



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

STRATEGY PAPER

The BMZ Agenda for Decent Work Worldwide

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Introduction

The importance of decent work for sustainable development in the 21st century

The 21st century is marked by multiple crises and structural challenges such as climate change, impacts of the pandemic, growing inequality, a burgeoning population and digitalisation. Against this backdrop, it is clear that our partner countries cannot successfully achieve sustainable development by pursuing the traditional development path of the 19th and 20th centuries. The vital prerequisite for sustainable development in the 21st century is a fundamental social-ecological transformation of economic systems – in our partner countries and worldwide. This will enable climate-neutral growth within the planetary boundaries, while at the same time bolstering the resilience that societies need.

Having said that, there are significant differences between the starting points and the conditions under which our partner countries will achieve this. There is no standard social-ecological transformation that can serve as a blueprint for all countries of the Global South. In fact, what are required are different social-ecological development paths for the 21st century. Besides a general decarbonisation of the economy, depending on the country context and needs, important elements will include sustainable industrialisation, a strengthening of the key sectors for the transformation, and a sustainable modernisation of the agriculture and food sector. This will require strong commitment by governments, appropriate economic policy frameworks, private-sector investment and – even more so in the digital age – well-trained young people with the right skills to cope with the demanding new jobs.

In order to succeed, the transformation must also be socially just. This is because the structural transition of the global economy that will occur in the face of the megatrends of digitalisation and climate change, and the changes to the working world which it entails, will have both positive and negative effects on work and employment. Moreover, these will be distributed highly inequitably, both globally and within countries. The social-ecological transformation will only be accepted at the local level if it is self-determined, creates new and decent jobs that are inclusive, and improves people's lives tangibly. Women, youth and marginalised groups must be given special consideration.

Decent work is therefore key to the success of the social-ecological transformation and to sustainable development in the 21st century. Ultimately, the best way to reduce poverty is through decent work that provides a living income for all population groups and all genders, on an equal basis. Decent work that includes social protection for formally and informally employed workers and their families also helps to boost resilience and social cohesion in times of crisis, and to reduce inequality.

Consequently, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has made the joint creation of more, better and sustainable jobs in our partner countries an aspiration of German development policy. Our goal is decent work worldwide as the foundation for a just global economic order within the planetary boundaries.

An agenda for the BMZ

To promote decent work as a key enabler of sustainable development in our partner countries, the BMZ will rely in particular on structural approaches and on close cooperation with our international and local partners. We will orient the BMZ portfolio in the area of sustainable economic development, training and employment accordingly. We will align this with an active labour, economic and social policy, and the local country contexts and strategies of our partners. Guided by a feminist development policy, we will aim to overcome structural inequalities between the genders and within societies.

1 Training, employment and social protection

Decent employment is a key to reducing poverty, hunger and unemployment. The structural transformation of the global economy, however, will entail enormous upheaval in the world of work. To manage this change and seize the opportunities presented by the transition, it will first of all be necessary to create new, quality jobs, especially in future-oriented industries. Secondly, well-trained people will be needed to actually do these jobs, some of which will be demanding. Moreover, people who lose their jobs as a result of the structural change will need further training to help them find new jobs. This applies particularly to people considered poorly qualified for the labour market, because they will be disproportionately affected by poverty worldwide. It will also be necessary to strengthen social protection systems, as without a safety net many people and their families will be left at the mercy of risks such as unemployment, sickness, poverty, or loss and damage caused by climate change.

The goal is to enable everyone – especially women and marginalised groups – to gain equal access to education and training, decent employment and social protection, and to reduce structural inequalities such as a gender pay gap or an inequitable distribution of care work. The BMZ will enable decent work and social protection by

→ **Supporting partner countries with an integrated approach to employment promotion.** This will involve combining measures to boost labour demand and supply, and labour market placement. Private sector promotion, dual education and training models (green skills) and institutionalised social dialogue will be important points of reference. In line with this, we will also ambitiously implement our recent G7 commitment to intensify the promotion of green jobs together with our partners. To achieve this, the BMZ will increase the share

of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for employment promotion in ecologically relevant future-oriented industries.

