

On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation, and the Workers and Trade Unions Major Group we would like to share a few brief comments with you concerning the latest focus areas document.

The list of focus areas and associated targets are befittingly ambitious for the purpose and we support much of the content that is included across all of the focus areas and targets. We therefore limit our comments to those focus areas that are the greatest priorities for the international trade union movement.

Focus area 8: Economic Growth, Employment and Infrastructure

We do regret that the issue of Employment and in particular Decent Work is no longer a focus area in its own right, especially given the magnitude of the challenge of effectively responding to staggering rates of systemic unemployment and increasing inequality. Experience shows that quality jobs are needed for sustainable economic transformation and to ensure social inclusion. Progress under the new development agenda requires a combination of policies and the Decent Work Agenda, recognised within the UN system places decent work at the heart of economic growth and development. Addressing the global jobs challenge requires more than job creation. We would therefore like to insist that each component of focus area 8 be afforded equal priority, in terms of resulting targets and commitments. The current list of targets appears to accomplish this so we would caution against eliminating any of the employment related targets.

We therefore strongly support the retention of all targets related to employment and in particular **8b** (*achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all who seek employment including for marginalized groups by 2030*) and **h** (*protect the rights of all workers, including migrant workers, in compliance with ILO fundamental rights at work*).

Further to these comments we have some specific proposals which will hopefully improve the focus area. These are:

- a) the title of the focus area (or goal) include Decent Work for All and say Inclusive Economic Growth i.e. ***Inclusive Economic Growth, Employment and Decent Work for All, and Infrastructure***
- b) the subtitle should refer to *decent work for all* instead of *decent jobs*
- c) under target 8b:
 - I. we suggest to **enumerate the four pillars of decent work**—job creation, social protection, workers’ rights and social dialogue
 - II. we wonder about the reference “for all who seek employment” as many people already in employment, formal or informal, do not enjoy decent work
- d) where employment is elsewhere referred to in the document we propose to maintain a consistency with the proposed language in this focus area e.g. *full and productive employment and decent work for all*.
- e) add an additional target: ***extend social security and social protection coverage, including social protection floors for those in need, including older persons, people with disabilities, unemployed, children, women and youth.***

Focus area 1: Poverty Eradication, Building Shared Prosperity and Promoting Equality

We appreciate the focus given to promoting equality as part of this focus area and find the associated targets are in the right direction. In particular we strongly support the retention of target **1c** (*by 2030 implement nationally appropriate social protection measures including floors, with focus on coverage of the*

most marginalized) and **e** (achieve full and productive employment for all, including women and young people).

Further to these comments we have some specific proposals which will hopefully improve the focus area. These are:

- a) as already mentioned we simply suggest consistency in language on employment and therefore suggest that target **1e** read as **achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people**
- b) we encourage the inclusion of a target on ensuring appropriate and functioning labour market institutions, including in particular a target on **ensuring a minimum living wage** and references to collective bargaining and the social dialogue.
- c) that nationally “appropriate” social protection measures is changed to read: **by 2030 implement nationally designed social protection measures, in particular social protection floors for all in need, including focus on the most marginalized;**

Focus area 4: Education and life-long learning

We strongly support all targets proposed under focus area 4 on Education and life-long learning, and in particular welcome the target **4a** on *universal, free, equitable access to and completion of quality primary and secondary education*.

However, we are concerned that the role of teachers has been overlooked; qualified teachers are a prerequisite for quality education and with a global shortage of more than 5 million primary school teachers, we propose that **“all children to be taught by qualified teachers”** is added to target **4g**.

The reference to “pre-primary education” in target **4c** is not sufficient as it often refers to only 1 year of education; comprehensive early childhood education is vital to success later in school and life, and especially important to disadvantaged children. Target **4c** should, therefore, read **“universal, free, quality early childhood education”**.

There is currently no reference to higher education. The higher education and research sector is necessary for finding solutions to the most pressing scientific, environmental, economic, social and ethical challenges we face today. We, therefore, propose that **“equitable access to higher education and lifelong learning”** is added under target **4e**.

Finally we propose an additional target: **by 2030 increase by x% the number of adult women and men with vocational training certified apprenticeships and technical, engineering and scientific skills aligned with labour market needs and equitable access to higher education and lifelong learning**.

Focus area 5: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

We support all the targets under this focus area and while we support the inclusion of target **5d** (*by 2030 ensure equal employment opportunities for women and equal pay for equal work*) we think it can be improved. We propose again consistency with other references to employment and ILO conventions where referred. This would require then that the target should include **equal pay for work of equal value** which is consistent with fundamental principles and rights at work, referred to under the employment focus area.

We would therefore propose the target be articulated as follows: ***by 2030 ensure equal employment opportunities and decent work for women and equal pay for work of equal value***

We also propose the addition of the following target under this focus area: ***by 2030 develop specific national strategies and measures to reduce the burden of unpaid care work including ensuring access to quality public services.***

We limit our comments to these for now and would be happy to elaborate on any of these proposals. We would also be very happy to support your efforts in ensuring that these issues are appropriately addressed in the set of recommendations to emerge from this process.