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25TH -27TH OCTOBER 2019

**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR
ORGANISATION**

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

Dear Delegates,

We would like to extend our warmest welcome to this year's International Labour Organisation (ILO) committee at the Oxford International Model United Nations Conference. Being one of the more operative agencies of the United Nations (UN), we hope that your delegation's representation in the ILO will empower you to steer debate and come up with constructive and innovative solutions.

With a Swiss and a Dutch director who have grown up all around the world, we had the privilege of preparing this study guide and the committee using a variety of perspectives. We hope that this document will be able to guide you in your preparations and will above all promote open and critical dialogue about the workings of international labour standards.

For this year's debate, we have given special attention to persisting issues in labour policy, ones that will require novel thinking and considerations that have – until recently – remained on the fringes of UN debate. It is for this reason that we will be especially interested in seeing nuanced and thoughtful proposals, as the road that lies ahead for both topics remains very unsure.

We look forward to meeting you all in October, and should you have any questions regarding the debate or the upcoming conference, please feel free to get in touch!

Warmest regards,

Directors

Maurits S. Bogaards

mauritsbogaards@hotmail.com

Yasmin Frischemeier

BRIEF GUIDE TO INTERCONNECTIVITY AT OXIMUN 2019

Dear Delegates,

Before jumping into the in depth research contained in this guide this introductory section is designed to help you understand the added dynamics that will be at play at OxIMUN 2019 this year. Oxford Model United Nations will be bringing *Interconnectivity* to the United Kingdom for the first time. First developed at WebMUN 2014 and then replicated by other conferences such as MUNAPEST, and most recently PiMUN; interconnectivity aims to provide a more realistic experience for delegates who wish to substantively simulate the world of international diplomacy. Just as delegates from the same country operate under a shared foreign policy in real life, delegates in the Intermediate and Advanced committees will be responsible not only for passing resolutions within committees, but for proposing policies, treaties and projects *across* them. Delegates will be working with the delegates representing the same country in other committees in order to advance their national, and global ambitions. Events, resolutions and decisions undertaken in one committee will impact others in real-time. However, **the structures of interconnectivity in the Intermediate and Advanced committees ARE SEPARATE** meaning that delegates in Intermediate committees will not be negotiating or working with delegates in Intermediate committees under any circumstance or scope, but will only be concerned with the problematics present at their level. Below you will find a table of all committees in your interconnectivity system which you are expected to liaise with.

All actions pursued by all delegates regardless of committee must be related to the themes at hand. For Intermediate Committees the general theme is "*Challenging Global Financial Interests.*" Delegation Meetings and Multilateral Talks are not an opportunity to discuss country dynamics which are wholly unrelated to the themes being actively debated.

Intermediate Committees:
INTERCON 1.0
<i>Challenging Global Financial Interests</i>
AU

ASEAN
G20
ILO
ICC
ECOFIN
World Bank
UNCTAD
Press Corps 1.0

Below is a brief guide to how interconnectivity works and what it will mean for you. However, we highly advise delegates to read the full in depth description of what interconnectivity is and how it works please visit the OxIMUN 2019 Rules of Procedure.

Link: [Rules of Procedure](#)

You as a delegate:

While providing an effective and realistic context of political interdependence between parties, states, and committees delegates will be engaging not solely with the topics of their committee but are also expected to consider and contribute to other decisions its country makes. *(It must be stressed that delegates are still expected to debate within committee about the topics outlined in this guide as this is your foci of research).* Yet, delegates will no longer be rogue representatives but rather part of a working country delegation and as such will have to be aware of other dynamics occurring outside their committee and communicate effectively with the rest of their delegation.

Conference Wide Communication and Press: In order to operate within the dynamics of interconnectivity a Directorial Board composed of the OxIMUN 2019 Academics Team will be monitoring Conference Communication and dynamics to update all delegates on what is occurring. Press Committee 1.0 will also be able to report on new updates, resolutions and outside deals that are passed but look out for Official Directorial Board Statements to receive official, unbiased updates on what has occurred.

Additionally, all delegates will be provided a Slack Account prior to the Conference where they will be connected with all Intermediate Committees and Delegates. Each Delegate will have access to a Channel connecting them with their committee, their Country Delegation, their Committee Directors, the Directorial Board, and your Financial Body (the World Bank) as well as a General Conference Channel.

Delegate within Interconnectivity are expected to:

Take part in Delegation Meetings: At designated times during the conference, delegation Meetings will provide the opportunity for all Delegates representing the Same Country (*not the same University!*) to come together and discuss recent developments and advancements within their committees. This is the time in which delegates must strategise with their Delegation in order to best advance their shared aims and their country objectives. Prior to arriving at OxIMUN delegates should have already begun preliminary virtual discussions settling their shared strategy (via their provided Slack accounts). At the end of each meeting each delegation will informally write down its new policy decisions and strategies in a Policy Paper it will send to the Directorial Board via Slack.

Engage in Multilateral Talks and Private Meetings: Multilateral Talks and Private meetings are the way delegates can talk to other countries or specific delegates they wish to organize a deal or plan with. Multilateral Talks allow delegates to negotiate issues that only concern limited number of states, are outside the scope of committee debate, or require immediate action. A delegate may send a Slack Message to the Committee Director requesting to meet with one or more Representatives of any Committee in a location of privacy.