- **Promoting labour market-oriented vocational training measures and private investment to create quality jobs.** Especially important here is the Special Initiative “Decent Work for a Just Transition”. In the future, the initiative will focus its collaboration with companies even more strongly on good jobs in ecologically relevant industries of the future, and on women’s access to decent work. An important part of this will involve piloting innovative approaches that can be incorporated into bilateral and multilateral development cooperation, and into national strategies of partner countries. At the same time, the vocational training partnerships, in which German chambers, business associations, and education and training institutions collaborate with local partner institutions, will give higher priority to women’s empowerment in these industries.
- **Driving the swift implementation of the UN initiative “Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions”.** The goal of the initiative is to create 400 million decent jobs in future-oriented industries and enable a further 4 billion people to access social protection by 2030. This will be a key lever for reducing poverty and inequality, and strengthening the resilience of individuals and societies. Through the Multistakeholder Engagement to implement the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions (M-GA) initiative, the BMZ is advocating at the multilateral level for closer cooperation between international actors. In this context, Federal Minister Svenja Schulze has agreed to step up cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank. Building on an agreed



finance architecture, the BMZ has pledged an initial capital of seven million euros for the M-GA, and is also canvassing other donor countries to get on board and make a financial contribution. The BMZ intends to maintain its commitment to the M-GA beyond the initial phase, and to continue supporting the implementation phase. The next milestone will be the operational launch of the initiative at the World Bank Annual Meetings in Marrakesh in October 2023.

→ **Redoubling our close cooperation with key international partners.** Together with the World Bank and the ILO, we have taken the initiative to expand and better coordinate engagement for social protection and decent work. We wish to continue along this path. To this end we will pursue in particular joint approaches of development banks, UN organisations and bilateral partners with the countries of the Global South. As the largest development finance institution, the World Bank will play a key role in implementing the social-ecological transformation

and in creating sustainable and decent jobs. As the BMZ sees it, the World Bank reform currently under discussion should help focus the World Bank more strongly on addressing global crises. Together with the World Bank, the BMZ will be presenting its new Jobs flagship report at the end of 2023. The core message of the report will be that more jobs which are also more decent are a public good, and as such should be promoted more strongly with public funds.

→ **Supporting the formalisation of informal jobs.** Employment in the informal sector in particular is a major contributor to working poverty and inequality. The formalisation of informal jobs therefore has an important role to play (in leaving no one behind). Formalisation will also create tax revenues and contributions for insurance-based solutions. This will require country-specific and reform-oriented solutions that involve the informal sector. Besides promoting employment in the formal sector, the BMZ will therefore support partner countries for instance in upskilling the informally

employed, increasing their integration into international supply chains and expanding the enforcement of labour rights and standards, also in the informal sector.

- **Strengthening the labour market policy of our partner countries.** To create more jobs of higher quality locally, the institutional and strategic capacities of our partner countries in the field of labour market policy will be pivotal.

These include labour market regulation, labour law, labour market information systems and labour market services. We will support our partner countries in developing these capacities, inter alia through our projects in the fields of economic development and employment promotion.

An example – the Sahel Plus Initiative

With the Sahel Plus Initiative the BMZ has declared the promotion of **training, employment** and social protection **core areas** for cooperation in the Sahel region and the neighbouring coastal countries. The initiative aims to help create **prospects of income for a rapidly growing youth population**, and thus alternatives to being recruited by armed or terrorist groups. A large proportion of the population in the Sahel works in the agriculture and food sector. Consequently, the BMZ will deepen its engagement particularly in this sector through measures to promote education and training, value chains and (micro) entrepreneurship. Through the Sahel Alliance of donors, we want to scale up these key areas **together with our partners** in the region, multilateral organisations, development banks and other donors. Within the framework of joint initiatives such as the Multistakeholder Engagement to implement the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions (M-GA) initiative, and cooperation with the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in the field of social protection, we will mobilise resources and make a joint contribution to more jobs, income and life prospects for people.

