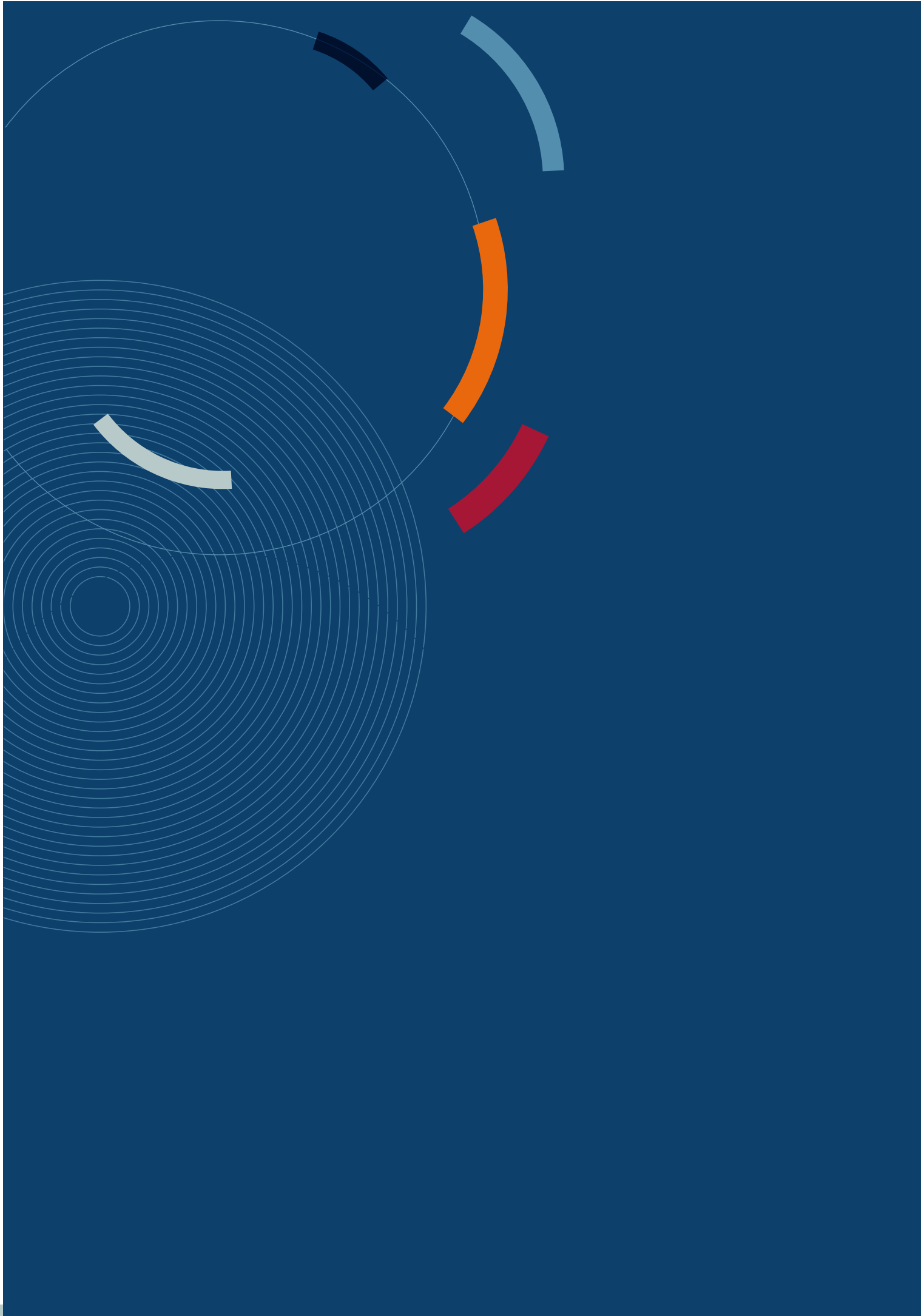




# A TRADE UNION TAKE ON THE SDGs





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# INTRODUCTION

This edition of A Trade Union Take on the SDGs is the second compiled under the challenging conditions resulting from the COVID-19 crisis and governments' efforts to contain it.

The pandemic has exposed the flaws of the current global economic model. It has uncovered the disastrous social, sanitary, and economic state of the world after decades of market fundamentalism. In the face of deepening social and economic deprivation, trade unions call for a New Social Contract, with SDG 8 at its core, that responds to workers' demands for decent and climate-friendly jobs, universal access to social protection, protection of workers' rights, equality, and inclusion for a successful recovery and resilience. This publication contributes to this call by giving an independent workers' perspective on how governments are delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

***“The pandemic has destroyed over 250 million jobs worldwide and left 1.6 billion informal workers destitute. We need to create 575 million jobs to reach full employment, and we also need to formalise at least one billion informal jobs. Investing in a New Social Contract, with SDG 8 at its core, will help achieve that!”*** Sharan Burrow, Secretary General of the ITUC.

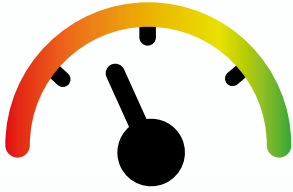
The Trade Union Take on the SDGs consists of a compilation of findings and analysis of the SDG country reports produced by trade union organisations in 13 countries in 2021. These reports focus on whether governments are transparent and make use of consultations and social dialogue to involve trade unions in the drafting and implementation of SDG national plans. Furthermore, it aims to map countries' efforts to reach key SDG targets in the context of existing structural, social, and economic challenges. This work is an essential contribution of the labour movement to the Decade of Action (2020-2030) to deliver the SDGs.

As the pandemic goes on, its impact in terms of loss of lives, collapse of healthcare systems, rise of inequalities, and economic downturn continues to grow. Lockdown measures have had deep socio-economic consequences, impacting the incomes and livelihoods of millions of people worldwide as workplaces went through layoffs, temporary shutdowns or simply disappeared. In parallel, the lack of universal social protection systems in a majority of countries has laid bare the extreme vulnerability most workers in the world face as they are left to face these consequences on their own. The pandemic has exposed an urgent need to guarantee income to cover basic needs and to provide universal access to social protection and healthcare to all. It has shown that occupational health and safety is fundamental to contain the spread of COVID-19 and that public services of quality are essential for resilience. However, this crisis also shows that the poorest countries in the world cannot provide for these necessary measures on their own. No recovery or resilience will be achieved if these countries are left behind. Thus, it is extremely important to set up a Global Fund for Social Protection that will enable the poorest countries to provide universal social protection to their populations.

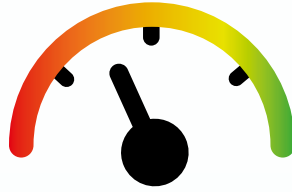
Finally, the pandemic also shows the urgent need to establish strong social dialogue structures within countries to efficiently steer national development efforts and contribute to global efforts to strengthen and improve multilateralism.

# ASSESSING PROGRESS

## TRANSPARENCY



## CONSULTATION



## SOCIAL DIALOGUE



### TRANSPARENCY

Trade unions assessed the transparency of the SDG implementation process within their countries based on two indicators: (1) their ability to access information on the process and its outcomes, its decision-making procedures, consultation meetings, policy documents, persons or institutions in charge and (2) their awareness of the reasoning behind the decision-making: clear explanations of how and why decisions are made.

The input provided by trade unions exposes clear limitations on transparency, with trade unions in 11 out of the 13 countries reporting some limitation on access to information on the SDG implementation process, with no access to any information at all in two cases – Thailand and Spain. The limitation on access to information took various forms, often meaning that it was provided in an ad hoc, fragmented manner, during meetings convened at short notice. In other cases, trade unions reported that the fragmentation of the responsibilities for SDG implementation within government structures has meant that it was hard to come by coherent information, or the information provided was not up to date.

### CONSULTATION

Multi-stakeholder consultations are vital to ensuring a truly participative implementation process, as foreseen in Agenda 2030. If the interests and perspectives of those impacted are not integrated into the policy-making process, the resulting policies and their implementation will simply not work for wider society, nor will they ensure that no one is left behind. Trade unions and civil society organisations have a key role to play in shaping policies that meet these demands.

Trade unions assessed consultation modalities available in their countries, with a special focus on the functioning of multi-stakeholder consultation platforms. Adequate consultation processes were in place in only four of the countries surveyed. In some countries, consultations lack structure and are organised on an ad hoc basis rather than systematically. In others, trade unions flagged

disingenuous consultation processes: while branded as consultations, meetings were de facto one-way information sessions, where stakeholders' input and recommendations were not taken on board. Most worryingly, four out of the 13 countries (Colombia, Namibia, Thailand and Pakistan) analysed have either no consultation process in place or effectively exclude trade unions from participating in it.

### SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Social dialogue is a fundamental means of implementing the 2030 Agenda, and the use of tripartite or bipartite social dialogues to establish common positions between employers and workers has been shown to have a positive effect on achieving SDGs targets<sup>1</sup>. Social dialogue builds consensus among social partners, facilitates policy implementation and results in more inclusive policies. Shaping the world of work to meet the demands of the 2030 Agenda is fundamental to achieving each of the 17 SDGs, making it a crosscutting priority.

However, trade union analysis highlights the insufficient integration of social dialogue into the planning and implementation process of the SDGs. In four of the 13 countries analysed, social partners were not involved at all in defining and implementing their government's national SDG plan. Cases in which representatives of workers and employers are consulted together are still not common enough: this was the case in only five of the 13 countries surveyed. Even in these instances, trade unions report that discussions often tend to be fragmented, lack long-term planning and have a limited scope, focusing only on the implementation of SDG 8 rather than the interlinkages between decent work and the 2030 Agenda as a whole. In other countries, social partners are reporting not being seen as partners in SDG implementation by the government, with no discussion on the 2030 Agenda taking place in tripartite fora.

No trade union reported the existence of a tripartite entity to implement and monitor the SDGs, which would involve both social partners and decision makers.

<sup>1</sup> See [Social dialogue as a driver and governance instrument for sustainable development; The contribution of social dialogue to the 2030 Agenda: Formalising the informal economy; The contribution of social dialogue to the 2030 Agenda - Promoting a Just Transition towards sustainable economies and societies for all.](#)

# ASSESSING PROGRESS

## WHERE ARE WE AT WITH...

### SHARED ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Shared economic well-being means going beyond the purely quantitative aspects of GDP growth to analyse if and how economic progress is distributed and looking at the levels of inequality and poverty in each country. The findings of the country reports show that inequalities in wealth distribution are growing: [Argentina](#), [Colombia](#) and [Mexico](#) are flagrant examples of this. Although these countries are considered upper-middle and high income, they have some of the highest levels of inequality, with the top 10 per cent of income earners holding between 32 to 40 per cent of wealth, and the lowest 20 per cent holding between four and five per cent; the size of their informal economies also stands near to or above 50 per cent. Similar levels of inequality are also present in certain African countries like [Chad](#) which, with an extremely high incidence of poverty and informality, had a growth rate of over three per cent in 2020. Concerningly, countries as diverse as [Germany](#), [Indonesia](#), [Sweden](#) and [Zimbabwe](#) – from different regions and with different income levels per capita – all reported increasing levels of inequalities.

### QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT

The country report findings on quality of employment show particular challenges to the employment of youth and women. Countries as diverse as [Chad](#), [Colombia](#), [Indonesia](#), [Mexico](#), [Thailand](#) and [Zimbabwe](#) all reported levels of unemployment which were much higher among those between the ages of 15-24, and especially among women. Three countries stand out for their low share of quality jobs with decent wages: in [Colombia](#), 56 per cent of workers earn less than the legal minimum wage; in Indonesia, the labour share of GDP had dropped from 39 in 2015 and 2016 to 38 per cent in 2017; and in [Pakistan](#), 38 per cent of workers (and 75 per cent of female workers) earn less than two thirds of median hourly wages. High-income countries are also lagging behind: in [Spain](#), the number of working poor increased by 16 per cent between 2010 and 2019. It is clear that it is not enough to promote job creation without ensuring the quality of employment through specific policies, including ones targeting youth and women.

### LABOUR VULNERABILITY

Labour vulnerability includes exposure of workers to risks, under-protection and exclusion. Trade unions report particularly high proportions of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) in [Zimbabwe](#) (45 per cent), [Chad](#) (37 per cent), [Namibia](#) (32 per cent) and [Pakistan](#) (31 per cent). In all cases, young women were significantly more likely to be NEET. In addition, the percentage of the population covered by at least one social protection instrument is only 9 per cent in [Pakistan](#) and an even more dire 2 per cent in [Zimbabwe](#). Precariousness is a widespread and growing problem, concerning 93 per cent of jobs in [Chad](#), 31 per cent in [Namibia](#), 29 per cent in [Argentina](#), 27 per cent in [Mexico](#) and 19 per cent [Zimbabwe](#). In some countries, like [Thailand](#), government agencies and state enterprises are themselves creating precarious working conditions. In [Spain](#) and [Germany](#), unionisation rates have been declining in past years. This underlines the need to scale-up efforts on social protection and collective bargaining coverage around the world.

