



# International Development Matters




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## The Global Crisis Needs a Global Coordinated Response

As the United Nations kicks off a major three-day Conference in New York on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, (24-26 June, 2009), the ITUC is drawing the attention of world leaders to the severe human costs of the deepening slowdown in the global economy. This is most evident in the jobs

crisis, with increasing income inequality, rapid increases in unemployment, and growing hunger and poverty in developing countries. Women are bearing a disproportionate share of the hardships brought on by the global crisis.

This unprecedented global crisis requires global, coordinated responses, forged in an inclusive manner, where the representatives of the developing countries that are bearing much of the brunt of the crisis have a say in policy-making. The United Nations provides such a forum. Trade unions are therefore calling on Member States to adopt a strong, pro-development Outcome Document of the UN Conference. This would serve to initiate an inclusive, democratic process towards real and lasting solutions to the crisis.

Details of the ITUC's Recommendations for the Outcome Document of the UN Conference are contained in the ITUC Statement to the Conference, and presented in succinct form in the Executive Summary.

These documents are available at: [http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article3921&var\\_mode=calcul](http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article3921&var_mode=calcul)

## ILO Jobs Pact: the Way Forward out of the Crisis

The adoption of a landmark Global Jobs Pact by governments, trade unions and employers at the annual ILO Conference on 19 June provides a realistic and workable template for economic recovery and reform, according to the ITUC.

"The ILO Pact puts employment and incomes at the heart of economic recovery efforts, and sets key

benchmarks for a new global economy. Jobs, workers' rights, social protection, quality public services and sustainability are to be at the centre of global policy making, in a significant break with the failed free-market radicalism which caused the crisis. Some are still seeking a return to business as usual, and the clear message from the ILO is that this would not be acceptable," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

The Pact provides guidance for governments and employers to maintain and create employment, recognising the importance of "green jobs" both for economic recovery and for tackling climate change. The crucial role of tripartite negotiations between governments, unions and employers as well as social dialogue and collective bargaining are highlighted, along with the need to avoid deflationary wage spirals and worsening working conditions. The importance of public job-creation schemes such as infrastructure development, as well as help for the unemployed and training and skills development, are also emphasised.

More information here

[http://www.ilo.org/global/About\\_the\\_ILO/Media\\_and\\_public\\_information/Press\\_releases/lang-en/WCMS\\_108482/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Press_releases/lang-en/WCMS_108482/index.htm)

## Getting the world to work

In this special publication, the Global Union Federations, working with the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD and the International Trade Union Confederation, set out alternative strategies for the global economy that are focused on getting people back in work and for a recovery plan based on humanitarian values. These arguments, agreed by Global

Unions, were put before world leaders in Washington in November 2008 and were on the table again at the meeting of the Group of 20 in London in April 2009. Put simply, these articles set out the labour movement's demand for a change of direction and a break with the greed, self-interest and inequalities of the past. They insist that governments put people first for a change. Individual chapters have been prepared by the GUFs.

<http://www.global-unions.org/spip.php?article253>

## The Global Economic Crisis and the Informal Economy

The global financial crisis has precipitated a world-wide economic recession with significant impacts on employment and workers. Policy makers and the media have begun to focus on the employment effects of the global crisis. But attention is largely on rising unemployment among formal salaried workers. Relatively little attention is given to the effects of the crisis on informal firms and informal workers, including the impact of new entrants on the informal economy.

The WIEGO community has been collecting evidence on the global economic crisis and the informal economy. **Impact of the Global Recession on the Working Poor in the Informal Economy** is a new section on the WIEGO website. It contains recent publications and data as well as reports from informal workers on the impact of the crisis on their lives. It also includes recommendations on what can be done to address the impact of the global recession on the informal economy.

## Older people and Decent Work

HelpAge International are highlighting a campaign emphasising that older people have a right to earn a livelihood through decent work. That means full and productive work carried out in conditions of freedom, equality and security.

HelpAge is working with older people to help them secure this right and will soon be publishing research undertaken in Bangladesh, Peru and Uganda.

You can read more here

<http://www.helpage.org/Researchandpolicy/Decentwork#>

## TUC submission to DFID White Paper consultation

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) in the UK, in its submission to the UK Department for International Development on the forthcoming White Paper, has called for a jobs pact in line with the ILO Global Employment Agenda accompanied by a fiscal stimulus package aimed at boosting demand. The TUC Submission which addresses a number of key issues ranging from the current economic crisis, climate change, reforms of international financial institutions to fragile states calls upon the UK Government to set an objective of assisting every developing country to create a Decent Work Country Programme in consultation with social partners by 2012.

