etc.

However, Principle 6 allows companies to consider additional grounds where discrimination in employment and occupation may arise. Companies should also familiarize themselves with grounds prohibited under national legislation.

Discrimination can arise in a variety of work-related activities. These include access to employment, particular occupations, training and vocational guidance and social security. Moreover, it can occur with respect to the terms and conditions of employment, such as:

- recruitment
- remuneration
- hours of work and rest, paid holidays
- maternity protection
- security of tenure
- job assignments
- performance assessment and advancement
- training opportunities
- promotion prospects
- occupational safety and health
- termination of employment.

In some countries, additional issues for discrimination in the workplace, such as age and HIV status, are growing in importance. It is also important to realize that discrimination at work arises in a range of settings, and can be a problem in a rural agricultural business or in a high technology city-based business.

Discrimination can take many forms. It may be direct when, for example, laws or rules explicitly limit a person's access to employment. However, most discrimination is indirect and arises informally through attitudes and behaviour. Some forms of discrimination may even have cultural roots.

Non-discrimination simply means that employees are selected on the basis of their suitability to do the job and that there is no distinction, exclusion or preference made on other grounds. Employees who experience discrimination at work are denied opportunities and have their basic human rights infringed. This affects the individual concerned and negatively influences the greater contribution that they might make to society.

The workplace is a strategic entry point for freeing society from discrimination. Combating discrimination at the workplace can help reduce disadvantages, such as in education, resulting from inequity that people may have suffered at earlier stages in life. When the workplace brings together workers of different races, sexes and ages, for example, and treats them equally, it helps build a sense of common purpose. By doing so, it defuses stereotypes and prejudices that are at the heart of discrimination.

Effective avenues are needed to permit meaningful challenges to discrimination when it occurs. ILO principles fix minimum thresholds. National laws and practices may well be broader and include more comprehensive approaches for the elimination of discrimination at work.

What can companies do to eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation?

From a business point of view, discrimination does not make sense. It leads to social tensions that are potentially disruptive within the company and in society. A company that uses discriminatory practices in employment and occupation denies itself access to talents from a wider pool of skills and competencies. The hurt and resentment generated by discrimination will affect the performance of individuals and teams in the company. Discriminatory practices result in missed opportunities for development of skills and infrastructure to strengthen competitiveness in the national and global economy. Finally, discrimination can damage a company's reputation, potentially affecting profits and stock value.


First and foremost, companies need to respect all relevant local and national laws. Any company introducing measures to promote equality needs to be aware of the diversities of language, culture and family circumstances that may exist in the workforce. Managers and supervisory staff, in particular, should seek to develop an understanding of the different types of discrimination and how it can affect the workforce.

IN THE WORKPLACE

- Institute company policies and procedures which make qualifications, skills and experience the basis for the recruitment, placement, training and advancement of staff at all levels.
- Assign responsibility for equal employment issues at a high level, issue clear company-wide policies and procedures to guide equal employment practices, and link advancement to desired performance in this area.
- Provide staff training on non-discrimination policies and practices, including disability awareness. Reasonably adjust the physical environment to ensure health and safety for employees, customers and other visitors with disabilities.
- Work on a case by case basis to evaluate whether a distinction is an inherent requirement of a job, and avoid applications of job requirements in a way that would systematically disadvantage certain groups.

- Keep up-to-date records on recruitment, training and promotion that provide a transparent view of opportunities for employees and their progression within the organization.
- Where discrimination is identified, develop grievance procedures to address complaints, handle appeals and provide recourse for employees. This and other action to avoid or remedy discrimination is particularly important in the context of negotiations and collective agreements.
- Be aware of formal structures and informal cultural issues that can prevent employees from raising concerns and grievances.
- Establish programs to promote access to skills development training and to particular occupations.