Manage their Budget: Each Delegation, prior to the conference will be given a budget. This should include the delegation's total budget, their credit outlook, their Standard and Poor Rating, Interest Rate and Down Payment. This budget will then be used and shared by each Country Delegation (keeping in mind these always remain separate between Advanced and Intermediate committees). Delegations may use this budget to pursue committee goals, multilateral agendas or unilateral actions pertaining to their country specifically. Delegations must also keep in mind that their actions and decisions throughout the conference may impact their Credit Rating and thus negatively or positively impact their budget's size. Delegates will turn to the World Bank, which will be the financial system for Intermediate committees in order to get advice and receive approval on projects. Please see details in the Rules of Procedure.

Introduction to The ILO

Founded in 1919, the International Labour Organisation has been an agency advocating for the increase of labour standards and the protection of worker's rights around the world. Within its mandate, the organisation has been continuously developing policies, setting standards, and creating programmes to promote its decent work agenda¹. The agency is committed to the values of equality, both through its promotion of gender equality in labour standards and via its use of a tripartite structure, in which representatives of the government, employers and employees seek to openly discuss labour standards.

Headed by the International Labour Office in Geneva - Switzerland, the ILO holds about 40 individual field-offices around the world and almost 3000 employees on active duty. With the central office deciding on policies and the agency's agenda, the field-offices and officials assist in the collection of research and the collaboration with its tripartite stakeholders. The organisation also holds an annual meeting, the International Labour Conference, where the resulting policies and proposals are discussed and implemented. Even though the ILO at OxIMUN will not follow the Rules of Procedure of this conference, and will instead abide by OxIMUN RoP², we encourage delegates to gear their ideas towards the internal workings of the organisation and to consult the documentation produced during its various meetings.

Since the ILO's initial development, a great number of its ideas and policies have been adopted and implemented around the world. These include the global implementation of eight-hour workdays, and ongoing efforts against child labour and gender equality. Under its current struggles, the ILO continues to promote the different facets of its decent work agenda.

HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

1919: Originally established as an agency of the League of Nations (LoN) following the advent of World War I, the ILO started out as network of progressive social thinkers and several epistemic

¹ ILO, *Topics: Decent work*, <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm>

² <http://oximun.org/pre-conference-2018/>

communities such as the International Association for Labour Legislation as well as political networks. Its advancements were mostly geared towards social action and establishing a harmonization of thought on labour policy.

- 1934:** During the interwar period, the ILO was mostly concerned with the consolidation of its influence and the promotion of its ideas. This included the invitation of the US into the organisation despite its reluctance to join the LoN as a whole.
- 1946:** The ILO becomes the first specialized agency of the newly formed United Nations after the end of World War II. This also included an amendment to its constitution and a restructuring of its functions towards the mandate that we know today.
- 1948:** The ILO adopted Convention No. 87 guaranteeing the freedom of association and the right to the organisation of labour unions. This allowed the organisation to start promoting its agenda of labour standards more thoroughly, for example through combatting forced labour.
- 1969:** Marking the 50 years anniversary of the organisation, the ILO was bestowed with the Nobel Peace Prize for its particular ability to translate its forward-thinking policies into practice.

“There are few organizations that have succeeded to the extent that the ILO has, in translating into action the fundamental moral idea on which it is based.”

Mrs. Aese Lionaes, Chair of the Nobel Committee, 1969³

- 1970:** After a period of contention with several members of the ILO on the inclusion of post-colonial states into the organisation, the US withdrew part of its support and financial assistance and eventually opted out, politicizing its work and membership.
- 1975:** This politicization was also fuelled by the inclusion of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as an observer and the representation of communist nations.
- 2008:** The ILO adopted its Declaration of Social Justice for a Fair Globalization⁴ given the dire economic situation of its member states at the time and the growing concern towards economic disparities in the world.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations working specifically within the sector of international development, it is also a member of the United Nations Development Group. It currently

³ Aese Lionaes, *Nobel Prize presentation speech*, 1969, Oslo

⁴ ILO, “ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization”, Geneva, 2008

holds 187 member states and allows all members of the UN to gain membership. The only current member of the ILO that is not part of the United Nations are the Cook Islands who joined in June of 2015.

In its workings, the ILO is especially focussed on the creation of recommendations and conventions for the improvement of labour standards, as represented in several other UN committees. Yet where the ILO differs is that it also places strong importance to the revision and amendment of existing documents and recommendations. This has allowed the committee to become more flexible on the revision of points and has allowed it to be especially lenient towards reconsidering its policies, creating a fruitful environment for innovation.

While the committee that will be represented in the conference will follow general rules of procedure, **it is strongly advised that participating delegates consider the tripartite perspective of their delegation. This includes promoting the thoughts of their respective governments, employees and employers.** While this can allow for internal contradiction at times, this also allows for a fuller and more rounded debate. Another way this can be done is by including this year's theme of interconnectivity in your thinking about the topics and in writing before and throughout the debate.

TOPIC A: USING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE DECENT WORK IN DEVELOPING ECONOMIES

BACKGROUND

Introduction

As the neoliberal engine of the global economy churns ever forwards, inequality grows increasingly stark. In such a system, the individuals who face the highest levels of workplace insecurity often lack the means to improve their situation. The promotion of decent work within least developed countries (LDCs) is thus a core objective of the International Labour Organisation.

The concept of decent work itself advocates the establishment of fair incomes, workplace security, productive employment, and social protection for all people as the most effective mechanisms for global poverty alleviation. Yet, those developing countries with the most to gain from decent work programmes tend to lack the financial resources and institutional knowledge to implement them alone. In such situations, financial assistance, whether it take the form of microloans, foreign direct investment (FDI), or structured country-to-country technical cooperation, is necessary to advance the decent work agenda. Though the international community has committed in recent years to achieving decent work for all, the practical facilitation of financial assistance remains a difficult task on multiple levels.

