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Leaving no one behind: Building inclusive labor protection in an evolving world of work

Originally Published By: International Labour Organization (ILO)

Introduction

Labor protection is the key to ensuring respect for human dignity and rights at work. To reaffirm the commitment to develop adequate labor protection and include explicit references to the right to healthy and safe working conditions ILO came up with the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice (2008) amended in 2022.

Key Highlights

- Regulation in the areas of wage, working time, Occupational safety, and health (OSH), maternity protection is essential to building an effective and inclusive labor protection.
- Labor protection is essential to avoid crises and build a transformative agenda for equality and eliminating violence and harassment at work places.
- **Trends in work kind:** Increase in wage employment across all income countries in the past three decades, growing informalization of workforce, increased intergenerational gender inequality, worldwide trend towards more temporary work (from 15% to nearly 30% in two decades), platform work and telework since COVID-19.
- **Trends in Labor Protection:** A higher proportion of people with disabilities employed in informal sector in developing countries than high income countries, lack of protection and poor payment to domestic workers, evident gender pay parity (women paid 12% lesser than men), long working hours (35.40% worked more than 48 hours per week in 2019) and part-time work (44.90% among developing countries), lack of legal recognition of rest periods at work, maternity protection with guarantee to return to the same job with same pay except the 33 OECD countries that recognize paternity leave.
- **Coverage and effectiveness of labor protection:**
 1. **Wage Policies:** Adequate minimum wage and wage bargaining, enhancing inclusiveness of collective bargaining for women and migrants who are underpaid.
 2. **Working Time & Work Organization:** Flexible work schedules, rights to employees on unpredictable work patterns, equal treatment to part-time workers, development of ICTs.
 3. **Occupational safety and health:** Legislation and guidance to respond to biological threats, emphasis on mental health with growing importance of teleworking, protection against workplace harassment and discrimination regardless of nature of job, ensure OSH in informal and lower tiers of supply chain.
 4. **Employment Protection:** Protection of data privacy of employees, amendment of dismissal procedures, stricter legislation on temporary contracts.
 5. **Inclusive Labor Protection:** Extending labor rights to the self-employed, effective recognition to rights of collective bargaining, formalization of work.
 6. **Compliance and enforcement institution:** Use of social media, educational videos and virtual assistant to raise awareness, strategic inspection plans to promote transition from informality in formal enterprises, strengthening of judicial and non-judicial dispute resolution mechanisms.
- **ILO responses to improve Labor Protection:** Implemented plan of action for 2015-22 with Labor Protection as the central agenda. A dedicated policy outcome on gender equality and non-

discrimination introduced for the first time. ILO emphasizes on capacity building of constituents, technical assistance and research development with implementation of a 2-pronged approach involving ratification of the international labor standard and a Standard setting agenda.

- **Conclusions and way forward:**

1. Informality remains a stubborn problem exacerbated by a global pandemic, geo-political tension, war, and increased cost-of-living risk.
2. Strategic partnerships of ILO with the UN, WHO, the Equal Pay International Coalition, and OECD countries, permits it to expand its outreach.
3. Achieving human-centered development with simultaneous emphasis on labor protection and social protection.
4. Increased attention to the most exposed to exclusion e.g.women, young, persons living with HIV, migrants, older age group, and PWDs.
5. Developing cutting-edge knowledge responding to constituents' realities and needs in an evolving world of work.
6. A general discussion by the Conference in 2025 regarding 'Right to disconnect' implementation i.e.on decent work in the platform economy.
7. Tackling undervaluation of Care economy in Conference 2024.

Read More: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_875127.pdf

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