IN THE COMMUNITY OF OPERATION

- Encourage and support efforts to build a climate of tolerance and equal access to opportunities for occupational development such as adult education programs and health and childcare services.
 - In foreign operations, companies may need to accommodate cultural traditions and work with representatives of workers and governmental authorities to ensure equal access to employment by women and minorities.
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Inventory of ILO Resources

This section provides an inventory of ILO resources that can help companies realise the labour principles. It includes information resources, guidance documents and training materials. It does not provide an exhaustive catalogue of ILO publications, but highlights those that can provide practical guidance for better understanding the labour principles and facilitating their application.

Resources are categorised as follows:

Key Global Resources consist of materials which relate directly to the four labour principles of the UN Global Compact.

Additional Resources include materials developed in specific regions or countries, or which address the labour principles in a broader context.

Box 6

ILO Helpdesk for Business

The ILO Helpdesk for Business on International Labour Standards is the one-stop shop for company managers and workers interested in better aligning business operations with international labour standards, using the ILO MNE Declaration as the basis. The ILO Helpdesk for Business provides basic information on a number of labour topics, including available resources for business and frequently asked questions.

The ILO Helpdesk also responds to specific questions. This individual assistance service is free and confidential and available for company managers and workers; government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations and other interested organizations are also welcome to use the service. Questions can be directly submitted to assistance@ilo.org.

The ILO Helpdesk does not assess corporate compliance nor does it provide information on national labour laws or national industrial relations practices.

For more information go to <http://www.ilo.org/business>

Key Global Resources

- **International Instruments and Corporate Social Responsibility. A booklet to Accompany Training on the Labour Dimension of CSR: from Principles to Practice**

This booklet describes the evolution of the concept of CSR, the role that international organizations and the European Union play in this area, and workplace initiatives. It explains in particular the three international frames of reference in the area of CSR, namely the ILO MNE Declaration, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the UN Global Compact.

Published: Geneva, 2007

Available in: English, French, Spanish, Arabic

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/empent/Whatwedo/Publications/lang--en/docName--WCMS_101247/index.htm

- **Combating Forced Labour: A Handbook for Employers and Business**

This handbook's main aim is to assist business and employers' organizations in understanding and tackling the various dimensions and issues related to forced labour and human trafficking. It presents background information, the latest statistics on forced labour and human trafficking, an overview of key issues, and resources for further reading. It adopts a cross-sectoral approach and presents information drawn from different regions, countries and companies of different sizes. Throughout the handbook, concrete examples of action illustrate measures that are already being taken. The handbook is made up of a series of stand-alone tools and booklets that provide practical guidance to help businesses address forced labour:

1. Introduction & Overview
2. Employers' Frequently Asked Questions
3. Guiding Principles to Combat Forced Labour
4. A Checklist & Guidance for Assessing Compliance
5. A Guide for Taking Action
6. Tips for Taking Action
7. Good Practice - Case Studies.

Published: Geneva, 2008

Available in: English, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/lang--en/docName--WCMS_101171/index.htm

- **Ten Principles for Business Leaders to Combat Forced Labour and Trafficking**

A set of principles to guide business action on combating forced labour and human trafficking. It was published in the UN Global Compact's Annual Review for the 2007 Leaders' Summit.

Published: Geneva, 2007

Available in: English

Copies can be requested by writing to forcedlabour@ilo.org

- **Employers' Guides for Eliminating Child Labour**

This is a set of three guides designed to help businesses and their organizations understand and take action against child labour. The guides are the result of a joint effort of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and were also reviewed by a wide range of experts of different employers' organizations and the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). The three practical guides provide ideas, advice and examples for the prevention of child labour, the withdrawal of children from work, and the protection of young workers from hazardous conditions.

- **Guide One** provides an understanding of the issue of child labour. It defines the problem and explains the causes and consequences of child labour. This guide also explains the ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138 and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182.
- **Guide Two** is addressed to enterprises and explains their options and possible strategies for eliminating child labour.
- **Guide Three** is about the collective role that employers' organizations and other business associations can play in helping their members address the topic of child labour.

