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# INTRODUCTION

The 2023 edition of *A Trade Union Take on the SDGs* gives an independent workers' perspective on how governments are delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Against a backdrop of existing structural, social, economic, security and environmental challenges, countries across the world continue to face significant obstacles in reaching the objectives set by the 2030 Agenda.

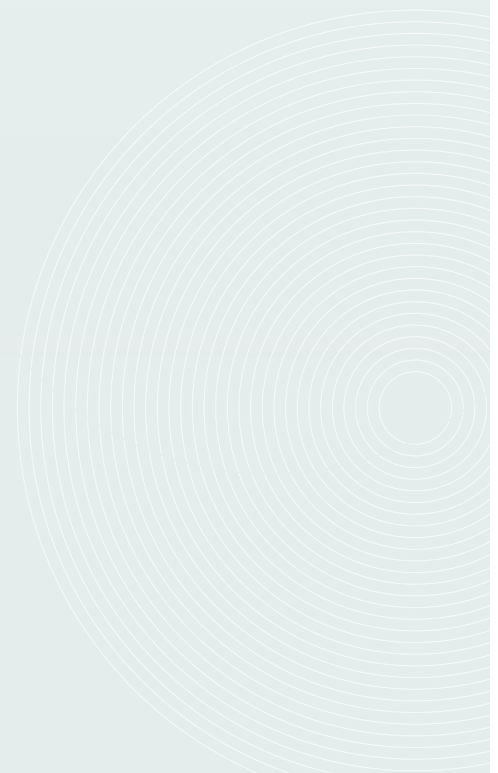
In this context, trade unions emphasise the need for a New Social Contract, with SDG 8 at its core, to respond to workers' demands for decent, climate-friendly jobs with just transition; rights for all workers; minimum living wages and equal pay; universal social protection; equality to end all discrimination; and inclusion of all countries in decision-making processes to build a rights-based development model that aligns with the SDGs and empowers developing countries.

*A Trade Union Take on the SDGs* compiles findings and analysis of the SDG country reports produced by trade union organisations in 12 countries in 2023. These reports focus on government processes related to the topic are transparent and assesses their engagement in consultations and social dialogue involving trade unions in the drafting and implementation of SDG national plans. They also map the efforts of countries to reach key SDG targets. This work is an essential part of the labour movement's contribution to the Decade of Action to deliver the Global Goals.

This year's review covers trade unions' reporting on how their governments are responding to the multiple crises which have emerged or intensified since the Covid-19 pandemic and which increasingly pose challenges to socio-economic recovery and sustainable development. Thus the country reports cover government efforts to address the fallout of the pandemic, new and re-emerging regional and global security threats, increasing global inequality, the food and energy crises, inflationary pressures and rising costs of living, climate change and environmental degradation.

Although the SDGs are increasingly integrated into national policies, resources to implement them remain insufficient. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of guaranteeing income to cover basic needs and provide universal access to social protection and essential services, such as healthcare and education. In the wake of the multiple crises listed above, there is a need to continue to focus on a human-centred recovery and resilience measures funded through domestic resource mobilisation and international support, including through official development assistance, international tax measures, debt relief, new Special Drawing Rights issuance.

Strong social dialogue structures are needed to ensure the full engagement of social partners in implementing the SDGs at the national level. Many trade unions report that governments have not adequately included them in the design and implementation of development plans. The full participation of trade unions is crucial to building trust and developing equitable policies, both within and between countries, to achieve the 2030 Agenda.



# 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 decision-making process, including consultation meetings, accessibility of policy documents and the openness of relevant officials or institutions and (2) the existence of adequate reporting mechanisms.

The input provided by trade unions exposed clear limitations regarding transparency, with trade unions in all 12 countries reporting some degree of restriction in accessing information on the SDG implementation process, and two countries (Peru and Venezuela) denouncing a complete lack of access. In other cases, where authorities provided limited information, they did so at irregular intervals, or only when requested. In addition, reporting mechanisms were often unclear.

## CONSULTATION

SSDG 17 recognises multistakeholder partnerships as key to achieving the SDGs and calls on countries to set up multistakeholder monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the goals. Indeed, multistakeholder consultations are vital to ensuring a truly participative implementation process. Trade unions and civil society organisations have a key role to play in integrating the needs and priorities of workers and society at large into the policy-making process and in ensuring that the resulting policies leave no one behind.

Trade unions assessed consultation processes available in their countries, with a special focus on the functioning of multistakeholder consultation platforms. Most of these assessments showed that unions were not included in the fora that governments had set up to monitor and implement the 2030 Agenda in their respective countries. Full consultation processes were in place in only three of the 12 countries surveyed (Belgium, Chile and Canada). Most worryingly, four

of the 12 countries analysed (Colombia, Lithuania, Rwanda and Venezuela) had either no consultation process in place at all or effectively excluded trade unions from participating in it. In other countries (Bangladesh, Maldives, Tanzania and Peru), while trade unions were involved in consultation sessions, these lacked a reciprocated dialogue, simply supplying information without taking input from the trade unions involved.

## SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Social dialogue is a fundamental means of implementing the 2030 Agenda<sup>1</sup>, as it facilitates consensus building among governments, employers' and workers' organisations on policies that have an impact on decent work strategies. The ILO considers social dialogue and tripartism "as the most appropriate methods (...) translating economic development into social progress, and social progress into economic development"<sup>2</sup> Social dialogue stands out as a key means of tackling the multiple crises at hand, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent economic and social crises.<sup>3</sup> However, the trade union analysis reveals an insufficient integration of social dialogue into the national planning and implementation process of the SDGs.

In four of the countries analysed (Colombia, Lithuania, Peru and Venezuela), social partners are not involved at all in designing and implementing their government's national SDG plan. Workers and employers remain under-consulted: contributions jointly drafted by employers' representatives and trade unions have only been submitted in three of the 12 countries surveyed (Belgium, Burkina Faso and Tanzania). A tripartite dialogue on the 2030 Agenda has not been reported in any of the surveyed countries. Only in Belgium and Tanzania do the discussions go beyond a focus on the implementation of SDG 8 and on the links between decent work and the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

<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.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [ILO Social dialogue report 2022.](#)

# ASSESSING PROGRESS

## WHERE ARE WE AT WITH...

### SHARED ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Inequality of wealth distribution is a significant concern in most of the countries covered in this report.

In Venezuela's case, this is particularly worrying, as it is one of the most unequal countries in the world, which has resulted in significant emigration, as the population has sought to escape poverty. Inequalities are also stark in Colombia, where inflation is eroding the purchasing power of those most vulnerable. Chile stands out as an example of a South American country where progress towards greater equality is taking place, albeit slowly. However, serious inequalities threaten to undermine progress in Bangladesh, the Maldives and Burkina Faso. Inequalities also pose a challenge in high-income countries, notably Belgium, where nearly a fifth of the population is at risk of poverty.

### QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Tackling unemployment and in-work poverty, while promoting productive employment and labour income share, is key for employment quality. Unemployment remains a significant challenge in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia and Rwanda. Underemployment, especially that of young people, remains to be tackled in Bangladesh, Belgium, Chile, the Maldives, Peru, Rwanda and Venezuela. Of the countries surveyed, only Canada has seen employment rates recover fully from the crisis brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Women and youth have been particularly affected by labour market disruptions caused by the pandemic. Where data is available, it shows that women's participation in the labour force is lower than that of men and confirms the persistence of a gender pay gap.

In most countries, trade unions report that the minimum wage is inaccessible to segments of the working population or too low, especially in view of the rising costs of living. Low-paid work and the number of working poor are relatively high in the high-income countries included in the report. In Belgium, the percentage of workers on low wages stands at 8.6 per cent. In Canada, nearly eight per cent of workers are working poor, with proportions particularly high among those from ethnic minority and migration backgrounds. Belgium, Chile and Lithuania are the only countries in this report where minimum wages have been raised to fight inflation.

### LABOUR VULNERABILITY

Labour vulnerability reflects the exposure of workers to risks and an absence of social protection.

The share of informal, precarious and vulnerable work is growing or remains a challenge in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, the Maldives, Peru, Rwanda, Tanzania and Venezuela. Informality is characteristic of the labour markets in the majority of lower-income countries, although even high-income countries, such as Canada and Lithuania, can face relatively high levels of vulnerable employment.

Trade unions also report high proportions of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) in each country, with the exceptions of Belgium and Canada, which registered slight drops. Young women are more likely to be NEET in Burkina Faso, Chile, the Maldives, Peru, Rwanda and Tanzania.

Social protection is crucial for economic recovery and resilient societies. However, even in high-income countries with near-universal social protection schemes such as Belgium, Chile and Canada, trade unions report that not all workers are covered in the event of a workplace injury. In lower-income countries, social protection coverage remains partial and fragmented. In some cases (Bangladesh), spending on essential services has declined and in others (Colombia), trade unions denounced corruption as undermining state social security schemes.

### LABOUR RIGHTS

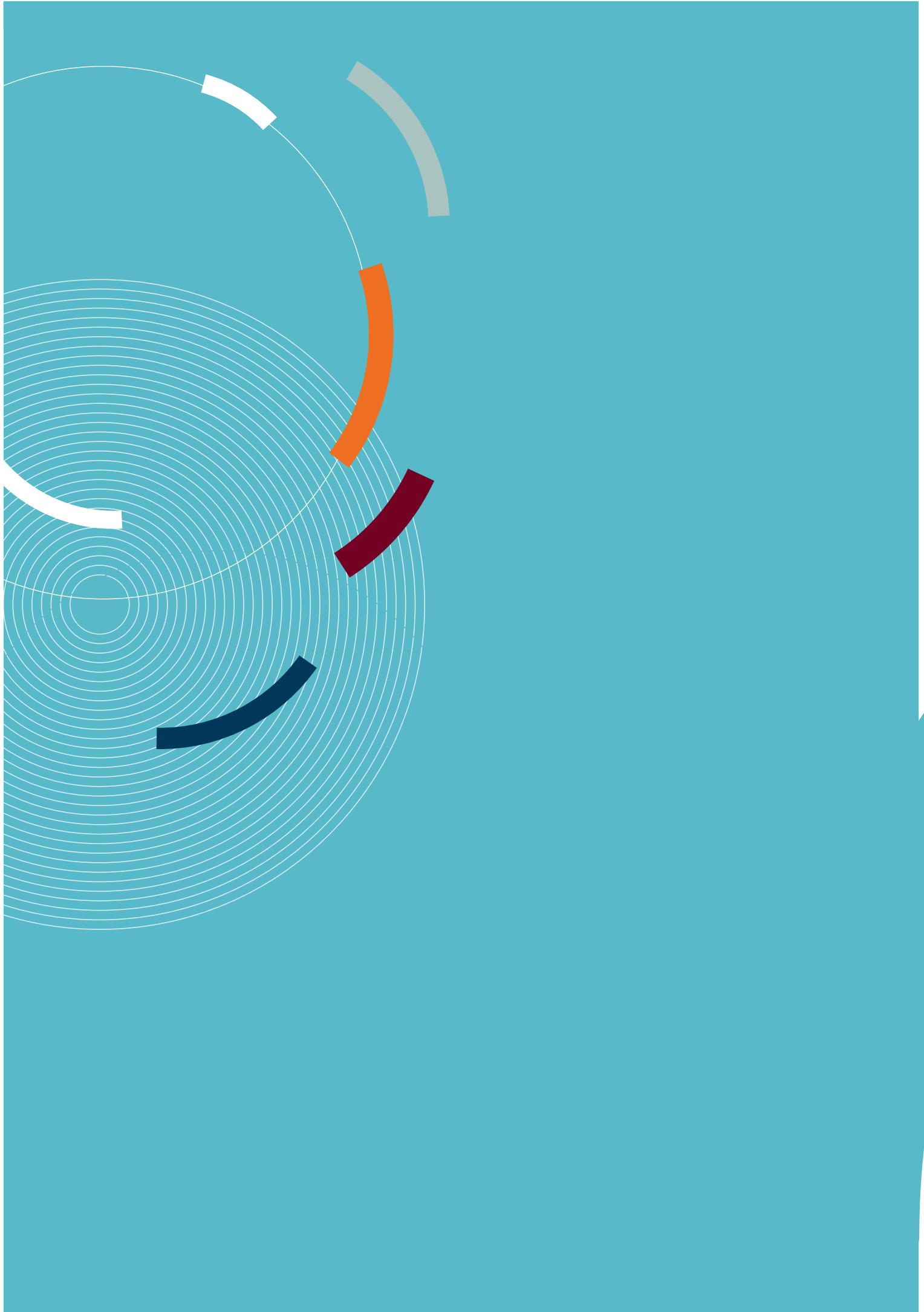
The protection of labour rights varies considerably between countries. National compliance with labour rights has declined in Bangladesh, Belgium and Burkina Faso; labour rights are restricted in the Maldives, Rwanda, Tanzania and Venezuela. Two of the countries included in this report (Bangladesh and Colombia) are to be found on the list of the 10 worst countries for workers in 2022. The labour inspectorates are understaffed in Rwanda and Tanzania, and international accords have not been transposed to the national level in the Maldives, jeopardising implementation.

