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Informality as deviancy: the problem of difference in the Decent Work Agenda

Informalidade como desvio: o problema da diferença na Agenda Do Trabalho Decente

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ABSTRACT

More than half of workers globally are informal workers; operating in non-standard, temporary employment that is often, but not always, poorly paid and unprotected. The Decent Work Agenda (DWA), pioneered by the International Labor Organization (ILO), has been broadly adopted to bridge the concerns of workers and states by pursuing "Decent Work for all". A core component of the DWA is the reduction of informality. Almost ten years later, however, informality is increasing in many countries. In this paper, I explore the conceptual foundation of the DWA by asking: how does the ILO understand "work" in their 2015 Decent Work Agenda? What are the consequences for those whose rights are protected within global governance projects? I compile a corpus of 36 ILO documents to demonstrate three interlocking discursive schemas: development, paternalism, and colorblindness. While the DWA progressively shifts regulatory discourses, its conceptualization of work constitutes informality as a condition of deviancy. This positions informal workers, who often occupy other vulnerable intersectionalities, as outside the scope of contemporary social protections. Gender, race, class, location and more factor into the formation of global and national labor policies; achieving equitable conditions for all workers requires grappling with the complexity of informality.

Keywords: Decent Work Agenda. Labor standards. Discourse analysis. Informal work.

RESUMO

Mais da metade dos trabalhadores em todo o mundo encontra-se em situação de informalidade, atuando em empregos não padronizados e temporários que, frequentemente, mas nem sempre, são mal remunerados e desprovidos de proteção social. A Agenda do Trabalho Decente (ATD), idealizada pela Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), foi amplamente adotada com o objetivo de conciliar as demandas de trabalhadores e estados, promovendo o "trabalho decente para todos". Um dos pilares centrais da ATD é a redução da informalidade. Contudo, quase uma década após sua implementação, a informalidade está em ascensão em muitos países. Este artigo examinou a base conceitual da ATD ao realizar os seguintes questionamentos: "Como a OIT compreende o conceito de 'trabalho' na sua Agenda do Trabalho Decente de 2015?", "Quais são as implicações para aqueles cujos direitos são protegidos dentro de projetos de governança global?". A análise compila um corpus de 36 documentos da OIT para demonstrar três esquemas discursivos interligados: desenvolvimento, paternalismo e indiferença à cor. Embora a ATD represente um avanço nos discursos regulatórios, sua conceituação de trabalho configura a informalidade como uma condição de desvio. Esse enquadramento posiciona os trabalhadores informais, que frequentemente enfrentam outras interseccionalidades vulneráveis, fora do alcance das proteções sociais contemporâneas. Gênero, raça, classe, localização e outros fatores influenciam diretamente a formação de políticas trabalhistas globais e nacionais. Alcançar condições equitativas para todos os trabalhadores exige enfrentar a complexidade inerente à informalidade.

Palavras-chave: *Agenda do Trabalho Decente. Normas trabalhistas. Análise do discurso. Trabalho informal.*

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> There can be little doubt that in the next fifty years the main challenge facing the International Labor Organization (and UNO) will be the widening gap between the rich and poor nations, a gap given an ugly dimension where it coincides with differences in "color" (Drake, 1969)

INTRODUCTION

While supranational governance has contributed to monumental reductions in global poverty, 55% of the world's workers have zero social protections (ILO, 2019a). This vast disparity in social safety nets is curious when considering that such a deficit can be targeted through coordinated policies, as in the case of poverty reduction strategies (Lockwood, 2020). However, the proliferation of jobs and the geographic spread of employment has not led to commensurate increases in social protections for workers. In fact, global labor relations are overwhelmingly informal, with over 60% of workers in precarious forms of employment (ILO, 2019a). For some countries in the Global South, informality is higher than 90%. The conflation of flexible labor arrangements with greater economic freedom is part and parcel of a marked shift from economic growth as not just the means, but the end goal of development (Broembsen, 2012).

The contemporary world of work has been shaped by national and corporate interests, but is also influenced by global discourses framing what constitutes work (Nam, 2018; Thomas; Turnbull, 2017; Langan, 2014; Ribeiro; Silva; Figueiredo, 2016). The International Labor Organization (ILO) has been at the forefront of this conversation through its Decent Work Agenda (DWA). In 2015, leaders from the United Nations (UN) met and confirmed 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) aiming to promote economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The SDGs "are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere" (UN, 2024, s.p.). They represent ambitious multilateral efforts to address the most pressing global challenges. SDG 8, which is under purview of the ILO, aims to "promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work[1] for all" (GOAL #8, 2024, s.p.).

Given the pivotal role SDG 8 plays in the future of global labor regulation, how the ILO conceptualizes "Decent Work" is essential to understanding the proliferation, or lack thereof, of social protections for workers. Its discourse defines global boundaries for who should be protected and how, with material, social, and political consequences. I conducted an interpretive analysis of 36 ILO documents of the following interrelated questions: *How does the ILO understand "work" in their 2015 Decent Work Agenda? What are the consequences for those whose rights are protected within global governance projects?*

I demonstrate that, while the ILO's DWA progressively shifts global regulatory discourses, it constructs informality as a deviant condition. Three interlocking discursive schemas, development, paternalism, and colorblindness suggest the ways the DWA relegates millions of informal workers as problems on the way to

1 Decent Work is capitalized to signify the ILO's understanding of the concept as distinct from other international organizations (IOs) or agencies.

modernization. While the DWA advocates for governments to provide social rights for people, it does so by connecting these rights to formal employment. Through its conceptualization of work, it produces particular power relations which favor workers employed in "standard", "formal" working arrangements. While there is a demonstrated need for global labor coordination, the ILO does so in ways that maintain the status quo of previous capital/labor configurations.

There are several implications of this research. It suggests the need to reconsider conceptual divides between economic and social spheres in the study of informality. It also urges greater consideration of the ways power relations structure the international political economy. This includes considering the impact of colonial legacies, changing capital/labor configurations, and intersectionalities such as gender, class, and location on whose rights are considered worth protecting.

THEORY

Though representing an opportunity to achieve greater peace and prosperity for precarious workers, the Decent Work Agenda falls short of engaging with the materiality of people's lives. I argue the DWA reproduces a neoliberal understanding of economic empowerment and capital/labor relations that inadequately captures the global reality of precarious workers, particularly informal women workers, for two reasons: first, informal economic activities are viewed as deviant from 'acceptable' formal forms of labor, rather than necessarily constitutive of one another; and second, by perceiving informal workers as deviant, they are cast as inferior, which prevents them from being extended similar rights as their formally employed counterparts unless and until they transition to the formal economy. I draw on social reproduction literature and the works of critical criminology and critical race scholars to guide my empirical analysis.

There is an established scholarship on the ways informal workers are often left behind, ignored, or otherwise sidelined by global governance projects (Arslan, 2022; De Almagro and Ryan, 2019; Tornhill, 2016; Elias, 2010). Informal work, also referred to as 'vulnerable employment' by the ILO, refers to own-account income-generating activities, reproductive labor, and subcontracted work (Chant, 2014). At its core, it emphasizes people's survival strategies. All industries and countries have some level of informality and it is primarily women and children who are engaged in informal labor. Inherent to many governance projects addressing informal labor is a taken-for-granted economic linearity; workers are progressively shifting from informal to formal employment relations, and this transition brings with it improved material conditions. Critical political economists contest notions of linearity built into development narratives (Mezzadri; Majumder, 2022).