The Submission also argues in favour of significant reforms of the IMF, World Bank and Multi-lateral Development Banks and demands expeditious implementation of the measures agreed at the March G20 Summit in London. It also points out that trade unionists

could play a critical role in conflict prevention and resolution in fragile and/or conflict-affected states.

For further information see <http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-16612-f0.cfm>

## Another dangerous year to be a trade unionist, says ITUC

Last year was another difficult and dangerous year for trade unionists around the world with 76 murdered because of their work defending workers' rights, according to this year's ITUC Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations.

The ITUC survey, which details abuses of workers' rights in 143 countries, says that in addition to those killed, many more trade unionists were attacked, subjected to harassment and intimidation, or arrested. Although fewer union activists were killed last year, (deaths fell from 91 in 2007), the number of killings in Colombia - the most dangerous place on earth to be a union member - reached 49, an increase of 10 on the previous year.

Elsewhere, nine trade unionists were murdered in Guatemala; four were killed in the Philippines and in Venezuela, three in Honduras, two in Nepal and one each in Iraq, Nigeria, Panama, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. In a number of cases, governments were either directly or indirectly involved in the killings.

All the information and detailed report is here

<http://survey09.ituc-csi.org/>

## Burma: Sanctions on insurance and financial services are a means of hitting the junta without penalising the poor says FTUB leader

The FTUB (Federation of Trade Unions of Burma) held its first ever Congress in March 2009. In this interview, the general secretary, Maung Maung, talks about the Burmese trade union movement and the current state of affairs in Burma: international sanctions, the trial of Aung San Suu Kyi, the 2010 elections, the economic collapse, etc.

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article3833>

## Urgent Action Nestlé Indonesia - Two Years and Nescafé Workers Still Waiting for the Right to Negotiate Wages!

Since 2007, the union at Nestlé's Nescafé factory in Panjang, Indonesia has been struggling to negotiate two basic improvements to their contract. The union wants: wages to be negotiated through collective bargaining, and is asking for the wage scale to be included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Nestlé management refuses, saying it is not company policy to negotiate wages and that wage scales are "confidential"! Rather than negotiate, Nestlé has attempted to undermine the union's legitimacy by intimidating members and leaders, attempting to establish a rival organization and pressuring workers to join it.

For two years, workers and their union have been standing up to company pressure - you can support them by sending a message to Nestlé, the world's largest food company, telling it to stop pressuring and start negotiating!

[http://www.iuf.org/cgi-bin/campaigns/show\\_campaign.cgi?c=410](http://www.iuf.org/cgi-bin/campaigns/show_campaign.cgi?c=410)

The situation at Nestlé Panjang is not unique. For growing numbers of Nestlé workers around the world, it's "Good Food - Good Life - Goodbye to Union Rights in the Workplace"

To learn more about Nestlé, Nespressure and the fight back, visit

<http://www.iuf.org/nespressure/en/>

## World Day against Child labour - Give girls a chance; new TUC report

On the World Day Against Child Labour, the TUC draws attention to the plight of girl child labourers by joining trade unions around the world in the global campaign Decent Work, Decent Life for Women.

By publishing this report, the TUC reflects the conditions of child labourers in developing countries, underlining the importance of the Decent Work Agenda and highlighting the link between the elimination of child labour and realisation of decent work for all.

The report emphasizes the multiple disadvantages girls face, which result in the worst forms of child labour. 2009 is especially important since the world economy is going through a series of crises. The TUC calls for the necessary steps to be taken to prevent erosion of gains in the elimination of child labour and gender equality.

Read more here

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-16597-f0.cfm>

New ITUC video

The ITUC has launched a new video spot

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zZXVq7elLw> to highlight the problem and press governments to tackle the exploitation of children more effectively, both through funding quality education and enforcing labour law.

## Global unions support campaign for new UN super-agency for women

At the next UN General Assembly in September 2009, there will be a vote for a new "super-agency for women". More than 300 NGOs, under the acronym GEAR (Gender Equality Architecture Reform) have been pushing for governments and the UN secretary-general to set up the new super-agency.

GEAR's primary mission is to ensure that all women's voices are heard throughout the United Nations Reform process so that women's issues and concerns are given the importance that they deserve on the global agenda. PSI, EI and the ITUC are supporting the campaign to ensure that the voices of working women are not ignored.

The UN sets global standards for human rights, but has no single agency with the resources necessary to improve the lives of women in all areas, including at work. Until now, women's concerns were spread across four poorly coordinated UN entities, Unifem, DAW, Osagi and Instraw. It is planned that the new agency will have the staff, resources and authority to really make a difference. For more details, see

<http://gear.collectivex.com/>, an interactive website to discuss and obtain resources on the campaign.