Some states with weaker economies are sceptical of large-scale foreign investment in the current international political climate, while others court it actively. As the future of the liberal international order hangs in the balance, certain states are hesitant to collectivise their investment responsibilities at all through multilateral fora like the ILO. It is with these and other challenges in mind that delegates are invited to pursue a constructive debate on how and whether financial assistance measures should be undertaken in the pursuit of decent work for all.

Historical Background

Mainstreaming the Decent Work Agenda

The path towards global recognition of the right to decent work began with the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944. This reassertion of the ILO's core goals most critically expressed that "labour is not a commodity" -- a statement which continues to lie at the heart of the fight for international labour standards.⁵ Despite the relatively progressive roots of organisations like the ILO, the Cold War period following Philadelphia dominated 20th century political agendas, thus preventing the timely realisation of its goals. As such, the next breakthrough of sorts for the decent work agenda would not come until 1995 with the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen. The Summit can be seen as a steppingstone in the formalisation of the decent work concept in that it elevated a people-centred development discourse above the paternalistic and Eurocentric mindset of the preceding period.⁶ With the people-centred approach rising to popularity in the early 2000s, the idea of decent work began cropping up spontaneously in various UN documents. Target 1.B of the Millennium Development Goals, recognised "decent work for all" (though the idea of decent work was relatively undefined within the documents themselves) as a step to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger.⁷ In 2005, many of the resolutions produced during the World Summit of the United Nations touched the topic in a similarly under sophisticated way.

2008 proved to be a pivotal year for decent work. In that year, the decent work agenda was truly mainstreamed through the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. The document, largely recognised as the third major expression of the ILO's guiding principles and commitments since its founding in 1919, institutionalised decent work as a key piece of the organisation's agenda. The

⁵ ILO, *Declaration Concerning the Aims and Purposes of the International Labour Organisation*, Philadelphia, 1944.

⁶ John Angus, "The United Nation's World Summit for Social Development," *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand* 4, (1995).

⁷ United Nations, "Goal 1: Extreme Poverty & Hunger," *N.d.*

declaration provided a robust definition of decent work organised around four strategic objectives: promoting employment, social protection, social dialogue, and the respect, promotion, and realisation of workers' rights.⁸ Similarly, the 2008 global financial crisis prompted a re-evaluation of global systems of labour and demonstrated to policy makers the importance of facilitating inclusive economic growth and socially responsible employment.⁹ Since then, the concept of decent work for all has been enshrined within the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), where it holds the title of SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

A Timeline of Financial Assistance

In researching this topic, it is important to keep in mind the successes and failures of past aid ventures. Though financial assistance within developing countries today encompasses a variety of technically complex exchanges meant to promote self-help above paternalism, its roots can be found in the objectively less charitable late colonial period. During the early 1900s, colonial powers like France and Britain made regular payments to their colonies in order to fund infrastructure projects.¹⁰ At the same time, an early version of foreign direct investment was taking place as wealthy American industrialists began taking a keener interest in international business.

Ultimately, the conclusion of World War II would be the catalyst that set off the global interest in financial assistance. In response to the level of destruction, the United States would deploy over USD\$12 billion with its Marshall Plan, the largely successful air package which rebuilt a war-torn Western Europe. It was with the wave of colonial independence triggered by the war that the idea of development would first enter the global political discourse, with United States President Harry

⁸ ILO, *ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation*, Geneva, 2008.

⁹ ILO, "Decent Work," N.d.

¹⁰ Keri Phillips, "The History of Foreign Aid," *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, December 17, 2013.

Truman's 1949 inaugural address proclaiming 'development' to be a condition all states should aspire to.¹¹

This ideological shift birthed modernisation theory, which held that poor, 'under-developed' nations required economic stimulus and aid from 'developed' capitalist nations so that they might avoid falling into the Soviet sphere of influence during the Cold War.¹² During the Cold War period, the question of financial assistance was largely a political game played to leverage one state against the other, with infrastructure projects like the Aswan High Dam straining the relationship between the United States and Soviet Union.

Despite this period of tension, during the 1970s, organisations like the ILO and World Bank began formulating more egalitarian ideas about development, adopting a people-centred approach to issues like poverty eradication and public health. The debt crises of the 1980s resulting from the mismanagement of loans from foreign creditors led to the 1990s 'aid fatigue,' drawing the focus away from portfolio investments and loans to capacity-building and technical cooperation facilitated by supranational organisations.

DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM

The Decent Work Agenda

Though lengthy, the ILO's definition of decent work is worth excerpting in its entirety for the purpose of this exercise. Decent work has been defined by the ILO as the following:

¹¹ Stephen Macekura, "The Point Four Program and U.S. International Development Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 128, no. 1 (2013): 127-60.

¹² Michael E. Latham, "Ideology, Social Science, and Destiny: Modernization and the Kennedy-Era Alliance for Progress," *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 2 (1998): 199-229.

“opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.”¹³

The global economic system incentivises profit above much else. As such, less developed countries are popular places to conduct international business due to a general lack of government regulation or enforcement of regulations as well an economic situation which forces many people to work in dangerous and low paying jobs. In such a system, profit-driven businesses have little financial incentive to promote decent work and improve the lives of their employees. This has obvious consequences for human wellbeing and socio-economic development in such regions of the world.