2 Ecological industrial and structural policy

One essential component of the social-ecological transformation of the economy is an ecological industrial and structural policy. This will aim to promote economic sectors, innovations and companies that are especially important for achieving a climate-neutral and sustainable economy. Key to this is the establishment of high labour and social standards – which will lead to decent jobs in future-oriented industries. A further aim is to expand the local processing of raw materials and products, thereby increasing value creation in the partner countries. This will not only lead to more employment opportunities and higher incomes. It will also create scope for partner countries to diversify their economies and reduce structural dependencies. And it will offer an opportunity to partially or completely skip individual stages of the industrial development process, especially fossil-fuel-based industrialisation (a path known as green leapfrogging). In this way, (fossil) lock-in effects can be avoided and sustainable, future-proof companies and sectors can be established and developed.

For an ecological industrial and structural policy to succeed, it will require strong government engagement. From a development-policy perspective it is important to support partner countries in developing and implementing their own industrial and structural strategies. Depending on the conditions in the respective partner country – such as an existing industrial base, raw materials, and demographic and domestic market structure – it is important to find customised solutions together with our partners. It is also important to identify those economic sectors that are of particular importance for the respective social-ecological transformation path of the partner country. Examples include the digital economy, the development of a local hydrogen sector or the

sustainable extraction and processing of raw materials for the energy transition. A further example is the decarbonisation of existing sectors such as energy, construction and transport.

The BMZ will promote decent work as part of an ecological industrial and structural policy by

- **Supporting the creation of sustainable sectors and industries through the Power-to-X (PtX) Development Fund in countries of the Global South.** Besides supporting the hydrogen value chain itself, this will also involve the use of hydrogen in other sectors, for instance in the decarbonisation of the steel or chemical industries, or in fertiliser production. The first round of tendering and selection of projects for the PtX Development Fund should take place by the end of 2023. Moreover, we are using the Green Hydrogen Business Alliance (H2 Alliance) to promote the market ramp-up of green hydrogen in some of our partner countries with technical expertise.
- **Strengthening our advice on ecological industrial and structural policy by establishing Sustainable Economic Transformation Centres.** These centres will pool the economic expertise of German development cooperation and offer tailored economic policy advice. They will focus on partner countries with a high potential for transformation. After successful piloting – and subject to the availability of further budget funds – the approach will be extended to additional countries, and the range of economic policy advisory services broadened. The BMZ will also place a special focus on promoting decent employment and fair incomes.

- **Supporting partner countries in formulating and implementing their just transition and green jobs strategies.** Here, advisory services on bilateral projects for private sector development, vocational training and higher education already play an important role. In future, this will be complemented by the systematic expansion of future-oriented labour market and employment analyses as an evidence base. These analyses will be conducted especially for the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) and the bilateral climate and development partnerships (P+). Moreover, in partnership with small and medium-sized enterprises and foreign investors, the Special Initiative “Decent Work for a Just Transition” will generate impetus for implementation.
- **Considering rural areas in ecological industrial and structural policy.** This is important because in many countries agriculture, including fisheries, is the largest sector of the economy. It also provides the material resources for the livelihoods of almost one billion people. At the same time, working conditions in the agriculture and food sector are often precarious, and a large proportion of the people employed there are poor or extremely poor. A sustainable transformation of the agricultural and food sector – benefiting women, young people and marginalised groups in particular – is therefore an important component of ecological structural policy. Together with international partners, the Special Initiative “Transformation of Agricultural and Food Systems” addresses the three-pronged approach of economic structural change, decent work and sustainable natural resource management, with a focus on women and youth in rural areas.

An example – the Just Energy Transition Partnership with South Africa

At the COP26 in 2021, Germany and other G7 countries agreed on a **Just Energy Transition Partnership** with **South Africa**. This was designed to support the country in making its economic system both climate-neutral and socially just, driving the phase-out of coal and massively expanding renewable energy. The goal is for South Africa to avoid emitting up to 1.5 gigatonnes of greenhouse gases over the next 20 years. To make the energy **transition sustainable and socially just**, investments are being made inter alia in **professional opportunities** for women and youth, in small and medium-sized **enterprises**, and in future innovation hubs – for **green hydrogen**, for instance. Through the construction of solar and wind power plants, and transmission lines for green electricity, new jobs are to be created – especially in the coal regions. Furthermore, many of the country’s more than 90,000 mine workers will be supported in developing **new career prospects**. The initial funding amounts to 8.5 billion US dollars. Following several increases, the German contribution is now 1.1 billion US dollars (of which 1 billion US dollars is provided by the BMZ).