## New papers on Women and Work

### Global Trends in Womens Access to Decent Work

Maria S. Floro and Mieke Meurs argue that the changes in labour markets and labour relations and the reduction of spending for social protection has worsened womens access to decent work. Accordingly, women shoulder the double burden of paid and reproductive work - a drawback that could be solved by social policy that enables men and women to balance both their paid and reproductive work responsibilities. The authors demand capacities for increased gender-aware economic analysis which in their view is crucial to bring to light gender inequalities and promote a move towards decent work for women.

You can find the Occasional Paper N° 43 directly under <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/06399.pdf>

### Trade - A Driving Force for Jobs and Womens Empowerment? Focus on China and India

Christa Wichterich counters the mainstream argument that trade has the potential to be a driving force for jobs and for womens empowerment. She presents evidence from China and India where past trade liberalization has distorted the labour market at the particular expense of women's working conditions, opportunities for quality employment and social relations with regards to women's dual burden as breadwinners and reproductive workers.

You can find the Briefing Paper N° 7 directly under

<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/06389.pdf>

## Solidarity with Iranian workers

The ITUC has expressed deep concern of the situation in Iran, following the contested election in which President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was declared victor against claims of election fraud by opposition Presidential candidates. Several people have been killed and many more injured by government forces which have been brutally repressing huge demonstrations demanding that the election be recounted or annulled.

"The violent response of the authorities against peaceful demonstrators must be condemned, and those responsible for the deaths and injuries have to be brought to justice. The people of Iran have the right to nothing less than full democracy and transparency, and we call upon those in power to ensure that democracy and internationally-recognised human rights are fully respected," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

Despite an official clampdown on the media, reports are also emerging of arrests of political activists and journalists. The ITUC and its Global Unions partners are continuing to focus their actions on campaigning for the release of trade unionists who have been imprisoned due to their activities in support of workers' rights in recent years. Among those in jail is bus workers' union leader Mansour Osanloo, who was beaten and detained by security forces on 10 July 2007, less than 3 weeks after he addressed an ITUC General Council meeting in Brussels. Rallies and other activities are being held on June 26, the international action day

for justice for Iranian workers, in actions coordinated by the ITUC, EI, ITF and IUF.

To find out what's happening in your country, visit:  
<http://www.justiceforiranianworkers.org/>

## New ITUC Report on Respect for Core Labour Standards in Morocco

A new ITUC report on respect for core labour standards in Morocco, released to coincide with the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) review of the country's trade policy, denounces the violations suffered by Moroccan workers and unions.

Morocco has not ratified ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association and protection of the right to organise, which, according to the ITUC, goes some way towards explaining why forming a trade union remains a difficult process in the country. At the same time, the report points out that the rapid growth in subcontracting and temporary employment is often accompanied by a deterioration in working conditions. For Guy Ryder, general secretary of the ITUC: "At a time of increasing global market integration, it is essential that all workers be able to fully exercise the fundamental right of freedom of association. This is why we are strongly urging Morocco to ratify ILO Convention 87."

Although Morocco has ratified the ILO Conventions on the principle of non-discrimination, the ITUC report denounces the numerous abuses still faced by women in the area of employment. According to the report, women are paid one third less than men for work of equal value; the illiteracy rate among women is virtually twice that among men, and women are overrepresented in sectors with the most precarious

working conditions, such as agriculture, domestic work, textiles, and the informal economy.

To see the full report:

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?rubrique161&lang=en>

## [Palestine: The participation of women in PGFTU is now visible thanks to quotas](#)

In this ITUC interview, Amna Abdel Jabbar Mafarja from the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) talks about Palestinian women's twofold struggle: against Israeli colonisation and fundamentalism. She underlines the progress made inside the trade union movement and the obstacles still to be overcome to secure equality.

Regarding international assistance, Amna says women in Palestine need the support of sisters and brothers from other countries to reconstruct and strengthen the women trade unionists' movement: "We need financial assistance to rebuild the women trade unionists' office in Gaza, as well as funding for teams of women working on the ground to recruit and organise women. We have some volunteers but we need extra staff to go out and meet women, to listen to their problems and to provide them with training. This requires a lot of time and effort. We would also like help with the publication of a bulletin covering these activities, to spread information and provide encouragement. Finally, we need to develop psychological support for these families, for the children as well as the adults."

You can read the full interview [here](#)

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article3936>

## [New report on IMF lending to low-income countries](#)

Eurodad has just produced a report analysing ten loans granted by the IMF to low-income countries for mitigating the effects of the current global economic crisis. The report notes that some of the recent changes the IMF has introduced, such as the creation of a low-conditionality Flexible Credit Line, are accessible only to middle-income countries and that reforms that should affect loans to poorer countries, such as the elimination of structural performance criteria announced by the IMF in March, have had only limited impact so far.