Several countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Chile, Peru, Rwanda, Tanzania and Venezuela) still report cases of child labour.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the multiple ongoing crises, trade unions call for the application of a New Social Contract. Specifically, they call for:

- A renewed political commitment to the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. This should be achieved through effectively **mainstreaming the SDGs** into national development plans and budgets, with adequate financial resources, including progressive taxation and Official Development Assistance (ODA) to support sustainable development efforts.
- Investments in the creation of decent, sustainable and climate-friendly **jobs** and training, lifelong learning, and literacy and essential skills, especially in the context of green and digital transitions, as well as investments into clean energy.
- The creation of **decent working conditions**, ensuring respect for labour rights, implementation of a labour protection floor for all, equal pay for work of equal value, health and safety standards and establishing minimum living wages which increase alongside the rising cost of living. In addition, freedom of association and collective bargaining rights must be secured; migrant workers should have full access to labour markets and pathways to permanent residency.
- Ensuring universal access to **social protection** and quality public services, including universal health coverage.
- Putting in place labour market policies and redistributive policies to ensure a workplace free of all forms of discrimination based on sex, class, ethnicity, age, ideology, religion and sexual orientation to **uphold equality and fight vulnerability**. To achieve this, it is imperative to invest in public care services to reduce and redistribute unpaid care.
- Ensuring inclusive **governance and social dialogue** by reinforcing the role of social dialogue is a key means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Social partners must be involved in a genuine consultation process on the development of national plans for the implementation of the SDGs; to this end, transparent progress reporting is essential.






# COUNTRY PROFILES

2023



# BANGLADESH

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGS

#HLPF2023

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

## WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

The Bangladeshi government has introduced specific measures to tackle the multiple crises, giving priority to food security, climate change and mitigating the impact of COVID-19. On food security, in 2020, a National Food and Nutrition Security Policy Plan of Action for 2021-2030 was introduced. The plan introduced incentives, legislation and regulation to encourage welfare, food safety, healthy diets and nutritional improvement in the population.

To address the public health implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the government formulated Health Guidelines on Covid-19 and a National Preparedness and Response Plan. To combat its economic consequences, initiatives such as subsidising the cost of purchasing rice for vulnerable citizens were introduced.

Bangladesh is one of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries. At the 2022 COP26 summit, it displayed international solidarity by pledging to cut its carbon emissions by 22% by 2030. To reach the target, 96% of Bangladeshi emissions cuts will come from sectors such as energy production, transport, industry, households, commercial and agriculture, brick kilns and fugitive emissions. The rest will be cut from agriculture and livestock, forestry, and municipal solid waste and wastewater.

## ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government of Bangladesh has integrated the SDGs into its eighth Five-Year Plan (2020-2025). The Ministry of Planning coordinates SDG integration and implementation, alongside the SDG coordinator in the office of the Prime Minister. The government has developed national-level SDG trackers and publishes progress reports on the implementation of Agenda 2030, based on information provided by line ministries and government agencies to the Ministry of Planning. A financing plan for the implementation of Agenda 2030 has been developed drawing on budgetary resources, donor and private sector funding.

Information on the process of SDG implementation is published in the form of the SDG Progress Report and is accessible to all. However, trade unions state that the reporting lacks detailed data on progress on individual targets for specific goals.

Trade unions and civil society are partially consulted on the design and implementation of national SDG plans. However, a strong and functional multi-stakeholder platform on the SDGs is missing. Civil society and trade unions have formed the Citizen Platform for SDGs, which provides a broad platform for discussions, including, occasionally, government representatives.

There have been instances where social partners have been engaged in discussions on SDG implementation within the framework of the tripartite dialogue. However, trade unions report that the government prioritises the input of employers and that trade unions and workers' representatives have not been visibly and effectively involved in the overall implementation of the SDGs.

### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

### CONSULTATION



Information sessions but a lack of interaction

### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Individual contributions from social partners to the national government



Jatio Sramik League (JSL)  
Bangladesh Labour Federation (BLF)  
Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal (BJSd)

Bangladesh Mukto Sramik Federation (BMSF)  
Bangladesh Sanjukta Sramik Federation (BSSF)  
Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC)



## IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With regards to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that in 2020, 20.5% of the population lived below the international poverty line, including 4% of workers. A further 30% of the population are defined as "vulnerable", having incomes slightly above the poverty threshold. With a human development index of 0.661, Bangladesh falls into the medium human development category and performs better than the South Asia regional average. However, trade unions warn that rising inequalities risk undermining this progress. With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2021, 22.5% of the population benefitted from at least one type of social security benefit. The proportion of the population above statutory pensionable age receiving a pension increased from 6.0% in 2002 to 39.0% in 2020. In addition, the government recently announced the creation of a Universal Pension Scheme. However, on **target 1.a (essential services)**, government spending on essential education services declined from 20.5% in 2000 to 14.6% in 2018.

On **SDG 5**, significant efforts still need to be made to reach the objective set by **target 5.4 (recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as women in Bangladesh spend eight times as much time (11.7 hours per day) as men (1.6 hours per day) on domestic and care work. With regards to **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 9.1% in 2000 to 20.9% in 2020.

On **SDG 8**, progress on **target 8.3 (support decent job creation)** is needed urgently, as the proportion of informal employment increased from 87.9% in 2010 to 94.7% in 2017. In addition, in 2019, 54% of work was categorised as precarious. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the unemployment rate grew from 3.3% in 2000 to 4.4% in 2017. In addition, underemployment stood at 6.9% in 2019 (5.8% for men and 9.6% for women). The situation for young people aged between 15 and 24 was particularly dire, as 15.9% were underemployed in 2019.

While NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** reduced somewhat from 31.0% in 2005 to 27.4% in 2017, they remain high. Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** show that 5.9% of children aged 5-17 engaged in economic activity in 2019 (8.7% for boys and 3% for girls). With regards to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, in 2020, the level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) stood at 7.5, a decline from 7.85 in 2019.

On **SDG 10** and **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**, in 2016, 10% of the highest income earners controlled 26.8% of GDP, while the lowest 20% controlled 8.6% of GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 42.2% in 2020, a decrease from 44.7% in 2010.

On **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, the 2010-2021 National Strategy for Sustainable Development formally integrates environmental management into broader planning objectives and a National Environment Policy was adopted in 2018. However, trade unions are not engaged in a dialogue on the design and implementation of these policies.

There are grave concerns in relation to **SDG 16**. Reaching **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** is far off, as in 2022, Bangladesh was one of the world's ten worst countries for workers, whose rights continue to be severely curtailed.



## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the government of Bangladesh to:

- Adopt a clear national policy on engagement and coordination with non-state actors on SDG planning and implementation.
- Ensure effective social dialogue and increase the involvement of trade unions in the tripartite social dialogue on the implementation of the SDGs.
- Ensure freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, formalise informal workers and guarantee their fundamental rights. Reduce the barriers for the formation of trade unions and for workers joining a trade union.
- Ensure a living wage, at least at the level of BDT 25,000.
- Ensure universal social protection.
- Ensure the implementation of the Universal Pension Act by including a workers' representative on the governing board of the National Pension Authority.
- Reduce workplace injuries and death by promoting proper health and safety at work. Improve the operations of the Employment Injury Scheme and worker representation within it.
- Ensure and enhance universal social protection for all workers and vulnerable populations.
- Eliminate all forms of violence and harassment against women, ensure equal pay in all workplaces and women-friendly workplaces.



Jatio Sramik League (JSL)  
Bangladesh Labour Federation (BLF)  
Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal (BJSD)

Bangladesh Mukto Sramik Federation (BMSF)  
Bangladesh Sanjukta Sramik Federation (BSSF)  
Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC)



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# BELGIUM

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGS

#HLPF2023

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

### WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE CRISES

In response to the pandemic, the Belgian government introduced a temporary unemployment scheme to prevent dismissals and support workers whose work had been reduced or suspended. This has been subsequently transformed into an 'energy insecurity' temporary unemployment scheme. In the face of the energy crisis and rising prices, the government implemented a program of energy subsidies and lowered taxes on gas and electricity. However, contrary to trade union demands, a ceiling on energy prices was not imposed, nor was a surplus windfall profit tax on energy providers implemented.

Trade unions commend the Belgian government for maintaining the wage indexation mechanism in view of the rising cost of living. Furthermore, the government introduced measures proposed by social partners to sanction abuse of daily contracts in temporary labour agencies, and to introduce an individual right to training for private sector employees.

Trade unions deplore the fact that the government extended the precarious job status of flexi jobs to more sectors; allowed employers to introduce night work without collective bargaining; and maintained the system of 'gig jobs' on digital platforms, excluding these jobs from labour protection, social security, or taxation.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Belgium implements the 2030 Agenda at both the federal and regional levels. The implementation is driven by the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development, attached to the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, and under the authority of the Minister for Sustainable Development. The Inter-Ministerial Conference for Sustainable Development is the central coordination mechanism for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national level. However, trade unions alert that this body has not met since 2017, meaning that implementation can only take place at the federal levels.

In 2021, a new Federal Plan on Sustainable Development was introduced. Trade unions regret that the implementation of this plan lacks political will and that the SDGs are not adequately transposed into national objectives. However, since 2022, some improvements can be observed thanks to the

introduction of the European Action Plan for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Trade unions alert that a national-level plan for the SDGs is still missing in Belgium, with only federation-level plans in place. Trade unions were invited to participate in the selection of priority indicators, but they have not been informed of the follow-up. While trade unions and other civil society representatives were invited to submit their input towards Belgium's 2023 Voluntary National Review (VNR), they do not believe their contributions were taken on board. However, trade unions are regularly invited to provide inputs towards the 2030 Agenda process. While the tripartite social dialogue process does not explicitly touch upon the implementation of SDGs, trade unions believe that many collective agreements contribute to their realisation.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Structured multi-stakeholder platform

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



social partners jointly agree and submit contributions to the national government



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

On **SDG 1 (eradicate poverty)**, while indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that only 0.1% of the population lived below the international poverty line in 2019, and Belgium had only 1.7% of workers working at minimum wage, the percentage of workers on low wages stood at 8.6%. In addition, 18.7% of the population was at risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2023.