3 Trade and supply chains

The just management of global trade and the effective regulation of international supply chains are key structural levers for reducing inequalities within the global economic order, promoting decent work worldwide and supporting our partner countries with the social-ecological economic transformation. In all their diversity, women and girls, in all their diversity, work in global supply chains under precarious conditions.

The BMZ will promote just global trade and just global supply chains by

- **Supporting our African partners in negotiating and implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).** The central actors here are the African Union and its member states, plus the AfCFTA Secretariat. The AfCFTA holds enormous potential for strengthening Africa's domestic trade, building regional value chains and creating more quality jobs on the African continent. Given the size and complexity of this undertaking, it will take a long time to achieve. The BMZ will therefore continue its commitment as the largest bilateral donor and supporter of the relevant Team Europe Initiative. In doing so, the BMZ will support both economic frontrunners and the least developed countries (LDCs) in fully implementing the AfCFTA. The BMZ will work to reduce barriers to continental trade for women and young people, so that they in particular benefit from more quality jobs.
- **Advocating for a trade policy geared to sustainable development.** Together with France, Belgium and the Netherlands, we will work to ensure that all new EU trade agreements include effective and enforceable provisions on decent working conditions, in particular concerning compliance with the ILO core labour standards. In the ongoing negotiations on EU trade agreements, the BMZ will continue to work to ensure that partner countries are supported in implementing the agreed labour standards (ongoing negotiations with the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa, the Southern Common Market [MERCOSUR], India and Indonesia, among others).
- **With effective regulation of international supply chains, also holding enterprises accountable for enabling decent working and environmental conditions.** The German Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains heralded a paradigm shift. Instead of voluntary commitments, enterprises are now legally obliged to ensure that human rights standards and environmental protection are respected in their supply chains. At the EU level, we will also use regulation as an instrument to strengthen compliance with environmental and social standards in our partner countries. To this end, we will advocate among other things for effective implementation of the EU Regulation on deforestation-free products and for the adoption of a strong EU supply chain directive. With the grievance mechanisms and rights of action provided for therein, workers from the Global South will then be able to better defend themselves against exploitation and abuse of power. Furthermore, within the German government and the EU we will advocate for a UN treaty on business and human rights.
- **Increasing the effectiveness of supply chain regulation through development interventions on the ground.** Together with local partners, we want to ensure that regulation in partner countries helps to create inclusive, decent employment with adequate pay. To achieve this, together with the European Commission we have launched a Team Europe Initiative to better coordinate and systematically expand corresponding support measures at the European level. As the centrepiece of the Team Europe Initiative, the BMZ will set up an EU Helpdesk together with the European Commission and

other Member States. The helpdesk will provide companies and representatives of other stakeholders from partner countries with targeted information on the legal requirements, plus advice on the numerous support measures and funding programmes. The European services will be closely interlinked with the BMZ's existing support measures, such as the German Helpdesk on Business & Human Rights and the responsible business hubs in partner countries (see example below).

→ **Winning over companies for local value creation and decent work.** Through the develoPPP programme, the BMZ co-finances projects implemented by companies in our partner countries that deliver development results. Local companies – and therefore local value creation – now account for more than half of the companies we support. In future, we will focus the tender windows more strongly on the social-ecological transformation as a theme, and thus on decent and sustainable jobs.

An example – the responsible business hubs

To promote sustainable supply chains and responsible business practices, the BMZ supports the establishment of responsible business hubs (RBHs) in selected partner countries. These act as local helpdesks for companies that want to make their **production processes more sustainable and socially responsible**, for instance by improving occupational health and safety or by combating gender-based violence in the workplace. For the companies, one especially important aspect here is preparing for new **supply chain regulations** in their sales markets. Examples include the German Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains, and the forthcoming EU supply chain directive. So far, there are responsible business hubs in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Serbia and Viet Nam. Others are being set up – for instance in Mexico, Tunisia and Turkey. The Responsible Business Hub in Viet Nam, for example, offers numerous information materials on corporate due diligence, as well as various event and training formats on the topic. As the topic is still new for many producers, a local pool of experts is being set up to support local companies in performing their due diligence obligations.

