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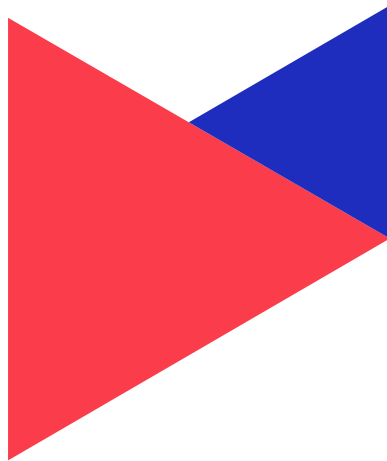


EESE  
Enabling Environment for  
Sustainable Enterprises

- ▶ **The ILO's provision of technical assistance to promote an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises**







**The ILO's provision of technical assistance to promote  
an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises**



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First published 2022

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ISBN: 9789220374931 (web pdf)

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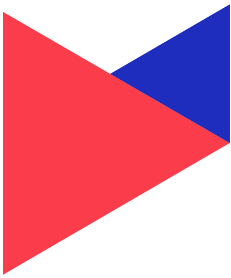
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Printed in Switzerland

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# Introduction

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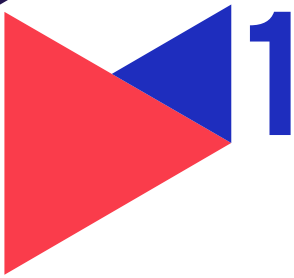
This publication outlines the technical assistance activities carried out by the ILO to help Member States to achieve an enabling business environment that is conducive to the development of sustainable enterprises.

The reference framework for these activities is provided by the conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises adopted by the ILO tripartite constituents in June 2007, which identify the features that make up an enabling business environment and call for the strengthening of the institutions and governance mechanisms that promote the development of enterprises.<sup>1</sup> The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019)<sup>2</sup> and the global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis (2021)<sup>3</sup> also acknowledge the central role of enabling environments. In line with the conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises, the ILO has for more than a decade

been implementing the Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (ESEE) programme,<sup>4</sup> which offers governments, employers and workers a wide range of services within the framework of the Organization's technical cooperation activities.<sup>5</sup>

The main features of the technical assistance provided under the ESEE programme are presented in the five main sections of this publication. Section 1 gives the background to the programme. The scope of the technical assistance available to Member States is discussed in section 2, while section 3 summarizes the principal activities under the ESEE programme. Section 4 describes how technical assistance is delivered in accordance with national priorities. Several key factors that need to be considered in the implementation of technical assistance activities are highlighted in section 5. Finally, some concluding remarks are offered.

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- 1 ILO, [Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises](#), International Labour Conference, 96th Session, 2007.
  - 2 ILO, [ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work](#), International Labour Conference, 108th Session, 2019.
  - 3 ILO, [Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient](#), International Labour Conference, 109th Session, 2021.
  - 4 See the ILO web page on the ESEE programme, <https://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/eese/index.html>.
  - 5 See the [ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25](#), Governing Body, 340th Session, 2020. GB.340/POL/6.



## Background

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In order to operationalize technical support for Member States in line with the 2007 conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises, the ILO launched the EESE programme in 2010. Over the years, the programme has used various approaches and activities to address business environment issues in countries that have requested assistance.<sup>6</sup> It supports ILO constituents' efforts to conduct assessments aimed at identifying barriers to the development of sustainable enterprises and the creation of decent jobs.

The technical assistance provided under the EESE programme encompasses a range of diverse activities, including assessments and diagnostic studies, enterprise surveys, identification of reforms and policies, institutional assessments, social dialogue, specific technical and sectoral studies, technical workshops and training, and support with the implementation of action plans. ILO staff from various units at headquarters and the field offices, along with external experts, work together and draw on their technical knowledge to implement all these activities. Of critical importance for the delivery of technical assistance is the cooperation established between the EESE team in the Enterprises Department on the one hand, and the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities

and the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities on the other.

