

Strengthening protection and resilience especially for the informal economy

Contribution by KOLPING INTERNATIONAL at the 109th meeting of the Virtual International Labour Conference June 3-19, 2021, prepared by Dr Hildegard Hagemann, KOLPING INTERNATIONAL

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Dear Chairman, Dear Delegates,

I thank you for the opportunity to submit an opinion on the report of the Director-General for the Catholic Social Movement KOLPING INTERNATIONAL with around 400,000 members in 60 countries.

First of all, we would like to express our appreciation that the International Labour Organization, from the beginning of the pandemic, has published regular briefings on the impact of Covid-19 on working and especially on vulnerable groups, including the expertise of social movements and civil society organizations,

These observations throw a bright light on the deficits that have existed for years in the implementation of the principle of 'decent work for all'. The pandemic has shown in a dramatic and often existence-threatening way that essential work in our global growth-oriented society is often informal, undervalued and precarious. Thereby, it is particularly to be valued and to be protected precisely in its concern and care for humans, society and the environment.

Here, a gap between claim and reality becomes clear because there are standards and recommendations of the ILO by ways to promote protection and resilience for working in the informal economy. The consistent implementation and compliance in particular of the conventions C177, C189, whose 10th year of birth is now, the C190, but also the recommendations R202 and R204 can protect informal and precarious workers in all economic sectors and vulnerable groups better and make them more resilient in crises.

Members of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL have experienced in their local contexts, as on the one hand the limitation of mobility and weak digital infrastructure and, on the other hand, the lack of access to social security systems and government programs endanger the existence of entire economic groups. They have launched their own support programs in solidarity and concern and are now committed to strengthening the protection and resilience of informal workers by adequate formalisation steps.

In the Director-General's report, ILO's efforts clearly become apparent as a means of combating the pandemic, the principle 'decent work for all' with its pillars implementation of standards, social security and social dialogue. We do not need to reinvent the wheel, but finally have to stand by what we have negotiated ourselves. This applies to the social partners at the international negotiating tables as well as for national and local actors.

KOLPING INTERNATIONAL hopes that the decentralized work of the ILO is promoted in the regions and countries. Collaboration with civil society groups that can strengthen the protection and resilience of workers in the informal economy should be intensified. We know ourselves connected with other Catholic social movements in the willingness to be a partner for that.