It should be noted that the promotion of decent work is not merely an altruistic venture. In fact, the ILO has collected a myriad of evidence to suggest that decent work can play a key role in the reduction of poverty and augmentation of state-level economic productivity. Countries which have seen wide decreases in poverty and have been able to transcend the ‘less developed’ category were by and large able to do so because they create more socially responsible (and, by consequence, more productive) jobs while also strengthening social protection measures for workers and their families.¹⁴

Though jobs conforming to the conditions of decent work tend to be more profitable, there is a profound lack of capital in less developed states to develop decent work programmes. This is why fostering investment through financial assistance mechanisms – a topic to be explored in greater depth in the succeeding sections – is so important. The key challenge for delegates to overcome will be

¹³ ILO, “Decent Work.”

¹⁴ ILO, “Decent Work, the Key to Poverty Reduction,” N.d.

designing a resolution where resulting increases in economic indicators and human wellbeing will justify initial costs.

Currently, the ILO's involvement with promoting decent work is centred around technical cooperation projects which bring together donor nations and supranational organisations in collaboration with national governments and private businesses. Between the years 1995 and 2010, ILO technical cooperation programmes have helped nearly 1 million children escape child labour, its entrepreneurship programmes have been successfully helping disadvantaged women across the world escape poverty, and its public works schemes have been providing productive short-term employment opportunities for youth and displaced individuals.¹⁵ Presently, the ILO is providing assistance to approximately 40 developing countries to strengthen their minimum wage systems.¹⁶ The ILO also drafts many detailed decent work reports to advise governments requesting support. Delegates are advised to explore some of these plans independently.

One of the ILO's most heavily promoted decent work schemes has been 'Better Work' – a collaborative enterprise between the ILO and International Finance Corporation (IFC) centred around improving conditions in the garment industry. Better Work collaborates with governments in order to improve their employment laws while also advising individual factories and unions on how to improve their working conditions and the competitiveness of business. With the IFC providing the financial backing, the ILO has been able to implement the project in over 1,600 factories employing over 2.2 million workers in 7 countries.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Better Work, "About Us." N.d.

Aside from Better Work, the ILO's most cooperative partners in such decent work ventures have proven to be EU member states, who tend to mirror the ILO's language surrounding decent work in their own legislation and are the primary donors of the MAP project, which has created a quantitative index to measure the world's progress towards decent work for all.

Financial Assistance Mechanisms

Microfinance

Microfinance involves the provision of financial services to individuals and small businesses who would otherwise be unable to participate in conventional banking. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) most often act as small lenders but can also provide services like microinsurance or checking and savings accounts.¹⁸

In 2015, the ILO concluded a substantial research project exploring the relationship between microfinance and the promotion of decent work in the informal economy. MFIs often have strong links to the business community in developing states; thus, it was hypothesised that they could use their power to entice improvements in local working conditions. The project was centred around testing this theory and proceeded in three stages. First, MFIs conducted their own internal diagnostic to identify the most pressing work-related challenge confronted by their clients. Then, in partnership with the ILO, they developed an 'innovation' (as outlined below) to promote decent work in the direst area. Finally, they implemented the innovation and tracked its impact. Though this could not be easily tested by the researchers involved, it was presumed that the innovations would pay for themselves as they would increase the MFI's client base, decrease loan losses, and improve member retention.

¹⁸ Julia Kagan, "Microfinance," *Investopedia*, August 3, 2019.

Table 3. Innovations implemented through the MF4DW

MFI	Country	Innovation
1. Child labour		
LAPO	Nigeria	Awareness campaign against child labour; loan for school associated expenses
NRSP	Pakistan	Extension of health insurance coverage
Nyésigiso	Mali	Client training on entrepreneurship, financial management, and child labour
2. Business performance		
Bai Tushum	Kyrgyzstan	Reorganization of micro and small enterprise finance
BASIX	India	Participatory Safety Education
IMON	Tajikistan	Entrepreneurship and Productivity training for female clients with start-up loan
Tamweelcom	Jordan	Training on occupational safety and health, results-based incentives for staff
3. Formalization		
ESAF	India	Awareness raising on formalization and business development services (BDS)
FCPB	Burkina Faso	Sensitization to benefits of formalization, client training on enterprise management and incentives to formalize
4. Vulnerability		
AMK	Cambodia	Financial education for clients
Banco Popular	Honduras	Health microinsurance and client training
Confianza	Peru	Multi-risk microinsurance and client training
NWTF	Philippines	Entrepreneurship training for clients
NWTF	Philippines	Emergency savings product
PML	Uganda	Asset financing product for the purchase of assets for income generation (land, vehicles, equipment)
TYM	Viet Nam	Client training on risk management and microinsurance
VFC	Cambodia	Financial education for clients

Figure 1: Table displaying innovations implemented by MFIs during the ILO’s Microfinance for Decent Work Project. (2015). Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_344847.pdf.

Some of the results were extremely compelling. Child labour innovations in Pakistan decreased child labour incidences by almost 7% locally. Within India, awareness innovations related to formalisation and business development led awareness to increase by 93% and formalisation by 70%. Training on productivity and occupational safety and health carried out by a different Indian MFI resulted in an 11% reduction of work-related injuries and enhanced productivity such that it led to an increase in monthly net income of USD 37. In the Philippines, emergency savings innovations reduced the likelihood of a client taking out a loan to repay a different loan by 22% as well as prompting a 7% drop in repayment difficulties and a generally lower level of indebtedness. Women’s entrepreneurship and productivity

training in Tajikistan along with start-up loans resulted in increased self-employment and business expansion for female microentrepreneurs in Tajikistan.¹⁹

Despite these positive results, not all innovations were so successful. For example, the child labour awareness programmes carried out in Nigeria had no measurable impact and financial management training in Mali was deemed a failure. What delegates should take away is that a one size fits all approach to using MFIs to promote decent work will not be successful. Additionally, it should be recognised that attracting MFIs to participate in such experiments requires strong links to local communities. One particularly positive aspect of an MFI approach is that decent work promotion would start from within adversely affected communities. The primary challenge with microfinance is crafting a larger strategic doctrine on how ILO outreach with MFIs should be conducted.