Social reproduction complicates prior divisions between labor and work (Mezzadri; Newman; Stevano, 2022). It refers to both the literal reproduction of societies, the everyday practices this entails, and the labor needed to sustain it. Feminist international political economy scholars, though considering social reproduction through various theoretical lenses and substantive issues, largely agree it

coincides with, and is constitutive to, relations of production (Mezzadri; Newman; Stevano, 2022; Arslan, 2022; Prugl, 2020; Steans; Tepe, 2010). Social reproduction contends with the ways the gendering of labor impacts women's social, economic, and material prospects. Regardless of whether labor is informalized or not, capitalism as an economic system maintains gender and racial oppression (Ferguson, 2023). Thus, according to this perspective, the DWA's goal of promoting gender and racial equality cannot be achieved through formalization.

Two insights of this literature are helpful when considering the shortcomings of the ILO's conceptualization of labor in the DWA. The first is the gendered and racialized nature of labor, particularly unpaid for and unaccounted for productive and reproductive labor (Alami; Guermond, 2023; Barchiesi, 2016; Elias, 2010). Second is the differentiation of employment trajectories among working women themselves across time and space (Stevano, 2022; Mezzadri; Majumder, 2022; Rai; Brown; Ruwanpura, 2019). Taken together, these depict a relationship between gender, race, and location that is accounted for in discussion of informal employment but is often remiss from the proscriptions of economic development projects.

While feminist IPE scholars have long tackled the dilemmas of dividing labor in terms of production/reproduction, public/private, and formal/informal, these conversations have yet to be explicitly bridged with parallel scholarship on race and deviance. As research on IPE has come to engage more heavily with the racializing and gendering of labor relations, and with the ways capital/labor arrangements are configured across geographies and temporalities, it becomes more urgent to consider how race and deviance are configured into these relations.

Across the world, women and girls increasingly occupy prisons faster than men (Hadi; Chesney-Lind, 2020). Feminist criminology seeks to explain this shift in the criminalization of women and identify the specific ways women and girls are labeled deviant (Upadhyay, 2021). Scholars in this field emphasize intersectional analyses that incorporate lived experiences of race, gender, class, and location, among others. They also consider the connections between systems of re(production) and how specific penal practices emerge and are sustained (De Giorgi, 2018). The relationship between capital/labor configurations and the criminalization of women, people of color, and other precarious people remains an understudied dimension of when and how people are ascribed deviancy. Assessing how particular economic policies and agendas replicate colorblind practices can provide insight into this relationship.

Colorblindness refers to a host of economic, social, and legal practices in which race is present through its supposed absence (Crenshaw, 2019). Advocates for a colorblind approach view the consideration of how race affects social issues as divisive, unimportant, or otherwise a distraction from achieving improved conditions. Increasingly, however, critical race scholarship recognizes only an intentional consideration of race in addition to other factors such as gender, class, geography and so forth can promote better conditions for precarious communities globally (Crenshaw 2019; Hua; Nigorizawa, 2010; Vosko, 2000). These scholars recognize how people's social experiences are influenced by their identities (Woods, 2014).

How the ILO conceptualizes work in its DWA fails to grapple with the material realities for many precarious individuals; particularly informal women workers. By reinforcing development narratives which perceive informal labor as deviant, it fosters colorblind policies which do not account for the historical and contextual necessity of informal work for many marginalized communities. This creates hierarchies amongst workers themselves that further complicates existing tensions within capital/labor relations. Those perceived to be on the informal side of the divide are not contributing to the state in the same way as those formally employed, and are thus less valuable to the state. This is not merely an economic valuation; this is also a social and legal valuation, wherein informal workers are not recognized by the state for their labor despite conducting work which sustains the state. Increasingly, societies have pegged the extension of state rights to employment. Within this framework, informal workers are not extended rights which were previously viewed as inalienable to all peoples. The meaning produced by global economic initiatives structures people's livelihood. Thus, understanding how the ILO's DWA configures work provides insight into the material and social reality of marginalized workers' lives.

METHODOLOGY

The ILO's creation of a DWA speaks to its privileged position in shaping the discourse, and thereby the social practices, surrounding labor. To analyze how the DWA contributes to this discursive project, I draw from 36 Decent Work research papers, issue briefs, and recommendations listed in Appendix A and interpret them using critical discourse analysis (CDA).

Text Selection

SDG 8, titled "decent work and economic growth", is part of the 2030 development agenda and has ten subgoals and 24 thematic areas. The DWA embodies the ILO's efforts to achieve SDG 8, and has four pillars: "Promoting jobs and enterprise, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue…with gender as a cross-cutting theme" (ILO, 2016). While there are many publicly available documents, or discursive fragments, associated with the DWA available on the ILO website, this paper narrows the scope to a key few. I draw on 36 ILO documents; texts were chosen for several reasons; each addresses a subgoal and thematic area of SDG8, they represent the array of ILO-published work on the DWA, and they are all dated from DWA implementation date (2015) and onwards.

Text Analysis

I utilize CDA to gain insight into how particular meanings produced within the DWA create, sustain, or otherwise alter power relations. According to Fairclough (2012, p. 67), "discourse as a political practice establishes, sustains and changes power relations...as an ideological practice constitutes, naturalizes, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations". In both political and ideological forms, power relations are central in shaping the ability of discourse

to stabilize—and destabilize—particular meanings over time. These meanings are analyzed as part of the dialectic relationship between social practices and semiosis (Wodak; Meyer, 2001). Here, semiosis refers to "all forms of meaning making" represented in social practices (Wodak; Meyer, 2001, p. 122).

CDA's attention to power relations positions it as a powerful methodological tool to consider how issues are framed. Hansen (2006, p. 68) speaks to the function of 'discursive encounters', stating they "inevitably evolve around constructions of inferiority and superiority and hence a particular distribution of discursive and political power". Applying this to the ILO's DWA, the function of "decent" paired with "work" illustrates a specific representation of work—that which is decent is juxtaposed against that which is indecent. The term itself does little to specify what work fails to meet its criteria, leaving such distinctions to be configured by the social structuring of semiotic difference (Fairclough, 2012). In this instance, the ILO's role in crafting particular notions of work inherently required marginalizing other representations. The DWA therefore consists of diverse themes structured into a particular network of social practices, and disentangling those themes will foster greater understanding of [mis]alignments with the notions underpinning the agenda itself.

I use close reading, coding, and memoing to ensure an interpretation grounded in the texts, with particular attention to themes of "gender", "race", "location", as well as fundamental rights and informality. I employ coding strategies from Saldaña's (2013) coding manual with two cycles of coding. The first cycle utilizes what Saldaña calls structural and descriptive ways of coding. The former is attentive to "content based phrase(s) representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data to both code and categorize the data corpus", and the latter "summarizes in a word or short phrase—often a noun—the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 56). This first pass through the data focuses on what the DWA *is*, that is, how it is described and understood procedurally and how it is meant to operate in practice. The second cycle of coding utilizes versus codes to delve into how the DWA *comes to be*, that is, the binaries and contradictions within social life which create and reproduce asymmetric power balances within ILO discourse (Saldaña, 2013). Pattern coding is used in conjunction with versus coding to identify how meaning is discursively produced. This type of coding "pull[s] together a lot of material into a more meaningful and parsimonious unit of analysis" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 58).

