

PRESS RELEASE

15 December 2013

- **The First 'India Labour and Employment Report 2014' released**
- **'Promising signs but a challenging future for a growing Indian economy'**

The India Labour and Employment Report 2014 prepared by Institute for Human Development and the Indian Society of Labour Economics was released by the Chief Guest Union Minister of Rural Development, Mr. Jairam Ramesh and Special Guest Dr. K S Jomo, Assistant Director General, Food and Agriculture Organisation. Professor Deepak Nayyar, former Vice Chancellor of Delhi University chaired the session. The report was released amidst a distinguished gathering of eminent experts, scholars, civil-society representatives, policy-makers, representatives of the international organizations and development practitioners.

The first report provides an overview of the labour and employment scenario in India during the last two decades after globalisation. Based on latest data, the Report succinctly brings out the emerging pattern of labour market outcomes and challenges of employment. It assesses the gains and losses for labour in the first round of globalisation during last two decades. The central message of the report endorses that a responsive, fair and comprehensive labour and employment policy is vital for sustainable and inclusive development.

The Chief Guest, **Mr. Jairam Ramesh**, congratulated Mr. Sharma for bringing out a first class India Labour and Employment Report. In his address his concern about the reason why small scale manufacturing never took off as even Bangladesh is ahead of India in garment manufacturing. He also said that there is lack of flexibility in leading entrepreneurs to invest in capital intensive and not labour intensive industries. He further argued that migration should be encouraged for employment generation. He commented on the problems of housing for youth who migrate for employment with landlords not wanting to give houses to youth from Jammu and Kashmir. It is important that there should be no barriers to migration by youth. The minister said that the report will inform policy in a big way.

Prof. Deepak Nayyar is concluding remarks The chairperson in his concluding remarks said, " the pattern of structural change has been opposite to conventional expectations" he raised the question, " Should workers go to jobs or jobs go to workers?"

Reflecting on the report, **Dr. Arjan de Haan** of IDRC said, India is the world's 2nd largest emerging economy, with 15 % of the global labour force, a very good growth record over the last two decades. Yet 92 % of its workers are still engaged in informal employment, working without contract, no social protection, and with sub-standard productivity. 276 million workers live below a poverty line of \$2 per day, and their bargaining positions have

declined as the economy grows. This India Labour and Employment Report 2014 provides an excellent description of this astonishing reality, and – at least as important – identifies options for addressing this reality, highlighting urgent needs for job creation in and by the private sector, balancing expansion of the number of jobs with enhancing job quality, and improving the skills and capabilities of workers. We at IDRC hope and trust that this excellent report prepared by the Institute for Human Development will give a much-needed push to help address these urgent challenges.

The Institute for Human development (IHD) is a leading centre for studies in labour and employment, livelihoods and human development in Delhi. Planned to be brought out by IHD biennially, the ILER 2014 report is the first in the series.

Alakh N Sharma

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