Foreign Direct Investment

The term ‘foreign direct investment’ (FDI) encompasses any investment made by a business such that they possess a controlling interest in another company based in a foreign country. In instances of FDI, the foreign-owned company is directly involved in the day to day operations of its location abroad in the host country, which distinguishes this investment practice from a portfolio investment.

FDI is currently the largest source of external finance for developing countries.²⁰ Many countries seek out foreign investments because jobs created by multinational enterprises tend to be better in a number of areas. Foreign firms tend to offer more stable and higher paid jobs, and the jobs created tend to

¹⁹ ILO, “Microfinance for Decent Work,” 2015.

²⁰ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, “Promoting Foreign Investment in the Sustainable Development Goals,” Geneva, November 2017.

benefit the host state at large through knowledge spill-over and higher economic productivity.²¹

However, there are a variety of factors that must be considered when assessing the viability of an FDI-centred strategy to address decent work.

One of the most important question to consider when discussing the potential benefits of FDI is ‘investment by whom?’. EU investments or those made by Western businesses tend to put greater emphasis on transparency and inclusiveness while also mandating that businesses adopt more responsible and sustainable practices.²² Some evidence has suggested that Asian-owned firms, particularly those owned by Chinese investors, are less likely to encourage such compliance with decent work standards unless they export to European markets.

Ultimately, expanding the ILO’s involvement in guiding FDI best practices would be entirely contingent upon the willingness of foreign firms to cooperate. However, this does not mean that FDI does not merit consideration as a medium through which decent work can be advanced. There exists room for expansion within the ILO’s MNE Declaration, which currently regulates responsible sustainable development, as well as many other potential FDI schemes for delegates to explore.

Cooperation with Supranational Organisations and NGOs

Many of the ILO’s current decent work projects operate in conjunction with other supranational organisations, NGOs, and UN organs. For example, the previously described Better Work programme is funded as a collaboration between the ILO and the IFC. When the ILO makes recommendations to countries, it often mobilises some of its own funds to begin the project while helping the host nation implement various financial measures (like, in Montenegro, collecting membership dues from its trade unions) to ensure the sustainability of the projects.

²¹ Beata Javorcik, “Does FDI Bring Good Jobs to Host Countries?” 2013.

²² Min Zar Ni Lin & Samu Ngwenya, “From Extractive to Non-Extractive Based Foreign Investment: An Analysis on the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment and Decent Work Conditions in Myanmar,” *International Labour Organisation and Centre for Economic and Social Development*, May 2019.

BLOC POSITIONS

Less Economically Developed Countries and the ‘Global South’

Given that decent work programmes increase national economic productivity and generate wealth and institutional knowledge, this group of countries has much to gain from the implementation of decent work standards. Despite these benefits, certain nations in this category might be reluctant to cede domestic control over their economies to foreign corporations by amending the global financial rules surrounding FDI. Similarly, the question of ‘investment by whom’ must be considered by less economically developed countries, as some UN member states such as Russia and China have been hypothesised to have predatory motivations for their investment. Furthermore, these states must consider to what extent they wish to be the arbiters of their own future, and how much conditional help they are willing to accept from the ILO and its members.

South-East Asia and Central Asia:

The countries belonging to this group tend to be generalised as rising economic powers seeking to increase their influence on the global stage. As such, they are often perpetrators of poor labour standards in order to maximise national growth as well as the profit of domestic corporations. The authoritarian governments amongst the South-East and Central Asian nations are particularly sceptical of western involvement in their economic systems, and the most vocal among them are often resistant to schemes of international accountability. It will be difficult for some of these nations to come to the table on the advancement of decent work, and they must consider how stubborn or yielding they wish to appear on the world stage.

Europe and North America:

This group of countries tends to have a strong domestic commitment to decent work, and en masse donate generously to the ILO’s decent work projects. Europe and North America have historically

advocated heavily for advancing decent work and, with the exception of the United States, support the principles of liberal internationalism. Outside of their multilateral involvement in decent work, these nations' corporations are quite involved in foreign direct investment and have significant lobbying power. These countries must continually consider their clashing altruistic and selfish motivations and will need to strike a balance between national benefit and bolstering decent work abroad.

POINTS A RESOLUTION SHOULD ADDRESS

- To what extent is the existing global trade orthodoxy harmful to vulnerable workers?
- Is it the role of the ILO to pursue financial assistance for developing economies seeking to promote decent work?
- How can trust be fostered between investors and host nations?
- What are the merits of the various listed financial assistance mechanisms in funding decent work programmes?
- How should partner countries be chosen?
- Which combination of financial assistance mechanisms would be most effective in combatting workplace insecurity?
- How can it be ensured that financial assistance improves working conditions?
- What role should NGOs play in advancing decent work?