### LABOUR RIGHTS

Violations of labour rights remain rife, having occurred in six of the 13 countries analysed. These range from restrictions or a lack of guarantee of labour laws, as in [Indonesia](#) and [Thailand](#), to restrictions on the operations of trade unions and to the persecution, criminalisation and imprisonment and/or violence against trade unionists, as in [Chad](#), [Colombia](#), [Pakistan](#) and [Zimbabwe](#). Unsurprisingly, the 2020 ITUC Global Rights Index lists these countries as ones where there are either systematic violations of rights or no guarantee of rights at all. By suppressing workers' rights, countries are seriously compromising the achievement of SDG 8 and the whole of the 2030 Agenda.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The world's sustainability and social cohesion are at risk as the COVID-19 pandemic rages on. As expressed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in support of a New Social Contract: "As we strive to recover from the pandemic and build a better world, we need to forge a new social contract based on inclusivity and sustainability."

The challenge of limiting the damages while building forward better towards the implementation of the SDGs is greater than ever. There is an urgent need of changing the economic production and labour relations model and adopting social-minded policies to ensure a strong recovery for all.

Trade unions call on governments to ensure decent working conditions through adequate wages, respect of the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, and protections for vulnerable workers. Decent living standards for all must be guaranteed through increased public spending and investment, strong social protection, universal healthcare coverage and access to housing and education. Tax systems needs to be reformed so as to ensure a fair taxation that lifts the burden off those most vulnerable and places it on the wealthiest while supporting the ecological transition process. The post-crisis recovery must focus on sustainable economic growth that prioritises decent job creation, environmental protection and a Just Transition for workers.

Furthermore, trade unions stress the need for transparency, with parliamentary and civil society oversight of the 2030 Agenda implementation as a key element to its success. Social partners must be involved in the implementation of the SDGs and monitoring of the progress of meeting their targets. Authorities at all levels, including local authorities and municipalities, must be included in this process. Finally, the allocation of adequate financial resources is key to realising the 2030 Agenda; ODA must be used to support sustainable development efforts.





# COUNTRY PROFILES

## 2021






# ARGENTINA

**A TRADE UNION  
FOCUS ON THE SDGs**

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS  
DEMAND A NEW  
SOCIAL CONTRACT  
FOR RECOVERY AND  
RESILIENCE**

## COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

The government of Argentina responded to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with policies to prevent the growth of poverty, loss of jobs and the closure of SMEs. A fiscal package of 1.5 billion US dollars (equivalent to 3 per cent the country's GDP) was introduced, and all negotiation channels with social partners were opened to ensure that the social and labour needs resulting from the crisis were met.

Argentina was one of the few countries which recognised COVID-19 as an occupational disease and took measures to address it as such: supporting companies and SMEs in maintaining employment by providing a minimum living wage for each employee by the state and banning dismissals and suspensions from work without just cause or due to the lack of or reduction in work volume or force majeure. Furthermore, the government introduced social measures such as the emergency family income: an exceptional monetary benefit for all residents between 18-65 who are unemployed, who work in the informal economy, or who are freelance or domestic workers. Measures designed to minimise the cost of living were also adopted, notably the fixing of maximum prices for a set of essential goods, such as food, medicines and personal hygiene products, which was in place for eight months from March 2020.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

In November 2020, the government adopted the UN Strategic Development Cooperation Framework with Argentina for 2021-2025 (MECNUD), which recognises the importance of the SDGs for public policy and their close relationship with the country's human rights priorities. The MECNUD outlines four dimensions for action: economic, social, environmental and governance. These dimensions are intersected by six thematic priorities: the human rights approach, the gender approach, leaving no one behind, territory, environmental sustainability, and the impact of COVID-19. In its second VNR, Argentina reported picking up over 200 indicators and the achievement of 80 targets, with clear links to governmental objectives and the national budget.

The National Council for the Coordination of Social Policy (CNCPS) oversees the mainstreaming and follow-up on Agenda 2030. The CNCPS is in charge of adapting the SDG implementation process to the national level and technically accompanying

the provincial and municipal governments that express their interest in participating in it; it further develops actions with trade unions and with civil society.

The MECNUD takes a participatory approach based on a dialogue with trade unions, civil society, the private sector, and other strategic actors. The government has consulted trade unions on several dimensions of the national SDG plan, notably the programme against hunger, the 2020 VNR, and preparedness and response to COVID-19. Furthermore, the government has created the Economic and Social Council, a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform, with a strong participation from trade unions, for the elaboration of National Development Programmes. While they welcome the greater transparency than under previous governments, trade unions call for better reporting mechanisms on the implementation of the SDGs in the provinces and for the construction of a centralised repository gathering relevant information of this kind.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners submit joint contributions to the government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty)**, already worrying before the COVID-19 pandemic due to the pre-existing economic crisis in the country, have continued to worsen, with poverty affecting 40.9 per cent of the population in the first half of 2020, a 10-point increase since 2016. While 66.1 per cent of the population was covered by at least one type of social protection in 2019, only 9.8 per cent of the unemployed were receiving support, suggesting that **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** was far off being reached. On **target 1.a (implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions)**, 49.8 per cent of the 2020 national budget was earmarked for social security spending, 4.95 per cent for health and 4.87 per cent for education and culture.

Progress on **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)** is still needed, as women spend significantly more of their time performing unpaid work (58 per cent for women without their own source of income and 42 per cent for women with their own source of income) than men (respectively 24.5 per cent and 28.6 per cent). With regard to **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation in political, economic and public life)**, more women (35.2 per cent) than men (30.7 per cent) had achieved a higher education level by 2020. The government has announced that 1.3 trillion pesos within the 2021 national budget will be earmarked for combatting violence against women and LGBTBI+ people and reducing inequality. An important landmark in the fight for gender equality was made with the approval of Law 27610 on the Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy in December 2020.

**Target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** is far off being met, as in 2019, 51.4 per cent of jobs were in the informal economy, the share of low-paid work stood at 25.8 per cent (25.6 per cent for men and 26 per cent for women) and 29.4 per cent of jobs were considered precarious. **Target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)** is far off being reached, as unemployment levels stood at 9.8 per cent in 2019, with women (10.7 per cent) affected more than men (9.2 per cent) and the situation being worst for youth 15-24, 25.9 per cent of whom were unemployed. Underemployment stood at 9.6 per cent in the third quarter of 2020 and was especially high for people under 24 (12.5 per cent). NEET ("not in employment,

education or training") indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at a high 19 per cent in 2019. On **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, 47.7 per cent of workers were covered by collective bargaining agreements in 2019, and trade union density stood at 27.7 per cent in 2021. The Argentinian government is addressing **target 8.b (develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment)** by introducing the "Youth with More and Better Work" Program aimed at unemployed people between 18-24 years of age with incomplete primary or secondary studies. The programme aims to accompany them in obtaining a job placement and includes a mandatory labour rights course.

Argentina must intensify its efforts towards meeting **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as in 2019, the share of the top 10 per cent income earners in overall GDP stood at 32.1 per cent, as compared to the meagre 4.4 per cent share of the bottom 20 per cent. The labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers, stood at 58.5 per cent in 2017.

The government is in the process of creating a national mitigation strategy on climate change and has set up a National Climate Change Cabinet (GNCC), the first steps to reaching **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**. In October 2020, the Ministry for Productive Development issued a strategy paper stating its commitment to investing in sustainable development and promoting the Green New Deal as part of the post-pandemic recovery strategy.

Indicators on **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** appear to be improving, as trade unions report that at the national level, no violations of freedoms or restrictions of civic and democratic spaces were noted in 2020. However, occasional negative developments were observed at the provincial level, such as the setting up of detention centres for people who did not comply with lockdown restrictions and the harassment of defenders of workers' rights by the local police.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions are urging the government to:

- Launch the Decent Work Country Program, the implementation of which has been suspended since 2015; in this context, proactive employment policies should be introduced and the labour market restructured to promote the creation of decent work and universalise social protection in the framework of recovery and resilience from the COVID-19 crisis.
- Upgrade consultation with trade unions to a systematic program of participation in the construction of the work agenda, effective dialogue, joint execution and effective monitoring of Agenda 2030 in Argentina.
- Provide for a greater role for government agencies and social partners in the implementation of Agenda 2030.
- To address the challenges posed by the pandemic, provide citizens with wage and income protection, introduce policies aimed at supporting people with low incomes, ensure universal social protection and free access to healthcare, and place a moratorium on the payment of mortgages, rents and loans.
- Begin the transition to a more sustainable and circular economy, including through a tax reform designed for the improvement of income distribution.



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# CHAD

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased poverty, social inequalities and violations of human rights and trade union rights. In response to the pandemic, the government of Chad introduced a curfew, restrictions on movement and a ban on gatherings, which have had a particular impact on women and youth, preventing them from meeting their basic alimentary, housing, health and educational needs. While many have lost their jobs and sources of income, no social protection measures have been put in place to address this. Furthermore, the funding announced by the government to support the private sector is not provided to MSMEs or companies in the informal economy.

Trade unions have called on the government of Chad to address the challenges posed by the pandemic by introducing a paid sick leave from day one, income and wage protection, unemployment benefits, universal social protection and access to healthcare, including vaccination of the population against COVID-19. In addition, the government should improve economic conditions and stability by providing support to MSMEs and putting in place debt reduction strategies.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government of Chad has aligned its 2017-2021 National Development Plan (NDP) with all 17 SDGs and integrated the objectives of the 2030 Agenda into relevant sectoral policies (health, agriculture, justice, education and social affairs).

The Ministry of the Economy and Planning oversees the implementation of the SDGs by implementing the NDP and managing the official development assistance (ODA) received by the country. The Ministry has put in place a national coordination structure, which includes representatives of relevant ministries and certain civil society organisations. A parliamentary committee monitoring progress on the SDGs has been set up in the Parliament.

Civil society is invited to provide input to the national reporting on the SDGs, and civil society platforms are part of the technical committees coordinated by the lead ministry. However, the representation of trade unions in these discussions

is not guaranteed: only one seat is allocated to a trade union representative within the technical and political committees and none at the level of the national or provincial SDG coordination structure. The input of trade unions has not been taken on board. The national social dialogue structures lack a clear and concrete agenda on the SDGs, despite trade union requests for this. However, the government does discuss with social partners political reforms linked to the implementation of the SDGs on topics which go beyond the remit of SDG 8.

Trade unions affirm that the budgetary allocation towards the implementation of the SDGs is not sufficient and relies primarily on ODA. Funding for sustainable development has further been jeopardised by the COVID-19 pandemic, reorienting government resources to combatting this crisis. While trade unions note some progress in the development of sectoral plans, they overall point to a deterioration in delivering on SDG targets.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners contribute individually to the government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With a human development index (HDI) of 0.398 and ranking 187th out of 189, Chad is one of the least developed countries in the world; in 2018, 42.3 per cent of its population was living below the international poverty line, having increased from 38.1 per cent in 2011, indicating that **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** is not being reached. In 2019, 40.3 per cent of workers over 15 were living under the poverty line, an increase on the 35.5 per cent rate in 2010. On **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)**, only 4.7 per cent of workers were covered by work accident insurance in 2019. The expenses allocated by the government of Chad towards essential services (health, education and social protection) constituted 17.2 per cent of the budget in 2018.

There is a need for significant improvement to achieve progress on **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as women, who perform two-thirds of all work hours and produce half of the country's food output, only earn 10 per cent of the total revenue, own less than 2 per cent of all land and are allocated less than 5 per cent of all loans. With regard to **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life)**, only 14.9 per cent of Chad's parliamentarians are women and the representation of women in government stands at 25.7 per cent. In the period 2015-2019, only 1.7 per cent of women above 25 attended secondary education (as compared to 10.5 per cent of men); 86 per cent of women in Chad, as compared to 69 per cent of men, are illiterate.

