

- investment and growth for generating labour demand, including work on sectors, clusters and value chains;
- skills development and addressing skills mismatch problems;
- better understanding the school to work transition and overcoming the hurdle of finding the first job;
- entrepreneurship education and promotion measures;
- labour market information and employment services.

We have been working in all these areas and we now have a project portfolio in the Youth Employment Programme of more than 120 million dollars around the world and growing fast. One of the new recent partnerships has been precisely with the MasterCard Foundation who is supporting us in the application of the ILO-School to Work Transition survey methodology in 28 countries.

Last year, governments, employers and workers in the ILO decided to put the youth employment crisis as a major theme in the agenda of the 2012 ILC, to be held next June. This means that representatives from 183 member states, and their workers and employers representatives will be discussing good practices and policies, as well as partnerships to address the youth employment challenge.

But what is new this year is that as preparation for the Conference, and to strengthen the Youth Employment Programme of the ILO, Director-General Juan Somavia has directed us to reach out massively to young people, to listen to them and to search systematically for youth-led projects and initiatives. So the ILO is organizing during the month of March some 50 national consultations on youth employment with young people's organizations and initiatives in 50 countries. And this will build towards a major Youth Employment Forum in Geneva from the 23 to the 25 of May.

This is innovative, this is breaking new ground for us, and it is, of course, also a challenge for the ILO, because as Nicole Goldin said candidly about USAID, we in the ILO are also struggling to find an appropriate model to engage and to partner with young people, including finding appropriate ways of using social networking technology.

The state of knowledge: what we know, what we don't know?!

I would now like to say a word about the state of knowledge on the question of addressing the youth employment challenge. There is a lot we know but also many aspects where we do not really have the answers, so there is a large knowledge agenda to be developed, and we are

certainly working on it and want to partner with researchers, practitioners, and others to develop leading edge understanding of what works.

As I said, documenting and cataloguing successful initiatives and better understanding the underlying models is extremely important.

We heard this afternoon how the private sector and companies, as well as trade unions, can do and are doing many things. From the discussions this afternoon and our experience on the subject, I would like to finish by listing ten types of partnership actions that business and/or trade unions can and should pursue, all of which would make a great contribution for more and better jobs for young people:

1. Help address the skills mismatch problem by connecting with schools, training institutions and Universities and helping to ensure that training meets enterprise needs, a2 (ds) -0 (ipi

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