FURTHER READING

- <https://www.ilo.org/pardev/publications/lang--en/index.htm>
 - Delegates should search for their country's most recent ILO cooperation fact sheet.
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_672549.pdf
 - For a better understanding of the principles decent work is built upon, read section 1.
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_344847.pdf

- To learn about the connection between microfinance and decent work, read the conclusions of this report.
- <https://betterwork.org/blog/portfolio/impact-assessment/>
 - Explore the Better Work impact assessment page to learn about the effectiveness of the ILO's decent work collaborations.
- https://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/mne-declaration/WCMS_570332/lang--en/index.htm
 - To understand the rules and guidelines surrounding ethical FDI, read this ILO declaration.
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/genericdocument/wcms_359234.pdf
 - To understand past action in greater technical depth, delegates should explore any of the ILO's recent decent work country programmes. This is only one example - have a search around, particularly if your country has made a decent work plan with the ILO.
- <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1c6f/da5af6eee2d67d34705eb8a6b64f95a3b6bf.pdf>
 - For more information on the pros and cons of FDI, skim this source.
- https://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ciid35_EN.pdf
 - This document provides a perspective on how foreign investment can help achieve the sustainable development goals.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iW6wr2FxO3c>
 - This ILO video provides an example for how decent work is being implemented around the world.
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X18303309>
 - Read this article for a gendered perspective on the decent work agenda.

TOPIC B: FRAMING QUALIFIED CIRCULAR MIGRATION AS A DRIVER OF DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND

Introduction:

In the ILO's publication *Resolutions and Conclusions concerning a fair deal for migrant workers in a global economy*, adopted in 2004, the ILO defined its obligations towards the regulation and promotion of labour migration²³. The ILO highlighted that its mandate entrusts the organisation with the promotion of development policies in regard to migrant workers, including qualified and highly qualified migrants. With the values of decent work in mind, the conclusions prescribed within seek to frame migration as a beneficial tool for both the displaced individuals and for the countries they cross. These were also formed through the consideration of labour standards in migration, which continue to reinforce the importance of migration within the ILO's mandate. It is for these reasons that the ILO has started looking into the interconnectedness of migration and development. The resolution also added that the: "Promotion of policies that maximize the contribution of migration to development is another essential component of a comprehensive policy to address the global context of migration."²⁴

When considering the world's total migrant population, it is often estimated that the majority of them are migrating for reasons related to labour, including migrant workers seeking employment, qualifications and their families²⁵. Keeping this in mind, global migration is therefore often considered to be "mainly a labour market issue"²⁶, especially when it comes to the work of NGOs. Another consideration to be made is that a large portion of these migrations are cyclical. **Circular migration,**

²³ ILO. *Resolution concerning a fair deal for migrant workers in the global economy*, adopted at the 92nd session of the International Labour Conference. Geneva, in: Report of the Committee on Migrant Workers, Provisional Record 22, International Labour Conference, Ninety-second Session, International Labour Office, 2004.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ ILO "International labour migration and development: the ILO perspective", *International Migration Brief, International Migration Programme*, Geneva, 2005.

²⁶ Ibid.

defined as the repetition of migration between two or more countries by the same person, remains one of the defining characteristics of labour migration in many regions of the world, especially when it comes to the effect labour migration has on development. The ILO has therefore started considering the promotion of policy and practices with the relation between circular labour migration and development in mind. Its resolutions have been able to prescribe a handful of actions allowing the economic and social benefits of labour migration to benefit states, yet these have remained largely comprehensive and have in later years often become a minor priority in regard to migration and labour policy.

The question of qualified labour migration:

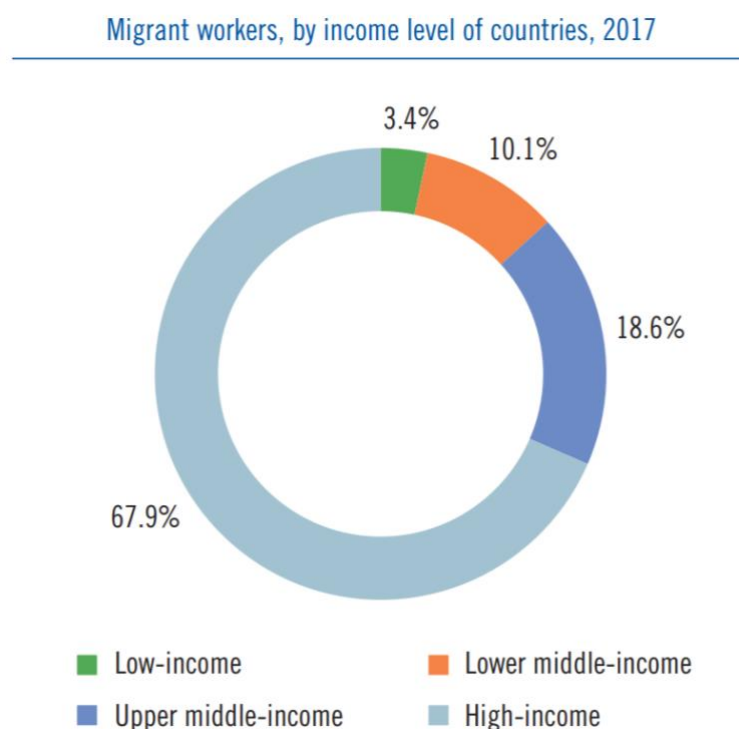


Figure 3: ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers – Results and Methodology. 2nd ed. International Labour Office - Geneva: ILO, 2018

One of the consequences of this lack of attention is that the ILO has failed to harness the potential of qualified labour migration, which until recently has not been considered as a driver for the development of states. Defined as the portion of labour migrants that possess significant skills and qualifications such

as university-level education or expert knowledge of their field of activity, qualified migrants tend to be left out of the equation when recommendations on the topic are made. This is partly due to patterns of circular migration being less prevalent with migrants holding higher qualifications. The attractiveness of strong labour markets in high-income host economies and the prospect of a higher quality of life has often deterred qualified migrants from returning to their country of origin, especially as programmes allowing the reunification of families have made it much easier for qualified migrants to sustainably migrate to a more economically stable country. The posed problem then slowly starts taking shape, on the one hand we have the strong potential presented by qualified migrants and their potential impact on development, yet on the other side the downsides of return migration and lesser economic prospects have classically withheld them from further displacement leading to a process of brain-drain.

