

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO)

INTRODUCTION:

It is a tripartite U.N. agency, established in 1919. The International Labour Organisation or the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member states, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

Over the span of its existence for a century, the Organization has played a role at key historical junctures – the Great Depression, decolonization, the creation of Solidarność in Poland, the victory over apartheid in South Africa – and today in the building of an ethical and productive framework for a fair globalization.

It was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, to reflect the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice.

The driving forces for the ILO's creation arose from security, humanitarian, political and economic considerations. The founders of the ILO recognized the importance of social justice in securing peace, against a background of the exploitation of workers in the industrializing nations of that time. There was also increasing understanding of the world's economic interdependence and the need for cooperation to obtain similarity of working conditions in countries competing for markets.

The Constitution of the ILO was drafted in early 1919 by the Labour Commission, chaired by Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labour (AFL) in the United States. It was composed of representatives from nine countries: Belgium, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Japan, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The process resulted in a tripartite organization, the only one of its kind, bringing together representatives of governments, employers and workers in its executive bodies.

Reflecting these ideas, the Preamble of the ILO Constitution states:

- Whereas universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice;
- And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those

conditions is urgently required;

- Whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries.

The Preamble also recognizes a number of key principles, for example equal remuneration for work of equal value and freedom of association, and highlights, among others, the importance of vocational and technical education.

The areas of improvement listed in the Preamble remain relevant today, including the regulation of working time and labour supply, the prevention of unemployment and the provision of an adequate living wage, social protection of workers, children, young persons and women.

FUNCTIONS OF ILO:

The international labour organisation performs a wide range of duties and functions for the purpose of fostering labour rights and ensuring manpower organisation along with Vocational training for:

- Migrant workers
- Women workers
- Child workers
- Social security
- Conditions of work
- Health, safety & welfare
- Other activities- Promotion of handicraft & small industries, worker's education programs.

ROLE OF ILO:

The ILO plays a vital role in ensuring-

- Full employment & raising standard of living
- Satisfactory Employment opportunities
- Facilities for training & transfer of labour-migration for employment & settlement
- Policies with wages, hours & condition of work

- Effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining
- Protection of life & health of workers
- Provision for child welfare & maternity protection
- Provision for adequate nutrition, housing
- Assurance of equality of education & vocational opportunity.

OBJECTIVES:

Four strategic objectives at the heart of the Decent Work agenda, are observed by

- Set and promote standards and fundamental principles and rights at work
- Create greater opportunities for women and men to decent employment and income
- Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all
- Strengthen tripartite system and social dialogue

In support of its goals, the ILO offers unmatched expertise and knowledge about the world of work, acquired over almost 100 years of responding to the needs of people everywhere for decent work, livelihoods and dignity. It serves its tripartite constituents - and society as a whole - in a variety of ways, including:

Formulation of international policies and programmes to promote basic human rights, improve working and living conditions, and enhance employment opportunities

Creation of international labour standards backed by a unique system to supervise their application

An extensive programme of international technical cooperation formulated and implemented in an active partnership with constituents, to help countries put these policies into practice in an effective manner

Training, education and research activities to help advance all of these efforts

STRUCTURE OF ILO

- International Labour Conference (ILC)
- Governing Body
- International Labour office

International Labour Conference (ILC):

- o Policy making/ legislative wing of ILO

- o Holds session once in a year
- o ILC elects governing body
- o Meetings/sessions are attended by 4 delegates - 2 from govt. (Generally Cabinet Ministers) - 1 representative of employee - 1 representative of employer
- o Each delegate is accompanied by advisor not exceeding 2 in number
- o Non- govt. delegates are chosen by govt.

Functions of ILC:

- Formulation of international standards (Conventions & recommendations)
- Decide expenditure budget
- Select once in 3 years members of governing body
- Elect president
- Consider labour problems & assist solution
- To make amendments

Governing Body:

- It is executive wing of ILO
- It is a political body
- Implements decisions of ILC with the help of International labour office
- It consist of 56 titular members - 28 govt. -14 employer -14 employee
- Further, it consist of 66 deputy members -28 govt. -19 employer -19 employee

Governing Body

- 10 of the titular govt. seats are permanently held by states of chief industrial importance (Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, U.K.,U.S., The Russian Federation)
- Generally it meets thrice in a year (March, June, November)
- Members are elected by ILC every 3 years
- Elects director-general after every 5 year
- Decides agendas for ILC
- Scrutinize the budget
- Follow up recommendations & conventions of ILC

International Labour Office:

- It is a focal point for activities of International Labour Organization under the supervision of Governing Body
- It is headed by Director-General
- Its headquarter is at Geneva
- Office employs 2700 officials from over 150 nations
- Office also contains a research & documentation centre
- It is responsible to collect & distribute information of labour & social problems

CHALLENGES FOR ILO:

Forced labour

The ILO has considered the fight against forced labour to be one of its main priorities. During the interwar years, the issue was mainly considered a colonial phenomenon, and the ILO's concern was to establish minimum standards protecting the inhabitants of colonies from the worst abuses committed by economic interests. After 1945, the goal became to set a uniform and universal standard, determined by the higher awareness gained during World War II of politically and economically motivated systems of forced labour, but debates were hampered by the Cold War and by exemptions claimed by colonial powers. Since the 1960s, declarations of labour standards as a component of human rights have been weakened by government of postcolonial countries claiming a need to exercise extraordinary powers over labour in their role as emergency regimes promoting rapid economic development.

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Minimum wage law

ILO has created Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928, Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 and Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 as minimum wage law for the purpose of protection of the right of labours for fixing minimum wage,

HIV/AIDS

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the lead UN-agency on HIV workplace policies and programmes and private sector mobilization. ILOAIDS is the branch of the ILO dedicated to this issue.

The ILO has been involved with the HIV response since 1998, attempting to prevent

potentially devastating impact on labour and productivity and that it says can be an enormous burden for working people, their families and communities. In June 2001, the ILO's governing body adopted a pioneering code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, which was launched during a special session of the UN General Assembly.

Migrant workers

As the word "migrant" suggests, migrant workers refer to those who moves from one country to another to do their job. For the rights of migrant workers, ILO has adopted conventions, including Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 and United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families in 1990.

Domestic workers

Domestic workers are those who perform a variety of tasks for and in other peoples' homes. For example, they may cook, clean the house, and look after children. Yet they are often the ones with the least consideration, excluded from labour and social protection. This is mainly due to the fact that women have traditionally carried out the tasks without pay. For the rights and decent work of domestic workers including migrant domestic workers, ILO has adopted the Convention on Domestic Workers on 16 June 2011.

ILO and globalization

Seeking a process of globalization that is inclusive, democratically governed and provides opportunities and tangible benefits for all countries and people. The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization was established by the ILO's governing body in February 2002 at the initiative of the director-general in response to the fact that there did not appear to be a space within the multilateral system that would cover adequately and comprehensively the social dimension of the various aspects of globalization.

Future of Work

The ILO launched the Future of Work Initiative in order to gain understanding on the transformations that occur in the world of work and thus be able to develop ways of responding to these challenges. The initiative begun in 2016 by gathering the views of government representatives, workers, employers, academics and other relevant figures around the world. About 110 countries participated in dialogues at the

regional and national level. These dialogues were structured around "four centenary conversations: work and society, decent jobs for all, the organization of work and production, and the governance of work." The second step took place in 2017 with the establishment of the Global Commission on the Future of Work dealing with the same "four centenary conversations".