After these coding cycles, I theme the data to make sense of the coding. These themes extract significant statements and interpret the meaning-making process undergirding the data. Once themed, schemes within the DWA can be identified. Schemas, borrowed from sociologist William Sewell Jr. (1992), denote the ideological and cultural operations of language within the DWA, and global governance regimes more broadly. Figure 1 below provides an example of the process described here, from initial coding cycle to abstracted schema[2].

2 This is a visual to highlight the abstraction process of this paper, but actual analysis included back-and-forths between close readings of the text, coding, and memoing not exhibited here.

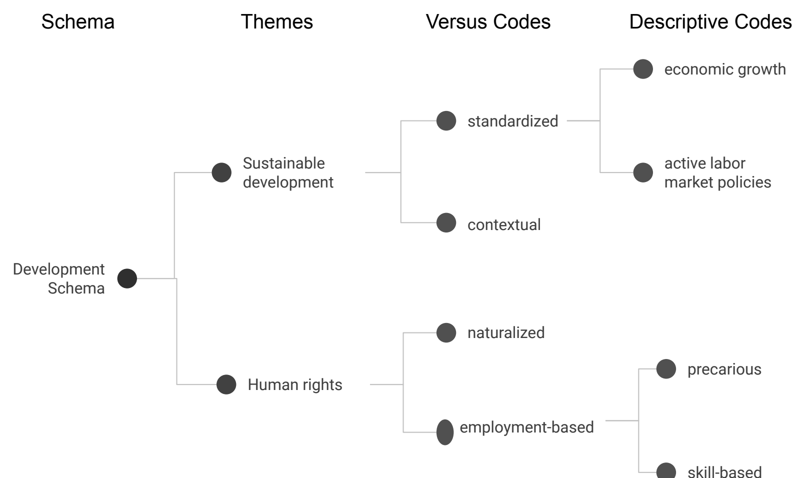
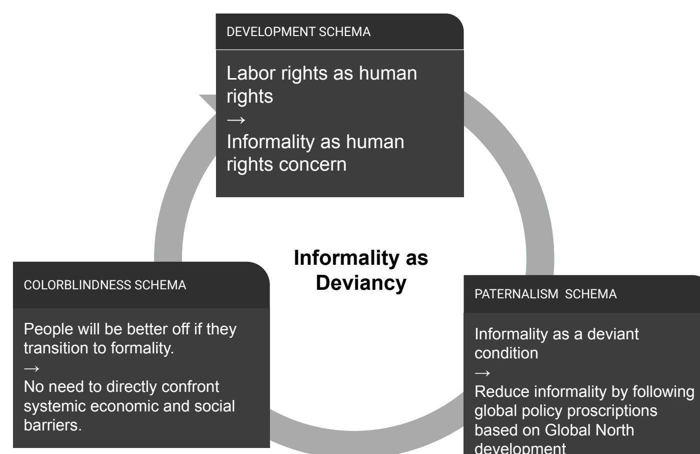


Figure 1. Critical discourse analysis coding strategy sample.

THE DECENT WORK AGENDA AND ITS SCHEMAS

By forming the DWA, the ILO is able to reassert its position as the creator and enforcer of labor standards. Its four strategic objectives, known as "the four pillars", are the institution's attempt to meld development and human rights discourses into a singular narrative. Though the ILO seeks to grapple with the complexity of informality, the DWA's construction of work maintains boundaries between formal/decent or informal/indecent, which mitigates its societal potential. I highlight the ways the DWA both deviates, and maintains, the status quo of previous ILO efforts through a discussion of three schemas: development, paternalism, and colorblindness. In the following three sections, I describe how these schemas operate and appear within the text. Figure 2 summarizes my argument; the visual is cyclic to illustrate the mutually constitutive nature of the schemas I identify.



This chart highlights the logics within each schema. It shows that while the intentions of the DWA are to promote better conditions, it perpetuates the ILO's ignorance towards utilizing the prospects and limiting the perils of informality.

DWA: Decent Work Agenda; ILO: International Labor Organization.
Figure 2. Informality as Deviancy.

Development Schema

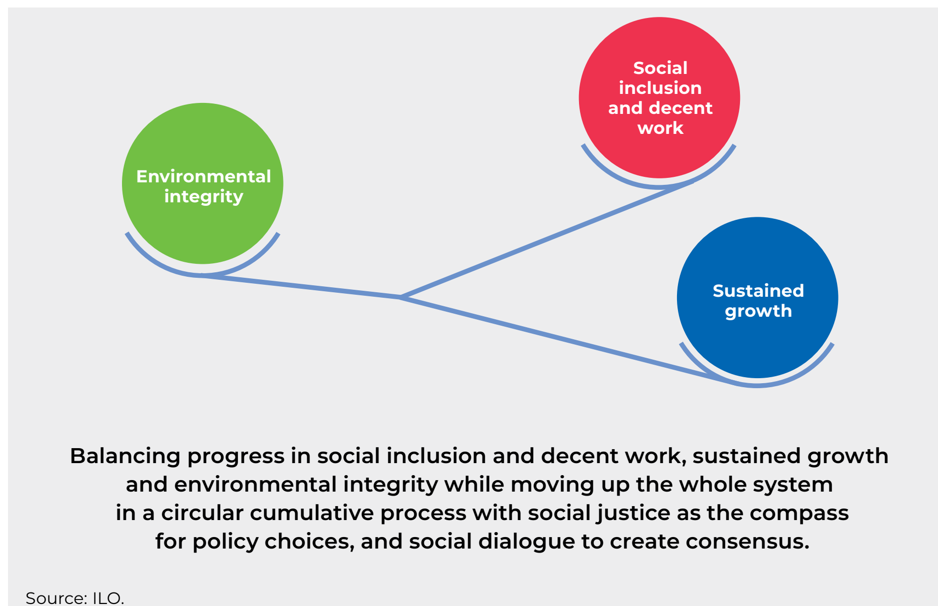
Schema Operation

This schema communicates how the DWA has conflated development and economic empowerment narratives with achieving rights for precarious workers. Improved material conditions are a necessary, but not sufficient, means through which to promote workers' rights. Unintentionally, the DWA advocates for standard—i.e. formal conditions—of employment in order to have a person's fundamental, human rights respected. This is due to the increasing global linkage between *form* of employment and *level* of social protection. More than half the global population is engaged in informal, or non-standard, employment relations ("informal economy"). This is an increasing reality for many, and it is the reality the ILO seeks to address as part of its DWA. However, its conceptualization of labor cannot reach those outside formal relations because it prioritizes state-sanctioned employment. When "labor rights as human rights" are understood as being a positive or negative relationship to state operations, it creates a narrowing coverage of *whose* labor rights are human rights.