Published: Geneva, 2008

Available in: English, French, Spanish, Russian

Location: Available online at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actemp/whatwedo/projects/cl/guides.htm>

- **Child Labour Monitoring Resource Kit**

An extensive set of materials including guides, manuals and concrete examples of successful child labour monitoring initiatives from a number of countries and sectors.

Published: Geneva, 2005

Available in: English, French, Spanish

Available online at

<http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=1501>

- **A toolkit for Employers: Promoting Equality in Diversity**

This toolkit contains materials to help employers dealing with equality and diversity in the workplace. It was prepared to serve as an inspirational guide to provide general ideas that could be applied to other organizations in Europe.

Published: Geneva, 2006

Available in: English, French, Spanish

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/equality/download/tool/employerstoolkit_en.pdf

- **Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises**

Adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2007, these Conclusions identify 17 essential factors of a conducive enabling environment for the development of sustainable enterprises, as well as six principles that enterprises should abide by to be sustainable. One of these principles is CSR.

Published: Geneva, 2007

Available in: English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, German, Russian

Available online at

http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Officialmeetings/ilc/ILCSessions/96thSession/lang--en/docName--WCMS_114235/index.htm

- **The Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (ILO MNE Declaration)**

The ILO MNE Declaration seeks to encourage the positive contribution that multinationals can make to economic and social progress and to minimize and resolve the difficulties arising from their operations. It contains recommendations on how companies can voluntarily apply principles deriving from

international labour standards in the areas of general policies, employment promotion and security, equality of opportunity and treatment, training, wages and benefits, minimum age, occupational safety and health, and industrial relations.

Published: Geneva, most recently updated in 2006

Available in: English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Bahasa, Italian, Japanese (2006 version), Azeri, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Kiswahili, Polish, Russian, Turkish (2000 version)

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/empent/Whatwedo/Publications/lang-en/docName--WCMS_094386/index.htm

- **Global Reports under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**

Each year, a Global Report provides a dynamic picture of the current situation concerning one of the principles and rights expressed in the Declaration. These reports are an objective view of the global and regional trends on the issues relevant to the Declaration and highlight those areas that require greater attention. They serve as a basis for determining priorities for ILO technical cooperation programmes. Recent publications include:

- Accelerating action against child labour, 2010.
- The cost of coercion, 2009.
- Freedom of Association in Practice: Lessons learned, 2008.
- Equality at work: Tackling the challenges, 2007.
- The end of child labour: within reach, 2006.
- A Global Alliance against Forced Labour, 2005.
- Organizing for Social Justice, 2004.
- Time for Equality at Work, 2003.
- A Future without Child Labour, 2002.
- Stopping Forced Labour, 2001.
- Your Voice at Work, 2000.

Published: Geneva

All reports are available in: English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, German, Russian

Available online at <http://www.ilo.org/declaration>

Additional Resources

- **Training programme “The Labour Dimension of CSR: from Principles to Practice”**

This programme, developed by the Italian-funded project “Sustainable Development through the Global Compact”, is aimed at ensuring a better understanding of the three international frames of reference in the area of CSR, namely the ILO’s MNE Declaration, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Global Compact; and at providing elements to translate into action the principles that refer to labour issues. It is comprised of six modules:

- **Module 1** describes the evolution of the concept of CSR, the role that international organizations and the European Union play in this area, and workplace initiatives. It explains in particular the three international frames of reference mentioned above and the fundamental principles and rights at work.

The other Modules are aimed at helping company managers and workers’ organizations understand the labour principles and provide concrete ideas on how to put them into practice. They cover the following topics:

- **Module 2:** Industrial relations (freedom of association and collective bargaining)
- **Module 3:** The effective abolition of forced and child labour
- **Module 4:** The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
- **Module 5:** Occupational safety and health
- **Module 6:** Training and skills development.

