

SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth

Speaker: Juergen Schwettmann

Career/Experiment: (retired) official, ILO

Introduction of the speaker

- A German national, has been working in international development cooperation since 1979, specializing in co-operative development, the social and solidarity economy sustainable development, decent work and the informal economy. His PhD, obtained at the Manchester Metropolitan University, UK, analyses the relationship between these topics.
- He has been an official of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for 28 years, holding different positions, including
 - Director of the Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department (Geneva),
 - Deputy Regional Director for Africa (Addis Ababa),
 - Director of the ILO Office for East Africa (Dar es Salaam),
 - Chief of the ILO Co-operative Branch (Geneva),
 - Regional Advisor on Co-operatives for Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (Kinshasa and Yaoundé).
- Before joining the ILO, Mr. Schwettmann served as rural finance advisor for the German technical assistance agency GIZ in Cameroon, and as management advisor to several coffee-marketing cooperatives in Cameroon.
- Since retiring from the ILO in October 2015 Mr. Schwettmann works as an independent consultant for various multilateral and bilateral development cooperation agencies.

ILO

- A UN Agency
 - The ILO is the only tripartite UN agency, the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers representatives of States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
- Mandate
 - Promote social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace.
- Agenda
 - Today, the ILO's Decent Work agenda helps advance the economic and

working conditions that give all workers, employers and governments a stake in lasting peace, prosperity and progress.

Lecture overview

- SDG 8
- Progress made
- Challenges
- Youth
- Youth engagement

Q1: a. What is SDG 8 and why it matters? b. What does it entail in terms of targets & Indicators?

- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
 - "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all".
 - A total of 12 targets and 17 Indicators to measure progress
 - 10 out of the 12 targets focus on the intended outcomes
 - There are also two targets for "means of Implementation", which are necessary actions to support the attainment of the Goal
 - ◆ Target 8.1: Sustainable economic growth
 - ◆ Target 8.2: Diversity, innovate and upgrade tor economic productivity
 - ◆ Target 8.3: Promote policies to support job creation and growing enterprises
 - ◆ Target 8.4 Improve resource efficiency in consumption and production
 - ◆ Target 8.5: Full employment and decent work with equal pay
 - ◆ Target 8.6: Promote youth employment education and training
 - ◆ Target 8.7: End modern slavery, trafficking and child
 - ◆ Target 8.8 Protect labor rights and promote safe working
 - ◆ Target 8.9: Promote beneficial and sustainable tourism
 - ◆ Target 8.10. Universal access to banking, insurance and services
 - ◆ Target 8.a: Increase aid for trade support
 - ◆ Target 8.b: Develop a global youth employment strategy

Q2: How much progress regarding SDG 8 have we made since the launching of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2016?

- Progress made
 - According to the 2022 SDG all targets under SDG8 were severely affected by COVID-19:

- ◆ Growth in GDP per capita remained below the 7%
- ◆ Labour productivity fluctuated widely
- ◆ The global unemployed rate is still above pre-pandemic level
- ◆ The number of children working as child labourers grew by 8.4 million since 2016
- ◆ Youth education and training suffered enormously from COVID induced disruptions.
- However, all indicators have improved in 2022, but not reaching the expectation for 2030.

Q3: What are the key challenges in implementing this particular SDG?

- Economic growth is likely to increase CO2 emissions, thereby negatively affecting the environment-related SDGs.
- Economic growth does not automatically create jobs; if it does, those jobs may not be decent.
 - Economic growth does not create jobs, need to convert economic growth into jobs (financial, economic, trade policies)
- The targets under SDG 8 cover two of the four dimensions of decent work - social protection and social dialogue are excluded (partly covered under SDGs 1, 3 and 16);
- The SDG indicators are not always consistent with the respective targets (example: target 8.3 and indicator 8.3.1);
- The informal economy, which occupies 60 % of the global labour force, is not adequately addressed in SDG 8.

Q4: How are young people reflected in this SDG?

- Young people: under-services population
- Poor countries cannot produce enough jobs for young people (cf. decent work for older persons)
- Decent employment vs. decent work (for every person)
- How to identify informal economy: develop measures to estimate

Q5: Which area(s) do you suggest for young people to engage or participate in order to achieve this SDG Goal?

- Young people should be seen as development actors rather than passive objects of development. None of the targets under SDG 8 can be achieved without active youth participation.

- Youth might be particularly attracted by targets 8.2 (innovation and technology), 8.4(resource efficiency), 8.6 (NEET) and 8.b).
- Young people should take the lead in (a) decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation (e.g., circular economy) and (b) ensuring that economic growth creates decent jobs.
- Costs of living (cf. decent/ fair wages)
- Inequality in and among many countries
- Independence + autonomy for young persons: German apprenticeship system (the older teaches the young) + certificate to work; not just degrees but also the skills (monitor system)