Textual Analysis

In its advocacy for a new, transformative agenda, the ILO expresses "an urgent need to reinvigorate the commitment of the international community to social justice and equality" (ILO, 2019b, p. 39). To this end, the ILO and partner agencies developed a "dynamic interlinkages framework" that promotes sustainable development in the economic, social, and environmental realm (ILO, 2016). In its plan on the 2030 Agenda, the ILO states, "the concept of sustainable development embraces three dimensions—economic, social and environmental—in a balanced and integrated manner. Decent work features prominently in the Agenda, not only mainstreamed across the Goals and targets, but also as part of the vision of the new Agenda" (ILO, 2016, p. 2).

Figure 3 offers a visual of this framework, wherein achieving SDG 8 and progress on the other 17 SDGs, particularly "Goals 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 1 (no poverty), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions)", is described as mutually reinforcing, with progress in one promoting progress in others (ILO, 2019b). This framework illustrates the push by IOs to "link" aspects of policy-making to each other because the ILO, which is committed to improving worker conditions, must also account for the concerns of development agencies committed to economic transformation. This graphic places three areas of policy, "social inclusion and Decent Work", "environmental integrity" and "sustained growth", in a balanced fashion to indicate they must be pursued in a constitutive fashion. This relationship between sustainable development and Decent Work is most clearly articulated in "Time to Act for SDG 8":



Source: ILO.

Figure 3. Dynamic Interlinkages Framework.

> The SDG 8 targets are closely intertwined with the goals of the International Labor Organization (ILO). Thus, the reference in SDG 8 to "full and productive employment and Decent Work for all" borrows terminology from the ILO's Decent Work Agenda (1999), while the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2019) borrows the SDG 8 phrasing of "promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth" in its strategy for a human-centered approach to the future of work. By emphasizing the needs of society and the environment, this strategy opens up a transformative path towards economic growth and development. (ILO, 2019b, p. IX)

This framework's three-pronged approach recognizes the mutual influence between the environment and people, but by including "sustained growth" and "social inclusion and decent work" it maintains a separation between these categories while at the same time upholding that pursuing one is pursuing the other. This is an effect of linking; the more areas of consideration regulatory bodies are beholden to, the more convoluted it is to achieve purported goals. Though linkage is not the most immediate or effective means of transformative change, the ILO pursued it because having the language for Decent Work incorporated into SDG 8 accomplished three strategic goals (Frey, 2017; Vosko, 2002). It created legal precedent for ILO policies in broader global governance conversations, it imbued social justice into the determination process for employment policies by all IOs, and tied the ILO to prioritize "sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth" in its push for Decent Work. A double-edged sword, the dynamic interlinkages model attempts to reconcile several threads into a singular path; compared to other frameworks, this might be an advantage, as there can be no sustainable development without employment and Decent Work. Sustaining people's livelihood is a prerequisite to any further development; it is a goal which should be fundamental (ILO, 2015a). The ILO articulates that the welfare of people is a necessary

precondition for development to take place, and that Decent Work is a necessary part of sustainable development.

On one hand, this widens the scope of the ILO's influence in global governance discussions. It also places Decent Work and social justice as a priority in those conversations. Since the late 1990s, the ILO has championed the view of labor rights as human rights. By growing its influence, it succeeds in this shift. In an ILO research paper on globalization, Emmanuel Reynaud describes this shift "as an attempt by the ILO to link formally its standard-setting approach to the human rights framework, which had gained in credibility over the labor rights perspective…the inclination of the times had become to talk about "protecting labor rights as human rights" (ILO, 2018e, p. 3). This allowed the ILO to pursue policies outside of its strict domain of the workplace and increased its influence in global governance. The commitment to promoting formal employment is to increase social protections and eradicate extreme poverty globally. The DWA, its relations to sustainable development, and the application of the dynamic interlinkages framework are the pathways promoted by the ILO.

This conception of Decent Work has important implications for the future of human rights policy-making. In a 2016 speech on the conditions of global employment, Director-General of the ILO Guy Ryder stated,

> The conclusion we have to draw from that rather harsh reality is that ending poverty and promoting Decent Work are two sides of the same coin. We believe that by putting Decent Work SDG 8 at the center of the 2030 Agenda, the international community has recognized something which the ILO has been arguing for a long time: that Decent Work is both the major instrument to make development happen and also in effect, the central objective of sustainable development. (Ryder, 2016)

In several locations, ILO documents have referred to Decent Work as the *means* and the *ends* of development ("ILO implementation plan", "a just transition for all"). This is echoed here in Director-General Ryder's statement that it is the "instrument" and the "central objective" of development. It is a pervasive belief within the ILO that the promotion of Decent Work means sustainable development, and that sustainable development will achieve Decent Work. The use of linkage in the DWA implies these are complementary outcomes and the statement above indicates not only are they "two sides of the same coin", but achieving one will be achieving the other. This indicates there is a singular pathway to promote both simultaneously, and that policies do not have to be tailored towards one or the other goal.

The dynamic interlinkages framework is predicated on a cyclic understanding of change, which is highlighted in the ILO's discourse. In "Time to Act", the interactions between each part—sustainable development, Decent Work, and poverty alleviation—are described here, "sustained growth requires structural transformation, diversification and innovation to support long term growth in productivity, income levels and Decent Work opportunities. Structural transformation, in turn, results from the enrichment and enhancement of a society's knowledge base, including

socially shared mindsets and technical knowledge and skills." A key feature of sustainable development is recognizing the connection between economic and social spheres of life. This is an important divergence in the ILO's prior discourse which focused exclusively on objectives, rather than quality of life. Despite this recognition, the ILO advocates for structural transformation, diversification, and innovation as key avenues for growth and Decent Work.

Figure 4 provides a chart of specific policies and recommendations in line with this view of policy coordination. Goal 8.3 explicitly mentions formalization, but other goals such as industrialization and SME development similarly prioritize formal employment relations. In the ILO's call to action for the SDGs, it presents these foci—structural transformation, diversification, and innovation—as distinct from prior pathways of development. While goals 8.3, 9, and others on the left side of Figure 4 are intended to promote structural transformation, the changes prioritize the economic sphere rather than the social sphere. The goals related to the social sphere on the right side of the figure are directed at the transformation of knowledge and beliefs. This figure shows greater explication of the ILO language shown in Figure 3. The pursuit of policies to achieve economic transformation (in blue) is supposed to incentivize pursuit of policies to achieve social transformation (in red). However, this increases the horizon of change for people's well-being in ways contrary to the ILO's espoused commitments. There are ways to promote sustained economic growth while simultaneously advocating for policies that provide immediate relief. Systems of direct wealth redistribution are an example of such means, but this has never been prioritized in ILO discussions. Such a policy would also provide greater incentive and a buffer for workers transitioning into the formal economy, which is often a time-consuming and costly process.

