Background Note

Asia Pacific Green Jobs Network Online Discussion

Green Jobs for Youth

1. Introduction

The ILO Asia – Pacific Green Jobs Community of Practice (COP) has been activated in December 2010 and acting as an interactive network where committed professionals and practitioners share experiences, information, news and resources on green jobs and related issues. In collaboration with other ILO Community of Practices, the Asia Pacific Green Jobs Network has organized regular talk shows and online discussions on green jobs, covering relevant topics and initiatives taken place in various countries in the region. A number of such Green Jobs COP products that were organized include the talk show on Green Jobs in Bangladesh\(^1\) (under the Green Jobs in Asia project), the online discussion on Skills for Green Jobs\(^2\) (collaboration between the Asia Pacific Green Jobs Network and Skills and Employability Network), etc.

In light of the upcoming Expert Group Meeting on Green Growth and Green Jobs for Youth to be held in Bangkok on 12-13 December 2012, the Green Jobs Network is organizing an online discussion entitled “Green Jobs for Youth”. The online discussion outcome is expected to provide relevant inputs for the contribution of the Expert Group Meeting to the follow up to the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future we want” with regards to green jobs and youth employment.

The discussion on Green Jobs for Youth is convened in cooperation between the Green Jobs Network and the Youth Employment Network of the ILO Regional Office in Asia and the Pacific.

2. Background

Climate change is one of the long-term challenges facing the humanity. It has become critical drivers of change for societies and the economies to shift to a greener and fairer development path. As an approach to sustainable development, the green economy can contribute to the poverty alleviation and capacity development of the countries to adapt to climate change and promote low-carbon, environmentally friendly development in a

\(^1\) http://apgreenjobs.ilo.org/media/videos/ap-green-jobs-network-show-1
\(^2\) http://apskills.ilo.org/discussions/discussions/discussion-2
socially inclusive way. The transition to green economy requires the involvement of different actors to ensure that the shifting process can also create decent work and bring social equity.

Green jobs, as defined by the ILO and UNEP\textsuperscript{3}, are direct employment in economic sectors and activities that reduce their negative environmental impacts. These jobs are also decent jobs that help to reduce consumption of energy, de-carbonize the economy, protect and restore ecosystem services and biodiversity, and minimize the production of waste and pollution. Green jobs issues are now moving up policy agendas across the region as governments look for integrated strategies to address the challenges of both job creation and climate change.

Green jobs are particularly appealing to the young people as relevant new education and technical programmes become available in university or in technical institutions. However, such linkages are yet to be built through targeted programmes for skills development, youth apprenticeship and entrepreneurship. The recent Call for Action for Youth Employment that was made at the International Labour Conference in June 2012 has highlighted the need to “anchor a job-friendly development agenda in industrial and sector-based policies that can facilitate structural transformation, contribute to an environmentally sustainable economy, and greater public private investment in sectors that create decent jobs for young people”\textsuperscript{4}.

Youth are faced with unprecedented levels of unemployment. Youth unemployment has soared in both developed and developing poor countries since the 2008 global financial crisis. Currently 75 million young people are out of work worldwide. In addition, young people are underemployed and trapped in low-skill and poorly paid jobs. Tackling youth unemployment and under-employment by ensuring decent jobs will therefore directly contribute to the promotion of environmentally sustainable growth, poverty eradication and social inclusion.

To address the issue, enabling conditions and sound policies for the promotion of green jobs for youth are required. Vocational training, skills upgrading, youth entrepreneurship promotion and greening work place practices are critical in this process. The involvement of different actors such as support from small and medium-sized enterprises, increased public and private investments in key green sectors and greening enterprises play a crucial part in the promotion and creation of employment opportunities for youth.

The online discussion on *Green Jobs for Youth* is convened prior to the Expert Group Meeting on Green Growth and Green Jobs for Youth to be held in Bangkok in 12-13 December 2012. The expert group meeting is jointly organized by the ILO, UNDESA, UNESCAP and UNEP, and aims to gain a better understanding of the challenges towards creating green jobs, identifying promising initiatives and examples for green jobs and youth employment creation specifically in Asia and Pacific region, as well as propose policy recommendations at the global, regional and national levels.

\textsuperscript{3} Green jobs: Toward decent work in a sustainable, low-carbon world, UNEP/ ILO/ IOE/ ITUC, September 2008

\textsuperscript{4} The youth employment crisis: A call for action, ILO, 2012
3. Discussion

Objectives and discussion points

The online discussion aims to engage COP members as well as non-members who are ILO constituents, stakeholders and interested individuals from across the Asia – Pacific region and beyond to (i) identify opportunity and challenges in promoting green jobs for young people; (ii) discuss enabling conditions for promoting green jobs for youth; and (iii) to exchange good practices from various countries and regions that have successfully addressed the challenge of youth unemployment and enhance the productive capacities of young people through innovative measures (strategies, policies, etc).

The discussion will be facilitated along the following points:

1. What are the key challenges and opportunities to promote/create green jobs for youth?
   06 – 12 December 2012
   Moderators: Vincent Jugault, Senior Environment and Decent Work Specialist, ILO ROAP, Bangkok, and Matthieu Cognac, ILO Youth Employment Specialist, ILO ROAP, Bangkok

2. What policies/strategies are required to promote green jobs for youth?
   What are the good practices and initiatives, in particular on skills development, innovative financing, promotion of green entrepreneurship/smaller and medium enterprises? Why do they work?
   13 - 20 December 2012
   Moderators: Vincent Jugault, Senior Environment and Decent Work Specialist, ILO ROAP, Bangkok, and Matthieu Cognac, ILO Youth Employment Specialist, ILO ROAP, Bangkok

Target audience

Primary target audience of the discussion is the existing members of the Asia-Pacific Green Jobs Network5, the Asia-Pacific Youth Employment Network6, and ILO technical staff. The discussion also welcomes participation of individuals who have not yet registered as COP members but are interested in the subject.

Discussion format

The online discussion will be facilitated along the discussion points and will be open for two weeks (06 - 20 December 2012). The discussion will allow free flow of interaction among COP members and interested public individuals (it will be set “Open” so as non-registered participants can also join the debate). The discussants are expected to enter the dialogue any time with their contributions during the activated discussion period.

5 http://apgreenjobs.ilo.org
6 http://apyouthnet.ilo.org
**Expected output**

- A discussion paper consolidating the contribution of discussants will be produced after the online discussion.
- A talk show with Youth representatives on green jobs and youth employment.

4. **Reference**

- Web link to participate in the *Online discussion on Green Jobs for Youth*: [http://apgreenjobs.ilo.org/discussions/e-discussion-on-green-jobs-for-youth](http://apgreenjobs.ilo.org/discussions/e-discussion-on-green-jobs-for-youth)