4 Living wages and incomes

Living wages and incomes are a human right, and a core component of decent work. They are the best way to prevent poverty. They also create opportunities for social development, and are a basic prerequisite for the realisation of many other human rights. It is important to give everyone equal opportunities and the same, self-determined access to living wages and incomes. Women must receive the same wages as men for the same work. Furthermore, incomes in the professions where women predominate (such as care professions, including childcare) must be brought into line with incomes in the professions that are male-dominated (such as manufacturing).

Responsible purchasing practices by German and European companies are a key lever for achieving living wages and incomes. This involves the payment of appropriate prices and the agreement of fair delivery conditions. These are key to enabling partnership-based, stable business relationships between purchasing companies and producers. They are also important in creating frameworks that enable living wages and incomes to reach the producers on the ground.

The BMZ will promote living wages and incomes by

- **Investing in education and training, infrastructure and higher local value creation in rural areas.** Alongside its bilateral engagement, here the BMZ will rely in particular on projects under the Special Initiative “Transformation of Agricultural and Food Systems”. Rural areas need to become more attractive for young people. This will include enabling them to earn a living income from their work and creating prospects for their future.
- **Advocating for this issue at international and EU level.** One cornerstone of this is Germany’s Joint Declaration on Living Wage and Living Income with the Netherlands, which Belgium and Luxembourg also signed in June 2023. For example, a joint project with the ILO and the Netherlands aims to help establish living wages and incomes in partner countries through the negotiation of minimum wages, collective bargaining, the strengthening of social dialogue and income-boosting measures. One example is Viet Nam. In this context, the ILO also plans in the medium term to define internationally valid calculation standards for living wages and incomes. To provide companies with guidance on achieving living wages and incomes, the BMZ is also supporting the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in publishing by the end of 2023 a handbook for companies to enable living incomes and wages, with a focus on the textile and agricultural sectors.
- **Performing pioneering work through multi-stakeholder partnerships.** Together with companies, trade unions, civil society actors and standards organisations, we will show how the payment of living wages can succeed. In the future, the BMZ will continue to strengthen the promotion of living wages and incomes in multi-stakeholder partnerships. This is why in the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles, living wages and purchasing practices are one of four focus topics. From 2024, all members must report annually on their progress. In the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, it is envisaged that the members will each submit and report regularly on their own strategies for the specific goal “living incomes”.

→ **Encouraging German and European companies to adopt responsible purchasing practices.**

Here too, one important lever is the multi-stakeholder partnerships in which the BMZ is involved. In the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles, for example, the Living Wage Lab 2.0 will promote the adoption of responsible purchasing practices by companies. It will be launched before the end of 2023. Furthermore, in the negotiations on the EU supply chain directive, the BMZ is also advocating for the inclusion of responsible purchasing practices.

A further possible starting point is the EU Unfair Commercial Practices Directive. This directive provides inter alia for a ban on cancellations at short notice, and on unilateral changes to contractual terms and conditions. In the food sector, the directive has led to a ban on the payment of prices below production costs in specific EU countries. Within the interministerial steering group, the BMZ will advocate for examining the possibility of extending this to global supply chains.

An example – promoting living incomes and wages in cooperation with the German retail sector

Through the German Retailers' Working Group on Living Incomes and Living Wages, the BMZ is supporting the implementation of **living wages for workers in the banana sector in Ecuador, Colombia and Costa Rica**. The working group is part of the Initiative for Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains – a multi-stakeholder partnership. Supported by the BMZ, it aims to help achieve more sustainability in global agricultural supply chains and improve the lives of small farmers in the Global South. The members of the working group are Aldi Nord, Aldi Süd, REWE Group, Kaufland and dm-drogerie markt. The goal is to ensure living wages for at least 50 per cent of own-brand bananas on the German market by 2025 – and in the long term for the entire range of own-brand bananas. The members of the working group have committed to closing wage gaps, also by paying more.



5 Trade unions and representative bodies

Trade unions play a pivotal role in promoting decent work. They are particularly important for strengthening workers' rights of co-determination and for enforcing fair wages and high social and labour standards. The reality of the working world in our partner countries is diverse. Besides trade unions, other forms of representation for workers are also playing an increasing role there – especially for people who are formally or informally self-employed, as well as for women and young people.