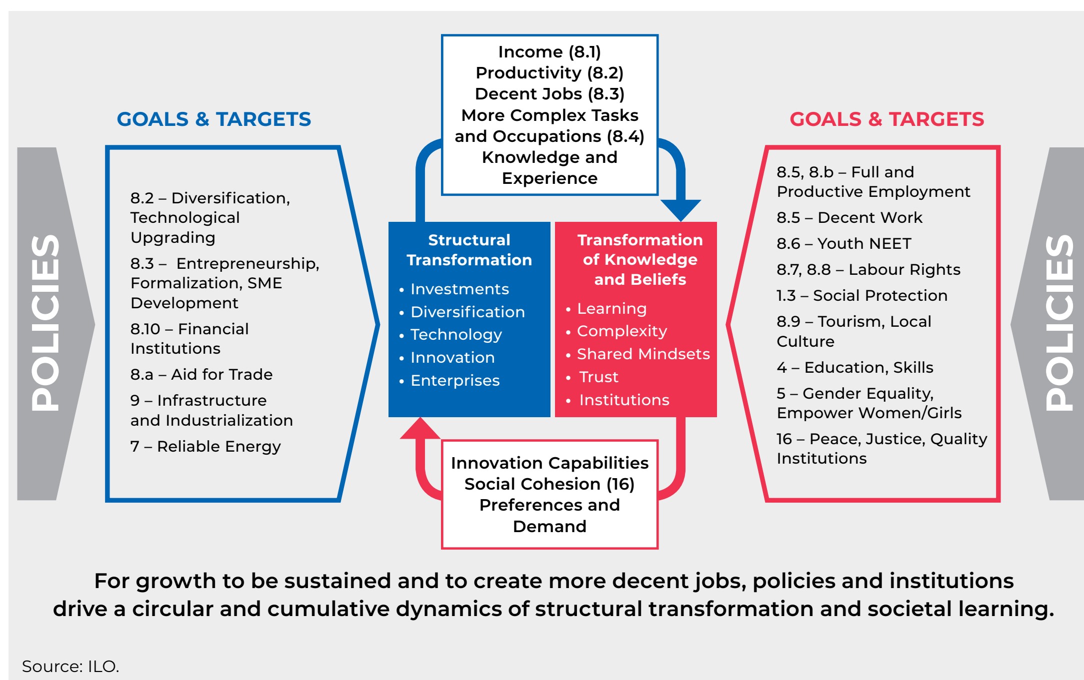


Figure 4. Specific goals, targets, and policies of the Dynamic Interlinkages Framework.

Kinyanjui (2012) argues that people use alternative institutions to those proposed by neoliberal development. These collective arrangements draw from culture and tradition to mobilize resources, invest, and distribute gains. There are alternative systems to Western neoliberal policies, wherein communal and unwritten rules are in place to ensure shared prosperity (Kinyanjui, 2021). The informal economy offers alternative pathways toward sustainability than what is possible in the regulated market economy (Ruzek, 2015). Comparing the DWA's discourse to its call for "people-centered" policies prioritizing human welfare highlights the mismatch between intent and outcome as economic growth continues to hold precedence in its policy-making.

Championing social justice language and objectives into global governance discussions is a demonstrable outcome of the DWA, and it has expanded the realm of applicability for ILO policies. Despite its reframing and increased scope, however, the DWA exhibits continuity with the ILO's past mediation tactics that reduces its effectiveness. Decent Work as the means and the ends of sustainable development does not itself push the pendulum towards achieving equitable welfare. The DWA's linkage between development and human rights encourages policies that tie protections for vulnerable populations to formal employment measures. For those who are undocumented, who engage in criminal labor such as sex work, or who otherwise find themselves unable to secure traditional employment opportunities, this furthers the state violence they face. The ILO is in the position to advocate for securing the needs and dignity of all peoples through its labor rights advocacy. Yet, this will take prioritizing social protections in the immediacy over development goals. Informality as a survival strategy is here to stay, and that reality must be dealt with seriously[3].

Paternalism Schema

Schema Operation

A core component of the DWA's construction of labor is positioning informal labor as a condition of deviancy. In the DWA's discourse on labor policies for Decent Work, and by extension sustainable development, the Global North becomes conceptually and empirically privileged. By constructing certain employment relations as deviant, the DWA fosters paternalism towards countries with highly informal, or "indecent", work. While there are risks associated with informality, the ILO discusses it not as the necessary reality for many, but as a condition that can be fixed through higher rates of development. This leaves the underlying conditions pushing workers to seek out informality unaddressed in the shift to state-sanctioned, "formal" labor. For instance, developments in the gig economy depict how formal employment does not translate to social gains. Many industries are increasingly adopting an

3 Increasingly, scholars of informality view have shifted from it as a condition that should be solved to an alternative reality of economic and social organization that neither can nor should be eradicated.

independent contractor model of employment in order to formalize employment relations, such as in the service industry (Zwick, 2018; Levitt, 2021; Easterbrook-Smith, 2022). However, independent contractor status often does not include worker benefits or consistent hours, and is still susceptible to the harms of workplace harassment. The increasing use of flexibilized formalized labor is an example of how the intent of policy and its outcome can be mismatched. This loss of context in policy-making severs a person from their community in ways that often do more harm than good in the long-run (Kinyanjui, 2010). Within this schema, there are themes of labor policies, upgrading, and integration.

Textual Analysis

One way the DWA exhibits paternalism is through the discussions of labor market policies. The high rates of informality in the Global South are evidence to the international community that they require intervention. The technical assistance services of the ILO have increased drastically in the last few decades, primarily funded by the US. In some instances, the local governments petition the ILO for assistance. In 2001 Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates among others asked for technical support in providing labor standards data (Elliot; Freeman, 2003, p. 108). Even in these instances, the services provided utilize language and operations that do not take into account the strengths and weaknesses of the target nation, but pursue the end goal(s) in a manner modeled after the Global North. This is due in part to the global context that ILO recommendations are formed in: elite representatives of member nations, in conversation with world-renowned trade unions and corporate representatives.

Additionally, the conditions which lead to informality amongst people are geographically dependent, and vary accordingly. Labor market policies are one method utilized by the ILO to promote Decent Work, which incidentally makes it easier to promote paternalistic North-South relations. There are two forms commonly utilized: passive and active labor policies. Passive refers to “income maintenance when workers are out of employment”, whereas active refers to “policies aimed at increasing or improving the employment opportunities of unemployed or inactive persons to get or return to a job” (ILO, 2018b, p. 2). With the DWA, the combination of active and passive policies recommended have become more contextualized to local needs.

According to the ILO, “low unemployment in conjunction with high labor participation rates results in large swathes of the population being engaged in vulnerable employment and many people in working poverty” (ILO, 2015b, p. 4). To the ILO, informality is a manifestation of social vulnerability, in opposition to formal and secure employment; informal employment is undesirable because workers engaging in it often have worse conditions than formal workers. However, it is not the type of labor either worker engages in that matters—it could be the same type in both instances, in fact. What matters is a person’s juridical relationship; if their employment is nationally protected then they are (mostly) assured. But the form of

employment should not matter more than the type of labor, and a person should be assured of their rights regardless of either. If labor policies only consider formal employment because the ILO assumes formality as such (as a move from formal to informal sector), then it will continuously fail to protect those engaged in informal employment. Research by Mary Kinyanjui (2010) suggests informal workers mobilize themselves to address fundamental concerns, and advocate for their strategies to be taken seriously rather than adopting formalization strategies that do not easily map onto informal relations. Kinyanjui discusses the importance of social networks and associations as an example of strategies used by informal workers, and how interventions often do not appropriately leverage these existing networks of relations. The ILO's notion of development, embedded with legacies of colonial power asymmetries, has historically precluded what informal workers are doing and saying (Maul, 2009; Bhambra, 2021).

