

Media Update-2

7 March 2018

ILO

Press Release

ILO launches online access to legal research and training for developing countries

GENEVA (ILO News) – The ILO and a group of academic partners have launched a programme to provide free or inexpensive access to legal information and training to promote research in low- and middle income countries and help strengthen the rule of law.

The programme, known as [GOALI](#) (Global Online Access to Legal Information) will give [users in more than 115 developing countries](#) access to a wide range of essential legal information for their work and studies that they would not normally be able to obtain.

Eligible institutions include governments, universities, law schools, research and not-for-profit institutions, as well as the secretariats of national workers' and employers' organizations.

Some of the key topics covered in the programme are international law, human rights, humanitarian law and labour law – areas that can help strengthen legal frameworks and institutions in many developing countries. The programme will also contribute to [UN Sustainable Development Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions](#) .

Find out how GOALI will help these two lawyers from El Salvador and Zimbabwe.* “The aim of GOALI is to improve the quality of legal research, education and training in low- and middle-income countries, and in turn strengthen legal frameworks and institutions and further the rule of law,” said ILO's Deputy Director-General Deborah Greenfield.

“This initiative will make this vital information available to those who, until now, have not had access. In turn, it will help promote social justice and



inclusive societies, which is at the heart of the ILO's mandate." she added.

GOALI has been developed with the participation of publishers, UN organizations and academics, as part of [Research4Life](#)¹, a partnership to boost evidence-based research, healthcare, policymaking and global justice.

The programme was launched at ILO headquarters in Geneva, together with representatives from the Brill Nijhoff academic publishing company, Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale Law School, the Cornell Law School Library and the International Training Centre of the ILO. Liesbeth Kanis, Managing Director Brill Asia said that GOALI "will clearly fill a gap in the area of access to legal information in developing countries. Brill Nijhoff has contributed nearly 160 journals and ebooks, mainly in the area of law, including the International Development Policy book series and the not-for profit Journal of Interrupted Studies."

The Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale Law School, for its part, is "adding hundreds of legal journals and ebooks daily, along with associated metadata to ensure the content is easily discoverable by GOALI users," explained its Law Librarian Teresa Miguel-Stearns. "As of today, we have over 10,000 legal titles from over 60 publishers. Many of these publishers have been contributing content to Research4Life's other programmes for years," she said.

A third partner, Cornell Law Library, "will contribute its expertise in the areas of research, teaching and learning by providing instructional support to participants in the program both virtually and in person," said Femi Cadmus, Edward Cornell Law Librarian and Associate Dean and Professor of Practice at Cornell Law School.

Institutions registered with other Research4Life programmes will automatically receive access to GOALI. Others are encouraged to [register on this website](#).

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¹ *Research4Life is a public-private partnership of the WHO, FAO, UNEP, WIPO, ILO, Cornell and Yale Universities, the International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers and more than 185 international publishers. The goal of Research4Life is to reduce the knowledge gap between high-income countries and low- and middle-income countries by*

providing affordable access to scholarly, professional and research information. The other Research4Life programmes include agriculture, health, environment, science and innovation.

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Ana Mercedes Reyes Landaverde, is a lawyer who works as Coordinator of the Gender Unit at the El Salvador Supreme Court. “In my work position we focus specifically on the human rights of women and we work on the institutionalization of the gender approach in the judicial branch of government.”

“I am currently preparing my thesis for a Masters in Human Rights and Education for Peace at the University of El Salvador.”
“Searching online for information tends to be difficult. Often when you find the ideal text for the research, you have to buy it and often there is information that is not reliable.”

She says here research looks at the unfair dismissals of women in the private sector and the lack support from the competent authorities in accessing justice and failure to enforce national and international norms on the labour rights of women. “The (GOALI) site will be very helpful for my information process.”

“Looking at the GOALI site, I noticed there is a lot of information on gender that will not only help me for my thesis, but also for the articles, studies and analyses we do at the office. I believe it will be a very effective site not only for students but also for lawyers working on labour rights and gender issues. I’ve told colleagues and the law library about the site so they should have it available in their database.



Brian Penduka is a Zimbabwean lawyer and a legal consultant with the Geneva based NGO International Commission of Jurists. As part of his work to strengthen the rule of law in Zimbabwe, he provides support to judges, helping them obtain relevant legal literature. He also seeks to promote the writing of more legal and academic articles.

“They are trying to grow jurisprudence in the country, trying to ensure that practitioners have access to as much information as they can possibly get.”

GOALI would be useful in this regard. Having access to information sources would help students and lawyers produce better research, and “improve pleadings and therefore improve jurisprudence,” says Penduka. “The quality of the pleadings is still very low and the jurisprudence reflects the lack of access to information. Access is important for greater protections of human rights and respect of the rule of law.”

Tags: labour law, research, information resources