With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2018, the coverage stood at 100% for population covered by at least one social protection benefit, including disabled people collecting disability benefits, children receiving child or family cash benefits, and vulnerable persons being covered by social assistance. However, only 63.1% of employees were covered in the event of work injury.

Further progress must be made on reaching **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as the proportion of time spent by women and girls aged 15 years old and over on unpaid domestic chores stood at 16% in 2013. Family responsibilities accounted for 20.4% of non-occupationally active women and girls aged 15-64 years old in 2021, placing Belgium behind the European Union average.

On **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the gender pay gap stood at 5.8% in 2018, when comparing the average annual gross income of men and women, without adjusting for part time work. This reflects the substantial difference between the frequency with which women take up part time work as compared to men.

On **SDG 8 (decent work)**, efforts to promote **target 8.3 (support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs)** remain to be made, as rates of informal employment in non-agricultural settings stood at 3.1% in 2021. 3% of jobs can also be classified as precarious, with the cleaning and service voucher sectors most affected by precariousness, closely followed by security, the public sector, construction and industry.

On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the underemployment rate stood at 9.2% in 2019, but was more than double that in the 15-24 age group (20.7%). NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 7.4% in 2021 (down from 9.2% the year before).

Progress on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** requires some improvement, as both the numbers of fatal (2.2 per 100,000) and non-fatal occupational injuries (2,234.9 per 100,000) increased in 2020, compared to 2019. While there are no violations of ILO labour rights in law, they occasionally happen in practice in Belgium, resulting in a rating of 1.66 for 2017 in the Penn State University index.

Belgium is performing relatively well on reducing social inequalities and on reaching **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**. With a GINI coefficient of 24.1, it has the second lowest inequality level in the EU. In 2019, the income share held by the highest 10% stood at 22.3%, while that of the lowest 20% was 9%.

To implement **SDG 13 (combat climate change)**, Belgium has adopted a National Energy and Climate Plan for which trade unions and other social partners have been consulted. A renewed plan is set to be introduced in 2023; trade unions have provided their input towards it.

On **SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies)**, it is highly concerning that Belgium holds a score of 3 on the ITUC Global Rights index of 2022, meaning that regular violations of rights take place. The fact that Belgium had a score of 1 (sporadic violations of rights) in 2018 suggests that the situation for workers and trade union activity has deteriorated and must urgently be addressed.

## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Belgian government to:

- Demonstrate a strong political commitment to delivering on the 2030 Agenda.
- Facilitate an open dialogue between social partners on broader SDG objectives and the means of meeting them.
- Focus on creating more quality jobs rather than on increasing the employment rate.
- Restore the right to free wage bargaining; further increase in the gross amount of the interprofessional minimum wage; further reduce fiscal and parafiscal burdens on low wages, avoiding the creation of income traps; reverse the unilateral government interventions in the negotiated minimum wages for youth and the gig job sector.
- Ensure equality at work by combatting discrimination in hiring and at other stages of the employment relationship; address discrimination and unequal treatment more actively and in consultation with social partners; make the current legal framework on positive action more flexible and provide better information on the possibility of using positive action plans.
- Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and through the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
- Reform the wage norm law, which is incompatible with the right to collective bargaining.



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

## WORKERS NEED SUSTAINABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

Burkina Faso faces a particularly difficult internal situation, which is having a significant impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In 2022, the country experienced two coups d'état, one in January and one in September. In addition, continued terrorist attacks by jihadists linked to al-Qaida and Islamic State continue to destroy public and private infrastructure in the country. As a result, several public investment and development projects have been discontinued, the country has suffered from social tensions, and over 1.7 million people have been internally displaced in the Sahel and Centre-North regions.

In addition, the global context, including the impact of the Russian aggression on Ukraine and China's zero-Covid policies, has hampered the country's economic progress. Burkina Faso's GDP growth amounted to 2.7% in 2022, a significant drop from 2021, when it stood at 6.9%. Year-on-year inflation came in at 13.5% in October 2022, compared to 3.3% in October 2021. The cost of food products has been particularly impacted, with inflation at 22.8% for this category. To combat the cost-of-living crisis, the government intends to strengthen the national food security stock and control food prices.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government of Burkina Faso integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its National Programme for Economic and Social Development II (PNDES II) for 2021-2025, which entered into force in July 2021. PNDES II builds on the previous development plan by focusing on four main areas: consolidating resilience, security, social cohesion and peace; deepening institutional reforms and modernising public administration; consolidating the development of human capital and national solidarity; and investing in growth-oriented industries to boost the economy and job creation. The implementation of the SDGs is overseen by the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Development.

However, the SDG implementation process has been interrupted by a succession of coups d'état, the first of which took place in January 2022, overthrowing the democratically-elected president. The new military

regime adopted a Transition Action Plan, which retained the axes of PNDES II. However, a second coup d'état in September 2022 interrupted the implementation of this plan. The authorities currently in power have adopted their own Transition Action Plan.

Trade unions report that the budgetary resources at the government's disposal are not sufficient to implement PNDES II or its successors, as 28% of the costs are not budgeted for through own or external resources. Trade unions are being consulted by the government on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in sectoral dialogues and annual reviews. They have also been consulted on the development of PNDES II, alongside other social partners. While the SDGs are not discussed within the framework of social dialogue as such, input from trade unions is accepted on an informal basis. Discussions within this framework focus on the implementation of SDG 8.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Social partners jointly agree and submit contributions to the national government



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Burkina Faso's progress on reaching the SDGs has stalled and requires urgent improvements.

With regards to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that in 2018, 30.5% of the Burkinabe population lived below the international poverty line. 36% of workers were under the poverty line, with rural areas being more affected – 43.7% in rural versus 11.7% in urban areas. With a human development index of 0.449, Burkina Faso was one of the least developed countries (184 out of 191) in the world in 2021, having registered a decline from its 2019 development indicators. With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2020, only 9.9% of the population benefitted from any type of social security benefit. While social security has been opened to informal workers on a voluntary basis, coverage remains marginal. Since 2018, the country has been putting a universal healthcare insurance scheme into operation.

On **SDG 5**, further efforts are required to reach the objective set by **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as 51.8% of women who were inactive on the labour market reported this as due to domestic obligations. However, with regards to **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, in 2015, women were the majority of those active on the labour market (52.6%), although men still represent the majority (two thirds) of civil servants. Working-age women in Burkina Faso are especially disadvantaged in terms of access to education: 76.8% of women aged 16 to 64 do not have primary education, compared to 53% for men; around 20% of working-age men have at least secondary education, compared to 13.8% of women. While the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 8.1% in 2000 to 13.4% in 2020, it remains low.

Significant improvements remain to be made on **SDG 8**. Progress on **target 8.3 (support decent job creation)** is urgently needed, as 94.3% of workers were in informal employment in 2018; additionally, the rate of vulnerable employment stood at 89.7% – 93.8% among women, 84.9% among men and 89.2% for young people. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for**

**all)**, the unemployment rate grew from 2.8% in 2003 to 4.7% in 2018. In addition, underemployment stood at 5.5% in 2019. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 41% in 2018 – 49% for women and 30.4% for men. Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** are highly concerning, showing that 40.6% of children engaged in child labour in 2014. With regards to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, 1,659 workplace accidents were reported in 2021, a number which trade unions say underestimates the true scale due to failures to register workers and declare such accidents by employers. In 2020, the level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) stood at 0.7, a decline from 0.9 in 2018.

Progress is still needed on **SDG 10**. On **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**, in 2018, 10% of the highest income earners controlled 37.5% of GDP, while the lowest 20% controlled 5.5% of GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 46.4% in 2019, a decline from 51% in 2004.

On **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, dialogue with trade unions on achieving a just transition is lacking.

There are grave concerns in relation to **SDG 16**. Reaching **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** is far off, as killings, kidnappings, enforced disappearances and the arbitrary detention of ordinary citizens by terrorists and vigilante groups continue. Journalists are often threatened. In April 2021, two Spanish reporters were shot dead by suspected jihadists. This context undermines the freedom of expression and that of the press.

## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the authorities of Burkina Faso to:

- Engage trade unions in consultations on the development of the successor plan to PNDES II.
- Boost decent job creation:
  - Combat tax and customs fraud.
  - Prohibit the import of certain products to protect local production and jobs.
  - Ratify ILO Conventions No. 94 on public procurement, No. 189 on domestic labour, and No. 181 on subcontracting.
  - Link the granting of public contracts to the creation of decent jobs.
  - Raise the minimum wage.
- Improve social protection:
  - Ratify ILO Convention No. 102 on social security.
  - Extend social coverage to all segments of the population, including informal and self-employed workers.
  - Extend the range of pension benefits.
  - Put in place universal health coverage.
- Improve labour rights:
  - Consult social partners on a more comprehensive and protective labour code.
  - Harmonise the salaries of public officials.
- Improve social dialogue:
  - Strengthen the High Council for Social Dialogue, and instruct it to produce an annual socio-economic barometric study as a basis for discussion.
  - Ratify ILO Convention No. 151 on the employment relationship in the public service and Convention No. 154 on collective bargaining.



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# CANADA

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2023

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

### WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

To address the challenge posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Canadian government introduced emergency pandemic benefits, which reduced poverty despite an unprecedented rise in unemployment. As the findings of the 2021 Canada Income Survey show, the withdrawal of income support benefits caused poverty rates to return to pre-pandemic levels, and in some cases (e.g. unattached seniors), exceed them. In 2021, over 18% of Canadians (nearly 7 million individuals) lived in households reporting marginal, moderate or severe food insecurity, up from 15.7% (5.8 million people) in 2020. Families with children, particularly female single-parent families, were at higher risk of food insecurity. Food prices this year have been increasing at or near twice the pace as overall Consumer Price Inflation, compounding the effects of high shelter, transportation and home heating costs. Despite downward pressure on living standards, falling average real wages, and the unwinding of COVID-era fiscal stimulus, monetary policy remains focused on slowing business investment and increasing labour-market slack.

To tackle the challenges presented by the climate crisis, the Canadian government has presented an interim Sustainable Jobs Plan and committed to introducing a Sustainable Jobs Act by the end of 2023. The legislation is set to include guiding principles, governance structures and reporting requirements, including a requirement for the government to prepare and implement Sustainable Jobs Action Plans starting in 2025, and every five years thereafter.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Canadian government launched a national strategy on Agenda 2030 in 2021. The Minister of Families, Children and Social Development has the overall responsibility for Canada's SDG implementation, in collaboration with all other ministers and their departments. The Minister of International Development champions Canada's international SDG efforts. All federal ministers, departments and agencies are accountable for implementing the SDGs within their areas of responsibility. An SDG unit coordinates efforts, raises awareness, monitors and reports on implementation. The Canadian government reports that it has committed \$59.8 million in funding over 13 years (2018 to 2031) to the implementation of the Agenda 2030. In addition, several federal programmes are supporting partnerships under various SDGs.

Progress on implementing the SDGs is reported through the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) and other government reporting mentioning the

SDGs. Canada is currently preparing for its second Voluntary National Review (VNR). The government launched a public consultation, inviting all citizens and civil society to provide input into the VNR, and the answers received are set to inform the report. Additional engagement activities will include targeted outreach to engage stakeholder groups, included trade union organisations, such as Government of Canada departments, provinces and territories, municipalities, Members of Parliament, indigenous peoples, youth and key SDG stakeholders.