The ILO has dedicated attention to informality in various industries and geographies (Kanbur, 2019). A progressive shift in recent years emerged from its 2014 recommendation, "Resolution on Transition from the Informal Economy Recommendation," which recognized the multiplicitous forms of labor that exist. In addition to recognizing various labor arrangements, the ILO acknowledges various paths towards development; "the current projection suggests that their manufacturing employment share is unlikely to increase and the development path and process of structural transformation is likely to be very different to that taken by developed countries in the past" (ILO, 2018b). Despite this attention, most of its measures are based on analyses rooted in the realities of advanced industrialized economies and not in countries that have been colonized and/or are developing. Its current recommendations espouse structural transformation but have failed to adequately address decades in the making of premature deindustrialization occurring in many countries. An ILO research paper conducted a meta-analysis of previous labor market policies that took into account packages implemented in both developed and developing countries, and concluded that active labor policies provide only short-term results and are overall less effective in the latter ("Boosting youth employment"). The explicit move towards reckoning with these differences indicates the ILO, and by extension other global governance organizations, are interested in seriously contending with how to advocate for Decent Work and sustainable development in varied national contexts.

This shift in perspective highlights the ILO's ability to alter global norms pertaining to human rights and development. While this is a strength of the ILO's conception of Decent Work, it is merely the prerequisite condition of recognition, and does not itself lead to permanent shifts in discursive sentiment. Indeed, the ILO has strayed from universal policy proscriptions; "there is no unique unemployment benefits design or combination of passive and active measures for an effective activation. With national variations, an individual action plan is widely used. These individual plans are designed in collaboration with specialized counselors and include

different interventions considering the labor market problems and the local economy context for each individual" (ILO, 2018b, p. 14).

The ILO's recognition of the contextual needs of individuals promotes more people-centered policies. Yet, collaboration with specialized counselors refers to national officials the ILO consults to make its suggestions. In many countries governmental officials are members of the political and economic elite and are often far removed from the contexts of informal workers. Thus, rather than resort to bureaucratic measures, it is important to be in direct consultation with the workers themselves to identify their needs. Even informal workers, who often lack institutional access, actively mobilize for their grievances (Hummel, 2022).

Consulting with local leaders in addition to national elites would better serve the mission of the ILO's four pillars. Otherwise, it continues to perpetuate an asymmetry between who is deemed worthy of policy decision-making and who must follow those decisions.

The ILO was created prior to the decolonial process, with asymmetric power relations as a founding feature[4]. Though it has sought to ameliorate this over time, these relations remain imbued in its legacy of agricultural regulation. In 1919 at the ILO's initial agenda-setting meeting, there were no agricultural representatives present, and this "was raised as one of the reasons why those Conventions would not apply to agriculture" (ILO, 2015b, p. 10). The fact that there were no representatives to express the grievances of agricultural workers, despite it being the dominant condition of employment for most peoples in the Global South, perpetuates colonial power asymmetries (Webster; Forrest, 2020). Since then, the ILO has returned many times to the issue of regulated agricultural production. Even a short two years later, it was brought to the agenda:

> During the discussions in 1921, several governments objected to the adoption of any standards relating to agriculture, as they considered that the Treaty of Versailles did not apply to this sector. Other governments considered that the Treaty did indeed apply equally to agricultural and industrial workers; the principle of freedom of association was referred to as "one of the most important objects of [the] Conference" (ILO, 2015b, p. 10).

Privileging a certain *form* of work, namely industrial conditions of labor, cannot be considered incidental when global employment trends and colonial relations are brought into context. Countries that had been colonized either had not achieved independence, or were grappling with colonial legacies, and these countries relied heavily on agricultural production due to being precluded from the industrial process. While this asymmetric relationship has ameliorated overtime through decolonization, it nonetheless persists. In a research paper on agricultural worker's agency, efforts by the ILO to redress this legacy are evident:

4 This, combined with the fact that most funding for the ILO comes from advanced economies, creates a pressure to conceptually and empirically favor policy-making based on the conditions of peoples in the Global North.

> The 2008 ILC discussion on the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction, which culminated in the adoption of a resolution and conclusions concerning promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction, set a mandate for renewed ILO involvement in rural development issues (ILO, s.d, p. 1).

This decision was decades in the making, and importantly occurred years after the beginnings of the decolonial process. While this can be a testament to the workings of social dialogue, it took several global economic and financial crises for the ILO to consider the conditions of workers in non-industrial employment relations. This highlights which workers, in which locations, the ILO has historically favored. It took a few more years for the ILO to *prioritize* the distinct policy needs of workers in the rural economy (ILO, 2015b, p. 98).

The ILO has established the relationship between informality and agriculture. The DWA shows that one of the means of sustained growth the ILO prefers as an alternative to informal employment or agricultural work is global value chain (GVC) integration. It promotes this with the hope of increased worker empowerment, rural development and increased provision of "basic services". The former and latter are conditions of humanity the ILO advocates for all workers, regardless of geography or employment type, and that are deemed essential to ensure gains are equitably shared. However, the ILO's promotion for global supply chain integration as a preferable alternative to local enterprises has little relation to existing research on precarity rates in GVCs. ILO support for integration is best exhibited here: "enterprises, as well as countries, can benefit from participation in GVCs…Participation in GVCs offers opportunities for developing countries to participate in global markets, enabling them to diversify exports" (ILO, 2018d, p. 3).

As noted previously by the ILO, institutions play a pivotal role in sustaining developmental projects. Developing countries face a disadvantage in that their institutional capacity is severely limited from historical legacies of colonialism and asymmetric power relations with the Global North. Additionally, there are high rates of labor precarity and exploitation even in GVCs, so this does not address the fundamental problem with informality identified by the ILO. In Phillips' (2017, p. 444) article on inequality in GVCs, she argues,

> "the current vast and expanding extent of global inequality is not a 'bug in the system' of a GVC world, but is rather foundational to the functioning of a global political economy built around the form of industrial organization associated with GVCs—an outcome that arises from the interactions of market, social and political power in underpinning this global economic order. To this extent, the inescapable conclusion is that incremental change will not be sufficient to address the distributional implications of the GVC world".

Despite research which indicates some countries will have worsening conditions from integration (Posthuma; Rossi, 2017; LeBaron et al., 2022), the ILO still advocates for this measure holistically for developing countries growth. This is despite its own recognition that mutual gains are *not* assured, especially for developing countries:

> There is a risk that the entry of new low-wage producers will precipitate a downward spiral of competition, in which increases in exports produce ever-diminishing returns (Kaplinsky, 1998; UNCTAD, 2013). Under this scenario, the potential social gains that arise from an increase in exports will be more than offset by lower prices (ILO, 2018d, p. 3).

Considering the higher levels of informal and contractual labor relations in developing countries, the higher likelihood to be targeted for offshoring, and the decreased institutional capacity to combat declining labor conditions, the insistence that GVCs are one of the primary paths for developing countries to sustainably develop presents a fissure with prior ILO aims ("Sectoral studies on Decent Work"). Even should these countries foster the "correct" conditions for development, skepticism for sustainable gains still exists: "a significant challenge will be whether and how low-income countries will be able to improve their working conditions in the face of competition not just from other low-income countries, but also from robotics in high-income countries" (ILO, 2018d, p. 3).