The report finds that the ten loans it analysed show "slightly greater flexibility compared to previous years ... with regards to structural reform", but that the "IMF programmes for low income countries are granting extremely limited additional flexibility in fiscal and monetary policies". Eurodad states: "Poorer countries must be given the fiscal space necessary to pursue the kinds of counter-cyclical policies currently being used by rich countries, especially as the current financial and economic crises come on top of severe poverty and food price crises."

The full 20-page report can be down-loaded [here](#):

<http://www.eurodad.org/whatsnew/reports.aspx?id=3679>

## [MTUC Malaysia: "By helping migrant workers,](#)

## we are also helping Malaysian workers"

In this interview, G. Rajasekaran, general secretary of the MTUC talks about trade union initiatives designed to help the two million migrant workers in Malaysia. He also denounces the exploitation suffered by domestic workers, a particularly vulnerable category of migrants.

You can read the full interview [here](#)

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article3860>

## Commonwealth values trade union contribution to civil society

The Annual Meeting of the Commonwealth Trade Union Group (CTUG) chaired by Khurshid Ahmed, General Secretary, Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF), was held at the ILO in Geneva on 14 June 2009. It was attended by 53 representatives from 17 countries in the Commonwealth and from Zimbabwe.

Mrs Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, in her address to the meeting, expressed her appreciation of the contribution made by trade unions to the Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF) in Kampala, Uganda, and hoped that the trade union participation in the CPF in Trinidad and Tobago in November 2009 would enrich the debate on such important themes as human rights, gender equality, informal sector workers, social protection and sustainable development.

For further information see <http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-16634-f0.cfm>

## Trade unionists organize VCT clinics in Ghana

A total of 281 workers from the timber industry in Ghana attended the first Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) clinic organized by the Timber and Woodworkers' Union (TWU) on 6 May 2009 in Kumasi under a workplace initiative on HIV/AIDS funded by the Bill Morris Testimonial Fund for HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Twenty workers (7%) who tested positive were referred to hospitals for further tests and treatment while others were offered counselling on the prevention of HIV/AIDS. VCT clinics are part of the activities currently underway in the one-year project implemented at a cost of £40,000 through TUC Aid. The Project was launched in January 2009 with a view to preventing HIV/AIDS through behavioral changes, improving the quality of life of workers affected by, or infected with, HIV and facilitating access to the Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT).

For further information see <http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-16627-f0.cfm>

## New publication: Community Unionism. A comparative analysis of concepts and contexts

This discussion of what has been termed 'Community Unionism' (CU) traverses a range of disciplines, including geography, sociology and industrial relations. While the term is being used more extensively, it tends to be loosely deployed and often in such a variety of ways as to generate as much confusion as clarity. This book draws out the different

meanings, including a range of the variations, of the term CU. The case studies presented in this book raise a number of issues important to the process of CU and its potential for success, including the nature of CU; the impact of geography; the sustainability of CU initiatives; the role played by activists in building trust between trade unions, community and faith groups; the potential problems presented to traditional trade unionism in acting beyond the workplace; the diversity of CU initiatives and whether CU offers the prospect of an alternative form of trade unionism.

You can order the book here

<http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?PID=281225>

New book on the financial crisis: *The Looting of America: How Wall Street's Game of Fantasy Finance destroyed our Jobs, Pensions and Prosperity, and What we can do about it.* (Chelsea Green Publishing)

**Quote from author, Les Leopold:**

"For the past several years, before the crash, I had been watching these "opaque and exotic" financial instruments that everyone said were too complicated to understand. So I thought I'd try to understand them.... and then the economy crashed under their weight. As I started to put the book together I realized how much this economic meltdown had to do with the rising income gap between the super rich and the rest of us, and the distended profits and compensation

packages on Wall Street. Helping others understand this mess became a mission. I honestly believe the book will help you understand more about the meltdown and that it will provoke your thinking about what should be done. This is a very important time in our history. I never thought our economy would teeter on the edge of another Great Depression. But here we are. I hope this book will make a small contribution to developing a safer, greener and saner economic world."

You can hear Les on line at [http://current.com/items/9000425\\_5\\_les-leopold-author-of-the-looting-of-america-explains-the-financial-collapse-and-bailout.htm](http://current.com/items/9000425_5_les-leopold-author-of-the-looting-of-america-explains-the-financial-collapse-and-bailout.htm)

The book is available on Amazon at <http://bit.ly/rltb4>.

**Useful websites**

There are a number of websites with useful information for trade unionists, policy makers and campaigners. Details here: [Useful websites](#)