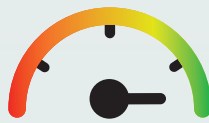
Trade unions are able to raise issues relating to SDG implementation through existing platforms, such as bilateral discussions, ILO tripartite discussions, or through the submission of briefs and occasional opportunities such as at annual tripartite roundtables.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Structured consultation/multi-stakeholder platform

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Individual contributions from social partners to the national government





# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

On **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that Canada ranked as the 15th most developed country in the world in 2021, with an HDI score of 0.936. While in 2018 only 0.2% of the population lived below the international poverty line, 7.6% of Canadians aged 18-64 were working poor. The proportion of working poor was particularly high among black men and women, First Nations people and recent immigrants. With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2018, coverage stood at 100% of the population covered by at least one social protection benefit. However, in 2019, only 69.1% of employees were covered by workplace injury benefits and only 68% of persons with severe disabilities were covered by disability social protection benefits. In 2017, Canada's social spending represented 23.1% of GDP, above the OECD average of 20.9%.

Further progress must be made on reaching **SGD 5** and **target 5.4 (recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work)** as in 2015, more women performed housework (89% compared to 76% of men) and women spent more time on caring for children (one hour vs 30 minutes per day for men). They were also more likely to provide care to an adult family member or friend (3.3% vs 1.2% for men). On **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 20.6% in 2000 to 30.5% in 2022 but remains far off parity. In 2018, the government approved the Gender Budgeting Act and developed a Gender Results Framework to track progress in meeting gender-equality goals.

On **SDG 8**, efforts to promote **target 8.3 (decent job creation)** still need to be made, as in 2019, 10.8% of employment could be categorised as vulnerable. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the rate of unemployment in 2022 stood at 5.3% (5.4% for men and 5.1% for women) —the lowest reported since 1976, despite sharp rises registered in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The rate of underemployment has also fallen, reaching 7.3% in 2022. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at

12.9% in 2021 (down from 17.9% the year before). Trade unions report that indigenous youth are twice as likely to be NEET than their non-indigenous peers. Progress on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** requires some improvement, as after a sustained decline, non-fatal occupational injuries have been on the rise since 2016.

On **SDG 10** and **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**, in 2019, the income share held by the highest 10% stood at 25.3%, while that of the lowest 20% at 7.1%. The share of GDP from labour, comprising wages and social protection transfers, increased only slightly from 60.1% in 2004 to 60.8% in 2019. On **target 10.7 (migration and mobility)**, while the government regularly consults stakeholders on its immigration-level plans, trade unions are not involved in these discussions. Trade unions express significant concerns about the rights of migrant workers, who do not have full protection of their rights and are subject to exploitation.

To implement **SDG 13**, in 2023 Canada launched a Sustainable Jobs Plan, following a consultation, including with trade unions. A Sustainable Jobs Secretariat was established to coordinate policies, and a Sustainable Jobs Partnership Council will promote consultation with trade unions among others. More funding has been allocated to support training for green jobs.

On **SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies)**, it is concerning that occasional cases of arbitrary arrest of workers and trade unionists have been recorded, alongside violations of the right to association and the right to strike. Trade unions report that increases in online attacks on public office holders, journalists and human rights advocates has harmed media freedom in Canada.



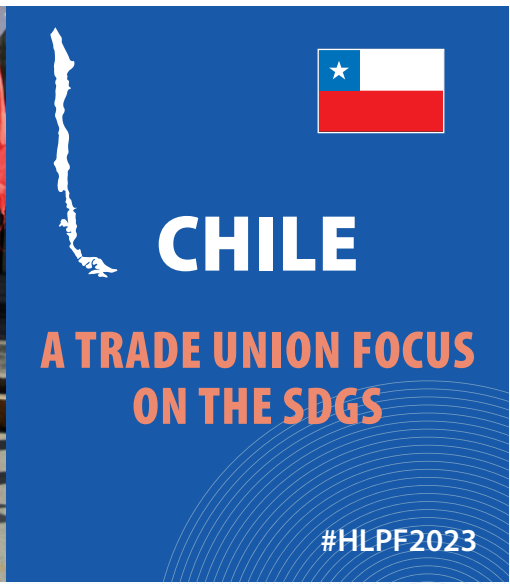
## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Canadian government to:

- To promote the creation of decent jobs:
  - Restore full employment as a primary objective of macroeconomic policy
  - Invest in sustainable jobs and training, lifelong learning, and literacy and essential skills.
  - Replace tied work permits for migrant workers with open permits and pathways to permanent residency
  - Improve job quality by ending employee misclassification, prohibiting contract-flipping, ensuring equal treatment for part-time workers, and strengthening the rights of remote workers and those working on digital platforms.
  - Remove barriers to unionisation and introduce robust anti-scab legislation preventing companies from using replacement workers in the event of strikes.
  - Ensure a just transition by making sure that investments in clean energy create good jobs.
- To promote social protection:
  - Reform employment insurance to improve access to adequate regular and special benefits
  - Provide dental care and universal medical insurance (pharmacare).
- Raise minimum wages and ensure they increase in line with the rising cost of living.
- Promote gender justice at work, ensure pay parity, prevent gender-based violence in the workplace.
- Invest in public care services to reduce and redistribute unpaid care.
- Strengthen federal and provincial labour standards, ensure compliance with ILO conventions and obligations.
- Promote social dialogue all levels – with federal, provincial and territorial governments and employers.



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

## WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE CRISES

The government of Chile has adopted a series of policies to address the multiple ongoing crises. To address the cost-of-living crisis, the government has raised the minimum wage and provides monthly subsidies to households to offset rising food prices. It has also set up a network of food banks. In 2023, the government launched a National Food Sovereignty Strategy to boost food security by introducing a range of measures, such as support for smallholder and Indigenous family farming, boosting the development of farmers' markets, a program to strengthen the sustainable production of traditional crops and investment into research and development on food sovereignty and security.

To address the climate crisis, efforts are underway to adjust Chile's energy mix and minimise the use of fossil fuels. Chile plans to completely phase out coal by 2030 and to produce 65 per cent of its energy needs from renewables by 2025, rising to 80 per cent by 2030. In 2022, the government passed a Climate Change Law which makes the 2050 carbon neutrality target and the nationally determined contribution targets binding in law.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Trade unions report that subsequent Chilean governments have consistently supported the implementation of Agenda 2030. In 2023, the current government of Gabriel Boric presented a new strategy for implementing the SDGs, focused on social justice, a just ecological transition, guarantees of decent jobs, and the creation of a society that places the sustainability of life, care, safety and well-being of people and communities at its centre.

the implementation of the SDGs is lacking, as these are fragmented across sectoral plans.

All ministries must integrate SDG targets into their work and the National Council for the Implementation of Agenda 2030, made up of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Economy, Environment and Social Development, monitors the streamlining of the SDGs into public policies and their implementation. However, trade unions report a clear overview of resources allocated for

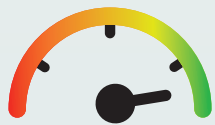
Trade unions report that transparency on the implementation of Agenda 2030 is set to improve with the establishment of the National Council for the Implementation of Agenda 2030, which will drive progress on reporting mechanisms. Trade unions have been consulted in the drafting process of the National Strategy for the Implementation of the Agenda 2030 for the years 2023-2030. Their input was included in both the creation of the first draft and following its initial presentation. However, as a tripartite social dialogue on SDGs has still not been put into place, social partners lack a platform to discuss and contribute on issues related to SDG implementation in a structured way.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



There is a structured consultation/ multi-stakeholder platform

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



No social dialogue on the SDGs



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

The indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty)** show that Chile is a country with a high human development index (HDI) – 0.855 in 2021 – and has a ranking of 42 among the most developed countries in the world. The proportion of the population living below the international poverty line is low, standing at 0.1 per cent in 2022. However, indicators on **target 1.3 (social protection systems)** show not all the population (83 per cent) was covered by at least one social protection benefit in 2021. Notably, only 24.3 per cent of the unemployed were receiving unemployment benefits and only 80.2 per cent of workers were insured in case of a workplace injury. As for **indicator 1a.2 (spending on essential services)**, an equivalent of 14.5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was spent on essential services in 2019.

Efforts remain to be made to meet **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)** as, while women already performed the greater part of caring and domestic tasks before the Covid-19 pandemic (with these tasks taking up 22 per cent of the day for women compared to 10 per cent of the day for men in 2015), their responsibilities in this area further increased: 54 per cent of women reported an increase compared to 38 per cent of men. All the while, time spent on self-care activities decreased for 38 per cent of women. On **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the proportion of women in parliament increased from 10.8 per cent in 2000 to 22.6 per cent in 2020. The proportion of women in management posts was somewhat higher, standing at 30.4 per cent in 2021. However, both numbers are far below parity.

Regarding **SDG 8**, much remains to be done to achieve **target 8.3 (decent job creation)**, as informal employment rates in non-agricultural settings stood at 26.6 per cent in 2021. Furthermore, in 2020, 11.8 per cent of jobs were classified as precarious, with women (15.3 per cent) more likely to be working in them than men (8.9 per cent). Regarding **target 8.5 (full and productive employment)**, the unemployment rate in 2022 stood at 8.2 per cent, higher for women (8.8 per cent) than for men (7.8 per cent). The gender pay gap stood at 11.3 per cent in 2019. Underemployment stood at 16.8 per cent in 2019 and was especially high for youth aged 15-24, who had an underemployment rate of 32.6 per cent. NEET

indicators for **target 8.6 (proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 16.4 per cent in 2021, with young women (18.5 per cent) affected more than men (14.4 per cent). Data on **target 8.7 (elimination of the worst forms of child labour)** suggest that in 2020, 219,000 children were subject to child labour, the majority (187,000) in urban areas; 30 per cent were between the ages of nine and 17 years old and performed domestic chores for more than two hours per day. There is some progress on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights)**, as the proportion of fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers has been steadily dropping year on year. However, the number of trained labour inspectors per 10,000 workers has dropped significantly, from 2 in 2009, to 0.9 in 2020. In 2017, 16 violations of labour rights were recorded, nine in law and seven in practice.

Chile is making slow progress in reducing social inequalities and reach **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**. In 2020, 10 per cent of the richest individuals controlled 35.7 per cent of the GDP, while the lowest 20 per cent controlled 5.5 per cent of the GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 62.5 per cent in 2019, up from 54.5 per cent in 2010.

On **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies)**, the national strategy for the implementation of the SDGs presented in 2023 includes the aim of pursuing a just ecological transition. The 2022 Climate Change Law introduces a means of cross-cutting governance in expectation of the enablement of wider public participation on this topic.

Concerns remain over the implementation of **SDG 16** and in particular, **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** in Chile, as it continues to be classified as a country that systematically violates workers' rights. In 2021, ITUC noted brutal repressions against trade union leaders by security forces.



## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Chilean government to:

- Create a civil society council that incorporates a social perspective on the SDGs to monitor progress and involve the tripartite High Labour Council in discussions on SDG implementation.
- Encourage the creation of new decent jobs to combat the growing unemployment generated by the impact of new technologies. Provide skills acquisition training and improve upskilling qualifications for workers affected by the green and digital transitions.
- Prioritise structural reform of the social security system to ensure full coverage of vulnerable groups.
- Ensure that minimum wages increase in line with the cost of living.
- Implement care policies to address the invisible work of thousands of women, helping to strengthen an economic sphere not considered in national accounts and provide employment for a significant number of mainly women workers.
- Strengthen policies and institutions for labour prospecting and intermediation, to improve the links between workers and potential sources of employment.
- Strengthen policies and institutions that develop labour training processes and the recognition of labour competencies.