There are serious concerns about Chad meeting the targets set by **SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all)**. Performance on **target 8.3 (support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs)** is highly worrying, with 96.9 per cent of all jobs (99 per cent of those performed by women and 95.2 per cent of those performed by men) being in

the informal economy; 93 per cent of all jobs are considered to be precarious. Achieving **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)** is still far off, as the broad unemployment rate stood at 18.5 per cent in 2018, affecting women (26.8 per cent) more than men (10.3 per cent) and urban (19.7 per cent) more than rural inhabitants (13.9 per cent). NEET ("not in employment, education or training") indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 37 per cent of youth aged 15-24 in 2018, with young women being much more affected (46.4 per cent) than men (24.8 per cent). Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** are extremely worrying, showing that 39 per cent of children have engaged in child labour in 2014. Poverty, lack of information, gender inequities and the high demand for cheap labour put women and children at high risk of human trafficking, as cases of abductions of children for forced labour in agriculture and pregnant women for surrogacy have been recorded. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** is far off being met, as there are only 53 trained labour inspectors in the country.

Progress remains to be made for Chad to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as in 2011, the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 32.4 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding a 4.9 per cent share. In addition, the country faces challenges stemming from the significant number of refugees that it hosts, who amount to around 4 per cent of the country's population, escaping regional conflicts in Sudan, Central African Republic and Nigeria; due to the cross-border nature of certain conflicts, Chad also faces a high number of internally displaced people.

While the government of Chad has introduced some policies to meet **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, a national climate change adaptation strategy is still absent.

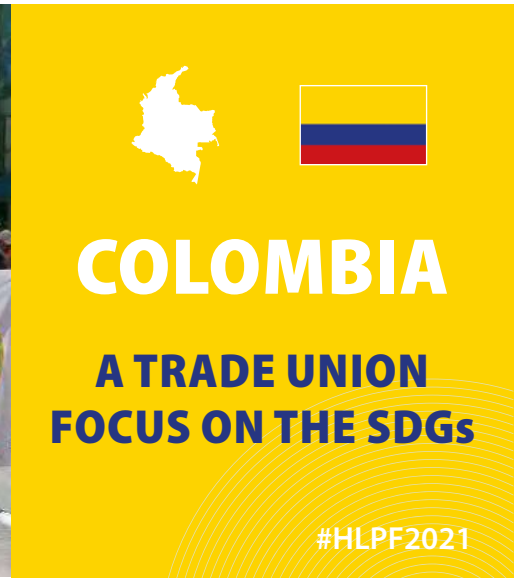
## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions are urging the government to:

- Consolidate social dialogue processes and structures for the implementation of the SDGs and in crisis response strategies.
- Provide specific support to MSMEs and informal economy units.
- Develop a national strategy for the elimination of the country's internal and external debt.
- Strengthen and extend social protection and ensure universal access to health care.
- Integrate funding for the SDGs into the national general budget.
- Provide for open participation in the national coordination structure on the SDGs to trade unions as well as local and rural organisations to promote ownership and local non-governmental participation.
- Decentralise the parliamentary commission on the follow-up and evaluation of the SDGs to bring the Goals closer to the local level throughout the country.
- Develop communication strategies to promote the SDGs.
- Prioritise partnership agreements on development projects which promote sustainable development.



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**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

## COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

The support measures put in place in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic by the government include: paid sick leave, partial wage/income protection, moratoria on credit repayments, and access to loans for companies (mainly benefiting big capital). Access to these measures has, however, been slow for micro, small and medium-sized companies and for the provision of assistance to families. Trade unions call on the government to provide universal social protection and free access to healthcare, and increase support to wage/income protection.

Trade unions urge the government to analyse the impacts of COVID-19 and design a strategy for overcoming poverty and generating emergency income for the most vulnerable populations, including training plans and requalification of workers; adopt adequate health and safety measures for workers in the health sector; introduce targeted measures to improve the situation of women and young people such as the promotion of their employment within the public sector; introduce a universal basic income and provide effective support to micro, small and medium-size enterprises.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Colombian government is implementing the 2030 Agenda through its National Development Plan for 2018-2022, called "Pact for Colombia, Pact for Equity".

The High-Level Interinstitutional Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) oversees the preparation and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, along with the implementation of the SDGs. It is chaired by the director of the National Planning Department and consists of the ministers for foreign affairs, finance, environment and sustainable development, the Administrative Department of the Presidency of the Republic, with the participation of the minister counsellor for the government and the private sector, the director of the National Administrative Department of Statistics and the director of the Administrative Department for Social Prosperity.

Trade unions report that no consultations were organised with them on the 2030 Agenda and that the government does not see them as partners in the

implementation of the SDGs. The SDGs are not discussed within the country's social dialogue structures, which overall fail to meet the expectations of trade unions due to workers' demands not being taken on board by the government.

For the Colombian government, the SDGs do not seem to be a priority. SDGs commitment is limited to a formal exercise through the National Development Plan that very rarely gets translated into actions, policies and projects that can effectively address the impacts of the Covid crisis. , trade unions fear that the government is not serious about acting on its stated intentions since no resources are allocated to the implementation of activities related to the 2030 Agenda, nor any adaptations have been made to the existing plans despite the deepening social and economic rises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



No consultation process at all

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners not involved in defining and realising government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Colombia's GINI index (0.517 in 2018) is among the highest in the region, which suggests that **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** is far from being reached. As a result of the recession, extreme poverty is foreseen to rise by 38.8 per cent, and poverty by 17.6 per cent.

The indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** are worrying: Government spending on social protection was just 5.5 per cent of GDP in 2018. Colombian trade unions point out that the pandemic has merely enabled the government to take a more radical stance, ignoring trade union organisations and establishing decrees that simply are concealed labour and pension reforms (such as Decree 1174 of 2020 on the Social Protection Floor affecting employment and social security rights), thus making employment and the welfare state for workers and the general population even more insecure.

Improvement is needed to achieve progress on **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, 49.6 per cent of employed women in 23 main cities in the country were informally employed in 2019. Performance on **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)** is satisfactory, as 49 per cent of those enrolled in preschool, primary and secondary education were women and girls, as were 51.6 per cent of those enrolled in higher education.

There are substantial obstacles to Colombia meeting the **targets set by SDG 8 (decent work for all)**. **Target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** is far off being met, as in 2019, 65.3 per cent of workers were in the informal sector, most often those working in agriculture, commerce, hotels and restaurants, construction, transport and manufacturing; 25 per cent of workers were in low paid jobs; 56 per cent of workers earned less than the legal minimum wage and 47 per cent were in vulnerable employment. As for **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, the 2019 unemployment rate was 10.5 per cent and was more likely to affect women (13.6 per cent) than men (8.2 per cent); the situation was even worse among young people (aged 15 to 24), whose overall unemployment rate was 17.7 per cent (21.6 per cent for young women and 13.7 per cent for young men). In Colombia, between May and July 2020, the average unemployment rate was 20.4 per cent.

When analysed by gender and by age, the trend is even more worrying. Female unemployment is 25.5 per cent and youth unemployment 39.4 per cent. The young people "not in employment, education or training" (NEETs) indicators mentioned in for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** was stood at 22.63 per cent in 2019 (31.69 per cent for young women compared to 13.6 per cent for young men). Progress is still needed to reach **target 8.7 (end child labour in all its forms)** as 2019 indicators showed that 5.4 per cent of children (aged 5 to 17) were engaged in child labour. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** is far from being met as, in 2019, an average of 318 workplace accidents took place every hour and 492 work-related deaths were registered. Collective bargaining coverage was just 7 per cent in 2016, while the unionisation rate was just 4.7 per cent in 2019.

Significant progress is still needed for Colombia to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 39.7 per cent share of GDP, while the bottom 20 per cent of income earners had a 4 per cent share of GDP, in 2018. In 2019, the minimum salary represented only 63 per cent of the median salary.

With regards to **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, a National Climate Change Policy was established in 2014, followed by a National Energy Plan and a National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change. A national tax on carbon was introduced in 2017. However, no substantive measures have been proposed that seek a reorientation of the production model, or changes in employment policies to progress towards a Just Transition.

Meeting **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** remains far off, as trade unions reported a total of 226 violent incidents that directly affected union members and leaders in 2019: 12 killings, 198 death threats, 11 cases of harassment, four attempted murders and one forced disappearance. The government's rhetoric on SDG 16 contrasts with its lack of commitment to fulfilling the national Peace Agreement.



## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDGs led recovery and resilience trade unions are urging the government to:

- Implement emergency employment policies ensuring minimum wages and social protection - crucial for women and young people - through public works plans at national and local level and public employment plans.
- Adopt a monetary policy to effectively lower the interest rate and subsidise the cost of credit for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Introduce a social protection system designed to meet people's needs; strengthen the public healthcare system, reversing its privatisation; ensure access to food, public services and utilities for the unemployed; introduce a basic income; ensure adequate health and safety measures for healthcare workers.
- Ensure the open and transparent participation of the social partners in the 2030 Agenda planning, implementation and monitoring processes.
- Allocate adequate resources for the implementation of the SDGs through adequate policies and programmes that involve social actors and trade unions.
- Assume responsibility for the effective implementation of the SDGs as a state-led process involving local governments and companies in its implementation.



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# GERMANY

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the German government introduced measures designed to preserve jobs, compensate wage losses and provide easier access to apprenticeships and training programs. There were further measures supporting enterprises and the self-employed, improvements in remuneration and working conditions in specific sectors, an introduction of new regulations on occupational health and safety and a simplification of access to basic social security. A loan moratorium and deferral scheme was introduced for a period of three months in 2020, which trade unions consider to have been too short, calling for an extension.

Trade unions note that as a result of the crisis, there has been a re-orientation of the German federal state's budgetary policy and the European Union's fiscal policy away from the logic of austerity policies. However, in order to ensure a just economic recovery, trade unions stressed the need for a long-term public investment programme to support the social-ecological transformation, a key element of which should be support for higher wage growth through a higher statutory minimum wage and measures strengthening collective bargaining.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

In its 2017 revision of its National Sustainable Development Strategy, the German government committed to the implementation of all 17 SDGs and set out concrete measures for how to achieve them, including through the selection of indicators.

Due to the high political significance of the commitments made and a cross-policy area approach, the responsibility for strategy is under the direct leadership of the Federal Chancellor, through the Committee of State Secretaries for Sustainable Development. In addition, all ministries hold primary responsibility for their contributions to the implementation of the strategy and Agenda 2030 in their respective policy fields. The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Sustainable Development and the German Council for Sustainable Development also play a key role in monitoring the implementation of the strategy; negotiations within the HLPF are led by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Information on the data collected by the Federal Statistics Office to meet indicators set out by the government is freely available, and trade unions have full access to it. Trade unions are also part of a regular forum for dialogue within which the implementation of the sustainability strategy is discussed with the federal government, providing trade unions with a space to negotiate a greater focus on their priorities. Trade unions are further part of the official German delegation to the HLPF.

Nevertheless, trade unions are critical of the fact that key indicators for measuring decent work are missing among those selected by the German government. In addition, a discussion on the SDGs among social partners as part of an official tripartite dialogue is lacking, aside from a joint sustainability initiative of social partners in the chemical industry.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Complete access to information

#### CONSULTATION



Structured multi-stakeholder platform

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners submit joint contributions to the government's SDG national plan





# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With an HDI of 0.947 in 2019, Germany ranked as the sixth most developed country in the world. However, indicators on **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty)** show that in 2019, 8 per cent of workers above the age of 18 were living under the nationally defined income line, with part-time and fixed-term employees most at risk. Women, youth and older people were in general more likely to be at an increased risk of poverty. With regard to **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)**, 99.5 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit in 2016. 100 per cent of children, the unemployed, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns and work-injury victims are estimated to enjoy social protection coverage. Indicators on **target 1.a (ensure significant mobilisation of resources to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions)** show that in 2019, health expenditure as a proportion of GDP was at 7.4 per cent, while the share for social protection stood at 19.7 per cent of GDP, both slightly above the EU average.

On **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, last figures from 2016 show that women do more unpaid domestic and care work (over 4h) than men (2.5h) per day, with the highest unpaid workload among rural women in the 25-44 age group. With regard to **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life)**, in 2019 there were 29.4 per cent of women in managerial positions in Germany. Two laws have been adopted since 2015 to address this relatively low figure, establishing fixed supervisory and executive board quotas for women.