Published: Geneva, 2007

Available in: English, French, Spanish, Arabic

Contact the ILO Multinational Enterprises Programme (multi@ilo.org)

- **Training Materials for Employers on Social Dialogue (SD) and Collective Bargaining (CB)**

These materials produced by the ILO/Vietnam Industrial Relations Project are part of a training package for employers, union leaders and government officials, who have different roles in implementing and supporting the promotion of SD and CB. The package is comprised of the following five modules:

1. Importance of SD & CB: introduction of social dialogue as a concept and various mechanisms to improve SD at the workplace (e.g. daily line meeting, suggestion box, labour-management council and collective bargaining).
2. Interest-based Bargaining Technique: concrete guidance about the technique and how it can be applied in successful collective bargaining.
3. Essential points in SD & CB for Managers: introduction of additional tools for managers to facilitate SD at the workplace and specific guidance on four phases towards successful collective bargaining for managers.
4. Essential points in Representation, SD & CB for Union leaders: specific guidance on four phases towards successful collective bargaining.
5. Government's Roles in supporting SD and CB: introduction on the practice of the US Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service as an example for Vietnamese governmental officials about supporting industrial relations. Labour mediation skills are also introduced here.

Published: Hanoi, 2006

Available in: English

Contact the ILO Office in Viet Nam (hanoi@ilo.org)

- **Better Factories Cambodia Modular Training for the Cambodian Garment Industry**

This Facilitator's Manual and the associated Remediation Modular Training Program kit have been developed by the ILO's Better Factories Cambodia project in collaboration with a local training partner VBNK, a management training institute that works in Cambodia to serve facilitators of development.

The purpose of the program is to provide factory managers and union representatives with the opportunity to learn together about the issues that are most pertinent to their work and their industry. The program assists in the development of local factories' capacities in the areas covered by ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work while linking to improved quality and production. It also contains 38 Good Practice Sheets.

Published: Phnom Penh, 2008

Available in: English, Khmer, Chinese

Available online at <http://www.betterfactories.org>

- **Joint Union - Management Negotiation Skills**

Training package for ILO social partners on conflict prevention and negotiation skills used by the Improving Labour Systems in Southern Africa (ILSSA) Project. Published by the ILO International Training Centre in Turin.

Published: Turin, 2005 (French 2007)

Available in: English, French

Contact the ILO International Training Centre (socdial@itcilo.org)

- **Trafficking for Forced Labour: How to Monitor the Recruitment of Migrant Workers**

This manual aims to raise awareness on the issues of trafficking, forced labour and job placement systems. It focuses on the recruitment of migrant workers into highly exploitative working situations that could amount to forced labour. The manual aims both to inform and to guide action; it promotes hands-on learning and emphasizes the policy measures, skills and techniques to be applied in curtailing these abusive practices.

Published: Geneva, 2005

Available in: English

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/lang--en/docName--WCMS_081894/index.htm

- **Human Trafficking and Business: Good practices to prevent and combat human trafficking**

This brochure – developed by the United Nations Global Initiative to fight human trafficking together with UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), ILO, International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Global Compact – presents an overview and introduction to human trafficking and the role that business can play in addressing it. It explains in practical terms what human trafficking is, why it is an issue for business and what companies large and small can do to take action against it.

Published: 2010

Available in: English

Available online at

http://www.ungift.org/docs/ungift/Private_Sector_Web.pdf

- **Training manual to fight trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other forms of exploitation**

This training manual – developed by ILO and UNICEF under the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking – seeks to aid governments, workers, employers, international, and non-governmental organizations that combat trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other exploitation. It is comprised of 5 booklets:

- Textbook 1: Understanding child trafficking
- Textbook 2: Action against child trafficking at policy and outreach levels
- Textbook 3: Matters of process
- Exercise book
- Facilitators' guide.

Published: Geneva, 2009

Available in: English, French and Spanish

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Traffickingofchildren/lang--en/WCMS_111537/index.htm

- **Rooting Out Child Labour on Cocoa Farms**

This toolkit comprises four papers:

- A synthesis of Rapid Assessment research on child labour in cocoa.
- Findings of research into the safety and health hazards of cocoa farming.
- Experiences derived from a major IPEC project in this sector that included contributions from major cocoa buyers.
- A manual for child labour monitoring in cocoa.