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# COLOMBIA

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2023

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

### WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

Regarding energy security, Colombia currently depends on fossil fuels for 77 per cent of its energy needs and has few renewable energy sources in operation, other than hydroelectric power. The country has nonetheless committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 51 per cent by 2030, one of the most ambitious goals, globally. This reduction is to be achieved through a shift towards renewable energy sources.

The government has put in place strategies to combat food insecurity, ensuring food production and distribution to avoid shortages. Food baskets are distributed across the country to ensure that children’s nutritional needs are met. Trade unions, however, point out that the country’s agriculture and fisheries industry has been weakened by its “free trade” development strategy (also initially referred to in Colombia as the “opening of trade”), which deregulated food imports, driven by speculative profit-making.

Measures relating to the Covid-19 pandemic were limited to prevention and have since been lifted. Significant progress has been made in health-care coverage in the country and 98.3 per cent of the population is now affiliated with the public health-care system. Unions nonetheless point out that there are still barriers in terms of access to health services and medicines.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Sustainable development goals (SDGs) and targets have been streamlined into Colombia’s national and local development plans since 2018. The ministries of health, education, labour, housing, mines, environment, defence, commerce, agriculture, transport and social prosperity, as well as the National Commission for Competitiveness and Innovation and the Intersectoral Commission on Climate Change are among the national bodies tasked with implementing the 2030 Agenda. The national budget has been aligned with the SDGs. Colombia presented its third Voluntary National Review in 2021. That year, the Department of National Statistics (DANE), the UN Population Fund and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization also launched a guide on measuring and reporting on SDG indicators.

Trade unions have, however, noted that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is hampered by systemic inefficiencies and corruption, and that progress on key indicators has stagnated or even reversed due to the confluence of crises: the Covid-19 pandemic, inflation and economic recession. Despite efforts to improve the labour market, unemployment and informal employment indicators have increased in Colombia.

Trade unions denounce the lack of transparency in the government’s allocation of resources and the implementation of the SDGs. Trade unions are neither involved in consultations on SDG implementation nor the dialogue with the UN Resident Coordinator, nor in tripartite social dialogue on the 2030 Agenda. Freedom of association has declined in Colombia, which has one of the lowest unionisation rates in the world.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



No consultation

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



No social dialogue on the SDGs



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Colombia is struggling to make progress on several key indicators set by the SDGs.

Regarding **SDG 1**, the indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty)** showed a multidimensional poverty rate of 16 per cent in 2021, while monetary poverty reached 39.3 per cent and extreme monetary poverty 12.2 per cent. This suggests that a significant proportion of the population is struggling to afford food because of inflation. In addition, Colombia's Human Development Index fell slightly to 0.752 in 2021 (from 0.756 the previous year). As for **indicator 1a.2 (spending on essential services)**, eight per cent of the country's GDP for 2022 has been allocated to social security and health care. The country's trade unions, however, denounce the inefficiencies and corruption that undermine such efforts.

To make progress with implementing **SDG 5**, Colombia has taken a gender-responsive budgeting approach to its financial planning and programming. Despite this, the country is, far from reaching **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as women performed 76.2 per cent of unpaid care work in 2020. As a result, women with care responsibilities had 15 per cent less time for leisure activities, 11 per cent less time for education and nine per cent less time for paid employment (if engaged in it).

Regarding **SDG 8**, much remains to be done to achieve **target 8.3 (support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs)**, as informal employment rates remained high, at 43.8 per cent for workers in urban settings and 58.1 per cent for the country as a whole during 2022. Regarding **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the unemployment rate in 2022 was 11.22 per cent, of which 8.96% were men and 14.3 per cent were women.

The gender pay gap was 12.9 per cent in 2019. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** were as high as 22.8 per cent. Colombia was listed as one of

the world's 10 worst countries for workers in the 2021 ITUC Global Rights Index, meaning that progress on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** requires significant and immediate improvement. The unionisation rate stands at an abysmally low five per cent and only seven per cent of contracts are covered by collective bargaining agreements. In 2021, agriculture, mining, quarrying and manufacturing were the sectors with the highest rates of work accidents; meanwhile, only 51 per cent of workers were covered by collective risk insurance. Between January and August 2022, 271 attacks, 19 of which were targeted murders, were committed against trade unionists in Colombia.

Significant progress is still to be made for Colombia to reduce social inequalities and **reach target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as in 2022, five per cent of the richest individuals controlled 37.2 per cent of GDP, while the lowest 10 per cent controlled 0.89 per cent of GDP. The labour share of GDP has been 33 per cent on average in recent years. Despite its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51 per cent by 2030, the Colombian government has so far failed to substantially address the implementation of **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**. The trade unions state that no dialogue or negotiation has so far been organised with social partners to ensure a just transition.

There are serious concerns over the implementation of **SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions)** in Colombia, as the Ombudsman's Office reported the murder of 215 social leaders and human rights defenders in 2022, the highest number in seven years. This increase is attributed to attacks by organised crime groups involved in drug trafficking.



## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Colombian government to:

- Involve trade unions in consultations and social dialogue on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Redesign national social dialogue spaces and improve on the interlocutors' technical abilities.
- Promote collective bargaining through policies facilitating multi-level bargaining by branch or sector, access to company information, spaces for dialogue within companies and access to companies to inform workers.
- Address food shortages through measures such as the reduction of interest rates, the introduction of tariff protection on food production, public procurement, technical help and marketing channels for farmers.
- Improve labour rights through measures such as strengthening labour inspection, promoting employment formalisation policies and reversing labour rights restrictions.
- Promote gender equality at work through policies ensuring equitable salaries for women, eradicating discrimination against women in the workplace and reducing the labour inactivity rate.



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

## WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE CRISES

Lithuania has been directly impacted by the multiple crises which have emerged following the Covid-19 pandemic. Along with other countries in the region, it was directly affected by the migrant crisis generated by Belarus and then the influx of refugees fleeing Russian aggression in Ukraine. Support for the reception and integration of refugees was put in place to address the situation.

The government's response to the cost-of-living crisis has been mixed. Trade unions welcome the subsidies introduced to help households and businesses meet rising energy prices, the investments made to enhance the country's energy independence, as well as increases in the minimum wage. However, there was no decision to cap food prices, which went up by 30 per cent compared to the year before. In addition, trade unions believe that the decision of the central bank to raise interest rates in the hopes of curbing inflation will have negative implications for households, while favouring banks which are set to profit from the decision.

To combat the climate crisis, the government launched initiatives encouraging the transition to renewable energy sources and reductions in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by individuals.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The SDG objectives are integrated into Lithuania's strategic planning documents, such as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and the National Progress Strategy 'Lithuania 2030'. In 2016, the National Commission on Sustainable Development was replaced with an inter-institutional working group for SDGs implementation. Consisting of representatives of all ministries, this working group is coordinated by the Ministry for the Environment, with the Ministry for International Affairs leading on development cooperation. However, trade unions have reported that the working group has not been meeting regularly, suggesting a lack of political commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda.

National Audit Office has found that there is a lack of progress on SDGs 2, 10, 14 and 17, and that progress on SDG 13 is regressing.

Trade unions denounce the lack of transparency on SDG implementation, as official information is published irregularly. Social partners are not informed on progress in a structured way or consulted on the design of policy to implement the SDGs. No multi-stakeholder consultation platform exists; while online consultations had been opened some years ago, trade unions do not believe that the input provided has been taken on in a meaningful way. While social partners discuss various topics which are relevant to SDG objectives and targets in the framework of social dialogue, holistic discussions on achieving progress on the 2030 Agenda as such are missing.

The government prioritises work on SDGs 1, 5, 13 and 16. However, trade unions state that not enough resources have been allocated to SDG implementation, hindering effective implementation. An analysis of the

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



There is no consultation process at all

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



No social dialogue on the SDGs



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

On **SDG 1 (eradicate poverty)**, while indicators for target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty) show that only 0.23 per cent of the population lived below the international poverty line in 2021, one per cent of employed people in Lithuania lived in absolute poverty, and 7.5 per cent of workers were at risk of poverty and social exclusion. With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2016, 92.7 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit (up from 91 per cent in 2000). However, only 54.1 per cent of the poor population received any social assistance, and only 37.7 per cent of the unemployed were receiving unemployment benefits. On **target 1.a (mobilisation of resources)**, the 2020 budget foresaw an increased investment in social protection – 37 per cent of the budgetary resources.

On **SDG 5 (gender equality)**, further progress must be made on reaching **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as the proportion of time spent on unpaid work was significantly higher for women (17.7 per cent) than for men (9.3 per cent) in 2010. In 2021, only 37 per cent of managerial positions were held by women, a decrease from 41.1 per cent in 2010, signalling a need for additional efforts to meet **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**. While the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 17.5 per cent in 2000 to 28.4 per cent in 2023, this is still far from parity.

On **SDG 8 (decent work)**, progress on **target 8.3 (decent job creation)** is needed, as rates of informal employment in non-agricultural settings stood at 3.6 per cent in 2021, higher for women (5.2 per cent) than for men (1.9 per cent). In addition, at 21.7 per cent in 2021, rates of low-paid work remain high, with women (23.6 per cent) more likely to hold low-paid positions than men (19.7 per cent). At 10 per cent in 2021, the share of precarious work is also hindering the achievement of this target. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, a gender pay gap of on average one euro in the hourly wages of women and men persisted in 2018 in most professions, with a gap of 13.6 per cent in annual earnings in 2022. The unemployment rate in 2021 stood at 7.1 per cent (7.7 per cent for men and 6.6 per cent for women). NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (youth**

**not in employment, education or training)** stood at 11.3 per cent in 2021, higher than the eight per cent rate registered in 2018. Indicators on **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking)** are worrying, with Lithuania ranked as having a medium prevalence of modern slavery, performing worse than its neighbouring countries in the Baltic region. There has been some progress on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights)** as collective bargaining rates went up from 7.4 per cent in 2019 to 25.6 per cent in 2021. The number of labour inspectors as a ratio of the workforce decreased from 1.5 in 2013 to 0.9 in 2021.

Lithuania appears to be slowly reducing social inequalities and reaching **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**. In 2020, the labour share of GDP stood at 55.1 per cent, a proportion which has been steadily increasing year on year. The income share held by the highest 10 per cent stood at 28.5 per cent, while that of the lowest 20 per cent was 7.1 per cent in 2020. On **target 10.7 (orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility)**, migrant workers have the freedom of association, although trade unions point out that they do not often avail of it, due to the short periods during which they stay in the country.

To implement **SDG 13 (combat climate change)**, Lithuania has adopted an Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030. However, trade unions believe that not enough emphasis is placed on securing a just transition and fostering green skills.

On **SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies)** and **target 16.3 (rule of law)**, the 2017 Labour Code established a Labour Dispute Committee which facilitates the resolution of labour disputes free of charge.

## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Lithuanian government to:

- Ensure the transparency of the SDG implementation process by regularly disseminating progress reports.
- Actively engage social partners in a dialogue on policy design for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Strengthen social dialogue and promote collective bargaining.
- Invest in green and innovative job creation; help workers upskill or re-qualify if their jobs are threatened by the green and digital transitions.
- Invest more in quality public services.
- Increase wages in line with inflation.
- Properly transpose the new EU Directive on Pay Transparency (equal pay for work of equal value) to combat pay discrimination and help close the gender pay gap. Increase the resources provided to the State Labour Inspectorate to monitor the Directive's implementation.
- Expand the right to strike and facilitate the organisation of legal strikes.
- Establish social and green conditionalities (for example, signed collective agreements) for companies applying for public procurement.