The BMZ will therefore increase its focus on the structural strengthening of trade unions and other bodies representing the collective interests of workers in developing and emerging countries by

- **Promoting structural social dialogue between employers and employees through bilateral development cooperation measures.** In far-reaching transformation processes in particular, social dialogue is an important instrument for reconciling social interests, especially in the informal sector.
- **Prioritising working with strong partners when promoting trade unions.** Partners will include in particular the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the German agencies engaged in “social structure assistance” such as the Education Centre of the Confederation of German Trade Unions, and multi-stakeholder partnerships such as the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles.

- **Involving trade unions more in our instruments for cooperation with the private sector.** As we reorient the BMZ's portfolio for cooperation with the private sector, we will supplement the existing chamber and association partnerships with new trade union partnerships. This will give workers an even stronger voice in the social-ecological transformation of the economy.
- **Strengthening the participation of trade unions in the design of vocational education and training.** As workers' representatives, trade unions play an important role in vocational education and training. By cooperating with trade unions in bilateral vocational education and training projects, we want to help enable trade unions to act as competent partners when working with employers and governments to shape vocational education and training in partner countries.
- **Supporting international partnerships to promote trade unions and strengthen workers' rights.** These will include for instance the US government-launched M-POWER initiative, which the BMZ is supporting in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS). We will also support the Global Labour University in building the capacity of trade unionists and members of other labour-oriented civil society organisations.

An example – the Dindigul Agreement to End Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in India

Every day, women in textile factories in India experience gender-based violence and discrimination. Consequently, together with the women-led Tamil Nadu Textile and Common Labour Union (TTCU) and women textile workers in India, the Asia Floor Wage Alliance developed the **Dindigul Agreement**, a **legally binding agreement** between international fashion companies, trade unions and supplier factories **to end gender-based violence**. The agreement provides for training, protection against discrimination and reprisal, factory access for trade unions and an independent grievance mechanism. The permanent presence of trade unionists in the factory ensures women's safety in the workplace, and a zero-tolerance policy on gender-based violence. Through the **Partnership for Sustainable Textiles** the BMZ, together with the Asia Floor Wage Alliance and the FEMNET e.V. association, will launch a project before the end of 2023 to extend the Dindigul Agreement to other suppliers. The agreement will also encourage other companies to get involved, and will build local capacities for implementation.

6 Digital transformation

The social-ecological and the digital transformation of economic systems need to be seen in the same context. Both megatrends can potentially exacerbate social inequality, and have a negative impact on employment and income. Alternatively, they may help to noticeably improve people's working and living conditions.

The digital transformation offers great potential for decent work and employment, for example through new, attractive employment prospects – especially in rural areas – and improved, equal access to education and social protection. We will support our partner countries in harnessing this potential. At the same time, it will be important to mitigate the challenges that the digital transformation poses for decent work and employment in our partner countries.

The BMZ will promote decent work as part of the digital transformation by

- **Supporting the provision of digital professional qualifications and promoting digital start-ups in partner countries.** Especially in countries with high youth employment, strengthening the digital start-up scene offers great potential for employment. Expanding services for female and male entrepreneurs will also contribute to greater gender equality. The BMZ's digital centres are key anchor points for these activities. They will continue to expand their training offerings with a digital focus.
- **Improving working conditions and transparency in the gig economy.** Today, some 40 million people in low- and middle-income countries already perform work provided through digital platforms. Examples of such work include translation, web programming, graphic design, and driving and delivery services. Poor working conditions, inadequate pay and a lack of social protection often prevail. To address this, we are collaborating with the Fairwork project, which is based at the Oxford Internet Institute and the Berlin Social Science Center. With BMZ support, by the end of 2023 more than 200 digital platforms with several million workers in 24 countries of the Global South will be assessed in terms of their working conditions. To encourage them to implement higher standards, they will be approached directly and advised.
- **Together with our partners, further harnessing the potential of digitalisation for social protection.** In particular, we will work with the openIMIS Initiative and the World Bank to drive work on open-source software solutions for social protection programmes. This joint approach will eliminate the need to develop proprietary solutions in each partner country, which are more expensive. Together with the Digital Convergence Initiative, we are also working in a broad alliance on technical standards for digital social protection systems.