Published: Geneva, 2004

Available in: English, French (2008)

Available online at <http://www.ilo.org/ipeccinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=6444>

- **Promoting equity through gender neutral job evaluations for equal pay: A step by step guide**

This Guide sets out various methodological components of the process of a pay equity programme: from selecting which jobs to evaluate, through the various phases of job evaluation, to equalizing pay. It explains the criteria to avoid gender discriminatory practices. It is aimed at both employer and union representatives who are responsible for implementing pay equity programmes, as well as practitioners and trainers. It explains the goals, the various operations to be carried out, the criteria for gender neutrality, and proper practices to follow. It also includes checklists for quick reference by users

as well as brief outlines of the benefits that can be gained from each step. It can be adapted to different economic and organizational contexts, and to large and small entities. Working together through each of the steps will allow those responsible for implementing pay equity programmes to gain detailed knowledge of the workplace, to take a critical look at some facets which have become obsolete or inappropriate due to technical or organizational changes, and to discover aspects of jobs they are not familiar with, in particular pertaining to jobs held by women.

Published: Geneva, 2009

Available in: English, French and Spanish

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp1/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_122372.pdf

- **A toolkit to fight racial discrimination at the workplace**

Racism operates at all levels and one of the reasons why actions fail is that we start to think there is a single solution. In fact, there are many solutions, each depending on the context, the situation or the place where racism occurs. This toolkit is designed for those who require policies to challenge racism. It will help both workers and employers to analyse their situation and develop appropriate strategies.

Published: Geneva, Forthcoming

Available in: English, French, Spanish

- **Good practice guide for promoting gender equality in enterprises in Morocco**

This guide provides public and private enterprises with guidelines on how to remove barriers that prevent female workers from enjoying equal opportunities and treatment in the workplace. The guide specifically looks at issues such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, promotion, equal remuneration, working time, reconciling work and family responsibilities, and sexual harassment. It also provides guidelines on implementing a strategy on equality at the workplace and conducting gender audits. It draws on a vast review of practices from several countries such as the United States, Sweden, France, South Africa, India, and Malaysia; as well as on in-depth field research in Canada and Morocco. It was produced and tested with a tripartite audience in Morocco and can be easily adapted for general use outside of Morocco.

Published: Rabat, 2008

Available in: French, Arabic

Available online at www.ilo.org/declaration

- **ILO Code of Practice for Managing Disability in the Workplace**

This publication is a guide for employers (large or small; public or private; in developing or industrialized countries) in adopting positive strategies for managing disability-related issues in the workplace. It also addresses the essential role played by governments as well as the importance of initiatives taken by persons with disabilities. It is designed to promote the safe and healthy employment of all disabled persons.

Published: Geneva, 2002

Available in: English, French, Spanish, German, Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, Icelandic, Japanese, Latvian, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Mongolian, Nepalese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovenian, Ukrainian.

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/skills/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS_103324/index.htm

- **Moving Forward: Toward Decent Work for People with Disabilities – Examples of Good Practices in Vocational Training and Employment from Asia and the Pacific.**

(Refer to section on Partnerships in particular)

This publication provides policymakers, people with disabilities, and service providers in Asia and the Pacific with examples of good practices regarding vocational training and employment programs.

Published: Bangkok, 2003

Available in: English

Contact the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (bangkok@ilo.org)

- **ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration**

This publication is a non-binding collection of principles, guidelines, and best practices, which addresses the major issues faced by migration policy makers at national, regional, and international levels. It also addresses themes of decent work, governance of migration, protection of migrant workers, promoting migration and development linkages, and expanding international cooperation.