FRAMING THE LINK BETWEEN CIRCULAR QUALIFIED MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT:

From a policy point of view, several institutions including the ILO, the International Organisation for Migration, and the United Nations Development Programme have long established the linkages between development and qualified migration, urging executive bodies to mainstream such considerations into policy. The United Nations High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held on the 14th/15th of September 2006 in New York and the Global Forum on Migration and Development held on the 10th/11th of July 2007 in Brussels²⁷ are considered as strong milestones in this regard. These have shown that the effects of labour migration, including the payment of remittances, the compensation of workforce shortages in host countries, the procurement of qualifications including university diploma's and work experience, can be geared towards specific development goals given that policies are then adapted accordingly.

²⁷ GMFD, *Summary Report*, First Meeting, Global Forum on Migration and Development, Brussels, July 9-11, 2007

With the increase in political interest towards qualified migration and the contemporary ease of displacement to a country of origin, qualified circular migration has slowly started being considered as a tool for development. Circular migration is of particular interest in this case, because whether it is the migration of an individual from their country of origin and back, or from their host-country to their country of origin and back, it has allowed qualified individuals to strongly impact the development of both countries, while also enriching themselves through the experience. States have for example started funding capacity-building projects seeking to harness the qualifications of diaspora members in foreign states. One example being the IOM's Mauritanian Diaspora Project²⁸ launched in 2019, countries have sought to invite qualified nationals to return to their country of origin to carry out short-term missions in order to reinforce the capacities of their public institutions. Another manifestation of such a project is the government of Tunisia and the European Union sponsoring Tunisian students migrating to Europe to carry out internships abroad, and then bringing back the skills and experience to employers in their country of origin in 2018. However, more policy-oriented measures have also been taken, with countries seeking to make foreign direct investment and the return of diaspora members more attractive through economic opportunities, hoping that their return will contribute to their state's development.

Yet while such efforts have started emerging on a small scale, the framework surrounding the migration of such labour forms has not yet been created or discussed. Where the ILO's involvement for this comes in is the establishment of this framework through the production of policy recommendations and guidelines²⁹.

²⁸ IOM, *Building the Capacity of the Mauritanian Government to Strengthen Linkages with the Mauritanian Diaspora*, Mauritania, February 2019.

²⁹ ILO, *Skills and Migration*, Areas of Work, 2019

DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM

Current problems facing qualified labour migration and development

Most contemporary thinking has framed the migration of qualified labour as an obstacle towards development³⁰. This has often been put in reference with the phenomenon of brain-drain, a process by which qualified labour, especially individuals with higher levels of education and experience, flee their country of origin in the search for a better quality of life. While this has often been a strongly beneficial action with regards to such individuals, who in return get a higher return on their qualifications, this has remained a detrimental process for the countries they leave behind. With the availability of a qualified workforce diminishing, the institutions and infrastructures of such countries of origin tend to suffer most. With shortages in public administration, hospitals, courts, and other institutions, it becomes abundantly clear that the development of such countries suffers strongly as well. Yet despite extensive efforts by governments to make their economies and qualified positions more attractive, these often fail to compete with the benefits and economies of host countries. Most have therefore refrained from migrating back.

Circular migration as a largely unexplored medium

Circular migration has been proven to present a possible solution to the above problematics. These forms of displacement are especially attractive due to the security they offer: individuals are guaranteed that their migration is only temporary and above all, many of these movements are facilitated by specific programmes. These have allowed migrants to harness their potential to benefit development, while

³⁰ Hernández, José Luis. “La Migración De Trabajadores Calificados Como Un Problema Para Lograr El Desarrollo.” *Problemas Del Desarrollo*, vol. 44, no. 172, 2013, pp. 81–104.

holding onto their positions abroad. However, these programmes have only been applied on singular programmes which often have frameworks devised on an individual basis, meaning it has not seen widespread application. A further challenge that it poses is that circular migration has often been defined differently by various actors in international relations³¹. The challenge that the ILO then faces, is that it must learn from these pilot projects and be able to establish recommendations to make them sustainable, while also devising a framework that will institutionalize the process and provide a clear definition of the issue and its scope.

The problem of recognising qualifications abroad

It must also be noted that individuals planning to migrate for their qualifications face strong drawbacks as well. Those holding significant qualifications and seeking to find employment abroad have significant barriers they must overcome, yet the problems concerning the ILO's mandate mostly pertain to the recognition of their qualifications and the need for opportunities to lawfully migrate. States have different standards of recognition when it comes to diplomas and work experience, and current centralized mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications remain costly and time-consuming. This is the case for UNESCO's service for the authentication of accredited university qualifications, which it has implemented in several regions across the world³². The problem that remains is that individuals hoping to migrate abroad, especially in the framework of circular migration, seek to have their qualifications proven through a lengthy and costly processes. Eventhough this may seem beneficial for situations of one-time displacement, this system often doesn't seem worth-while when it comes to limited and circular migration. The challenge is therefore also resting on the possibility of making circular migration easier, for example through tackling the issue of recognising qualifications.

³¹ ILO, *Circular Migration of Healthcare Professionals: International Organizations and Public and Private Employer's Perception*, Geneva, September 2013

³² UNESCO, "Recognition of higher education qualifications", *Conventions and Recommendations*, N.d.

