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Webinar

Interactive dialogue and launch of *Work Wise Youth: A guide to youth rights at work*

14 February 2024 | 14:30- 16:00 CET/ 08:30 – 10:00 EST

Background

As recent entrants into the labour market, young people find themselves navigating their way through a complex world of work characterised by both opportunities and challenges. With boundless ambition, energy and enthusiasm, they aspire to access employment opportunities that provide fair wages, job security and a safe working environment. Equally, many young people aspire to forge their own paths in the world of work by embracing entrepreneurship and self-employment. Given the limited opportunities for wage employment in some countries, entrepreneurship and sustainable self-employment can become channels to accessing productive employment and decent work.

Enabling young people's access to decent work and unleashing their potential as drivers of job creation and economic growth is not merely a source of income. It represents an avenue for them to build a secure future and make meaningful contributions to society.

Yet, these aspirations for decent work and dignified lives may be jeopardized by their limited knowledge of the legal standards, norms and the fundamental principles and rights at work governing workplace relations and conditions. For young entrepreneurs and youth in self-employment, barriers such as a lack of access to skills, knowledge, finance, markets and networks pose additional obstacles. This can expose young people to the risks of discrimination, exploitation, unsafe working conditions and an inconducive business environment.

At the same time, more and more young people are finding themselves in situations of forced displacement owing to protracted conflicts, violence or other serious risks to their lives. Young people in forced displacement contexts are among the most vulnerable groups of youth and face specific barriers to accessing decent work and equal rights at work.

It is therefore paramount to promote and raise awareness among young people about their rights at work in order to ensure their successful integration in the workplace. Being aware of their rights and advocating for its protection enables youth to work in an environment characterized by freedom, dignity and security, and to have a voice at work. Moreover, young entrepreneurs and those in self-employment need to be made aware



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of their freedom to engage in economic or business activities, and to access the skills, knowledge, financial resources, markets and networks that can help them succeed.

Such empowerment contributes to advancing their engagement in the labour market, strengthening economies and paving the way for a sustainable and inclusive future for all. For young people in forced displacement contexts, it helps reduce vulnerabilities and enhance resilience, both during and after displacement. It also empowers them to meaningfully participate and contribute to the economy and society in their host country and community, promoting social cohesion.

Against this backdrop, the ILO is launching ***“Work Wise Youth: A guide to youth rights at work”***, an updated and expanded version of the 2015 manual [*“Rights @ Work 4 Youth: decent jobs for young people”*](#).

The guide sheds light on young people’s rights at work, including wages, working time, occupational safety and health, prevention of violence and harassment in the world of work, gender equality and non-discrimination, and access to social security. The content is tailored to the current and evolving shifts in the labour market – driven, among other things, by the polycrisis, technological advancements, climate change and globalization – and aims to promote equality, including gender equality, through a transformative agenda. It is intended for ILO constituents and other stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of initiatives aimed at raising young workers’ awareness of their rights at work, in particular young people in forced displacement contexts.

This guide has been produced under the initiative, [*Advancing Young People’s Engagement and Meaningful Participation in the Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities*](#) (PROSPECTS), jointly implemented by the ILO, UNHCR and UNICEF with the support of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. [**PROSPECTS**](#) seeks to improve access to employment, education and protection for refugees and host communities and is implemented by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. In developing the guide, the ILO leveraged the collaboration with various organizations under the aegis of [*Decent Jobs for Youth*](#), a multi-stakeholder alliance for the promotion of youth employment.

The objective of the initiative, **Advancing Young People’s Engagement and Meaningful Participation in the PROSPECTS Partnership**, is to empower and meaningfully engage young people in forced displacement contexts so that they develop their skills and confidence to lead socio-economic and cultural activities, start an enterprise, address protection concerns, volunteer in their communities, advocate on issues that are important to them, and provide input to programming, including



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PROSPECTS. It does so by harnessing the nexus between youth employment and youth participation.

The successful integration of young people in their workplaces is not only crucial for their personal development but is equally significant for the broader society and enterprises.

Objectives

The objectives of the webinar are to:

- Foster knowledge and awareness of the international labour standards and fundamental rights under the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work that lay down important provisions on the working conditions of young workers, including forcibly displaced youth, such as social protection entitlements, occupational safety and health, among others;
- Facilitate a dialogue among young people representing employers, workers and refugee communities about the importance of promoting youth rights at work for individuals, businesses and societies at large;
- Launch ***Work Wise Youth: A guide to youth rights at work***; a reference framework for facilitators to support them in delivering training for young people to raise their awareness on their rights at work, social protection entitlements and fair conditions of work.

Participants

The webinar will bring together ILO tripartite constituents, partners of the PROSPECTS Programme and the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, experts from international organizations, development partners, practitioners working on youth and refugee issues, youth-led organizations, including refugee youth-led organizations, and young people.

Agenda

14:30 – 14:35 **Welcome**
Moderator: Milagros Lazo Castro, Youth Employment and Participation Officer, ILO

14:35 – 14:45 **Keynote speech**
Speaker: Ouided Bouchamaoui, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 2015

14:45 – 14:50 **Video**

14:50 – 15:00 **Launch of the Guide**
Speaker: Mia Seppo, Assistant Director-General for Jobs and Social Protection, ILO



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15:00 – 15:05 Q&A

Panel session on young people's perspectives on promoting their rights at work

15:05 – 15:40

- Satyajeet Reddy, Chair of the ITUC Youth Committee and Representative of Indian National Trade Union Congress
- Foni Joyce Vuni, Program Coordinator, Global Refugee Youth Network
- Kingsley Laar, Young Economist and Researcher, Ghana Employers' Association
- Felipe Paullier, Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs

15:40 – 15:55 Q&A

15:55 - 16:00

Closing

Moderator: Milagros Lazo Castro, Youth Employment and Participation Officer, ILO