

## Alliance 8.7 Berlin Strategic Workshop (June 2017)

### Supply Chain Action Group

#### *Outcomes Report*

#### **1. Introduction**

Alliance 8.7 is part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda. The Alliance was launched in September 2016 at the United Nations as a global partnership initiative to help States achieve Target 8.7, which calls on States *"to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms"*.<sup>1</sup>

Alliance 8.7 members established the Supply Chain Action Group in February 2017 at a workshop in Wilton Park.<sup>2</sup> In June 2017, some 50 representatives from governments, workers' and employers' organizations, businesses, civil society and UN Agencies participated in the first strategic workshop for the Supply Chain Action Group in Berlin, Germany. The workshop was financed by the Government of the Netherlands and the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and organized by International Labour Organization (ILO), the current chair of the Supply Chain Action Group.

The meeting aimed to provide an initial framework of action for the Supply Chain Action Group, in particular guiding implementation for the next 18 months to two-year timeframe. Key priorities were to:

- Gather inputs for the development of an initial work plan;
- Agree on the modalities for implementing the work plan; and
- Discuss the monitoring of the work plan, including Key Performance Indicators.

The workshop was opened by representatives from the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS); the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB); and the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA). In introductory statements, the goals of Alliance 8.7 were emphasized, namely to accelerate timelines; foster knowledge and research; and drive innovation and collaboration. It was also pointed out, the action

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.alliance87.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Wilton-Park-Outcomes-Report.pdf>

group should be inclusive, not duplicate existing initiatives and remain embedded in existing frameworks, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy; and the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The need for concrete action on the ground covering child labour and forced labour was stressed including capacity building for social partners, continued support to raise awareness at the community level, concrete research and knowledge initiatives (including local labour legislation in developing countries) and more effective resource allocation.

The ILO explained that the Alliance is not a standard setting, supervisory or policy making body but rather a platform to foster collaboration, and share knowledge and long-term public policy-driven solutions that can be brought to scale. While the operational structure of the Alliance is still developing, there are three main levels of coordination (global, regional and national), with shared learning between the various levels.

## ***2. The current landscape on child labour and forced labour in supply chains: a review of an initial scoping***

The ILO presented preliminary findings from a mapping exercise to better understand where the action group fits within the broader landscape. The mapping exercise was initiated by the UN Global Compact and elaborated on by the ILO and others. It was explained that while there are many initiatives on child labour or forced labour, and several that address sustainability concerns in supply chains – very few take an integrated approach to tackling the issues; and only a limited amount directly engage trade unions and employer organizations or local governments. Many initiatives are only focussed on one sector and few stem from the global south. The ILO invited participants to continue adding to the mapping exercise by sharing their own knowledge of important initiatives with the Alliance Secretariat.

Following the presentation, participants discussed how to leverage other relevant initiatives such as the Bangladesh Accord and how learnings can be drawn from their structures and methodologies. The question of accountability of stakeholders to eradicate child labour and forced labour in supply chains was also raised along with its relationship to legal standards, monitoring and evaluation and effective enforcement. The coordination role of Alliance 8.7 was discussed and it was agreed that much of the Alliance’s value-add would be the extent to which it is able to “mobilize” and ensure concrete action on the ground.

### **3. Development of the Supply Chain Action Group's work plan**

The participants then split into four working groups with the aim of developing concrete inputs for an 18 months to two-year work plan.

#### **i. Working group one on knowledge gaps and research**

A senior academic presented one possible approach to estimate child labour and forced labour in supply chains. He explained the importance of quantifying the numbers with regards to prevalence (e.g. number of children in labour in global supply chains) and incidence (e.g. percentage of child labour in value chains, added value of child labour) of the target groups. Regarding the methodology, he explained the aim was to analyze trade flows to track the value chain of specific products. It was stressed that impact evaluations are key to better understand the demand side, with a view toward changing incentives and developing alternatives.

During the subsequent discussion the issue of gender disaggregated data was highlighted and it was pointed out that more research is needed to understand the root causes of child labour and forced labour. Regarding performance indicators, participants discussed the difficulty to measure the four target groups clustered under SDG 8.7 as the term “modern slavery” is not defined in international law. Another issue concerned knowledge sharing and transparency to help enterprises carry out their due diligence duties as defined by the UN Guiding Principles.

During the plenary discussion it was acknowledged that if Alliance 8.7 wants to measure success, the development of good and concrete indicators (such as the UN level SDG indicators) and impact evaluations are key. It was also acknowledged that it is important to improve research such as the national child labour surveys (e.g. by disaggregating data by sub-sector) to allow for more informed discussions with national policy makers. Participatory approaches to research were also encouraged to ensure workers' voices are being heard. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is also developing a methodology of conducting business surveys to research trafficking in persons along supply chains.

Over the next 18 months to two years the group pledged to:

- Partner with international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the World Bank Group (WBG), governments, local research institutes, social partners and civil society to collect sex-disaggregated data and other research on the prevalence and root causes of child labour and forced labour in global supply chains;
- Set up a labour law database by country (in English) to enable employers inquiring about the situation in a given country;
- Set up a knowledge sharing platform for Alliance 8.7 with the UN University;
- Work with the UN to develop concrete indicators for the work of Alliance 8.7 and the Supply Chain Action Group.