Technical assistance activities under the EESE programme address several substantive issues related to the business environment and have been implemented in different national contexts, including countries in situations of crisis and fragility, least developed countries, economies in transition, export-oriented economies, countries with higher income levels, rural economies, and countries that have embarked on economic reforms and restructuring.

Obstacles to the improvement of the business environment continue to hamper significantly the creation of decent jobs in developing countries. To tackle this challenge through technical assistance, innovative approaches are required, as recognized by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, which provides support to the EESE programme through the ILO programme and budget, approved every two years by the International Labour Conference.<sup>7</sup>

Technical assistance activities under the EESE programme may be implemented at either the national or the global level.

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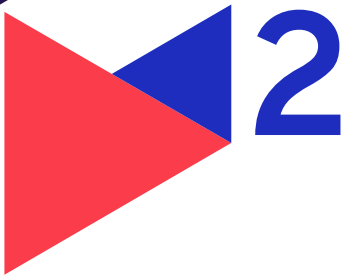
6 See the web page of the ILO EESE team, <https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eese/lang--en/index.htm>.

7 See, for example, ILO, [Preview of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2022-23](#), Governing Body, 340th Session, 2020. GB.340/PFA/2.



► EESE technical assistance at the national and global levels

Level of intervention	Area	Characteristics
<b>National</b>	<b>Assessing key constraints</b>	Assessing policy, institutional and regulatory constraints on the development of sustainable enterprises and the creation of decent work. Since 2020, particular attention has been paid to the constraints arising from the COVID-19 crisis and to the factors hindering the longer-term recovery of enterprises and decent jobs, productivity and the sustainable transformation of enterprises.
	<b>Advocacy</b>	Supporting advocacy efforts and policymaking to tackle obstacles to an enabling business environment, including the development of institutional frameworks for the advocacy of reforms.
	<b>Policy design and implementation</b>	Drafting recommendations on policies to address barriers and facilitate enterprises' access to markets and resources, and supporting the implementation of these recommendations.
<b>Global</b>	<b>Research and new knowledge</b>	Examining policy options for improving the business environment during the post-COVID-19 recovery, and deepening knowledge of new factors that have a direct bearing on entrepreneurship dynamics, enterprise productivity and the productive transformation of enterprises.
	<b>Capacity-building</b>	Strengthening the capacity of ILO constituents to promote an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises and to monitor progress on relevant indicators under the Sustainable Development Goals.



## Scope of the technical assistance provided

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The EESE programme provides technical assistance in the form of non-financial support through technical advisory services and

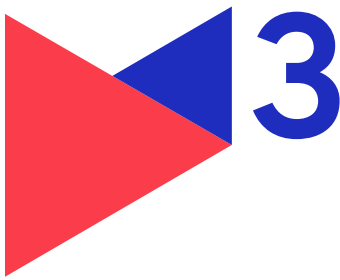
capacity-building. It covers a wide range of knowledge-based activities, as summarized in the box below.

### Technical assistance activities to promote an enabling business environment for sustainable enterprises

The EESE programme provides technical expertise and advice with a view to enhancing human and institutional capacity to foster an enabling business environment that is conducive to the development of sustainable enterprises and the creation of decent work. This assistance can be provided through ILO staff and/or specially recruited external experts. Technical assistance under the EESE programme generally involves the transfer, adaptation and use of knowledge, practices, technologies and skills. It tends to be focused on improving policy design, institutional development, supporting programmes and projects, building implementation capacity, and generating knowledge through training and related learning activities. Typical EESE activities include the sharing of information, expertise, data and instructions; skills training; dissemination of methodologies and techniques; consultancy services; management and administration; and policy formulation.

The technical assistance provided is meant to enhance stakeholders' capacity to design and implement policies, tailor-made solutions and institutional arrangements; to organize reform strategies and programmes; and to participate in social dialogue on how to achieve an enabling business environment. In this way, the EESE programme is facilitating the transformation of business environments in ILO Member States.