Significant challenges to meeting **target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** remain. In 2013 10.1 per cent of workers were in informal employment, with a tendency for informality particularly high in non-standard forms of employment, such as marginal employment, live-in private care, temporary agency work, work in subcontracting chains, posted employment, self-employment, etc. Migrant workers with no residence or working permit are also highly vulnerable to informality. While the rate of low-paid work stands at 21.8 per cent, there is a significant regional disparity in its distribution, with rates in eastern states, such as Thuringia, over triple (34.1 per cent) those in the West of the country (e.g., Hamburg – 10.7 per cent). Trade unions report that nearly 40 per cent of all new

hires in Germany are temporary. There are almost one million temporary jobs and 2.5 million people of core working age working exclusively in “mini-jobs” – of these, 70 per cent are women. In addition, there are at least one million part-time jobs that are taken because no full-time job could be found. On **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the 2019 unadjusted earnings gap between men and women stood at 19 per cent, significantly higher than the EU average. NEET (“not in employment, education or training”) indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 5.3 per cent of youth aged between 15-24 in 2021; strong regional differences must be noted, with youth unemployment in eastern Germany being significantly higher than in the west. On **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, collective bargaining coverage stood at 44 per cent in 2019 and trade union density stood at 16.5 per cent in 2018, both with a trend towards declining.

Progress remains to be made for Germany to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the share of the bottom 20 per cent income earners in overall GDP in 2016 was 7.6 per cent, compared to the 24.6 per cent share of the top 10 per cent income earners, whose share has been continuously increasing.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, Germany has adopted the 2050 Climate Action Plan in 2016 and the Climate Action Programme 2030 together with a Climate Change Act in 2019. However, trade unions note that a blind spot of this plan is the lack of a just transition strategy. A good example for a Just Transition was the German commission on Growth, Structural Change and Employment in 2019, where the relevant stakeholders, including trade unions, formulated a socially and economically acceptable path to a politically desired phase-out of coal-fired power generation.

Trade unions report that Germany is meeting its obligations under **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, as a Legal Aid Act ensures that people with low incomes receive legal advice and representation.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

German trade unions call on their government to address the consequences of the global pandemic and improve the implementation of the SDGs in the country by:

- Integrating the SDGs within national policies in a more effective manner while insisting on the centrality of SDG 8 for a sustainable and just transition and for the reduction of poverty and inequality.
- Reducing inequalities that were deepened by COVID-19 by raising wages, strengthening decent work and reducing precarious working conditions as well as reducing the number of working poor.
- Strengthening decent work and workers' participation by adjusting the national indicators for SDG 8 so as to actually be able to map the progress in the quality of employment.
- Establishing fairness along global supply chains to tackle unfair competition at the cost of the environment and fundamental workers' rights by ensuring preconditions of human work and social progress through binding guidelines and responsibilities.
- Developing and implementing a suitable framework for the transformation, one which intertwines climate protection, equally distributed prosperity and decent work with workers as directly affected core drivers of sustainable development.



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# INDONESIA

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indonesian government introduced a series of stimulus packages. In total, 43,45 billion euro were allocated to health (health workers' protection, purchase of medical devices, repair of health facilities, and incentives for doctors), social subsidies, fiscal and tax incentives, export-import simplification, support to SMEs, physical and social distancing policy, and compensation.

According to trade unions, these stimulus packages should have come earlier in time. Moreover, they have been rolled out too slowly and not adequately targeted to address the problems associated with the pandemic. Trade unions complain about government's approach, prioritising a business and economic recovery over public health. The Omnibus Law on Job Creation passed in late 2020 introduces labour market flexibility by allowing hourly pay, decreasing severance pay, liberalising flexible work, lowering minimum wages as well as making it easier to hire and fire workers, falling short of ILO standards and failing to sustain existing workplaces or improving the quality of employment. Trade unions are seeking a judicial review of this law, arguing that its contents and the way in which it was passed contravenes the Indonesian Constitution.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government of Indonesia has incorporated the SDGs into the current Long-Term Development Plan for 2005-2025 and the National Medium-Term Development Plan for 2020-2024. The SDGs are also set to be included into the upcoming Long-Term Development Plan for 2025-2045.

The Ministry of National Development Planning oversees the implementation of the SDGs, and a National SDG Coordination Team has been established to formulate a road map for implementing the SDGs over 2017-2030. The team ensures coordination at both horizontal (between ministries/agencies and non-state actors) and vertical levels (between the national and local governmental levels). The Indonesian government is working on all 17 SDGs. In the 2020-2024 period, the focus is on sustainability, economic resilience and growth, narrowing the income gap, improving public services, infrastructure, and competitiveness.

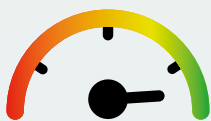
While civil society is usually consulted annually on the SDG implementation process, in 2020, due to the pandemic, this only took the form of online information provision.

While trade unions are usually invited to participate in consultations, their input is scarcely taken into consideration by the government, whose action seems not to go beyond reporting it in consultations records.

Trade unions are involved by the government in the implementation of the SDGs through the National SDG Coordination Team and its task force for the economy, which deals with SDGs 7, 8, 9, 10, and 17.

Trade unions report that the budgetary allocation towards the implementation of the SDGs is not sufficient. Even though the government introduced innovative financing instruments such as green bonds, the SDGs financing gap remains problematic. With Indonesia's graduation to middle-income country status and the subsequent decrease in official development assistance (ODA) received, greater efforts are needed through domestic resource mobilisation to address the resulting financial gap. However, no fiscal reform has so far been undertaken to promote this through progressive taxation.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Complete access to information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners submit joint contributions to the government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

According to recent data in 2020, 9,78 per cent of population (26,42 million) is living under the national poverty line in Indonesia, which shows that **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** is far from being reached. The indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** are also far from satisfactory: in 2019, the proportion of population covered by at least one social protection benefit was 54 per cent, and while the proportion of the population above statutory pensionable age receiving a pension increased from six per cent in 2002 to 14.1 per cent, it remains low. Total social protection spending was 1.4 per cent of GDP in 2016, up from one per cent of GDP in 2007.

Significant challenges remain to reach **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as there were over 15 million domestic workers in Indonesia in 2018 paid under minimum wage. More efforts are needed to reach **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)**, as the proportion of women in skilled employment declined from 47.59 per cent in 2016 to 46.31 per cent in 2017. Female workers with tertiary education degrees earn substantially less than male counterparts. However, 46.8 per cent of women and girls in Indonesia have achieved at least a secondary level of education, and the proportion of women in single or lower houses of parliament increased from eight per cent in 2000 to 20.4 per cent in 2020.

**Target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** in Indonesia is far off being met, as the proportion of informal employment stood at 82.3 per cent in 2018. On average, women earn 23 per cent less than men. As for **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, the total unemployment rate stood at 4.5 per cent in 2018; in 2020, underemployment stood at 7.8 per cent and at 21.5 per cent among those between 15 and 24 years of age. The number of persons not in education, employment or training (NEETs) mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 20.5 per cent in 2019, with a substantial disparity between the sexes: 26.2 per cent of young women compared

to 15.1 per cent of young men were NEET. Significant efforts are needed to reach **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour, end child labour in all its forms)**, as 2017 indicators showed that 23.4 per cent of children 10-17 were working in the urban areas and 76.6 per cent in rural areas. Regarding **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, the number of labour inspectors is insufficient for the size of Indonesia's workforce, as the ratio of inspectors to companies in Indonesia in 2016 was 1:11,228. The number of cases for work-related accidents increased in 2018 compared to previous year. However, the number of collective bargaining agreements increased from 12,113 in 2013 to 13,829 in 2017, an increase of 14 per cent.

Further progress is still needed for Indonesia to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 29.3 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding a 6.9 per cent share in 2018. The labour share of GDP had dropped from 38.6 per cent in 2015 and 2016 to 38.1 per cent in 2017.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning)**, a revision of the country's Nationally Determined Contributions for 2020-2025 is underway led by Department of Environment. Thanks to the participation of trade unions in this process, the Ministry of Labour got involved as well, integrating the labour dimension into climate change and environmental sustainability. At the end of 2019, the Ministry of Labour created a national tripartite forum and issued the Bogor Declaration as the tripartite commitment to respond to climate change and secure a Just Transition. To continue with this process, trade unions were involved in designing the LTS-LCCR (Long-Term Strategy for Low-Carbon and Climate Resilience Development) on "Green Investment and Non-party Stakeholders Engagement".

Indicators on **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** are highly worrying, as the 2020 ITUC Global Rights Index ranks Indonesia as a country with no guarantee of rights, where workers are exposed to arrests for their organising and recruiting trade union activities.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions are urging the government to:

- Align recovery and resilience financing with the SDGs, prioritising gender equality, climate change, social protection and decent work. These should be the government priorities together with supporting trade unions engagement.
- Prioritise a rights-based recovery, not only limited to economic terms: investments need to be oriented at creating and sustaining quality jobs and climate-friendly jobs.
- Ensure that measures introduced to combat the pandemic-induced crisis, such as support to SMEs and social protections, are maintained in the long term.
- Extend social protection coverage, including precarious workers and digital platform workers, and improve the protection of the migrant workers.
- Increase international cooperation to seek resources that could favour the implementation of a universal social protection system. Globally, trade unions are calling for the establishment of a Global Social Protection Fund that can catalyse social protection spending for the countries in need.
- Continue the comprehensive consultation process related to the formulation of the SDGs VNR, including the National Action Plan 2020-2024, including almost 500 multi-stakeholders.
- Keep involving trade unions as it happened in the recently launched consultation and enable them to effectively participate – also through supporting their capacity building and expertise.
- Domesticise the SDG and fully integrate them into the national development plan, rather than treating them as complimentary to it.
- Ensure budget availability to finance the implementation of the SDGs by strengthening the involvement of the parliament.
- Ensure coherent implementation of the SDGs and maintain coordination between the economic, social, environment and law task forces and local governments charged with implementation.



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# MEXICO

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

Trade unions report that the Mexican government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been inadequate. The only social protection measure implemented was advancing the payment of programmes for the elderly and people with disabilities in March and June 2020 and the provision of financial support for the funeral expenses of people who died from COVID-19. There has been nearly no financial support provided for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and none for larger companies. Support for family microenterprises and freelance workers has come in the shape of a programme facilitating the provision of loans; however, access to this programme is overly bureaucratic. The government has also introduced a ‘Solidarity Market’, a virtual platform for MSMEs, artisans and providers of non-essential services to find potential consumers for their products and services.

Trade unions call on the Mexican government to respond to the crisis caused by the pandemic by ensuring wage protection, universal social protection and implementing moratoriums on the payment of mortgages, rents and loans.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Mexico’s National Development Plan 2019-2024 links federal policies to the SDGs and budgetary programmes. The progress of SDG implementation can thus be evaluated through performance evaluation indicators within the national planning system. To facilitate access to the indicators set and the progress achieved under them, the government created a website with open access data. However, trade unions report that there is currently no access to up-to-date official information reflecting the situation under the pandemic.

The implementation of the SDGs is overseen by a technical committee within the Office of the Presidency of the Republic, which coordinates efforts of all 29 units of the federal government. In addition, a National Council for Agenda 2030 was created, and a working group for the legislative follow-up on the SDGs formed in the Senate; over the last two years, SDG monitoring and implementation bodies have been created at state and municipal level.

The Mexican government works on all 17 SDGs, integrating them through the work of four multisectoral committees: healthy, safe and free people; prepared, productive and innovative people; people committed to cities, nature and the environment; and united people working to leave no one behind.

While a consultation and monitoring mechanism exists, there is no effective participation of different actors, including trade unions. Trade unions report that there is also no genuine and structured social dialogue and that they have few opportunities to interact with government representatives outside of ad hoc presentations from the state on planned labour law reforms. Despite this, trade unions have made contributions on key SDGs and topics: gender equality, regulation of remote work, elimination of outsourcing and fair profit sharing.

Trade unions report that the budgetary allocation towards the implementation of the SDGs in Mexico is not sufficient.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners contribute individually to the government’s SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

In 2018, 41.9 per cent of the Mexican population lived under the national poverty line, a reduction of only 2.5 per cent compared to 2008, which suggests that **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** is far from being reached. While indicators on extreme poverty have been dropping, the number of people living in poverty has increased, due to overall population growth. This is in stark contrast to the fact that Mexico is classified as a country with a high level of human development (HDI of 0.779 in 2019). The indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** are also far from satisfactory: in 2019, only 54.7 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit.

Further efforts are needed to reach **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)** as between 2010–2018, 54.8 per cent of women and girls in Mexico had achieved at least a secondary level of education, compared to 61.1 per cent for men and boys. Women were hit particularly hard by the pandemic, and their presence in the labour market dropped from 45 per cent to 39 per cent in that period, primarily due to their overrepresentation in the 'non-essential' sectors of the service industry.