LIETUVOS  
PROFESINIŲ  
SAJUNGŲ  
KONFEDERACIJA



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# MALDIVES

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2023

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

### WORKERS NEED SUSTAINABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

In the wake of the crisis provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Maldives government, with the support from International Financial Institutions (IFIs), has been working on introducing reforms to create and implement an active and integrated labour market policy. IFI grant and loan schemes are also being used to plan projects supporting the transition to sustainable renewable energy, to better address the challenges of the energy crisis. However, trade unions point out that in the absence of a tripartite social dialogue, these discussions are not well coordinated with social partners and lack a meaningful consultative process.

Trade unions welcome the fact that the Maldives government has increased climate budgeting over the past decade, making it an integral part of public finances and the annual budget. This addresses the climate crisis as it includes budgeting for disaster reduction, risk management, building a resilient public health system adapted to climate change as well as enhancements to water security and coastal protection. However, a more inclusive approach to the fight against climate change is needed through just transition plans negotiated with social partners, including trade unions, in all phases of policy implementation.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) objectives are integrated into the Maldives' National Strategic Action Plan 2019-2023. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is coordinated by the Ministry of Planning, which contains an SDG monitoring unit. A National Coordination Committee comprising the Ministries of Environment and Energy, Youth and Sports, Education, Fisheries and Agriculture, Gender and Family, and Foreign Affairs monitors the progress of implementation.

Trade unions regret that there is a lack of transparency and adequate data sharing of materials such as implementation progress reports. They report that the government conducted a consultation with civil society, including trade unions, as part of the country's 2023 voluntary national review (VNR), which was the first instance of trade unions being consulted on this topic. However, it is not clear if their contributions have been taken on board. Furthermore, since the Covid-19 pandemic, broader dialogue on the SDGs between civil society and the government has been lacking. Previously, annual civil society fora had been held, but these have not yet been resumed.

Trade unions report that in 2022, the government allocated USD 14 million from different funds and grants to SDG implementation. However, the lack of transparency with regards to how these funds are being used, or with regards to how implementation is progressing overall in the Maldives, means that trade unions are unable to assess if this financing is adequate.

Since 2019, tripartite dialogue has been conducted in the context of the Minimum Wage Advisory Board, but discussions are restricted to the minimum wage, with no consultation related to SDG 8 or other SDGs.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



Information sessions but no interaction

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Individual contributions from social partners to the national government





## IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Reaching the SDGs will require the Maldives to make further efforts on several key indicators.

With regards to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that the nationally defined poverty rate in the Maldives increased from 3.9% in 2019 to 19.3% in 2020. However, the Maldives' human development index for 2021 has improved compared to pre-Covid-19 levels, standing at 0.747 in 2021. On **target 1a.2 (spending on essential services)**, the percentage of the population covered by at least one social protection benefit stood at 21.2% in 2020. All citizens of the Maldives have access to universal healthcare through a universal health insurance scheme; health spending amounted to 8.04% of GDP in 2019. However, trade unions regret the lack of unemployment benefit and a mechanism for the sustainable reintegration of unemployed persons. In the absence of an occupational health and safety act, there is no compensatory mechanism for workplace injuries and accidents.

On **SDG 5**, further efforts are required to reach **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as in 2019, women dedicated three times as much of their time to unpaid work as men: 15% compared to 5%. Women are also overrepresented in informal employment – 59% of workers in the informal sector are women. To better implement **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the Maldives has established a Ministry for Gender, Family and Social Protection, and signed an agreement with the Asian Development Bank to create a holistic gender equity project. Within the Maldives' civil service, 64% of employees are women. However, out of 87 parliamentarians in the 19th Parliament, only four are women.

On **SDG 8**, a lot remains to be done to implement **target 8.3 (support decent job creation)**, as 39% of workers were in informal employment in 2021; additionally, the rate of vulnerable employment stood at 33.4% among women and at 15.2% among men. Efforts are needed to progress on **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, as women's participation in the labour force (34.3%) was much lower than

that of men (67.5%) in 2021; in addition, 13% of women were unemployed due to caregiver and domestic responsibilities, compared to 1% of men. The gender pay gap stood at 14% in 2019. Underemployment stood at 14%. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** for the 18-35 age group stood at 15% for men and 41% for women. With regards to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, trade unions report that there are restrictions in practicing the right to freedom of association, even though the Maldives has signed the fundamental conventions of the ILO, as legislation transposing these at national level is lacking; rights are even more restrained for migrant workers.

Progress is still required on **SDG 10**. On **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**, in 2019, 10% of the highest income earners controlled 23.3% of GDP, while the lowest 20% controlled 8.9% of GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 43.8%, a share that has remained relatively stable over the nine previous years, although it has decreased from 44.3% in 2010. In 2022, the Maldives introduced a minimum wage; however, migrant workers are excluded from the minimum wage, and the level of the minimum wage is subject to sectoral differences depending on the size of business. In addition to being excluded from the minimum wage policy, migrant workers are also excluded from the new pay harmonisation policy, which is intended to review the existing salary structure for all public employees.

On **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, the Maldives is progressively moving towards renewable energy projects. In preparation for the nationally determined contribution, a socio-economic analysis as well as consultations with stakeholders are being conducted, but these do not include trade unions. Climate-resilient adaptation measures are being integrated into the public healthcare system.

## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Maldives government to:

- Engage trade unions in consultations and social dialogue on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Increase the transparency of the monitoring and evaluation progress on SDG implementation.
- Meaningfully consult with trade unions in relation to all employment and labour policy programmes.
- Put in place an industrial relations bill outlining trade union and collective bargaining rights and establish a tripartite labour governance mechanism.
- Adopt a gender-responsive approach to the creation of decent employment, focusing on capacity-building through systemic education and training.
- Ensure that the basic social protection floors reach everyone, including access to universal health coverage and minimum wage benefits.



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# PERU

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGS

#HLPF2023

## WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE CRISES

To address the food crisis and the impact of Covid-19, the Peruvian government has begun to implement a rapid reactivation plan 'Con Punche Perú', which focuses on three areas of action: the reactivation of the family economy, the reactivation of the regional economy and a sectoral reactivation. Trade unions have reported that various indicators related to poverty, unemployment and informal employment have worsened following these crises and that they are not being addressed by the government through adequate means, such as investment in social protection.

In response to the climate emergencies in different regions of the country, the Peruvian government has reactivated disaster prevention programs, in coordination with regional and local governments. However, trade unions report that they were not consulted in the design of these plans.

## ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Trade unions report that the Peruvian government has not integrated the objectives of the 2030 Agenda into the National Strategic Development Plan, 'Vision of Peru to 2050'. As a result, the five axes of the national development plan remain only loosely related to the SDGs.

There is an overall lack of monitoring mechanisms related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The government does not prepare or publish reports on the status of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country. The National Institute of Statistics (INEI) does not have an ongoing monitoring program and only prepares case-by-case reports at the request of public entities. The Peruvian state has no public budget to monitor the implementation of the SDGs, and neither are there systems to verify public spending on their implementation.

There is no multilateral dialogue or consultation on the implementation of the SDGs in which trade unions could present their positions to government, even informally. Nevertheless, trade unions do provide contributions to a civil society group dedicated to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, to which the government sporadically provides limited information. Social partners are not involved in a dialogue on the implementation of the SDGs. Trade unions attribute the lack of dialogue, monitoring or implementation to the political, economic and climatic crises the country faces.

### TRANSPARENCY



No access to information at all

### CONSULTATION



There are information sessions but no interaction

### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



No social dialogue on the SDGs



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Peru is struggling to progress on several key indicators set by the SDGs.

With regards to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that 4.1 per cent of the population was living in extreme poverty in 2021 and 2.7 per cent of workers lived under the national poverty line. At 0.762, Peru scores highly on the Human Development Index (HDI), although this is a drop from 0.780 in 2019. On **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2020, only 29.3 per cent of the population was covered by at least one social protection system.

Progress remains to be made on the implementation of **SDG 5**. With regards to **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, the proportion of time spent by women 15 to 24 years old on unpaid domestic chores and care work stood at 23.6 per cent in 2010. On **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 10.8 per cent in 2000 to 30 per cent in 2020. In 2018, the proportion of seats held by women in deliberative bodies of local government was 26.2 per cent. No gender-sensitive budgeting has been put in place by the Peruvian government.

On **SDG 8**, a lot remains to be done to implement **target 8.3 (decent job creation)**, as informality rates remained high, with 59.2 per cent of workers outside of agriculture being in informal employment in 2021, up from 58.6 per cent in 2020. Trade unions attribute this to the drop in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and lack of social investments by the government. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment)**, the unemployment rate stood at 5.1 per cent in 2021, with trade unions reporting that the situation was worse in urban areas. The gender pay gap stood at 5.7 per cent in 2021. Under-employment stood at 11.1

per cent in 2019. Indicators for young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at a high 22.7 per cent, with women (26 per cent) being more affected than men (19.5 per cent); this proportion has increased from 13.7 per cent in 2002. Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** are of concern, showing that 12.2 per cent of all children (11.3 per cent of girls) have engaged in child labour in 2020. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights)** showed that according to calculations based on information from ILO textual sources, the level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) stood at 4.2 in 2020. Peru ratified ILO Convention No. 87 on freedom of association in 1960 and Convention No. 98 on the right to organise and collective bargaining in 1964.

Progress remains to be made for Peru to reduce social inequalities and reach **target 10.4 (achieve greater equality)**, as in 2020, 10 per cent of the highest income earners controlled 32.9 per cent of GDP, while the lowest 20 per cent controlled 4.8 per cent of GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 46.1 per cent in 2017.

Reaching **SDG 16** will require further progress, as **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** remains unmet. The ITUC Global Rights Index registers systematic violations of trade union rights in Peru, with 37 violations (16 in law and 21 in practice) reported on 2017.




## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Peruvian government to:

- Create decent jobs:
  - Diversify productivity, considering the climate and environmental crisis.
  - Ratify ILO Conventions No. 155 on occupational health and safety and No. 158 on termination of employment.
- Ensure social protection:
  - Implement robust social protection floors in accordance with ILO Convention No. 102.
  - Increase health and pension coverage for the most vulnerable groups.
  - Put in place unemployment insurance: ratify ILO Conventions No. 168 and part IV of Convention No. 102.
- Put in place minimum living wages:
  - Ratify ILO Convention No. 131 on the fixing of minimum wages.
  - Promote collective bargaining.
- Promote workplace equality:
  - Establish equal pay and work-life balance policies.
  - Establish care centres.
- Secure labour rights:
  - Implement all ratified ILO Conventions.
  - Address the recommendations made by ILO Control Bodies.
  - Strengthen the Labour Administrative Authority and ratify ILO Convention No. 150.
  - Strengthen the Labour Inspection System and justice bodies.
- Ensure a social dialogue:
  - Strengthen social dialogue, providing a budget, appropriate tools and competencies to monitor the implementation of the SDGs as well as the national Business and Human Rights Plan.



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# RWANDA

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGS

#HLPF2023

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

## WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

The government of Rwanda has introduced various policies to combat the ongoing multiple crises. To mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, an economic recovery fund was established to support businesses severely affected by the pandemic and safeguard jobs. In addition, a broader Economic Recovery Plan introduced measures to support vulnerable households through food distribution, subsidised access to agricultural inputs, cash transfers to casual workers, measures to ensure poor households access to basic health and education, and tax deferral and relief measures to help formal and informal sectors.