There is a mismatch between the ILO's efforts to foster more nationally tailored recommendations and its general promotion of GVC integration. While GVCs may be beneficial to some, there is not enough long-term evidence of its success in increasing the quality of work and livelihood for people. As countries in the Global South have only recently decolonized, or may still be in the process of doing so, the ILO must be cautious of basing its metrics on advanced economies which have benefited from forms of asymmetric economic gain (i.e. colonialism, coercive trade).

Colorblindness Schema

Schema Operation

By conceptually and empirically privileging the Global North while simultaneously viewing informal work as deviant, the ILO operates with a form of colorblindness.

Colorblindness shows as an erasure of the experiences and needs of informal workers in policies by conditioning how and when workers are viewed as worthy of protection. This perpetuates harm against already economically and socially marginalized people. The discursive meaning within this schema underscores themes of deviancy, precarity, and difference, as well as a dichotomy between informality as coercive or as chosen.

The ILO also recognizes the value in multilateral coordination. To preserve its discursive commitment to people-centered policies while also enabling countries to more comfortably coordinate on transnational issues, the ILO prioritized standardizing national labor policies. In the DWA implementation plan, the ILO describes how it extends its standard setting into its push for Decent Work for all with "national reviews [that] "will be open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people and will support the reporting by all relevant stakeholders" and "will be people-centered, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a

particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind" (ILO, 2016, p. 7).

The ILO considers this push for increased transparency between countries as an operational issue and a measure to increase accountability. However, the ILO's means do not align with its ends. While this plan calls for "particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind", the focus in the DWA's policy recommendations prioritize economic measures that support formalization as a precondition for the securing of rights. So rather than prioritize the conditions of people in precarious work by advocating for innate rights rather than employment-based rights, the ILO seeks to bring them into formally recognized employment relations regardless of whether this immediately ameliorates their precarity.

Textual Analysis

In its most recent call to action, the ILO expands on the importance of SDG 8 for improving worker conditions by stating:

> Unemployment is too high in many countries, and there are persistent gender wage gaps and Decent Work deficits across the world. In addition to women, young people and persons with disabilities are also at a great disadvantage. Even in countries with a low risk of unemployment, these population groups face severe challenges when it comes to finding employment and enjoying equal access to Decent Work and equal pay for work of equal value (ILO, 2019b, p. X).

This paragraph shows how certain people face higher precarity, including "women, young people and persons with disabilities". These higher levels are not due to innate characteristics of any of the above groups, but from systemic conditions which prioritize some people to the exclusion of others (Hooks, 2000). This hierarchization maintains conditions which make it easier to prey upon already systematically disadvantaged people, such as racial minorities, women, and those in conditions of poverty.

Largely, the ILO recognizes the association between precarity and informality is higher for people facing other forms of exclusion. Informality is the dominant condition for workers worldwide, yet the goals of the ILO and the methods it advocates to achieve its goals serve to maintain a firm division between formal and informal labor. The latter, however, is only informal so long as it is not sanctioned by the state, or not regulated. Regulation necessarily improves conditions of work by formalizing the conditions of work, not by shifting the worker to the formal economy but by ensuring the work they are currently engaged in is adequately remunerated, their hours are fair, their workplace conditions safe, and so on. Here, I am not saying the ILO is antithetical to those changes. Rather, its role as norm and standard setter means it plays a privileged role and has the leverage to advocate for extending existing national labor protections to provide immediate relief to workers (Hauf, 2015). Instead, the ILO encourages workers to shift to the formal sector by offering technical knowledge, such as business development services, market

access and credit access conditionally based on transitioning. This may be feasible for some workers, but it will not be for all. The ILO creates and maintains divisions that preclude informal workers from social protections afforded to formal workers[5]; "Some countries explicitly exclude workers in non-standard forms of employment from labor protections against violence and harassment" (ILO, 2018a, p. 17).

While the reality of informal workers is such that, on average, their conditions are worse off than those of other workers, this has less to do with the type of work they do (informal/indecent) and more to do with the condition of their work (protected versus unprotected). In other words, informal workers face precarity and poverty because they are often precluded from the social welfare nets by virtue of the conditions of their employment. Informality fundamentally challenges the ILO's conceptualization of work in the DWA, as it assumes formalized employment is the best avenue to achieve social rights. The ILO's emphasis on formality as a precondition to social rights ignores that some workers willingly engage in informal work as a preferred method of economic survival and community care (Kinyanjui, 2010).

In the current global economic order, with protections increasingly tied to forms of employment, informal workers are neglected, or otherwise explicitly excluded from consideration. To combat this, the ILO promotes informal workers' transition into the formal economy; but it also helps to maintain the precarity of informal workers by denouncing it as a condition to be eliminated ("Informal economy"). Eradicating poverty, promoting Decent Work and ensuring sustainable development will occur if and when informality is eradicated.

Along this line of reasoning, it is the ILO's responsibility to teach workers how to be "decent" by moving them into the formal economy. This conception of non-standard employment as deviant is illustrated in the DWA's discussion of informality and gender:

> Women working in the informal economy face a number of structural constraints which prevent them from accessing decent paid work. As they often bear the brunt of unpaid childcare and domestic work, they may have little choice but to take on low-quality jobs that allow them to attend to these care responsibilities (see Issue Brief No. 3). A range of discriminatory social norms may limit their access to: property, assets and financial services; opportunities for education and skills development; and social protection (ILO, 2018c, p. 1).

The reality of informal work today is such that people engaged in it are more likely to be exploited, to face violent or unsafe conditions, to have lower pay and less agency over their terms of employment (ILO, 2018c). The ILO's objective to take local needs into account requires a more nuanced approach to understanding the needs of people engaged in different *forms* of employment, rather than deeming some jobs decent and acceptable and others indecent and unacceptable. There should be

5 For some categories, such as domestic workers (who are frequently excluded from labor laws and the majority of whom are women), the gap in protection may affect women disproportionately. In 20 of the 80 countries studied, domestic workers are excluded from the labor laws, and in eight countries contributing family workers are excluded ("Violence and harassment").

a concerted effort to know when and why workers turn towards informality, and the variation in opportunities and challenges facing workers of different intersecting identities (e.g. women, people of color, queer people, people with disabilities).

By critically considering the implications of gender for working conditions, the DWA begins to move away from a dichotomized understanding of employment. Its explicit reference to structural constraints and social norms that sustain conditions of poverty for some workers and not others alludes to the systemically perpetuated nature of poverty. But while the ILO recognizes these nuances implicitly in this discussion, it is not explicit in calling for change. This is to its own detriment, as identifying structural barriers is the first step to addressing them.