**Target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** in Mexico remains far off being met, as the proportion of informal employment stood at 56.8 per cent in 2018. In 2019, the share of low paid work stood at 17.1 per cent, with women more likely to be in low paid work (22 per cent) than men (14.6 per cent). In 2018, 26.9 per cent of work was classified as precarious. As for **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, the total unemployment rate stood at 3.5 per cent in 2019 but was significantly higher for the 15–24 age group: 7.2 per cent; in 2020, underemployment stood at 11.6 per cent. The number of NEETs mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 18.3 per cent in 2019, with a substantial disparity between the sexes: 27.7 per cent of young women compared to 8.9 per cent of young men were NEET in Mexico. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** requires additional

efforts to be met, as both the collective bargaining coverage (9.9 per cent) and trade union density (12 per cent) are low and there are constant attacks on collective bargaining agreements and labour rights. Mexico has made efforts to meet **target 8.b (develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment)** by implementing a programme which allows people between 18–29 who are NEET to gain technical skills and experience working for companies for up to a year, supported by the government through a monthly stipend and health and labour insurance. However, trade unions report that this programme faces challenges in implementation.

Mexico is one of the world's largest economies based on its GDP. However, this wealth is not evenly distributed, as the country has one of the highest inequality rates in the world. Indicators on **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)** show that in 2018 the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 36.4 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding a 5.4 per cent share in 2018.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, the government adopted five priority objectives to combat climate change through awareness raising, improving the implementation of existing policies, increasing capacity, facilitating access to information and strengthening the national compliance to international commitments. Consultations with civil society and relevant sectors on these topics had been held before 2020.

Mexico is implementing labour law reforms which are directly relevant to **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** as they secure the right to exercise the freedom of association and unionisation and set up labour dispute courts. Trade unions however signal that the process of adoption of this reform has been slow and that the timeline for the creation of the courts risks delaying the process even further.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions urge the government to:

- Strengthen social protection systems and health care services.
- Provide financial support to MSMEs at risk.
- Invest in jobs and sustainable economic growth and ensure adequate budgetary provision for the implementation of the SDGs.
- Strengthen and promote a genuine tripartite social dialogue mechanism, meeting on a regular basis and discussing all relevant policy topics.
- Establish a genuine consultation on the implementation of the SDGs, with the participation of social partners.
- Strengthen the Working Committees of the National Council for the 2030 Agenda 2030, the State Councils on the 2030 Agenda, and the Specialised Technical Committee on the SDGs.
- Support legislatures in creating sustainable laws and ensure that sectoral programmes integrate the vision of the 2030 Agenda.
- Maintain a territorial approach and ensure SDG implementation at municipality level.
- Implement institutional and communication programmes to promote the 2030 Agenda.



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# NAMIBIA

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the government of the Republic of Namibia introduced a number of stimulus and relief measures to directly support individuals, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and corporations, and safeguard jobs. Fiscal and monetary measures were undertaken in the form of loans or loan payment moratoriums, but trade unions note that these schemes mainly favoured big businesses, as smaller businesses were wary of requesting them to avoid further indebtedness.

Specific measures in the area of social protection included a once off emergency income grant of N\$750 to employees who lost their jobs during the pandemic in the formal and informal sectors. But this initiative has been characterised by bureaucratic ways of handling.

Employment retention measures were undertaken through the flexibilisation of labour regulations, oriented to avoid major retrenchments and closures of businesses. But trade unions note that these have not yielded the expected results, as many people have lost their jobs and salaries, and hours of work were cut unilaterally, and workers were forced to go on unpaid leave. Unions call for ensuring wage and income protection for workers, a further strengthening of the social protection system and guaranteeing effective access to unemployment and pension benefits.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government adopted its current National Development Plan (NDP 5) straight after the adoption of the SDGs in 2015. As a result, the NDP is not aligned with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, and any overlaps with the SDGs are coincidental. Trade unions suggest that this has led to many critical SDGs receiving little or no attention, notably SDG 8, as it was also reflected in Namibia's 2018 Voluntary National Review.

National development and the implementation of the SDGs are overseen by the National Planning Commission in the office of the president.

Trade unions report that there is no transparent monitoring or evaluation of the implementation of the SDGs in Namibia, nor are any updates provided to the public or trade unions. Consultations were organised in the context of drafting the NDPs. However, the stakeholders that were invited were narrowly defined and mainly included entities that are close to the government. Neither independent trade

unions nor employers' organisations were invited to take part and were thus unable to provide input to the plans. Trade unions report that their priorities have not been taken into account in the implementation of the SDGs due to a lack of political will at the highest levels in Namibia; there is also a lack of understanding of the contributions trade unions can make, as the government failed to provide a platform for them to contribute. This lack of interest from the government is also evident in the fact that there is no discussion on the SDGs, including SDG 8, in social dialogue settings. However, after a long insistence, trade unions were invited to participate in a VNR validation workshop.

Trade unions report that no specific resources have been allocated to the SDGs aside from those allocated towards the NDP, which fail to serve their purpose due to corruption and other forms of mismanagement. This lack of resources has meant that no meaningful implementation has taken place.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Information sessions but no interaction

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners not involved in defining and realising government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

In 2019, 13.2 per cent of the population of Namibia was living below the income poverty line; the level of multidimensional poverty, which includes individuals above the income poverty line but still suffering deprivation in health, education and/or standard of living, was 24.6 per cent points higher. In 2019, 9.4 per cent of workers were living under the poverty line, an increase from 7.7 per cent in 2015. This indicates regression in meeting **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)**. On **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)**, 27.2 per cent of the population has access to either direct or indirect social protection benefits. However, the centralisation of services makes it difficult for the rural and poorest sectors of the population to access these.

There is a need for further efforts to achieve progress on **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as the GNI per capita is N\$8,917 for women against N\$10,497 for men, suggesting that women are less employed and/or perform more unpaid domestic work. With regard to **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life)**, 43 per cent of Namibia's parliamentarians are women and the representation of women in senior and middle managerial positions stands at 48.2 per cent. However, in the period 2015-2019, only 40.6 per cent of women had attended secondary education (as compared to 42 per cent of men).

There are serious concerns about Namibia meeting the targets set by **SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all)**. The proportion of informal employment outside of agriculture stood at 47 per cent in 2018, with more women (50.4 per cent) than men (43.4 per cent) being informally employed. Women are also far more likely (70 per cent) to be self-employed than men (31 per cent). This suggests further efforts are needed to meet **target 8.3 (support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs)**. There has been a regression on **target 8.5 (full and productive employment**

**and decent work for all)**, as 2019 figures show that 75.2 per cent of Namibian employees earned N\$1,353 (US\$91) or less per month, a deterioration from 2018 figures. In 2018, the broad unemployment rate of the economically active population stood at 33.4 per cent (32.5 per cent for men and 34.3 per cent for women). NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 31.8 per cent of youth aged 15-24 in 2018, with young women being more affected (34.2 per cent) than men (29.3 per cent). Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** are worrying, as in 2019 it was estimated that 8,000 people were living in modern slavery. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** is far from being met, as in 2016 there were only 61 trained labour inspectors for a working population of nearly 680,000 in the country. To meet **target 8.b (develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment)**, the government has put in place several initiatives to create employment. However, their implementation is hampered by lack of buy-in from relevant ministries and government departments.

Progress remains to be made for Namibia to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as in 2015, the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 47.3 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding a paltry 2.8 per cent share. With regard to **target 10.7 (facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people)**, Namibia adopted a National Labour Migration Policy in 2020. However, while there is formally no discrimination on the freedom of association for migrant workers, this is limited by short or fixed-term employment contracts and employers' control of work permits.

While the government of Namibia has introduced some policies to meet **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, trade unions report that these have not been adequately implemented.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions are urging the government to:

- Strengthen and extend social protection and ensure universal access to health care.
- Put in place effective measures to absorb shocks to the economy.
- Adopt policies for a wage-led growth, making wages commensurable to living conditions to increase demand.
- Adopt monetary policies that encourage employment creation, reducing the interest rate for loans in proportion to the number of jobs created.
- Create a sovereign wealth fund to direct dividends from the national resources to fund social protection programmes and employment creation schemes.
- Prioritise social dialogue for the elaboration of recovery measures and the implementation of the SDGs.
- Establish a national tripartite dialogue on the SDGs, together with a co-ordinating task force.
- Set up a focal point in each ministry that would be responsible for mainstreaming, monitoring and reporting on the progress or challenges in the implementation of the relevant SDGs and targets.
- Set up a reporting mechanism on the SDGs, with quarterly reporting sessions, open for participation to trade unions.



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# NORWAY

**A TRADE UNION  
FOCUS ON THE SDGs**

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS  
DEMAND A NEW  
SOCIAL CONTRACT  
FOR RECOVERY AND  
RESILIENCE**

## COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Norwegian government introduced measures designed to ease the impact of the crisis; these were negotiated through a tripartite dialogue. The measures focus on preventing bankruptcies of companies, ensuring the capacity to restructure sectors and securing the income of the unemployed and other vulnerable groups. The benefits have increased, and regulation has become more flexible to ease the situation for the unemployed and those who were laid off during Covid. Several tripartite branch programmes for improving competences have been established, and the possibilities for combining unemployment benefits with education have been increased.

Trade unions have called on the government to combat the increasing inequalities and ensure that companies cannot misuse the financial support they receive (e.g., by taking out dividends or firing workers), but to no avail so far. They have also asked that the financial situation of municipalities and local authorities be improved in order to promote economic activity. Trade unions hope that the government will improve its contingency planning and confirm that the current measures will remain in place as long as the pandemic and the related crisis persist.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Norwegian government is in the process of developing a national plan for the implementation of Agenda 2030. This move is a response to calls made by civil society, including trade unions, and an evaluation report from the Office of the Auditor General, which concluded that the government must better coordinate implementation, improve its progress reporting to the parliament, and adopt a comprehensive plan for the implementation of the SDGs at the national level.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation oversees the implementation of Agenda 2030. The SDGs are further included in the state budget at sectoral level, and individual ministries are charged with their integration and implementation in their policy area. However, trade unions warn that there is a lack of a coherent approach to this process, something which a holistic national plan should address. Trade unions report that the fragmentation of the SDG agenda implementation means that monitoring impact is difficult, resulting in a lack of transparency. The

same challenges persist with regard to consultations, to which trade unions and other civil society representatives are invited on an ad hoc thematic basis, often with very short notice, by different ministries.

There is a bipartite and tripartite dialogue on the social, economic and environmental aspects of Agenda 2030, and the SDGs are negotiated into some collective bargaining agreements. However, in the absence of a long-term national implementation plan, the dialogues are fragmented and a genuine discussion on Agenda 2030 based on social partners' requests is difficult. However, the aspects of SDG implementation relating to social dialogue have been well followed up.

Trade unions report that awareness of Agenda 2030 and its implementation has improved over the years, in particular among local and regional authorities; the commitment from academia and the education sector has been high and is rising.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners submit joint contributions to the government's SDG national plan





# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With an HDI of 0.957, Norway ranks as the most developed country in the world. Indicators on **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty)** show that none of its population lives in extreme poverty. With regard to **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)**, in 2016, 96 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit. 100 per cent of children, mothers and people with severe disabilities are estimated to enjoy social protection coverage; these values were lower for certain categories, such as the unemployed (61.8 per cent in 2014) and vulnerable groups (83 per cent in 2016). Groups which lack coverage, such as some segments of the self-employed and part-time working students, have benefitted from ad hoc measures during the pandemic. Indicators on **target 1.a (ensure significant mobilisation of resources to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions)** show that in 2016, the equivalent of 16 per cent of government spending was dedicated to education; in 2019, 10.5 per cent of GDP was spent on healthcare.

On **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, a new (2021) survey of relatives prepared for the national health agency finds that 36 per cent of the population is supporting, helping or nursing a person close to themselves. The gender differences are small but persistent. Women do slightly more unpaid domestic work (3h and 50 minutes) than men (3h) per week, according to 2010 data. With regard to **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life)**, in 2019 there were 37 per cent of women in managerial positions in Norway, compared to 32 per cent in 2008. Among the 200 top companies, the share of woman CEOs is only 14 per cent, and the share of women board chairs is only 11 per cent. 95.4 per cent of women have completed at least some secondary education.

Norway faces smaller challenges than most with regard to meeting the targets set by **SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all)**. Regarding **target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)**, in 2020, 19 per cent of full-time wage earners had low-

paid work, earning less than 79 per cent of the median wage; 4.9 per cent of the work was considered as vulnerable or precarious. On **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the underemployment rate stood at 8.7 per cent in 2020. The 2020 indicators on the gender wage gap suggest that, on average, women earn 89.3 per cent of a man's average wage. NEET ("not in employment, education or training") indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 10.7 per cent of youth aged between 15-29 in 2018 and 2019, a decrease compared to 2015. On **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, in 2017, overall collective bargaining coverage stood at 69 per cent, with 100 per cent coverage in the public sector and 52 per cent in the private sector; trade union density stood at 50.2 per cent. The Norwegian government is addressing **target 8.b (develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment)** through the introduction of the "New Youth Effort", a policy designed to reduce the share of under-30-year-olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs).