To combat the cost-of-living crisis, mainly caused by the global food and energy price crisis, and high inflation, the government introduced fuel subsidies, comprehensively reformed tax systems, capped the prices of essential food products and provided other subsidies for the general population.

As the effects of climate change are becoming ever more apparent in Rwanda, with occurrences of deadly floods, landslides and drought, the government has put in place prevention and rapid response measures. Rwanda has introduced a Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy, which will stay in place until 2050. The strategy aims to guide policy and planning, mainstreaming climate change preparedness and mitigation into all sectors of the economy, positioning Rwanda to access international finance for climate resilience and low-carbon development.

## ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Rwanda has integrated the objectives of the SDGs and those of the Africa Agenda 2063 into its national development agenda through the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1, 2017-2024), Vision 2050 and related strategies. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is responsible for the implementation of SDG priorities. Trade unions believe that enough resources have been allocated to this objective and that the overall progress on implementing Agenda 2030 in Rwanda is satisfactory. In relation to SDG 8, the government implemented a Decent Work Country Programme, which ended in 2021.

in the whole process. While a multi-stakeholder platform for consultations on the SDGs exists, trade unions are often confounded with other civil society organisations. As such, trade unions suggest that the methods of reporting, data collection and information processing in relation to the SDGs should be more inclusive and transparent, and that information should be disseminated to key stakeholders for input before publication.

Trade unions report that transparency in relation to SDG implementation in Rwanda could be improved. While reports on the implementation of the SDGs are available to all on the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning website, trade unions suggest that they can be more systematically involved

The national labour council comments and gives advice on labour law, the minimum wage and other labour-related matters. While a tripartite plus body exists, trade unions should be regularly invited to provide input on Agenda 2030 in the context of social dialogue. Trade unions aim to provide input on all relevant SDGs whenever possible, not only on SDG 8 but also other topics, such as gender equality, quality education, reducing inequalities, climate action, peace and social justice as well as partnerships.

### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

### CONSULTATION



Informal or ad hoc consultation

### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



Individual contributions from social partners to the national government



# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With regards to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that in 2022, 40.3% of Rwanda's workers and their families lived below the international poverty line, which trade unions attribute essentially to the lack of a minimum liveable wage. Between 1995 and 2021, Rwanda's HDI increased from 0.286 to 0.534, a significant change of 86.7%; however, in 165th place, Rwanda remains among the world's least developed countries. With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2021, the proportion of the population covered by at least one social protection benefit stood at only 9.8%, as only 3.1% of people above retirement age were receiving a pension and no unemployment benefit is available. Public expenditure on social protection stood at only 2.3% in 2017.

On **SDG 5**, some commendable progress can be seen in reaching the objective set by **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, as 35.4% of managerial positions were held by women, and the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 17.1% in 2000 to 61.2% in 2023. A dedicated Gender Monitoring Office oversees gender mainstreaming across different sectors.

Significant improvements still need to be made on **SDG 8**, as indicators on **target 8.3 (support decent job creation)** show that 87.1% of all workers and 71% of those outside of agriculture were in informal employment in 2021; additionally, the rate of vulnerable employment stood at 66.3% in 2021. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the unemployment rate came in at a high 17.2% in 2023, with women (19.2%) more affected than men (15.5%); unemployment was slightly higher among the population living in rural areas (18.0%) compared to those living in urban areas (15.9), and it remains relatively higher in the youth category, those aged 16-30 (20.4%), than among adults (15.1%). In all age categories, the highest unemployment rate is observed among those aged 16 to 24 years old (21.8%), while the lowest rate is observed among those aged 45 and above (14.0%). The data for 2023 shows that labour underutilisation is also high at 54.3%, and the gender wage gap stood at 29.8% in 2021. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 31.6% in 2023 – 35.3% for women and 27.6% for men, and 25% for urban and 33.4% for rural areas. Performance on **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the**

**worst forms of child labour)** is concerning, as trade unions report that there are many children still subjected to the worst forms of child labour in domestic work, dangerous tasks in mining, agriculture, and construction, including carrying heavy loads. However, in 2021 Rwanda finalised a national action plan to combat human trafficking and launched a hotline for reporting child abuse, including child labour. The situation is unsatisfactory with regards to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, as trade unions report that the numbers of trained labour inspectors is very low, and court proceedings take a very long time, which discourages unlawfully-treated workers from seeking justice.

Progress still needs to be made on **SDG 10**. On **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**, in 2016, 10% of the highest income earners controlled 35.6% of GDP, while the lowest 20% controlled 6% of GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 44.2% in 2020, having barely increased from 43.5% in 2004. On **target 10.7 (migration policy)**, migration policy as well as other policies and laws are discussed between the government and social partners and civil society, who are sometimes invited to provide their input through technical meetings, to the National Labour Council and in the parliament's social commission.

On **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, given that the subject of climate change is relatively new on Rwanda's political agenda, a consistent and regular dialogue with trade unions and civil society organisations on achieving a just transition is to be recommended.

With regards to **SDG 16** and reaching **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, improvements are needed to ensure workers' rights, as trade unions report that while these are protected by legislation, their enforcement needs to be enhanced. Trade unions report that employers at times refuse union activists entry to their premises and that workers are generally afraid of joining unions due to employer discrimination and fear of losing their jobs. This contributes to low trade union density (less than 5%).

## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the government of Rwanda to:

- Improve engagement and consultation of trade unions throughout the process of implementing the SDGs.
- While remaining committed to increasing the number of jobs created, boost the creation of more quality jobs (decent, climate-friendly and sustainable), and ensure that skills match market needs, e.g. through the promotion of innovative and attractive vocational training.
- Improve social protection by ensuring universal social protection systems, including social protection floors; support inclusive growth, boost human capital and increase domestic demand and supply.
- Guarantee labour rights and equality at work by passing legislation that secures fundamental rights and ensures their implementation.
- Establish strong social dialogue mechanisms that promote effective collective bargaining and conflict resolution. Foster commitment among employers and workers to collaborate with the government to overcome crises and support recovery together. Remove barriers to productive collaboration between employers and employees.

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



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# TANZANIA

## A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGS

#HLPF2023



### WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

Tanzania’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic was not initially strong. The existing social and health program was predominantly oriented towards a rural population and failed to reach households in the informal urban economy which were the most vulnerable to the virus. However, since the swearing-in of President Samia Suluhu Hassan, renewed efforts saw the country make headway in its efforts to contain the pandemic, notably through an increased number of vaccinations.

To tackle food insecurity and address its vulnerability to unpredictable events, Tanzania has been working with the World Bank, which has approved new funding for Eastern and Southern African countries for this purpose. A salary raise for public employees was introduced in 2022, after a seven-year freeze. In addition, the Tanzania Social Action Fund’s Productive Social Safety Net program aims to increase income and consumption, improve the ability to cope with shocks, and enhance and protect the human capital of children among extremely poor populations.

Tanzania has agreed a National Climate Change Response Strategy for 2021-2026, which aims to enhance national resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change. In 2022, the president unveiled a plan to invest US\$18 bn in renewable power generation.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Tanzania mainstreamed the SDGs into its national policy frameworks, including the national development plan and monitoring and evaluation systems. Its current UN Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP II, 2022-2026) is anchored in the SDGs, with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable communities. The Ministry of Finance and Planning is responsible for identifying and mobilising resources for the implementation of national and global development goals and targets; it also coordinates the implementation of the SDGs. Line ministries are responsible for integrating the SDGs into their respective policy areas. The National Bureau of Statistics is mandated to mainstream SDG indicators and collect data to monitor the implementation progress of SDGs at a national level.

Trade unions have observed that government reporting mechanisms on SDG implementation remain inadequate. This is exemplified by the absence of a multi-stakeholder platform for effective consultation between civil society and the government on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Trade unions are, however, able to provide input towards the implementation of the SDGs through their participation within the Labour, Economic and Social Council (LESCO), where the 2030 Agenda is discussed in the context of social dialogue. As LESCO is both the tripartite and the advisory body consulted by the Ministry of Labour on measures to promote economic growth, social security, economic and social policy, trade unions can provide input relevant to a broad range of SDG goals, rather than solely on SDG 8.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

#### CONSULTATION



There are information sessions but no interaction

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



There are contributions agreed and submitted jointly



## IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With regards to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that Tanzania was one of countries with the lowest human development index (HDI) in the world, standing at 0.549 in 2021. While the proportion of the population living below the extreme poverty line has decreased from 69.3 per cent in 1991 to 44.9 per cent in 2018, it remains high. In 2022, 47.6 per cent of the country's workers and their families lived on less than US\$1.90 per person per day. Trade unions report that rising inflation has eroded workers' purchasing power. With regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2021, only 14 per cent of the population benefitted from any type of social security benefit. However, the proportion of the poor population that received social assistance cash benefits increased from seven per cent in 2019 to 37.8 per cent in 2021. Still, indicators on **target 1.a (spending on essential services)** show that in 2018, only 3.3 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was spent on social protection.

On **SDG 5**, further efforts are required to reach the objective set by **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as in 2014, women spent four times more time per day on unpaid work (16 per cent of the day) than men (four per cent). With regards to **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 22.2 per cent in 2000 to 37.4 per cent in 2023 and the proportion of women in senior and middle management positions increased from 11.7 per cent in 2001 to 27.9 per cent in 2020. However, in both these cases, the figures remain below parity levels.

Significant improvements remain to be made on **SDG 8**. Progress on **target 8.3 (support decent job creation)** is urgently needed, as informal employment accounted for 82.4 per cent of employment outside of agriculture, affecting 77.2 per cent of men and 88.1 per cent of women, in 2020. Additionally, the rate of vulnerable employment stood at 81.9 per cent in 2021. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the unemployment rate, at 2.8 per cent (1.9 per cent for men and 3.7 per cent for women), was relatively low in 2020. However, underemployment was high,

reaching 14.7 per cent in 2019. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 14.3 per cent in 2020 – much higher for young women (19.3 per cent) than for men (9.1 per cent). Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** are of concern, and show that 22.8 per cent of children were engaged in child labour in 2014, including through forced labour in mining, quarrying, and domestic work, as well as performing dangerous tasks in agriculture. With regards to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)**, the number of trained labour inspectors is likely insufficient and unable to cover the large informal workforce. In 2017, 25 violations of labour rights were noted – 19 in law and six in practice.

On **SDG 10** and **target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)**, in 2018, 10 per cent of the highest income earners controlled 33.1 per cent of GDP, while the lowest 20 per cent controlled 6.9 per cent of GDP. However, some progress can be reported as the labour share of GDP increased from 27.2 per cent in 2010 to 53.3 per cent in 2020. Furthermore, both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar have a minimum wage for public and private sector employees. On **target 10.7 (migration and mobility)**, social partners are involved in a dialogue on legislation around labour migration in Tanzania.

On **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into policies)**, trade unions warn that despite stated plans, governance challenges impede Tanzania's ability to enforce climate-related policies, as there is weak coordination between levels of government, limited scientific and policy information, and insufficient capacity and resources.

On **SDG 16**, Tanzania is far from achieving **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, as it is noted as systematically violating workers' rights in the ITUC Global Rights Index.



## TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Tanzanian government to:

- Establish regular and transparent reporting mechanisms on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for civil society and social partners.
- Establish a multi-stakeholder platform on the SDGs that involves all civil society stakeholders.
- Put in place development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.
- Formulate comprehensive national employment policy frameworks, built upon the principle of policy coherence for development.
- Involve trade unions in the development of national policies on minimum living wages, as well as in the monitoring and evaluation of these policies.
- Adopt policies that promote gender equality in employment, such as equal pay for work of equal value, and measures to address occupational segregation. Encourage employer policies that promote gender equality in the workplace, such as flexible working arrangements and measures to address sexual harassment.
- Implement international labour standards, including freedom of association, collective bargaining and social dialogue.
- Ensure significant mobilisation of resources to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.