The underlying conditions of a business environment are not static: they change and evolve over time. Accordingly, technical assistance activities under the EESE programme address the institutional, economic and political factors shaping the evolution of these conditions. This approach takes into account the role of system actors, such as entrepreneurs and government officials, who may either be leading the transformation of business environments or may themselves be acting as brakes on business growth. EESE interventions seek to understand the adaptive capability of local institutions and other stakeholders in relation to barriers and other specific conditions affecting a country's business environment.



## Main technical assistance activities

The EESE programme is flexible and comprises a diverse range of technical advisory services and activities. Its implementation takes into account the specific conditions of countries, markets,

sectors, institutions and policy frameworks. The following table provides an overview of some of the main activities through which technical assistance is delivered under the EESE programme:

Activities	Characteristics
<b>Assessment and diagnosis</b>	The EESE assessments and diagnostic studies provide a contextual characterization of barriers and ongoing processes that hinder business growth in a country. Assessments begin with an extensive review of the relevant literature and secondary data focusing on selected issues (the methodological approach is flexible and can be tailored to different situations). <sup>8</sup> The findings feed into the design of technical support activities to address those barriers. Assessments involve a broad-based process of gathering and analysing factual and other relevant information. <sup>9</sup>
<b>Enterprise surveys</b>	EESE enterprise surveys are perception surveys designed to gather primary data on specific constraints and/or the overall business environment. A survey can cover a wide range of issues. The process of preparing and conducting such surveys is in itself an important capacity-building exercise as far as survey methodologies and data collection are concerned. The gathering of primary data can play an instrumental role in improving social dialogue on business environment issues. <sup>10</sup>
<b>Identifying constraints and possible policy options</b>	The EESE programme offers a wide and flexible array of methods to identify legal, regulatory and institutional constraints, either through diagnostic studies or through data- and opinion-gathering activities. The extensive initial gathering of information on business environment constraints relies on research, interviews with stakeholders and other diagnostic tools. All this information feeds into consultations and technical discussions aimed at identifying possible policy options and related measures.

<sup>8</sup> See ILO, “Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (EESE)”, brochure (2021).

<sup>9</sup> For some relevant examples, see the reports listed on the web page of the ILO EESE team, <https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eese/lang--en/index.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> For an example of a specific survey, see the summary of the national enterprise survey conducted in El Salvador between 2018 and 2019 at [https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eese/WCMS\\_739574/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eese/WCMS_739574/lang--en/index.htm).

<b>Bipartite and tripartite social dialogue</b>	Social dialogue involving bipartite and tripartite stakeholders and other local partners is a central feature of the EESE programme. The interaction of representatives of the government, employers and workers is intended to bring about a shared understanding of barriers to business development and to identify solutions to issues of common concern. The way in which such interaction takes place depends on the national setting. <sup>11</sup>
<b>Technical and sectoral studies</b>	Specific technical and sectoral studies allow for more in-depth examination of the structural factors that underlie shortcomings in the business environment. Such studies may focus on barriers related to a country's geographical region, markets, the size of enterprises or other characteristics.
<b>Support for the development and implementation of action plans</b>	The EESE programme is aimed at supporting the development and implementation of action plans to promote improvements in the business environment. The preparation of such plans lays the groundwork for their implementation by guiding the actions identified to remove barriers, by indicating how actions need to be implemented in accordance with existing mechanisms and policies, and by identifying clear priorities and institutional capabilities for implementation. <sup>12</sup>

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11 This area of the EESE programme is illustrated by a training course on decent work and social dialogue in business environment reforms that was held on 18 November 2021. See: [https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eese/whatsnew/WCMS\\_830081/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eese/whatsnew/WCMS_830081/lang--en/index.htm).

12 For an example of support with the implementation of action plans, see ILO, [Review of the Implementation of a Business Environment Programme Based on the ILO's Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises \(EESE\) Toolkit in Honduras, 2012–19](#) (2020).