An example – the Centre for Digital Transformation, Iraq

Many of the BMZ's **centres for digital transformation** support the provision of digital vocational qualifications and promote young digital entrepreneurs. This is also the case in Iraq. In a country with high youth unemployment, this centre for digital transformation coordinates a network of innovation hubs in order to **strengthen the digital start-up scene** and involve young, creative and engaged people. The innovative forms of cooperation not only create **new employment opportunities**, but also provide **easily accessible education and training**.



7 Migration

Today, more than 281 million people are living in a country other than the one in which they were born. Many of our partner countries are very interested in regular migration opportunities – in order to relieve pressure on their labour markets, for instance, or to enable people who wish to migrate to work or train abroad. The overarching goal of BMZ’s engagement is to ensure that migration cooperation benefits both Germany as the destination country, and the migrants and their countries of origin. Close cooperation with the countries of origin helps to avoid a brain drain that could constrain development. In this way, the BMZ also contributes to the German government’s skilled labour immigration policy and to the work of the Special Commissioner for Migration Agreements.

The BMZ will support interested partner countries in creating more enabling frameworks for safe, orderly and regular migration by

- **Advising people in partner countries on opportunities for regular migration, and raising awareness of the risks of irregular migration.** The BMZ’s centres for migration and development will advise interested individuals on opportunities and conditions for labour migration to Germany, to Europe or within their region. To prevent exploitation, for instance, the centres will also raise people’s awareness of the risks of irregular migration. Furthermore, they will support returnees in reintegrating sustainably, for example by providing them with training opportunities or decent jobs. Together with the competent local authorities, the BMZ will set up or expand centres for migration and development in nine partner countries (Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan and Tunisia).
- **Supporting partner-country authorities in shaping their migration policies and managing labour migration.** The BMZ will strengthen competent labour administrations so that they

can self-reliantly make labour migration fair and safe. This will be achieved, for instance, through training on standards for the fair migration of skilled workers. Together with local institutions, models for transnational labour and training mobility, and standards for their implementation, will be developed and institutionalised. The BMZ will also promote collaboration between authorities in partner countries and in Germany that are responsible for labour migration.

- **Supporting the establishment of training and labour migration partnerships.** These partnerships will facilitate labour migration to Germany for selected occupational groups, for instance through networking and by strengthening vocational training structures in the partner countries. By closely involving the German private sector, these partnerships will promote fair labour migration and the placement of trainees and skilled workers from partner countries with German employers. This will create career prospects, especially

for young people. The BMZ will establish or expand partnerships on development-oriented labour and training migration in selected occupations with Egypt, Ecuador, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia and Viet Nam, as well as other interested partner countries where appropriate.

- **Improving precarious working conditions of migrants in global “care chains”.** This will involve a particular focus on women who migrate to countries offering greater opportunities to generate income by performing paid care work. This includes for instance raising children or caring for the elderly and sick, as well as household tasks. The BMZ is planning training measures on the working conditions of migrants and care work, as well as support for civil society organisations to protect the rights of migrant workers. In this context we will further intensify cooperation with multilateral organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the ILO and UN Women, which have extensive experience and networks in this area.

An example – supporting regular labour migration between North Africa and Europe

With the regional project Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa (THAMM), which is co-financed by the EU, the BMZ is pursuing a comprehensive approach to supporting **fair and development-oriented labour migration between North Africa and Europe**. Building on the labour market potential in the partner countries and the needs of the German labour market, ministries and employment agencies in the partner countries Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia are being supported in actively managing safe labour migration with Germany that is both conducive to development, and at the same time protects their own labour markets from brain drain. This creates employment prospects and an opportunity for quality training, especially for the young population, for whom there are often not enough jobs on their local labour markets. So far, more than 300 trainees and skilled workers have been successfully placed in secure jobs with German employers (mainly in the hotel and catering industry, in electrical engineering, in manufacturing, and in heating and sanitation). One example is placement with Deutsche Bahn. By testing safe, regular and development-oriented migration models, THAMM is also helping to **reduce the risks of unethical recruitment**. At the same time, THAMM is creating an enabling environment for an expansion of placement by labour authorities and private sector actors.

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