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## WORKERS NEED DURABLE RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE CRISES

To address the ongoing food crisis, the Venezuelan government is implementing policies such as the Local Supply and Production Committee (CLAP) programme and the School Meals Programme (PAE). However, trade unions believe that the meals provided through the school programme are inadequate in terms of their nutritional value, food quality, and regularity of service.

In response to the health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, programmes that provide primary healthcare services in the poorest areas of the country and integrated diagnostic centres staffed by Cuban doctors continue to be rolled out. Shortages of medicines, supplies and surgical/medical material, the deterioration in the hospital infrastructure and deficit of medical and care staff are, however, putting the health of the general population at risk.

In response to the climate crisis, Venezuela has signed the Paris Agreement. In its first nationally determined contribution (NDC), the government committed to reducing emissions by at least 20% by 2030, compared to baseline levels, through national mitigation and adaptation plans. Trade unions are, however, warning that no action had been taken in this direction until at least November 2021, when an updated NDC repeated the same commitments. Trade unions regret the fact that they were not consulted in the course of the design or implementation of any of the above policies, in order to ensure a just transition for workers.

### ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The Venezuelan government states that it has integrated the SDGs and their objectives into its National Economic and Social Development Plan 2019-2025. The implementation of the national plan is being led by the president and executed through the bodies of the National Planning System, the Ministry of Popular Power for Planning and the Vice-President of Planning.

In September 2022, the government signed a framework cooperation agreement with the UN that anticipates that the national plan will address areas such as health, education, food, science and technology, social care, the economy and women.

There are concerns regarding the implementation of Agenda 2030 in Venezuela, as it is the country with the greatest decline in its SDG Index score between 2015 and 2021; the 2022 Index ranks it 120th out of 163 countries. Trade unions doubt the government's capacity to fund its development objectives, as the amount Venezuela received in development assistance fell from \$2,609.2 million in 2000 to \$309.2 million in 2020. They are also sceptical towards Venezuela's 2023 Voluntary National

Review (VNR) as they believe that the 2016 VNR exercise was a rhetorical one and failed to reflect the multiple crises the country is facing.

The unions regret the impact of unilateral coercive measures against Venezuelan state institutions, which have worsened the situation of public services already in crisis. This has had a negative effect on the quality of life and well-being of workers and constitutes an obstacle to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Trade unions report a lack of transparency and access to official information relating to the implementation of the SDGs and they have been unable to verify whether or not the SDG indicators have been incorporated into the statistical system of the National Institute of Statistics.

They are neither consulted nor invited to provide input into the design of policies on Agenda 2030. Finally, SDG implementation is not discussed during tripartite social dialogue meetings.

#### TRANSPARENCY



No access to information at all

#### CONSULTATION



No consultation process

#### SOCIAL DIALOGUE



No social dialogue on the SDGs





# IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

With regard to **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty)** are highly concerning because, due to inflation and the cost-of-living crisis, 76.6% of the population were living in extreme poverty in 2021, compared to 25.2% in 2014.

Poverty has worsened and inequalities are rising because public sector workers, retirees and pensioners receive their salary in national currency, the purchasing power of which is 1% of the food basket, while some private sector workers receive their salaries in US dollars and have greater purchasing power, with marked wage inequalities. At 0.691, Venezuela is in the middle of the development index scale, having registered a sharp drop in its human development since 2014. On **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, 54.2% of the population were covered by at least one social protection system in 2017; in 2022, despite 76.8% of the total budget being allocated to public spending, social protection for workers is still very poor.

Some progress remains to be seen on the implementation of **SDG 5**. 2021 data for **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)** showed that half of the seats in the Supreme Court of Justice, 34% of cabinet ministers and 22.2% of the elected representatives in Parliament were held by women. Trade unions report that the proportion of the national budget allocated to the promotion of gender equality is exceedingly low.

On **SDG 8**, much remains to be done to implement **target 8.3 (decent job creation)** as informal sector rates remain high. While 55.6% of workers outside of agriculture were in informal employment in 2017, national data suggest that this proportion had risen to 80.8% by 2021. Trade unions attribute the growth in informal employment to a lack of adequate government policies to combat the informal sector. In March 2018, the ILO appointed a Commission of Inquiry for Venezuela to analyse repeated complaints of increasing informality and precariousness as well as disrespect for labour standards. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment)**, the unemployment rate stood at 7.5% in 2021. The gender pay gap in Venezuela is one of the worst in the region, with women's average earnings standing at only 43% that of men's in 2021. Underemployment stood at 13.7% in 2019 and was

particularly high among youth between 15 and 24 (22.4%). NEET (not in education, employment or training) indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at a high 37.1%, with men (44%) being more affected than women (30.1%). There is a lack of exact data on **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)**. However, in 2020 the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that child labour was increasingly being used in mining and that children between the ages of 7 and 10 were being exploited for prostitution in Venezuela. Venezuela performs poorly on **target 8.8 (protect labour rights)** as the ITUC Global Rights Index classifies the country as suffering from systematic labour rights violations.

Progress remains to be seen in terms of Venezuela reducing social inequalities and achieving **target 10.4 (achieve greater equality)** given that it was the most unequal country in the Americas in 2022 and one of the most unequal countries in the world. The labour share of GDP stood at only 10.2% in 2019. The Venezuelan context is marked by significant emigration from the country (more than 7 million people) as the population seeks to escape poverty and inflationary pressures.

With regard to **SDG 13** and **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)**, trade unions report that they are not involved in a dialogue on a just transition although they have petitioned the government to streamline the necessary measures into national development plans.

There is an urgent need to make progress on **SDG 16** in Venezuela, as **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)** remains unmet. In 2022, 274 individuals were reported as political prisoners and 87 cases of threats against trade union activists were recorded. Venezuela occupies an extremely low position in the global ranking of press freedom, 159th out of 180 countries.

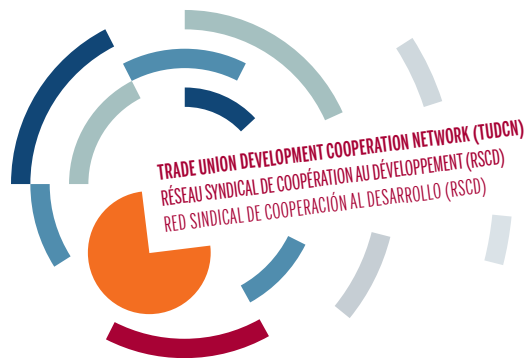
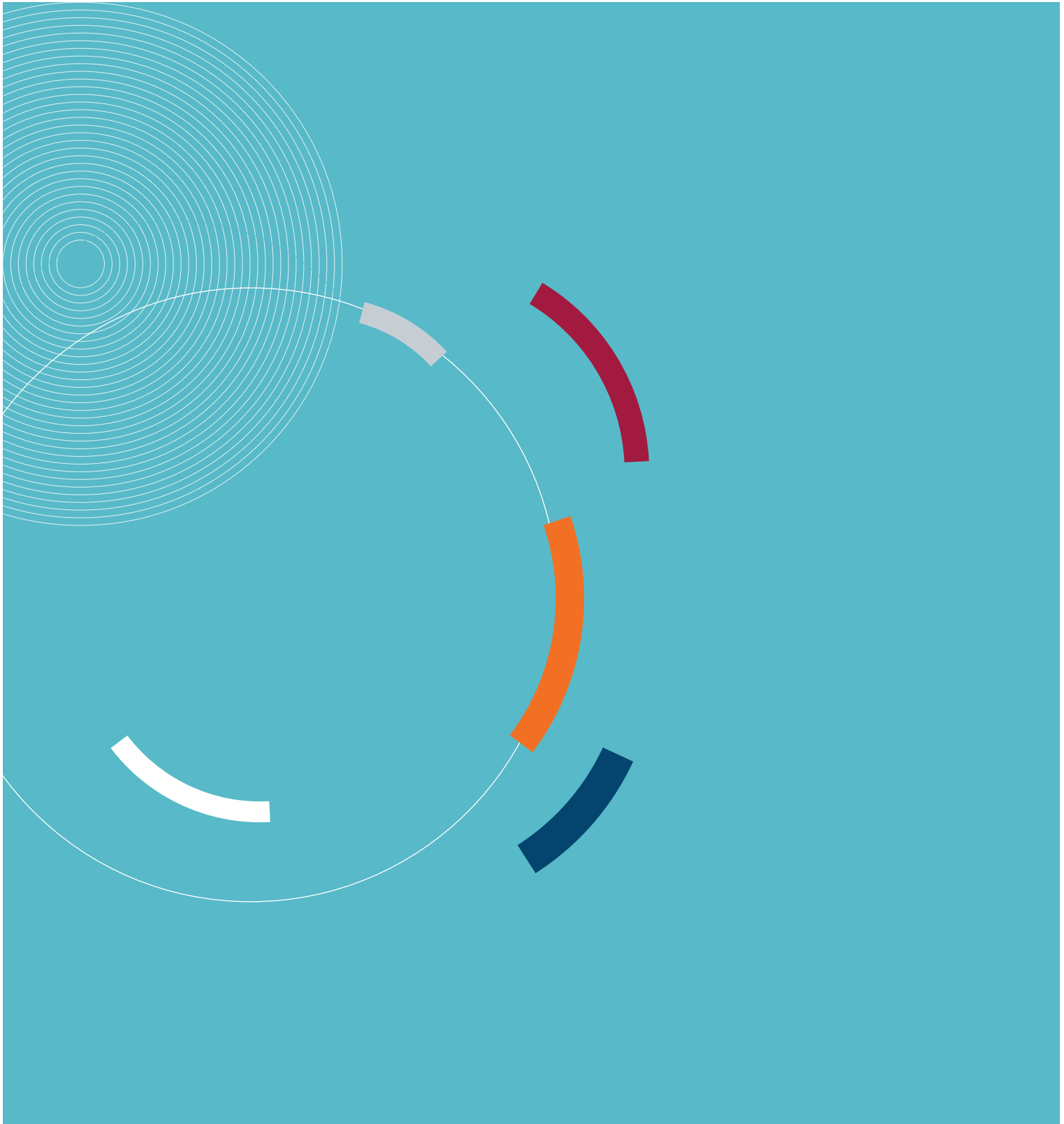
## TRADE UNION ASKS TO LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND

Trade unions are calling on the Venezuelan government to:

- Use resources from funds frozen abroad due to sanctions to create an emergency income as a supplement to the minimum wage for workers, retirees and pensioners.
- Establish a fund for wage stabilisation, economic recovery, social benefits, social security and wages with resources from sanctions, oil funds and funds derived from international cooperation donations.
- Increase the minimum wage and pensions to the equivalent of the price of 50% of the food basket, with quarterly progressive adjustments until 100% of the basic basket is covered.
- Increase the level of bonuses provided to public sector employees.
- Include all active workers, retirees and pensioners in all social non-salary bonuses awarded by the national system.
- Widen the food voucher system ("cestaticket") to also cover transport and health expenditure for all workers, retirees and pensioners.
- Ensure compliance with collective agreements across sectors.
- Extend social and labour rights to informal workers.
- Include trade unions in the consultation process on the implementation of the SDGs. Establish mechanisms allowing for the active participation of trade unions in the monitoring and accountability of Agenda 2030 implementation.



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