

**In times of crisis, International Labour Standards provide a strong foundation for key policy responses that focus on the crucial role of decent work in achieving a sustained and equitable recovery. These standards, adopted by representatives of governments, workers' and employers' organizations, provide a human-centred approach to growth and development, including by triggering policy levers that both stimulate demand and protect workers and enterprises.**

**Policy responses should focus on two immediate goals: Health protection measures and economic support on both the demand- and supply-side.**

**First, workers and employers and their families should be protected from the health risks of COVID-19. Protective measures at the workplace and across communities should be introduced and strengthened, requiring large-scale public support and investment.**

**Second, timely, large-scale and coordinated policy efforts should be taken to provide employment and income support and to stimulate the economy and labour demand. These measures not only cushion enterprises and workers against immediate employment and income losses, but they also help prevent a chain of supply shocks (e.g. losses in workers' productivity capacities) and demand shocks (e.g. suppressing consumption among workers and their families) that could lead to a prolonged economic recession.**

**Pro-active, large-scale and integrated measures across all policy areas are necessary to make strong and sustained impacts. Since the crisis is evolving rapidly, careful monitoring of the direct and indirect effects of all interventions are crucial to ensure policy responses are and stay relevant.**

**Building confidence through trust and dialogue is crucial in making policy measures effective. Especially in times of heightened social tension and a lack of trust in institutions, strengthened respect for, and reliance on mechanisms of social dialogue creates a strong basis for building the commitment of employers and workers to the joint action with governments. Enterprise-level social dialogue is also crucial.**

**Protect workers in the workplace to minimize the direct effects of the coronavirus, in line with WHO recommendations and guidance .**

**Improve OSH measures, including social distancing, provision of protective equipment (especially for health and allied workers, volunteers and others in permanent contact with people), hygiene procedures and forms of work organization (supported by information and awareness campaigns), and through social dialogue between employers and workers and their representatives, using for example OSH committees;**

**Encourage appropriate flexible working arrangements, such as teleworking;**

**Prevent discrimination and exclusion relating to COVID-19;**

**Enhance universal access to collectively-financed health services for all, including uninsured workers and their families;**

**Expand access to collectively-financed paid sick leave, sickness benefits, and parental/care leave to ensure income security for those who are sick, quarantined or caring for children, elderly or other family members.**

**Stimulate the economy and labour demand through economic and employment policies to stabilize economic activity.**

**Active fiscal policies, particularly social protection measures, including targeted transfers and automatic stabilizers, such as unemployment benefits, along with public investment and tax relief for low-income earners and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs);**

**Accommodative monetary policy (interest rate reductions, reserve rate relaxation, targeted liquidity provisions);**

**Targeted lending and financial support for specific sectors to protect enterprises, especially MSMEs. Investing in health systems is crucial in building resilience against COVID-19 but also offers an opportunity to create decent jobs.**

**Protect employment and incomes for enterprises and workers negatively impacted by the indirect effects (factory closures, disruption to supply chains, travel bans, cancellation of public events, etc.).**

**Social protection through existing schemes and/or ad-hoc payments for workers, including informal, casual, seasonal and migrant workers, and the self-employed (e.g. through access to unemployment benefits, social assistance, and public employment programmes);**

**Employment retention schemes, including short-time work arrangements/partial unemployment benefits and other time-bound support for enterprises, such as wage subsidies [and temporary cuts to payroll tax/exemptions from social security contributions], provision of paid leave and extension of existing entitlements to workers, and training leave, grants and related schemes;**

**Time-bound financial/tax relief and income smoothing measures to support business continuity, especially MSMEs and the self-employed (e.g. subsidies, credit mediation/re-financing to overcome liquidity constraints).**