## Examples of substantive issues addressed by technical assistance under the EESE programme

The following table presents examples of issues that can be addressed through technical assistance interventions under the EESE programme in addition to the issues highlighted by the

conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2007. It is worth emphasizing that EESE interventions can benefit from collaboration with other technical units and teams in the Enterprises Department and other areas of the ILO.<sup>13</sup> Such joint efforts have the potential to increase substantially the scope and impact of technical assistance interventions.

Broad themes	Areas	Specific issues
<b>Procedures and regulations</b>	Business registration and licensing regimes	Streamlining burdensome and inefficient business registration and licensing processes
	Fiscal procedures	High costs and complexity of tax compliance, particularly for small firms
	Access to external finance	Information and procedural constraints to accessing credit, and the adoption of policies aimed at expanding access to financial resources
	Customs procedures	Burdensome export and import procedures
	Red tape arising from administrative processes	Other administrative inefficiencies that hamper business activity
	Sectoral regulation	Sectoral regulation and simplification/removal of regulations that inhibit investment by firms and the creation of decent jobs
	Local regulations	Assessment of local business regulations
<b>Access to markets and resources</b>	Access to markets, inputs and networks	Market access, production and distribution networks, regulatory requirements, regulations governing products and services, special access to productive resources and markets for women entrepreneurs;
		Productive linkages with larger and multinational firms; incentives to support the positive contributions that multinational enterprises can make to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) while minimizing the difficulties that their operations may create.
<b>Legal frameworks</b>	Settlement of commercial disputes	Inefficient and costly resolution of contractual disputes to ensure contract enforcement
	Property rights	Reforming property rights to ensure greater access to resources and markets

13 The potential fields of cooperation include business development services; entrepreneurship and enterprise development; enterprise formalization; multinational enterprises' contribution to the creation of decent jobs in small and medium-sized enterprises; local economic development; productivity and working conditions; social finance; social and solidarity economy; inclusive markets and value chains; women's and youth entrepreneurship; and employment injury insurance through social insurance mechanisms. Other departments and technical areas of the ILO are also involved in important work that is complementary to the technical assistance provided under the EESE programme – in particular, covering such areas as labour standards, employment policies, social protection, sectoral policies, labour administration, social dialogue and labour law.

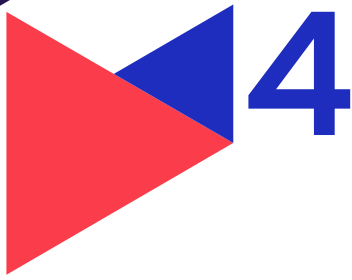
<b>Special tax regimes</b>	Simplified and preferential tax regimes for small firms	Introduction of preferential tax regimes for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to encourage enterprise formalization and growth
<b>Business restructuring</b>	Restructuring regimes	Inefficient insolvency and bankruptcy regimes preventing the restructuring of viable firms
<b>Productivity of small firms</b>	Production premises, services and technology	Access to production premises, basic production services, technology, economies of scale, new environmental transformation opportunities, decent work conditions
	Productivity of small firms	Impact of regulatory burden, policy failure and other external factors on the productivity of small firms
	Digital operation	Legal frameworks for the digital operation of small firms
<b>Sustainable transformation of SMEs</b>	Productive and environmentally sustainable transformation of small firms	Policies, regulatory measures, incentives to encourage productive and environmentally sustainable transformation of small firms' operations
<b>Access to information, analysis of impact of policies</b>	Market information	Access to market information
	Policy impact on firm performance	Impact of policies on decisions to invest, distortions in the allocation of resources and prices, specific barriers faced by women entrepreneurs
	Competition	Competition factors affecting firm formation and growth and the creation of decent jobs
<b>Human capital development</b>	Social security	Small firms' access to social security services
	Skills development	Institutions, mechanisms and policies to ensure continuous upgrading of skills and decent work conditions
	Decent work conditions	Assessment of and support for the adoption of decent work conditions in small enterprises
<b>Incentives</b>	Investment incentives	Review, simplification and targeting of business incentives
<b>Labour law provisions for MSMEs</b>	Labour rights for MSME workers	Improving MSMEs' understanding of the regulation of labour rights
<b>Resilience in situations of crisis and fragility</b>	Supporting MSMEs' resilience in countries facing situations of crisis and fragility	Emergency support, basic business environment conditions in situations of crisis and fragility
<b>Institutional factors</b>	Institutional barriers	Inefficient institutional setting of public entities dealing with SMEs;
		Constraints affecting the operational capacity of small firms; Institutional barriers faced by women entrepreneurs;
	Institutional capacity to assess decent work-related deficits and to support the improvement of business operations with a view to generating decent jobs.	
	Social dialogue and consultation	Consultative mechanisms
	Governance	Identification of factors influencing rent-seeking and corruption; enhancing the transparency of public administrative requirements to which enterprises are subject