## ii. Working group two on capacity building and tools

The working group on capacity building and tools initiated a discussion around what sorts of capacity building approaches and tools have proven to reduce child labour and forced labour in supply chains. This included methods of more effective labour inspection (including Brazil's model of mobile inspection); transparency initiatives; creation of inter-ministerial or joint-agency committees; community awareness and the creation of Child Labour Free Zones. Sectorial approaches to combatting child labour and forced labour in supply chains were also noted as being effective. Key challenges to be addressed included ensuring donor funding goes through the national processes (rather than bypassing it) and reaching small and medium sized enterprises and the lower tiers of the supply chain. A key point of consensus was that there were too many small initiatives that remained undocumented and which operated outside the established national processes and frameworks. The group advocated sustainable, scalable and concrete action on the ground based on established best practice.

Over the next 18 months to two years the group pledged to:

- Document practices and models at the different levels that worked to eradicate child labour and forced labour;
- Make best practices available on a knowledge sharing platform with a focus on child labour and forced labour in the deeper supply chain. This includes looking at best practices like area-based approaches to combatting child labour; the carpet work with IKEA; and a tool-kit to help local community stakeholder's work with the deeper supply chain;

- Undertake awareness-creation and brand building on Alliance 8.7, weaving it into various dialogues to ensure broad sensitization (government officials, local communities, business etc.);
- Link with the Action Group on Rural Economies to ensure there is interaction and synergy of action in regards to key sectors;

### iii. Working group three on priority countries and supply chains

Working group three aimed to develop a criterion to select priority countries and supply chains where the Action Group could implement direct action. The participants suggested selecting a country and supply chain where the Alliance could show success through having the right people working together and scale-up quickly. Key considerations to be taken into account for country and supply chain selection included reviewing enforcement of existing legislation (including on public procurement), root causes of child labour and forced labour, commercial interest and levers of change.

Existing tools which could be used in the identification of target countries were based on the ILO's Annual Review on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which includes country requests for technical assistance on child labour and forced labour; and also on the Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS), and the MNE Focal Points. It was also suggested the group should take advantage of opportunities, e.g. integrating Alliance 8.7 planning with scheduled meetings on child labour and forced labour and also selecting sectors where there are already strong partners to work with and where there is existing research. It was pointed out that many actors are focusing on seafood/fisheries and cotton and that these may be good sectors to initiate collective action.

Participants agreed there was a need to move away from short-term thinking to more medium and long-term approaches that build the willingness for governments to build capacity and which take an inter-ministerial and inter-governmental approach. The need to link with financial institutions such as the WBG, investors and the local business communities was also identified. The working group advocated selecting priority countries and supply chains along the following criteria:

1. Countries or sectors where there are already coalition groups mobilized to work on the issues of child labour and forced labour in global supply chains (e.g. Uzbek cotton);

2. Countries or sectors with active social partners that are willing/able to work on child labour and forced labour in global supply chains;
3. Countries with no/inadequate political will;
4. Countries where there is willingness but low level of skills and capacity;
5. Countries with a willingness to work on the issues;
6. Countries where there are existing intergovernmental systems on human rights (calling to account of governments, name and shame);
7. Countries or sectors where there are clear cases on child labour and forced labour identified by the Committee on the Application of Standards at the ILO;
8. Countries or sectors where there is a possibility to leverage the business voice and bring in domestic business into the discussion as well;
9. Countries or sectors where there is existing or promised resources to combat child labour and forced labour.

Over the next 18 months to two years the group pledged to:

- Document good practices;
- Undertake a mapping and risk assessment within a supply chain;
- Develop case studies and a tool kit in tier one and two;
- Remove internal bureaucracies to ensure the Alliance members can work together efficiently, not letting our mandates/organizational structures, etc. come in the way;
- Awareness raising both internally and externally on the Alliance 8.7 Action Group;
- Find successful scalable initiative and build on them and demonstrate success, deepen collaboration between ILO, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) etc.

#### **iv. Working group four on advocacy and partnerships**

The group started by sharing relevant initiatives on child labour and forced labour in global supply chains including *inter alia* the OSCE's project on *preventing trafficking of human beings (THB) in supply chains* (under which flexible model guidelines for governments on preventing THB in supply chains, with a focus on government procurement and transparency practices are being developed); the Global March and the Solidarity Center; ILO and Walk Free Foundation Global Estimates of Modern Slavery; the Global Forum on Responsible Recruitment; Interfaith Initiative to stop Forced Labour; and the Bali Process. The group also discussed advocacy on six priority topics:

1. Policy coherence and synergies between the different SDGs;
2. Public and private procurement and putting policies into place to ensure tax payers' money does not contribute to child labour and forced labour and also to enable business to better examine their own supply chains;
3. The role of civil society and consumers;
4. Taking an integrated approach to FPRW and not just on child labour and forced labour but also freedom of association and discrimination as enabling rights;
5. The role of finance institutions;
6. The need for guides and tools for other key stakeholders.

Over the next 18 months to two years the group pledged to:

- Develop a calendar of events;
- Support promising initiatives and initiate or strengthen existing partnerships that have started to demonstrate results;
- Summarize the existing initiatives on child labour and forced labour that are relevant to supply chains and analyze their comparative advantages

#### ***4. Reporting back and conclusions***

During the closing session some participants emphasized the need for Alliance 8.7 to include the voices of other stakeholders, including civil society and small and medium sized enterprises. The ILO thanked all the participants for the important inputs and pointed out that the key “take-away” messages from the workshop include the value of local ownership and a strong focus on country level action with governments in the driving seat. Next steps following the workshop closure include:

- Drafting of the workshop report (herewith submitted);
- Development of a work plan draft with indicators, for validation;
- Identification of further contributions to the draft work plan;
- Sharing of the mapping exercise;
- Sharing of an events calendar;
- Provision a simple communication tool for keeping in contact;
- One annual face-to-face meeting or additional virtual meetings with the Argentina Conference on Child Labour.