Project No. 1-B

Region: Global

Project:
Decent Work and Local Development

Donors:
ILO regular budget and various donor resources for technical cooperation have been used to support local development

Project Description:
Local development serves as a framework for the way the ILO promotes Decent Work at the local level. Different units of the ILO are currently undertaking activities at the local (sub-national) level in various, including Mozambique, South Africa, Angola, Ghana, the Philippines, China, Guinea-Bissau, South Serbia and Croatia, Kazakhstan, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia and Central America.

Depending on local needs and priorities, the entry points to local development differ, including small and medium enterprise (SME) development, microfinance, youth employment, community development or social protection. While entry points differ, the ILO highlights the interconnections between issues and promotes integration of economic and social goals.

The ILO’s approach to local development is centred on work and employment, and anchored on four principles: (1) employment is strategic to local development and poverty reduction; (2) social protection from risks and vulnerability reinforce employment creation, and vice-versa; (3) people’s organizations and social dialogue strengthen broad-based participation in decision-making; and (4) fundamental rights at work ensure an inclusive and just local development. Careful attention is given to gender dimensions of local conditions, and to local diversity, creativity and culture. The ILO’s approach has been especially relevant in addressing the informal economy in urban and rural areas, where most poor women and men live and work, and socially excluded populations. Where appropriate, specific economic sectors with growth potential for domestic and international markets have also been targeted.

During the upcoming biennium 2006/2007, the ILO will work in three main areas, to advance the project activities and expertise already gained. This will include:

1. The elaboration of a comprehensive, ILO-specific local development approach that achieves policy coherence at the local level and formulates policy guidelines for promoting Decent Work locally, while bearing in mind national and global trends. Work under this component includes the gender-sensitive analysis of the impact of national-level policies on local economies, enterprises and sectors, workers and communities in different contexts, and will serve as a conceptual input into PRSP processes and formulation of economic and industrial development strategies at the national level.

2. The design and implementation of field programmes that apply this local development approach and build local capacities is achieved in partnership with ILO field offices. Wherever possible, field activities carried out through, or in collaboration with, ongoing local development projects carried out by the ILO and other agencies.

3. The creation of a global knowledge-sharing network on decent work and local development. This work builds on a number of databases on the informal economy and poverty reduction tools already created by the Policy Integration Department, and the tools and strategies developed by local economic development projects over the last ten years.
The ILO has a comparative advantage in the areas of local employment creation; employment strategies; conditions of work and employment; the capacity to raise resources for private and public investments locally; crisis responses; social protection; trade union, employers, and government tripartism; and social dialogue to develop an innovative local development and participatory approach that goes beyond traditional strategies. This expertise enhances our understanding of the nature of local level social dialogue and effective participatory approaches to help women and men lift themselves out of poverty.

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