## New priorities

The COVID-19 crisis caused major economic disruption and led to new constraints on business growth. These constraints have compounded the existing challenges faced by enterprises as

a result of ongoing economic and technological transformations. The following table outlines some of the issues that can be addressed in this regard as part of technical assistance under the EESE programme:

Issues	Characteristics
<b>Information and communications technology</b>	Greater need for investment in and use of information and communications technologies; new regulatory requirements for business operations involving new technologies and procedures; need for the design of appropriate incentives
<b>Firm indebtedness</b>	High levels of debt resulting from shocks and crisis conditions, the suspension or reduction of market activity and partial recovery conditions
<b>Import and export restrictions</b>	Dealing with trade-limiting measures introduced as part of crisis-related restrictions
<b>Regulatory uncertainty</b>	Uncertainty about the continuation or modification of regulations that were introduced as emergency or adaptation measures in crisis and recovery conditions
<b>Electronic government procedures</b>	Compliance with new e-government procedures and regulations
<b>Adjusting to market conditions of cloud-based business activities</b>	Adjusting to cloud-based business operations; process automation; change management practices; adopting permanent changes to enterprise strategy
<b>New business models</b>	Organization of new business models and operational structures; compliance with administrative requirements
<b>Access to market data</b>	Access to and management of large volumes of data that impact the viability of enterprise operations
<b>New requirements for payment methods</b>	Regulation of new and fast-changing conditions of digital payment methods
<b>Production networks and associated standards</b>	Managing complex supply requirements and standards in networks of production
<b>New environmental regulations</b>	Compliance with new and changing environmental regulations
<b>External shocks</b>	Adaptation and restructuring in response to external shocks; supporting jobs and social security coverage, insurance and preparedness
<b>Adaptation to technological change and skills requirements</b>	Incentives to promote enterprises' adaptation to new technologies; investment in new technologies; skills upgrading; access to new business services
<b>New and local supply networks, changes to the operation of special economic zones, and domestic content requirements</b>	Regulation, policies and incentives for new activities promoted as part of local supply networks; changes to the operation of special economic zones; domestic content requirements; decent working conditions
<b>Adaptation to macroeconomic change</b>	Assessment of new macroeconomic conditions and impact of changing policy frameworks



## Delivery of technical assistance in line with national priorities

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Technical assistance under the EESE programme can be used to support the preparation of the ILO's Decent Work Country Programmes and implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>14</sup>

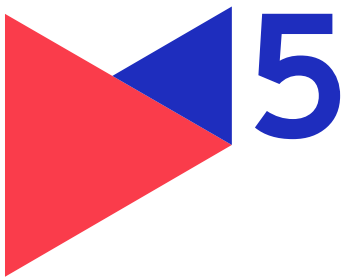
Decent Work Country Programmes are the main vehicle for the delivery of ILO support to Member States. The priorities and outcomes of country programmes reflect the strategic results framework of the ILO, adapted to national situations and priorities. Technical assistance activities under the EESE programme can be used to identify national

priorities and/or support their implementation. Intensive consultations with local stakeholders are the starting point for the identification of priorities, which is followed by in-depth research to assist local stakeholders in selecting the priorities that they wish to concentrate on. An advantage of technical assistance is that it can be deployed rapidly, since the EESE programme combines, in a flexible manner, resources from the ILO's regular budget, extrabudgetary technical cooperation and donor support.