While economic policies matter, the ILO only pushes for social change in so far as it promotes economic change. For social welfare systems to reach those who need it most, they must be accessibly created with differential barriers in mind, including those presented by informality. On the issue of mitigating structural and social inequalities, an ILO issue brief recognizes the dual burden women face that often leads them to seek flexible labor arrangements (ILO, 2018c, p. 5). Issue brief number 4 advocates for shifts in social norms and the provision of public care services. These are useful recommendations, but they still presume that such shifts should occur only when workers are "formally" employed. It cannot be assumed that it is always coercive or harmful to workers (Anyidoho, 2013). For instance, a study of informal vendors in Ghana indicates 88% of households rely on informal work. This study also suggests that it is primarily macroeconomic conditions that negatively impact informal workers. For instance, one of the ILO's four pillars guarantees workers freedom of association. Yet, this right is often not respected at the national level and especially for informal workers. While informal workers do organize, they will only do so where state officials encourage them to (Hummel, 2022).

Countries profiting from labor exploitation have a vested interest in maintaining informality in a way where the workers are not politically activated, meaning not unionized. There is little the ILO can do on their own to redress these macroeconomic concerns; but it is important to advocate on behalf of workers to policies at national and sub-national levels that not only address the risks of informality through knowledge sharing and diversification but that promote social changes that mitigate the losses incurred during transitions to formality. These losses include, but are not limited to, a reduction in income, flexible work hours, and employment autonomy (Aleksynska; La; Manfredi, 2023). Though many of these losses are seen as necessary to achieve gains in the form of increased job security and access to social benefits, these are not promised gains, and the transition can have a significant impact on people who are already experiencing financial precarity. Without attention to the particular needs and conditions of informal workers, the people most economically and politically disadvantaged will remain engaged in precarious work, regardless of informal or formal employment, and generational poverty will persist.

It is important for the ILO's mission that they do not simply assume informality should be eradicated, but that it takes a concerted effort to understand it in order

to promote better conditions for those engaged in it. By deeming it "informal", and by extension "indecent", both the labor itself and the person engaging in it become viewed as deviant. This paper argues that the ILO has made strategic choices to further its mission within global governance, but that it has unintentionally made it more difficult to come to a consensus with its stakeholders-states, employers, and workers—on matters regarding informal employment. It has promoted attention to certain aspects of employment, such as the ability to collectively mobilize, to be working "full-time", to have a physical place of employment separate from the home, among others, that do little to address conditions perpetuating unsafe work unless workers are formally employed.

If the ILO hopes to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, it should implement strategies to provide people with tools to sustain themselves and their communities regardless of whether it will have a sustainable, i.e. long-term, effect on development. There are a few ILO issue briefs that come close to this conclusion. On the topic of gender and informality, one asks:

> How can the voices of workers in the informal economy be better reflected in policy making? When it comes to choosing priorities for public spending, how can we ensure that the interests of women working in the informal economy are represented, so that we can guarantee them an adequate provision of services, infrastructure and social security?
>
> • How can technology be used more effectively to facilitate access to credit?
>
> • How can we extend social protection to all those working in the informal economy, including those who are engaged in unpaid work? (ILO, 2018c, p. 10).

This section of the brief shows a promising direction in the ILO's DWA. Though this language is not incorporated in any other texts and it is tacked on at the end without being followed up on or fleshed out, it shows how the ILO's discussions of working conditions illustrate *who* its agenda is meant to prioritize; namely, workers in industrial sectors engaged in full-time, highly skilled, highly remunerated employment in a state with strong institutional capacity. For most people globally, these are not their current conditions. While the ILO has continued to refine its DWA, it will require a concerted pivot towards understanding and improving conditions for peoples regardless of their form of labor. Certain recommendations, such as universal basic income and institutional building, are beneficial regardless of occupation status. Others, such as minimum wage, maximum work hours, and social security may need significant adaptation to meet the needs of the most vulnerable workers (Andoh; Segbenya, 2024; Okolo et al., 2024). It will take time and effort to redress the persistent tensions outlined here for the DWA's mission to become reality.

CONCLUSION

The DWA is an ambitious project that serves as a case study in the strengths and weaknesses of transformative global discourses. The ILO's codification of labor standards, while presenting an expansion of protections for formally employed,

full-time workers, fails to account for the conditions of millions working temporary, contracted, casual jobs. The schemas within the DWA's discourse-development, paternalism, and colorblindness indicate a conceptualization of work that constructs informality as deviant from "ideal" formal employment. This view of progress sustains, rather than challenges, hierarchical power relations. Already marginalized individuals become excluded from achieving greater social protections by virtue of their occupation. This is especially true for those who are criminalized in many countries for the type of labor they engage in, such as for sex workers and street vendors. There is also a greater need to consider how pressing global issues, such as health and migration crises, affect the rise of flexible labor arrangements. For instance, COVID-19 has exacerbated the gig economy and how this impacts the ILO's push for Decent Work needs to be considered.

The questions and concerns expressed here seek to push scholars and practitioners to push the boundaries of how informality is regulated and understood. While this is only a preliminary excavation of global efforts to promote Decent Work, it can serve the basis for further research into how the ILO, as well as other IO's, perpetuate, assimilate, and/or challenge modern power asymmetries. For it to present a true turning point in global labor discourses, it must acknowledge both the historical legacies of colonialism in the world of work and the impact of global regulation in sustaining systemic inequalities between countries and peoples.

Future studies engaging with this topic can branch off in numerous ways. This complexity can be better served if researchers and practitioners recognize the necessity of informal labor for societies (Mhando; Kiggundu, 2018). The ILO must grapple with the persistence of informal work not only through research but through continuous dialogue with informal worker collectives. One way to do so is to not only represent differentially racialized and gendered workers but to have global initiatives recognize and incorporate the strengths of these workers.

Understanding the strengths and barriers facing informal workers requires processes of *listening* and *learning* to understand how informality presents in different geographies, and how workers negotiate their own conditions of employment in the broader world of work. Informal workers are amongst the most marginalized in the global economy, and if the DWA fails to speak to their conditions then it remains a limited project. Taking seriously the ways informal workers organize, mobilize resources, promote job creation, and more can further global governance efforts toward sustainable development.

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APPENDIX A

1. ILO Implementation Plan—2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
2. ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work
3. Work for a brighter future
4. 5 of 8 Research Papers on the Future of Work pertaining to social protections and inclusive work
5. 12 Future of Work issue briefs
6. Time to Act for SDG 8: Integrating Decent Work, Sustained Growth, and Environmental Integrity
7. The ILO and Globalization: Fundamental Rights, Decent Work and Social Justice
8. MNEs and Inclusive Development: Harnessing national social dialogue institutions to address the governance gap
9. Violence and Harassment against Women and Men in the World of Work—Trade Union Perspective and Action
10. The Right to Social Security in the Constitutions of the World: Broadening the moral and legal space for social justice
11. Boosting youth employment through public works
12. Technical report: ILO workshop on labor administration reforms and innovations: efficiency and outreach
13. Sectoral Studies on Decent Work in Global Supply Chains
14. Illustrated guidelines for gender-responsive employment and intensive investment programmes
15. Social protection for domestic workers: key policy trends and statistics
16. Collective bargaining- a policy guide
17. Improving working conditions for domestic workers: organizing, coordinated action and bargaining
18. A just transition for all: can the past inform the future?
19. Tripartite Declaration concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy
20. Promoting Decent Work for migrant workers
21. Giving a voice to rural workers

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