Progress remains to be made for Norway to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the share of the bottom 20 per cent income earners in overall GDP in 2017 was 8.9 per cent, compared to the 21.6 per cent share of the top 10 per cent income earners. The labour share of GDP (wages and social protection transfers) stood at 52.7 per cent in 2017.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, Norway's government has proposed a plan for achieving a reduction of emissions by at least 50 per cent, and towards 55 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030. The proposed Climate Action Plan for 2021-2030 on how to reach the targets is yet to be adopted and seems to be insufficient to meet the targets and the Paris Agreement.

Trade unions report that Norway is meeting its obligations under **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, as a public legal aid scheme is in place and there are no violations of trade unionists' rights.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Norwegian trade unions call on their government to improve the implementation of the SDGs in the country by:

- Developing a coherent national plan for the implementation of Agenda 2030 and ensuring that social dialogue is integrated throughout.
- Strengthening the Norwegian tripartite cooperation model through measures that increase the number of organised workers and employers, enhance their social dialogue, and deepen people's knowledge and understanding of the Norwegian working-life model.
- Ensuring a coherent and concrete reporting on the budget process combined with strengthening of parliamentary scrutiny.
- Adopting a holistic approach, in particular with regard to implementing SDG 8 together with the Paris Climate Agreement's call for a just transition and the ILO's Just Transition Guidelines.
- Combating work-related crime and social dumping to ensure a secure working life.
- Using public procurement to stimulate sustainable development, just transition and respect for international law and human and workers' rights.
- Addressing the interlinkages between education, employment and social policy in the implementation of the SDGs.
- Strengthening the public school system and supporting education and competence, including lifelong learning for all.
- Investing more in research.
- Adopting relevant legislation nationally to prevent tax evasion and avoidance, in particular corporate profit shifting, and increasing wealth taxation.
- Strengthening the ethical framework for the Government Pension Fund Global, with a view to increasing the use of company pre-screening when investing in countries and industries posing elevated risk for norm violations.



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# PAKISTAN

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pakistani government responded through the National Disaster Management platform, introducing a lockdown and cash grants, relief in the payment of utility bills and loan rebates. Under the Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme, the government provided cash grants and other support to those facing economic hardship and struggling to buy food; the programme covered 12 million families. In addition, provinces launched their own programs, such as providing cash grants and distributing food.

The second wave of the pandemic is being addressed through smart lockdowns (only closing off the affected area) and a second financial relief package and measures such as paid sick leave from day one, wage and income protection, and applying limited mortgage, rent and loan relief. Factories and other workplaces remain open and work has not been affected. However, trade unions stress that these measures are being implemented in a limited manner and must be expanded on. In addition, trade unions are calling for the development of a database of workers in the informal, agriculture and formal sectors to ensure the correct distribution of the relief package.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Pakistani government has adopted the SDGs as its own national development agenda, mainstreaming them in national policies and strategies, including the Five-Year Plan and provincial growth strategies, aligned with its long-term development perspective, 'Vision 2025'. All of the SDGs are covered by one or more of the seven pillars of 'Vision 2025' (people first, growth, governance, security, entrepreneurship, knowledge economy and connectivity). The Federal Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform is charged with the integration of Agenda 2030. A dedicated SDGs unit has been established under the ministry to monitor and to coordinate with similar units established with the departments of planning and development in provinces and administrative regions.

While consultations on priorities for SDG implementation in the country were organised by the government, trade unions have not been consulted or involved in this process, and neither have employers' representatives. Agenda 2030 and its implementation in the country has not been included on the agenda of the tripartite or social dialogue processes.

The realisation of SDG targets has been linked to the implementation of existing or planned policies in Pakistan. The most prominent one of these is Ehsaas, the largest scale programme ever launched to tackle poverty in the country. It is an umbrella initiative of 134 policies and programs addressing state capture, social protection, livelihoods and human capital development. Through various campaigns at the national, regional and district levels trade unions demand workers protection in neglected sectors and their coverage under the existing social protection schemes. At the National and regional levels, PWF has launched a special campaign for recognition of the basic rights of the workers of informal sector, agriculture workers, domestic workers and construction workers. Furthermore, a new universal health coverage initiative has been launched in 2021 to fill the gaps in health insurance coverage. However, trade unions alert that the overall resources allocated to reaching the goals of Agenda 2030 are limited, in particular in the areas of education, social protection and health.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners not involved in defining and realising government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

In 2019, 2 per cent of the population of Pakistan was living in extreme poverty, 41 per cent near poverty and 25 per cent in moderate poverty, which suggests that **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** is far from being reached. The COVID-19 pandemic together with the pre-existing inflation of prices of essential items is expected to further increase poverty in the country.

The indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** are far off being met: in 2019, only 9.2 per cent of the total population was covered by at least one social protection benefit, and only 8.4 per cent of the population was affiliated to a social healthcare protection scheme. In the 2018-2019 financial year, government spending on health stood at 2.5 per cent and on social protection at 0.05 per cent.

Significant challenges remain to reach **target 5.4 (recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as women and girls spend 19.9 per cent of their time on unpaid care and domestic work (compared to 1.8 per cent of time spent on this by men). More efforts are needed to reach **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)** as only 26.7 per cent women and girls in Pakistan have achieved at least a secondary level of education and women account for nearly 90 per cent of the bottom 1 per cent of wage earners in Pakistan. While Pakistan is implementing gender-based budgeting, differences in gender-based resource allocation and spending still prevail.

**Target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** is far off being met, as in 2018, the informal sector accounted for 72 per cent of non-agricultural employment – more so in rural (76 per cent) than urban areas (68.3 per cent). 37.5 per cent of workers earn less than two thirds of the median hourly wages; this is especially the case of female workers, 75.4 per cent whom are in this category, compared to 31.3 per cent of men. As for **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, the 2017-18 unemployment rate stood at 5.8 per cent and was more likely to affect women (9 per cent) than men (5 per cent). The number of NEETs mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education**

**or training)** stood at 31.2 per cent in 2020, with a massive disparity between the sexes: 56.2 per cent of young women compared to 8 per cent of young men were NEET in Pakistan. Significant efforts are needed to reach **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour, end child labour in all its forms)** as 2011 indicators showed that 11.3 per cent of children (aged 5 to 17) were engaged in child labour and that over three million people (1.8 per cent of the population) were living in modern slavery in 2018. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** is far from being met as 42 violations of labour rights (28 in law and 14 in practice) were noted in 2017, relating to workers' right to establish and join organizations, union activities, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike. Trade union density is low, standing at just 2.3 per cent in 2018.

Further progress is still needed for Pakistan to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 28.9 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding an 8.9 per cent share in 2015.

Pakistan is amongst the countries most affected by the impacts of climate change. To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, the government has introduced priorities on climate change and the environment into its 12th Five Year Plan (2018-2023). In addition, Pakistan has created disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management plans and introduced policies addressing deforestation, biodiversity, sustainable land management, flood mitigation and climate-smart agriculture. However, trade unions warn that the government has no strategy to accommodate the needs of workers arising from the technological shift associated with the introduction of environmental policies.

Indicators on **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** are highly worrying, as NGO operations are restricted by the government and workers and supporters of social movements have been subjected to intimidation or detention on charges of sedition and terrorism in 2019.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDGs led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions are urging the government to:

- Introduce universal social protection.
- Introduce a managed reduction of hours where necessary, with government support to maximize income security.
- Protect those most vulnerable i.e., workers in the informal sector, home based workers, domestic workers, brick kiln workers and agriculture workers.
- Develop a database of workers in the informal, agriculture and formal sectors to secure the distribution of relief packages.
- Ensure a more effective implementation of laws and policies, involve social partners in the SDG prioritisation and implementation process.
- All workers should be protected under labour laws, industrial relations laws and existing schemes of social protection. To ensure this, eradicate child and forced labour, focus on the social protection of all vulnerable categories of workers by extending labour and social protection coverage to workers of the construction sector, agricultural workers, domestic workers and workers of informal sector as a priority.
- Collect data and maintain statistics to ensure that the employment, skill development and universal social protection policies can be adequately implemented and reach the target demographics.
- Improve the effectiveness of the existing gender budgeting and gender-sensitive policy making approaches.
- Pursue a 'just transition' towards environmentally friendly and climate-neutral growth in close involvement with social partners.



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**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

## COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

The Spanish government has adopted a range of policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The labour measures include a new regulation on the temporary suspension of workers (Expedientes Temporales de Regulación de Empleo - ERTE), adopted to safeguard jobs and cover all affected workers; the automatic extension of existing benefits; a ban on dismissals and the interruption of temporary contracts to extend their duration; and the extension of unemployment protection coverage. Other measures include the introduction of a minimum living income (IMV); the suspension of evictions; a moratorium on rent and mortgage debt payments; temporary rent deferrals, together with aid for the payment of rent; a guaranteed supply of electricity, gas and water for vulnerable groups; and special measures to support the self-employed and SMEs.

Trade unions are calling on the Spanish government to further support workers by increasing the minimum wage and adopting measures to reduce the differentiated impact of the pandemic and the gaps between women and men, ensuring that companies comply with the obligation to negotiate equality plans and measures, and to promote a work-life balance and more equal responsibility sharing between men and women by increasing investments in the public provision of care services and by reversing economic, social and labour rights cuts that increase inequality and poverty. They are also calling for better management of unemployment benefits and the minimum living income (IMV) as well as government measures to restore the balance in collective bargaining, mainly through the repeal of the labour reforms.

## ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Spanish government has aligned its general budgetary plan with the SDGs and has stated that it aims to ensure that all of its policies contribute to the 2030 Agenda. A comprehensive approach has been taken, promoting all 17 SDGs. The implementation of the SDGs is overseen by the Ministry of Social Rights and the 2030 Agenda and the State Secretariat for the 2030 Agenda.

In 2021, the government will press ahead with its 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy based on a road map to guide its progress with the Decade of Action leading up to 2030. These documents have been developed in consultation with civil society actors, including social movements and the business sector. No specific dialogue has, however, been held with the trade unions.

The trade unions feel that the transparency on the current level of SDG implementation should be improved, with the presentation of reports on the spending allocated to the SDGs in the general budgets and the inclusion of indicators required to ensure adequate accountability and impact reporting.

There is no bilateral social dialogue between the government and trade unions on the implementation of the SDGs. Some sectoral discussions are, however, in place on areas related to SDGs 5, 8 and 12. Trade unions are calling for the establishment of a specific social dialogue on the implementation of the SDGs in Spain.

### TRANSPARENCY



No access to information at all

### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners contribute individually to the government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Greater efforts are required to reach **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)**: 12.8 per cent of people in employment were at risk of poverty in 2019, and the number of working poor increased by 16 per cent between 2010 and 2019. As regards **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)**, in 2016, 80.6 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit. In the context of the social emergency created by the pandemic, a non-contributory social security benefit has been introduced, the minimum living income (IMV), to guarantee a minimum income for those in need. Most applicants, however, fail to qualify for it due to the excessive bureaucratisation and strict eligibility requirements. According to the general budget for 2021, government spending on essential services will see a 10.3 per cent increase on the amount allocated in the 2018 budget, bringing it up to 37.2 per cent of the budget.

More efforts are needed to reach **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)**. Although more women than men have the highest level of education, their work is generally much more precarious, with high rates of part-time employment, temporary contracts, reduced working hours, lower pay, etc. Women's access to managerial and leadership positions is still limited.

Obstacles remain for Spain to meet the targets under **SDG 8 (decent work for all)**. Although official statistics are lacking, informal employment is estimated to account for between 18 and 24 per cent of GDP. Meeting **target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** is still a challenge. According to official data, 11 per cent of workers are in precarious work, but the actual levels are estimated to be higher, with almost half of all workers on temporary contracts, working part-time or as false self-employed workers. With regard to **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, the unemployment rate in 2020 was 15.5 per cent, affecting more women (17.4 per cent) than men (13.9 per cent). Young workers below the age of 25 were particularly hard hit, with unemployment rates of 37.1 per

cent among young men and 39.7 per cent among young women. The number of NEETs ("not in employment, education or training") mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** was 12.1 per cent in 2019. The indicators on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** show a high level of collective bargaining coverage, 73.1 per cent in 2016, but a relatively low rate of unionisation, at 13.9 per cent in 2015. Spain has made efforts to meet **target 8.b (develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment)** by introducing the 2019-2021 Action Plan for Youth Employment with comprehensive measures to promote and boost employment for young people. These initiatives have, however, proved insufficient.