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<sup>14</sup> See also ILO, [Resolution and conclusions concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals](#), International Labour Conference, 107th Session, 2018. For example, technical assistance interventions can be organized to address poverty reduction (SDG 1), the empowerment of women entrepreneurs (SDG 5), inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG 8), employment and decent work (SDG 8), and the sustainability of small business practices.





## Key aspects in the design of technical assistance activities

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### Stakeholders' ownership of EESE interventions

A fundamental premise for the provision of technical assistance under the EESE programme is the involvement of national stakeholders at all stages of an intervention. This includes stakeholders' participation in the identification of the problem to be addressed, in defining the scope of the intervention, selecting the method for the delivery of assistance, discussing what kind of expertise is required and the terms of reference, monitoring the intervention and compiling relevant data and indicators, implementing the various activities and, finally, evaluating the intervention as a whole.

### Local institutional capabilities

Limited local institutional capacity is both an initial challenge and a justification for technical assistance interventions on issues covered by the EESE programme. A thorough assessment of institutional capacity is key to the delivery of technical assistance. The limitations of local institutions often increase the need for preparatory and complementary work. As a result, additional coordination mechanisms and actions are often required to address capacity-building needs, which calls for flexibility in the early stages of an intervention. Inadequate assessment of institutional capacity not only impairs the direct implementation of technical assistance but, more importantly, it can also undermine ownership by

domestic stakeholders, who may have little understanding of and involvement in the activities that are organized.

### Expert advice

It is essential to select appropriate experts to participate in technical assistance interventions. The selection process may take considerable time and should include matching the problem to the available expertise. Experts should possess not only the requisite technical knowhow but also teaching skills (to reinforce capacity-building among constituents), together with communication skills, cultural knowledge and language skills. An important initial task is for external experts to determine the adjustments needed to take into account the circumstances of stakeholders in the target country. Beyond technical matters, the success of a technical assistance intervention depends to a significant extent on the experts having a good understanding of the circumstances of local stakeholders, and in particular of their capabilities and goals.

### The logic of EESE interventions

Technical assistance interventions need to be structured using a results-based management framework if they are to achieve concrete results. A blueprint for this purpose is provided

by the EESE programme's theory of change (see the annex). Such a framework should set out clear, realistic and measurable objectives based on expected outcomes and required inputs. It is also important to clearly identify each stakeholder's responsibility for achieving those outcomes. Building flexibility to support the delivery of results ensures that technical assistance interventions are realistic.

### Connecting EESE interventions with broader policy interventions

Technical assistance can be effective in increasing stakeholders' understanding of and capacity to deal with issues falling under the scope of the EESE programme. However, it should be noted that this may not translate into an improved enabling environment if other factors are leading to market failures and unfavourable economic conditions. EESE interventions must take into account any such factors and complement appropriate national policy responses or promote their adoption where they are absent. The effectiveness of EESE interventions depends on due attention being paid to all important economic and policy aspects that contribute to an enabling environment.

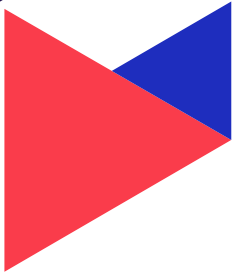
### Coordination with other relevant efforts

Collaboration with ILO technical units, the ILO Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities and other development partners is an important component in the delivery of technical assistance. Isolated or fragmented interventions that are not sufficiently well integrated with broader development goals and that fail to coordinate with existing assistance programmes can achieve only limited results. However, it is important to recognize that such cooperation is fraught with potential risks, such as increasingly demanding and labour-intensive activities, complex administrative and organizational arrangements, transaction costs, and conflicting and/or different time frames. These risks should be weighed against the efficiency gains and synergies that can be achieved by cooperating with relevant partners.