BLOC POSITIONS

Lesser Economically Developed Countries and ‘Global south’³³:

For countries seeking to harness their diaspora members or their qualified nationals’ potential for development, the biggest priority for circular migration is to make the process more available and regulated. Currently, many states face the continuous problem of a post-brain drain economy, an ongoing process of brain-drain or the inability to harness the qualifications of their diaspora members abroad. What they tend to gain from the process in terms of development, is that returning migrants can share their experience and contribute to the capacities of their institutions. Yet with this potential also come numerous pitfalls: The dangers of opening flows of circular migration lay in the fact that such channels can also be abused, facilitating migration abroad also creates the opportunity for migrants to overstep the final development goals of such movements to benefit of their own situation. Furthermore, positions of LDCs will also have to include the promotion of their own agency in these processes, as partnerships with host-countries can often lead to unequal power-dynamics when it comes to decision-making.

South-East Asia and Central Asia:

For a lot of very dynamic economies in Asia, qualified migration has become a priority for economic development. Uniquely, circular migration in several areas is characterized by displacement from rural to urban areas, or is alternatively defined via the migration of students for overseas qualifications. Yet while those qualifications remain great assets for their economies, countries such as China and South-Korea

³³ Hollington, Andrea, “Introduction: Concepts of the Global South”, GSSC, 2015

maintain special interest in the ability to have migrants return to their territories in order to reinforce institutions and private economic activities³⁴. What is particularly challenging in their situation is that young nationals make up the majority of these displacements, and that they often leave behind lesser prospects in the rural areas they originally came from. Solutions have to be found in order to both benefit rural and urban development. Furthermore, the migratory flows of these countries are most often internal, provisions therefore have to be made in order to coordinate international and internal migration policies.

Europe and North America:

These states mostly serve as host countries in this dynamics. At first sight, this means that they will often be supplying qualifications and professional experience to migrants, who will then be encouraged to put these qualifications to the service of their country of origin's development. Yet, these states also tend to benefit strongly, the creation of international frameworks for circular qualified migration can not only help them increase their economic partnerships with other states, these can also help them temporarily fill-in labour shortages in specific sectors. Countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom have long been able to identify and target specific labour shortages in their economies. Where special attention should be placed however, is on the protection of migrants and their professional safety, given the fact that temporary contracts and short-term migration situations can often prove to be precarious.

POINTS A RESOLUTION SHOULD ADDRESS

The problems currently facing qualified circular migration remain twofold: the ILO must consolidate recommendations in order to make circular qualified migration more feasible and attractive, meanwhile it

³⁴ Deshingkar, Priya, "The role of circular migration in economic growth", *Rural-Urban links, seasonal migration and poverty reduction in Asia*, Overseas Development Institute, London United Kingdom, 2006

must also create a framework that will be able to orient international labour migration towards development goals while upholding labour rights.

- First of all, a resolution should be able to uphold the mandate and the abilities of the ILO specifically. Given the technical nature of the topic. Collaborative efforts and overlapping areas of activity have existed in NGO actions and UN activities.
- While technical, the topic also remains largely unexplored and many components have to be harmonized in terms of definitions and understandings. A strong starting point for each involved delegation would be the decision of a common framework, or at least a provisional roadmap on how to create their foundation.
- One specific point to be addressed within this area is for example the common recognition of qualifications. This can serve as a starting point upon which to form policies and allow for the expansion of qualified circular migration.
- Such policies should also aim to be sustainable, especially when it comes to the process of multiple displacements, the recommendations of the ILO should uphold the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals as well as to present a sustainable option for the individuals who will be undertaking them.
- Given that circular migration is also a relatively new frontier for the ILO, policies must remain especially mindful of the fragilities involved and the necessity to coordinate with other UN agencies before being able to advise on expanding policies.

Resolutions should also be mindful of the different regional queries related to the topic, different states hold different priorities in the process and those individual necessities can be very quickly overshadowed by comprehensive policies.

FURTHER READING

- <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/policy-areas/skills-migration/lang--en/index.htm>
 - To learn more about the specific activities of the ILO and their mandate related to qualified migration
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms_201706.pdf
 - For a better understanding of qualified migration trends, read section 4
- <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/migration/lang--en/index.htm>
 - Additional information on the ILO and its involvement in the Global Compact on Migration, regional sections also available.
- <https://www.iom.int/labour-migration>
 - Learn more about current qualified labour migration projects and the potential of circular migration.
- <https://www.oecd.org/dev/migration-development/eclm.htm>
 - To understand the specific contributions of circular migration to countries of origin, several country-specific studies available below.
- <http://www.gfmd.org/tags-docs-lib/temporary-and-circular-labour-migration?page=1>
 - Several publications available on the workings of circular migration.
- <https://en.unesco.org/themes/higher-education/recognition-qualifications/global-convention>
 - For further reading on the difficulties of recognising foreign qualifications.
- <https://www.afd.fr/sites/afd/files/imported-files/35-notes-documents-VA.pdf>
 - For a broader understanding of the context and the overarching dynamics influencing the topic.
- <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264288737-4-en.pdf?expires=1569248368&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=CD2A2181C944A56092374DA679141AED>
 - Provides a comparative approach to the creation of policy specifically seeking to integrate labour migration into development.
- https://www.iemed.org/observatori/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/anuari/med.2016/IEMed_MedYearBook2016_EUs%20Labour%20Migration%20Policy_Andrei_a_Ghimis.pdf
 - Analysis of the current labour policies of the European Union with a critical approach to their current points of improvement.

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