Progress is still needed to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)**. In 2017, the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 25.4 per cent share of GDP, whilst the bottom 20 per cent of income earners had a 6.2 per cent share.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, a strategic energy and climate framework has been adopted which includes the following: a law on climate change and energy transition; a just transition strategy to minimise the negative impacts of the energy transition on those people and regions affected; a 2021-2030 national plan for adaptation to climate change; a national integrated energy and climate plan that aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050; and a long-term decarbonisation strategy.

Spain is meeting its obligations under **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, as there is full access to legal and juridical tools for assistance in the event of labour disputes. After years of trade union struggle against the criminalisation of the right to strike under Article 315.3 of the penal code, the article was finally repealed in April 2021.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, the trade unions are urging the Spanish government to:

- Change the economic production and labour relations model: strengthen legal frameworks that ensure pay and working conditions that allow for a decent life, securing the right to collective bargaining, the right to organise, and gender equality, and create frameworks to recognise and value care work, along with public policies that promote joint responsibility between men, women, companies and public administrations.
- Strengthen the welfare state: build a solid system of social protection for all, increase public investment and guarantee universal access to healthcare, decent housing and quality public education; ensure a guaranteed minimum income and a public pension system that corrects the gender gap.
- Reform the tax system: raise tax collection levels by placing greater emphasis on wealth and capital gains taxes; reduce the taxation of basic necessities and fresh food and eliminate gender bias from the tax system; and ensure that the tax system supports the ecological transition process.
- Implement recovery plans geared towards promoting sustainable economic growth that creates quality jobs: repeal the 2013 labour and pension reforms; improve the management of the minimum living income (IMV) scheme and widen its scope; and prioritise the implementation of the Action Plan for Youth Employment.
- Adopt policies that enable other countries to achieve sustainable development.



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# SWEDEN

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

The Swedish government has adopted two main line of response to the COVID-19 pandemic. One set of measures targets workers who were made redundant as a result of the pandemic, or those who were already unemployed, through financial support by means of easier access to unemployment benefits and sick leave; other measures are additional skill training and access to higher education. Enterprises and employers have been supported in covering the loss of income they have experienced. This support has been through rent subsidies and financial support to pay for permits or tax reductions.

Trade unions call on the Swedish government to ensure that companies and workers in close contact industries are provided with support and have appropriate working conditions, securing both financial security and reducing the spread of the virus. Once the pandemic is over, unions further call for the Swedish economy to be kick-started through broad investments in welfare, digitalisation, energy and infrastructure, and for unemployment to be addressed through the launch of a broad programme encouraging education and vocational training.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Swedish government approaches the implementation of the 2030 Agenda holistically. The implementation of the SDGs is overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment, with focal points present within different departments.

will be taken onboard, the previous action plan did include activities which were supported by trade unions, such as the Global Deal Partnership, which aims to address the challenges in the global labour market and enable all people to benefit from globalisation.

While the Swedish government's current action plan on the SDGs expired in 2020, a forthcoming national plan aims to integrate the SDGs and the reporting on their implementation at different levels: SDG targets are to be incorporated across the board in all government activities, and reporting on progress is to be done as part of a special budget report and as part of a presentation made to the Parliament, each made at least once every mandate period. Information and consultation sessions on the new plan have taken place and with a broad spectrum of civil society, including trade unions. Although it is not yet clear which of the trade union recommendations

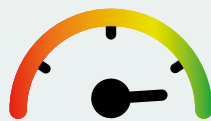
There is a dialogue between the government and social partners on policy reforms linked to the implementation of the SDGs. However, trade union partners believe the focus of the discussion in this context to be too narrow, as it centres on SDGs 8 and 13. Trade unions suggest that the topics for discussion should further be focused on SDGs 5 and 10, as well as the Global Deal Partnership and the importance of social dialogue. To this end, trade unions have presented the government with contributions and recommendations on how to promote advances in these areas.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Structured multi-stakeholder platform

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners submit joint contributions to the government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Sweden has one of the highest levels of human development in the world, ranking 7th in the HDI index in 2019. Nevertheless, 18.8 per cent of all people in Sweden, and 19.6 per cent of women, are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, suggesting that further efforts on meeting **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** are needed. The indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** are good: in 2018, the universal health service coverage index stood at 86 per cent and the proportion of population with access to affordable medicines and vaccines on a sustainable basis stood at 75 per cent. Total government spending on essential services stood at 24.4 per cent of the budget in 2017.

More efforts are needed to reach **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as women and girls still spend more of their time on unpaid domestic work and care than men (16.4 per cent for women vs 12.8 per cent for men in 2011). Indicators on **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)** are good, as between 2015-2019, 89.3 per cent of women and girls obtained at least some secondary education. Gender budgeting procedures implemented by the government ensure the regular analysis of spending from a gender-sensitive perspective.

Meeting **target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** remains a challenge, as the Swedish labour market is increasingly more insecure, especially for temporary employees. Longer-term positions are increasingly being replaced by on-demand employees and day labourers, who are more precarious by nature. Women (19 per cent, compared to 15 per cent men), 16-24-year-olds (56 per cent, compared with 21 per cent among 25-34-year-olds and 9 per cent among 35-44-year-olds) and foreign-born people (24 per cent, compared with 15 per cent among individuals born in Sweden) are more likely to hold a temporary employment. With regard to **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, the total unemployment rate stood at 8.3 per cent in 2020 but was significantly higher for the 1524 age group: 24 per cent; in 2020, underemployment stood at 6.3 per cent. The number of NEETs ("not in employment, education or training") mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment,**

**education or training)** stood at 6.5 per cent in 2020. Indicators on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** are exceptionally good, as collective bargaining coverage stood at 90 per cent in 2015 (83 per cent in the public sector and 100 per cent in the private sector) and in 2018, 69 per cent of all employees (excluding full-time students) were unionised.

Progress is still needed for Sweden to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as indicators show that in 2017 the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 22.3 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding an 8.3 per cent share. The income share of the bottom 20 per cent has been decreasing during the last three decades as a result of a combination of factors, such as persisting higher unemployment levels following the 1990s economic crisis in Sweden, as well as policies, implemented primarily during the 2000s, such as weakening of unemployment insurance, which were specifically aimed at decreasing the relative income of many groups in the bottom deciles.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate-change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, Sweden has adopted a long-term strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, fulfilling commitments under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. The strategy is largely based on the national climate policy framework and climate policy action plan. The climate policy framework's long-term goal is to have zero net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2045 at the latest and thereafter achieve negative emissions. By 2045, greenhouse gas emissions from Sweden are to be at least 85 per cent lower than emissions in 1990.

Trade unions report that Sweden is meeting its obligations under **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, as there is open access to labour courts and availability of legal aid. There are only incidental physical attacks on union members, and discrimination against trade union members is rare. Other impediments to activities, membership of trade unions or workers are deemed incidental and rare.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions urge the Swedish government to:

- Develop and strengthen the Swedish labour market model to deal with the emerging major challenges and achieve SDG 8. The model, based on respect for party autonomy, has already given good results on many of the sub-goals that SDG 8 covers, such as protection of workers' rights, higher productivity and decent working conditions.
- Contribute knowledge to encourage and establish formal structures for social dialogue and tripartism. The Global Deal Partnership, a Swedish initiative which promotes the distribution of the globalised economy in a more equal way, is an important step in this direction.
- Support the development of trade union capacity in other countries, including through development cooperation projects. Aim at mutual learning and the development of context-bound structures so that trade union activities can realise decent working conditions at the national level.
- Deepen work with the ILO, which is the main platform for promoting international cooperation for sustainable economic development and decent working conditions.



The Swedish Trade Union Confederation



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# THAILAND

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Thai government applied an emergency decree to implement restrictive measures such as restrictions on travel and movement within the country, closing of certain categories of businesses and venues and prohibiting gatherings. Additional measures such as the screening of migrant workers arriving in the country were subsequently introduced.

With regards to measures designed to support the population in view of the economic impact of the pandemic, the National Housing Authority, a state enterprise responsible for the provision of accommodation to working class people, decreased the rent. Additionally, the Government Saving Bank suspended debt payments. While universal healthcare services are not available to all, health care was provided to Thai citizens who contracted COVID-19, and free tests were made available to people at risk of infection.

Trade unions call for the Thai government to tackle the crisis by providing universal social protection and free access to the healthcare for all, establishing an income protection scheme and a fund for workers who lost their employment (protecting workers from illegal work contracts termination) and take measures to lower the costs of living.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Thai government has established a Sustainable Development Committee, whose work is coordinated by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board. The Sustainable Development Committee has approved Thailand's SDGs Roadmap and ensures that the country's development plan mainstreams the SDGs. It is further responsible for shaping the sustainable development strategy of the country, coordinating the work of government agencies with the private sector in this respect and following up and evaluating on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

While all ministries and government agencies, as well as employer organisations and representatives of the academia are constituents of the Sustainable Development Committee, trade unions are not. As a result, trade unions are not consulted on the planning of the realisation of the SDGs nor do they have access to transparent

information on their implementation. There is also no involvement of trade unions in discussions on the 2030 Agenda as social partners. Trade unions alert that this exclusion means that neither workers nor the Thai population in general can contribute to SDG process in the country.

Trade unions report that, six years after the adoption of the SDGs, the government strategy on decent work and SDG 8 implementation is still unclear. Trade unions are further worried by developments that put into question the government's commitment to meeting SDG 8, as Thai government agencies and state enterprises are themselves creating precarious working conditions to reduce spending on personnel by offering short-term or daily contracts. In addition, the Ministry of Labour has begun working on a regulation introducing an hourly working wage, which is the worst form of employment terms for workers.

#### TRANSPARENCY



No access to information at all

#### CONSULTATION



No consultation process at all

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners not involved in defining and realising government's SDG national plan





# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

The indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** in Thailand give cause for modest optimism: 68 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit in 2019 and 61 per cent of the unemployed were covered by unemployment benefits, a significant increase on 22.4 per cent in 2010. In addition, the proportion of the population above statutory pensionable age receiving a pension increased from 5 per cent in 2000 to 82 per cent in 2019. However, performance on **target 1.a (implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions)** require further improvement, as government spending on healthcare as a proportion of the GDP stood at 2.9 per cent in 2017 and on social protection at 3 per cent in 2018.

Challenges to reaching **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)** remain, as women and girls spent 11.8 per cent of their time on unpaid care and domestic work in 2015. More efforts are needed to reach **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels)** as fewer women and girls in Thailand have achieved at least a secondary level of education than men (43.5 per cent for women and 46.8 per cent for men). However, the 2017 Constitution introduced a provision on gender budgeting and a Women's Development Strategy for 2017–2021 has been developed as a planning instrument for Thailand's gender equality policy.

**Target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)** is far off being met, as in 2018, the informal sector accounted for 64 per cent of non-agricultural employment, with women (65.2 per cent) being somewhat more likely to be employed in it than men (63.7 per cent). As for **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work)**, while the overall figures for 2019 are low for both unemployment (0.7 per cent for men and 0.7 per cent for women) and underemployment (1.7 per cent for men and 1.5 per cent for women), these are significantly higher in the 15–24 age group, 4.2 per cent of whom are unemployed and 5.5 per cent of whom are underemployed. Moreover, because of the crisis workers are subjected to illegal work contracts termination, being forced to submit resignation letters instead of getting due compensation and unemployment benefits. The number of NEETs mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** show a disparity between the sexes:

18.6 per cent of young women compared to 11.2 per cent of young men were NEET in Thailand. Significant efforts are needed to reach **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour, end child labour in all its forms)** as cases of forced labour persist and human trafficking remains a significant problem, especially in the case of undocumented migrants: 610,000 people were estimated to be living in modern slavery in Thailand in 2018. Meeting **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** is far off, as the government has not ratified the ILO Convention on the Freedom of Association (87) and Migration for Employment (97). Collective bargaining coverage and trade union density are both very low, standing at just 3.1 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively in 2016.

Further progress is still needed for Thailand to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 28.2 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding a 7.2 per cent share in 2015.

To reach the objectives of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, the Thai government has introduced a Climate Change Master Plan for 2015–2036 which aims to enhance adaptation and mitigation capacity of various sectors of the economy. In addition, 17 provinces and 32 municipalities have been trained and have developed climate action plans for their respective constituencies, complementing their provincial disaster risk reduction plans. However, no involvement of trade unions is observed at this stage in these processes.