As already noted, EESE interventions should be coordinated with the activities under the ILO's Decent Work Country Programmes and with national poverty reduction strategies in line with SDG 1. Regular consultation with other ILO units, the United Nations Resident Coordinator Offices, and other development partners is therefore essential to ensure that EESE interventions can make a meaningful contribution to national strategies for decent work and implementation of the SDGs.

The following linkages and contributions should be considered on an ongoing basis for those countries where EESE activities are taking place or being planned:

Area or task	Linkages and contributions
<b>Providing inputs for description of the national context to guide ILO and United Nations activities</b>	Inputs for diagnostic and situation analysis – EESE assessments can be used to (a) summarize the main challenges to be addressed in the case of countries that have not yet undertaken such assessments; (b) present lessons learned from countries that have conducted recent EESE assessments; (c) provide updates on evolving issues that are relevant to an enabling environment.
<b>Identifying EESE interventions that can support country programme outcomes</b>	In close coordination with ILO field staff, specific proposals can be developed on EESE priorities for inclusion in the country programme outcomes of those Member States that are interested in addressing issues falling under the scope of the EESE programme. In that respect, regular communication with ILO country offices will ensure the prompt identification of key barriers to business development and of needs for reforms and institutional change.
<b>Supporting implementation, monitoring and evaluation in countries with EESE activities</b>	Development partners can provide technical assistance to ILO country offices and local stakeholders with the implementation of EESE activities, including proposals for targeted monitoring indicators and methods for data collection and analysis.
<b>Funding of EESE activities</b>	Coordination with units at ILO headquarters and field offices to identify potential sources of funding and ensure targeted mobilization of resources
<b>Advocacy and communication</b>	Contribute to Decent Work Country Programmes by incorporating EESE-related advocacy efforts
<b>Coordinating with the United Nations system and other development partners on mutually supportive efforts to make progress in several SDG areas</b>	<p>Poverty reduction (SDG 1)</p> <p>Gender equality (SDG 5), with a focus on tackling the barriers faced by women entrepreneurs</p> <p>Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) through an improved enabling environment</p> <p>Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), by proposing actions to increase innovation in SMEs</p> <p>Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), by drawing up strategies for the promotion of sustainable enterprises in growing urban markets</p>



## Conclusions

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This publication has identified the main characteristics of ILO technical assistance aimed at supporting an enabling business environment. Such technical assistance is expected to continue playing an important role in the ILO's efforts to support the development of sustainable enterprises worldwide. The EESE programme organizes technical support using a flexible approach and covering a broad range of issues. Technical assistance activities draw on both internal (ILO) and external technical expertise to respond to specific national conditions. The EESE programme has already led to numerous technical assistance activities that have addressed diverse issues related to the business environment in different types of countries. These activities have gradually evolved from general diagnostic studies providing purely analytical findings to more in-depth assessments.<sup>15</sup> EESE interventions are now able to