Published: Geneva, 2006

Available in: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic

Available online at http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/multilat_fwk_en.pdf

- **Youth Employment: Making it Happen, an electronic resource tool for employers**

This resource tool provides an overview of youth employment challenges and the role of the private sector in promoting access of young people to work as well as a compendium of useful resources. It compiles forty cases to illustrate the role of the private sector in promoting youth employment. These cases include detailed descriptions and contact details of the relevant organizations in case further information is needed:

Published in: Geneva, 2008

Available in: English

Available online at <http://www.ilo.org/youthmakingithappen/>

- **Productivity and competitiveness upgrading through improved labour management relations and workplace practices**

This is a training package on CD-ROM for workers and managers of medium and large-sized enterprises to facilitate action-oriented dialogue on how to boost productivity and competitiveness through labour-management relations and improved working conditions.

Published: Geneva, 2006

Available in: English

Copies can be requested by writing to empent@ilo.org

- **Guide on building labour-management partnerships**

As businesses become more competitive in the globalized economy, an increasing number of companies and unions have recognized the value of partnerships and are working together to create them at all levels. This guide seeks to assist parties in creating or improving relations by providing guidelines for developing partnerships between labour and management. The contents are based largely on best practices experienced by companies operating in developed and developing countries, including the Caribbean, and are complemented by a number of live cases.

Published: Port-of-Spain, 2005

Available in: English

Contact the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean (ilocarib@ilocarib.org.tt)

Annex: Short Overview of the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (ILO MNE Declaration)

The ILO MNE Declaration encourages enterprises to:

General Policies

- Obey national laws and respect international standards;
- Contribute to the realization of the fundamental principles and rights at work;
- Consult with government, employers' and workers' organizations to ensure that operations are consistent with national development priorities.

Employment

- Endeavour to increase employment opportunities and standards, taking the employment policies and objectives of governments into account;
- Give priority to the employment, occupational development, promotion and advancement of nationals of the host country;
- Use technologies which generate employment, both directly and indirectly;
- Build linkages with local enterprises by sourcing local inputs, promoting the local processing of raw materials and local manufacturing of parts and equipment;
- Extend equality of opportunity and treatment in employment;
- Assume a leading role in promoting security of employment, providing reasonable notice of intended changes in operations and avoiding arbitrary dismissal.

Training

- Provide training for all levels of employees to meet needs of enterprises as well as development policies of the country;
- Participate in programs to encourage skill formation and development;
- Afford opportunities within MNE for local management to broaden their experience.

Conditions of work and life

- Provide wages, benefits and conditions of work not less favorable than those offered by comparable employers in the country concerned;
- Provide the best possible wages, benefits and conditions of work, within the framework of government policies, to meet basic needs of employees and their families;
- Respect the minimum age for admission to employment;
- Maintain highest standards of safety and health at work;
- Examine the causes of industrial safety and health hazards, provide information on good practice observed in other countries, and effect necessary improvements.

Industrial Relations

- Observe industrial relations no less favorable than those observed by comparable employers;
- Respect freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, providing the facilities and information required for meaningful negotiations;
- Support representative employers' organizations;
- Provide for regular consultation on matters of mutual concern;
- Examine the grievances of worker(s), pursuant to an appropriate procedure.

The International Labour Organization

The ILO is the United Nations agency devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity.

As the only tripartite UN agency, the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of its 183 member States.

The main function of the ILO is to formulate international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations, and to supervise their application in member States. The ILO also undertakes other activities to support member States in their efforts to implement labour standards. These include: developing international policies and programmes; technical cooperation; training and research.

The ILO is one of the core UN agencies participating in the UN Global Compact and is the guardian of the four labour principles of the initiative.

The United Nations Global Compact

The UN Global Compact is both a policy platform and a practical framework for companies that are committed to sustainability and responsible business practices. As a leadership initiative endorsed by chief executives, it seeks to align business operations and strategies everywhere with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

Through a wide spectrum of specialized workstreams, management tools, resources, and topical programs, the UN Global Compact aims to advance two complementary objectives: (1) Mainstream the ten principles in business activities around the world; and (2) Catalyze actions in support of broader UN goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

By doing so, business, as the primary agent driving globalization, can help ensure that markets, commerce, technology and finance advance in ways that benefit economies and societies everywhere and contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive global economy.