Indicators on **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** are highly worrying, as the rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining and strike have been severely restricted under two labour relations acts in Thailand, excluding around 26 million workers – out of a workforce of about 40 million – from coverage. As a result, civil servants, migrant workers, informal sector workers, private sector teachers, agricultural workers, temporary workers, and other subcontracted workers are prohibited or severely restricted from the right to organise.

## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions are urging the government to:

- Provide universal social protection and free access to the healthcare to everyone equally.
- Establish income or wage protection scheme to help workers, including informal workers, against the COVID-19 impact.
- Fully protect workers from illegal work contracts termination, by getting the full amount of compensation and providing unemployment schemes.
- Introduce measures to promote the protection of employment, such as employment retention schemes.
- Fiscal and financial support measures to enterprises should be conditioned to maintain jobs and safe workplaces.
- Stimulate the economy by increasing government spending, for example by providing income support including to informal workers.
- Introduce economic measures to decrease the cost of living, such as reducing the price of the public transport or the price of essential products etc.
- Introduce innovative measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic, such as wide-scale and free testing of the population in outbreak areas and the free provision of vaccines, both for Thai citizens and migrant workers.



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# ZIMBABWE

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2021

**WORKERS DEMAND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE**

### COVID-19: WORKERS NEED SDG-DRIVEN RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

The Zimbabwean government, through advice from the Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF), declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national disaster and introduced various measures in response. The government launched an economic recovery and stimulus package of US\$720 million (9 per cent of GDP); a US\$25 million package to compensate small businesses, vendors and the elderly for loss of income during the national lockdown was also announced, as well as a US\$26 million national preparedness and response plan and an informal economy relief fund. The National Social Security Authority developed guidelines for protection of workers in the workplace and on the manufacture and distribution of PPE and medical consumables. In addition, the government unfroze 4,000 health sector posts and created an additional 200 posts to ensure a full-scale response to the pandemic.

Trade unions, however, are aware of and point out important challenges in the implementation of response measures. There is no clear information on how the different measures have been of benefit, nor on who has benefited from them, and trade unions have, together with business, demanded transparency on how the package has been distributed. While the Zimbabwean government introduced a managed reduction of working hours, it has done so with no corresponding support to ensure income security. While a three-month cash transfer programme targeting one million of the most vulnerable households was launched, the support provided per household per month was far below the food poverty line.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government of Zimbabwe has integrated the SDGs into its 2021-2025 National Development Strategy (NDS1), which aims to realise the country's Vision 2030 and Africa Agenda 2063. All SDGs are integrated into the 14 national priorities of the NDS1, with clear targets and indicators to monitor progress.

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare is in charge of coordinating the implementation of Agenda 2030. Government reporting mechanisms on SDG implementation are based on VNR pre-processes, but trade union presence and ability to provide input has improved, as the trade union think tank LEDRIZ was commissioned to undertake the national progress review on SDGs. However, the multi-stakeholder platform to consult civil society on the implementation of the SDGs still meets only on an ad hoc basis.

Although for the first time the NDS1 has a clear recognition of the role of decent work in the COVID-19 recovery period, there are doubts around the political will to implement this strategy in the current context, as the government has failed on

its commitments with all its economic frameworks and has resorted to austerity. There are therefore important concerns around a possibility of improvement in the implementation of the new NDS 1.

The national Tripartite Negotiating Forum does not discuss the SDGs as such and is only involved in policy development rather than implementation and monitoring. At tripartite dialogues, labour has raised critical issues which include wages and prices, labour law reform, productivity, national social security and corruption, but no concrete results have come out of these negotiations.

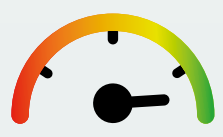
Trade unions warn that not enough resources have been allocated to the implementation of Agenda 2030. They attribute this to a lack of concrete efforts on cutting back on non-productive recurrent expenditures to create fiscal space; corruption and rent-seeking behaviour; failure to plug loopholes and eliminate leakages and illicit financial flows; and the slow pace of reform of state enterprises providing social services.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Structured multi-stakeholder platform

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners contribute individually to the government's SDG national plan



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Zimbabwe faces significant challenges in meeting **SDG 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere)**. In 2017, the proportion of the population that was deemed poor was 70.5 per cent and extreme poverty increased from 22.5 per cent in 2011-12 to 29.3 per cent in 2017 and 34 per cent in 2019, suggesting regression on **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)**. The increase in extreme poverty in rural areas is attributed to a worsening economic environment. In urban areas, deindustrialisation and job losses have led to an increase in the informalisation of the economy. Reaching **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** is far off the mark, as in 2019, only 2 per cent of the population were receiving a monthly pension or some social security funds, very low compared to the demand, which has increased due to job losses and the informalisation of the economy. Zimbabwe's 2020 budgetary allocation towards social protection was 0.7 per cent, significantly less than the 4.5 per cent of GDP stipulated in the Social Policy for Africa. Social protection is fragmented and dependent on donor funding.

Reaching **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)** remains far off, with women in Zimbabwe spending 6.5 hours per week on all unpaid care work compared to 4.5 hours for men. With regard to **target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life)**, women have lower completion rates at upper secondary level (40.8 per cent for women and 59.2 per cent for men).

The Zimbabwean economy is dominated by informality: in 2019, the proportion of informal employment outside of agriculture stood at 76 per cent, and 19 per cent of workers were considered to be in precarious or vulnerable employment, an increase from 13 per cent in 2014. This poses a challenge to reaching **target 8.3 (support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs)**. The 2019 unemployment rate stood at 16.4 per cent (higher for women – 17.2 per cent than for men – 15.7 per cent), suggesting challenges in fulfilling **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all women**

**and men)**. In addition, women are more likely than men to be working in precarious work and low-remunerated sectors; as a result their average income is only two thirds of the one for men. The underemployment rate stands at 15.5 per cent. The number of NEETs ("not in employment, education or training) mentioned in **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 44.7 per cent in 2019, a sharp rise from 35.2 per cent in 2012, affecting more women (52.9 per cent) than men (36.4 per cent). Indicators on **target 8.7 (take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour)** remain worrying, as trade unions warn that due to the harsh economic environment, vulnerability to exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking is high. Delivering on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** seems far off, as in 2019, Zimbabwe joined the list of the ten worst countries for workers, where wage theft and the non-remittance of union dues by employers are widespread.

**Target 10.4 (progressive achievement of greater equality)** remains unmet and inequalities are increasing due to corruption and the stagnancy in wages and salaries versus the cost of living. In 2017, the top 10 per cent of income earners had a 34.8 per cent share of GDP, with the bottom 20 per cent of income earners holding a 6 per cent share.

While the Zimbabwean government has passed a number of policies in order to meet **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, the lack of political will and insufficient allocation of financial resources is likely to limit their implementation.

Trade unions report that Zimbabwe's performance on **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** remains worrying: the increase in violence against and attempts to dismantle independent unions continues and the prosecution of union leaders through violence, threats and kidnappings rose between 2019 and 2020.

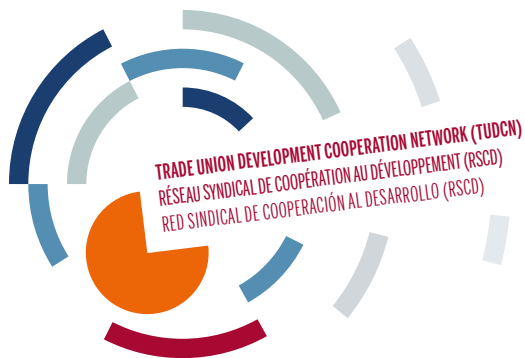
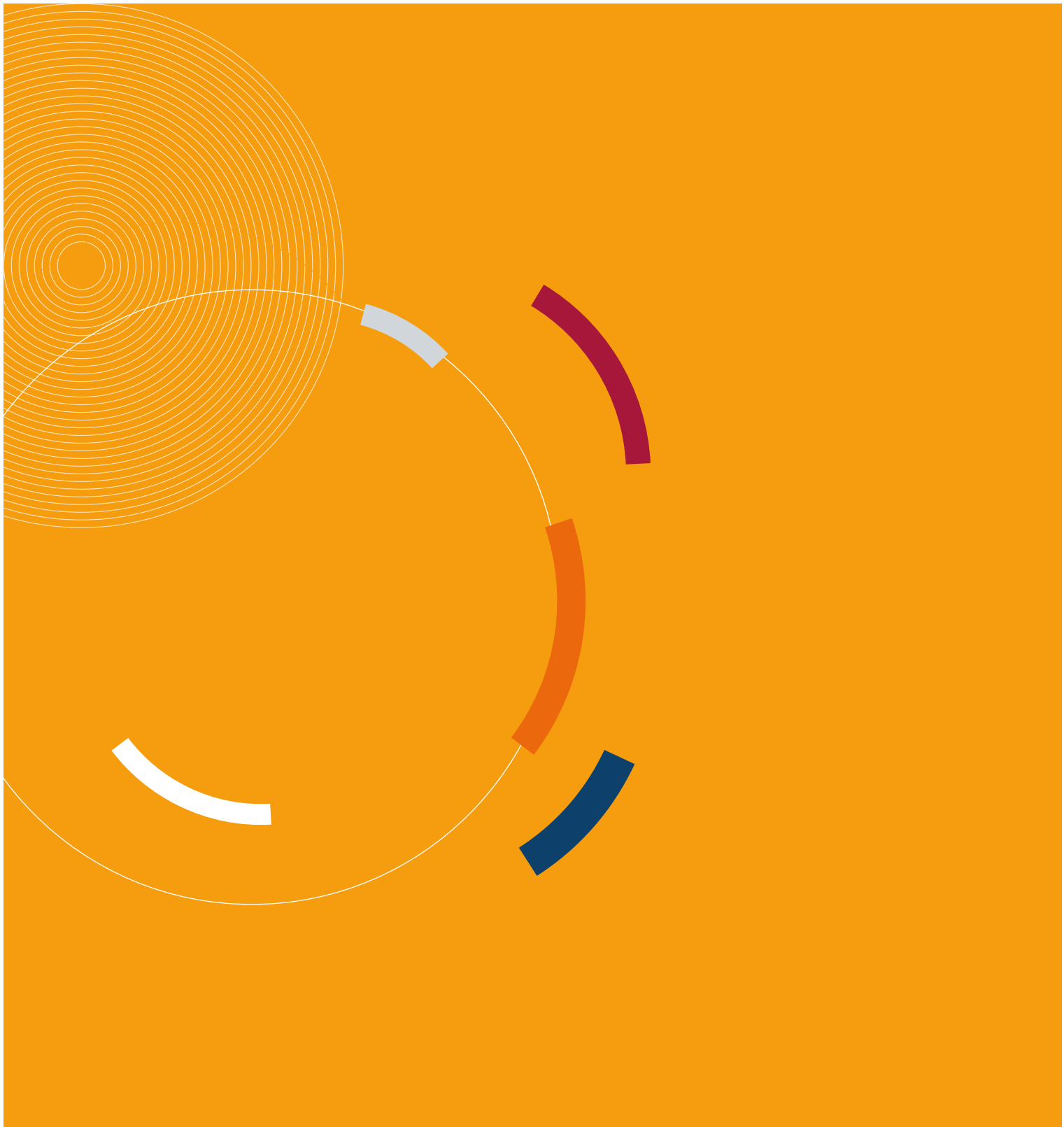
## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

To ensure an SDG-led recovery and resilience from the crisis, trade unions urge the government to:

- Ensure a consistent national dialogue through the Tripartite Negotiating Forum and effective implementation of its agreed positions. Provide for social partners' involvement not only in Agenda 2030 policy development but also in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Provide adequate budget support for the implementation of Agenda 2030, especially SDG 8.
- Reprioritise government expenditures, address corruption and impunity and halt illicit financial flows to create fiscal space to fight the pandemic and improve social service delivery.
- Increase budgetary provisions for socio-economic rights in line with the SDGs. Benchmark social protection support to the Food Poverty Line. Transform the temporary COVID-19 social protection measures into sustainable social protection mechanisms.
- Review the Zimbabwe National Employment Policy Framework in line with broad-based social dialogue and consultations in the COVID-19 recovery framework. Invest more in employment-intensive programmes and formalising the informal economy.
- Include informal economy operators in the dialogue and give priority to the informal economy in any future economic stimulus packages.
- Ensure accountability and transparency in the mobilisation, procurement processes and distribution of resources to combat COVID-19.
- Ensure the adequate provision of water and sanitation to enhance personal hygiene in informal economy workspaces, home industries and artisanal mining areas which either have erratic or no water supplies.



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