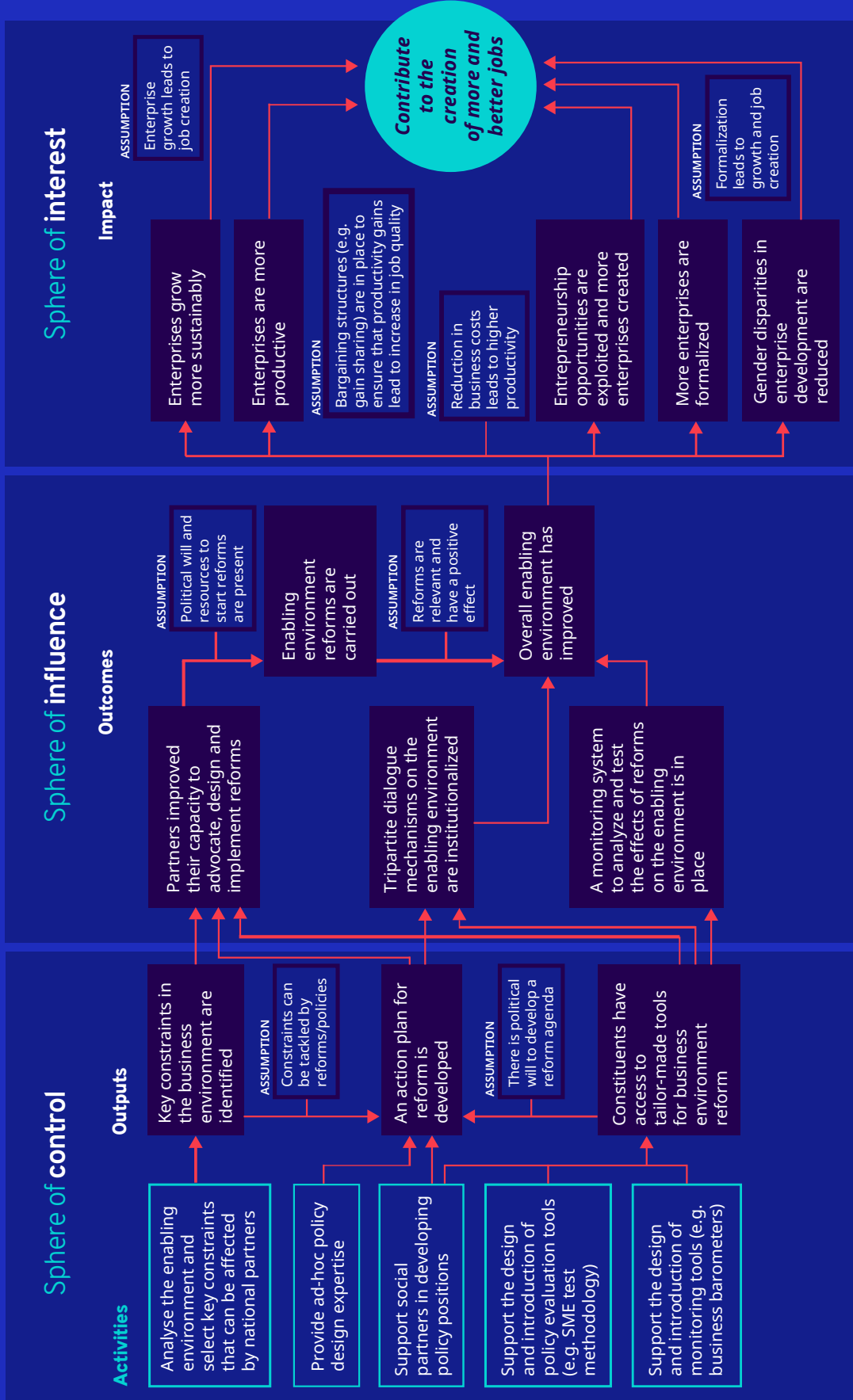
contribute to policy design and implementation; serve as innovative exercises for the gathering of high-quality data; create numerous opportunities for social dialogue; and provide new tools to address urgent issues, including shocks and conditions of crisis and fragility. Although the EESE programme is well positioned to expand and intensify the technical assistance that it offers to ILO constituents, it is important to do so following a robust approach based on: (a) careful consideration of any factors inhibiting the participation and full involvement of domestic stakeholders in the design and implementation of activities; (b) identification of the rationale for interventions; (c) the selection of appropriate experts to support capacity-building; (d) an assessment of institutional capabilities for the implementation of technical assistance; (e) the monitoring of activities; and (f) cooperation with development partners.

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<sup>15</sup> See, for example, the information on EESE technical assistance activities in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ghana, Honduras and Montenegro, available from: <https://www.ilo.org/empent/units/boosting-employment-through-small-enterprise-development/eeese/lang--en/index.htm>.

Annex: Theory of change underlying the EESE programme

► EESE Global Theory of Change





**EESE**

Enabling Environment for  
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