

TIME FOR 8 WEBINAR AFRICA

6 OCTOBER 10.00 AM-12.30 PM BRUSSELS

REPORT

Welcome and opening

At the start of the meeting Mamadou Diallo, ITUC Deputy General Secretary highlighted the importance of SDG 8 and the Time for 8 Campaign. Eric Manzi, ITUC-Africa Deputy General Secretary, presented responses to the pandemic in Africa, and the impact these have had on economies and on the SDGs. He emphasised that we need to push our agenda for the implementation of the SDGs.

Session 1: Recap on trade union initiatives and agenda presentation

In the first session of the meeting, Paola Simonetti, from the ITUC-TUDCN, presented the trade union SDG country reports and highlighted the trade union priorities for SDG 8. She also recalled the SDG 8 monitor which is based on relevant and existing data, structured across four sub areas. She emphasised the main trade union demands for the SDG decade of action being: decent jobs, social protection and just transition.

Session 2: SDG 8 as a key to recovery and resilience: main findings from the ACTRAV survey

In the second session of the meeting Hilma Motte, from ILO/ACTRAV, presented the preliminary findings of the survey undertaken by ACTRAV on trade union perspectives on the impact of COVID-19 on SDG 8. The objectives of which were to have baseline data, to serve as a first measure of the assessment, and to draw conclusions and recommendations to provide timely advice. She highlighted that already before COVID-19, SDG 8 was not on track to be achieved and that overall, it does not seem there has been much progress.

Session 3: UN and ILO Strategy for the Decade of Action for the SDGs in Africa

The following session looked into the UN and ILO strategies for the SDG Decade of Action in Africa. In this discussion Munyaradzi Chenje, Regional Director of the UN Regional Office for Africa, highlighted the importance of the ITUC Time for 8 Campaign as a very responsive initiative to the UN General Secretary's call for the decade of action. He underscored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDG 8 and assured that the UN Resident Coordinators and country teams have been reinvigorated to enforce the necessary changes for the SDG decade of action.

Cynthia Samuelson, ILO Regional Director for Africa, outlined key areas towards progress in the SDGs decade of action which include: decent jobs for Africa; leveraging skills; formalising the informal economy; social dialogue and tripartism; social protection; labour migration, occupational safety and health and gender equality.

To achieve this we will need to clearly link the SDGs and Agenda 2063; work with the regional economic communities; build the capacities of trade unions and their work with their regional country teams; and

build regional social dialogue platforms. She underscored that ITUC-Africa and OATUU remain key priority partners for the ILO.

Session 4: The Time for 8 Campaign and trade union engagement in the UN Country Frameworks: updates from members on their engagement with Resident Coordinators

In the final session trade unions presented their engagement in the UN Country Frameworks.

In Somalia, engagement in the country framework was achieved with the support of the ILO that also helped trade unions start a discussion with other UN agencies. The involvement of FESTU in the national development plan (NDP9) contributed to the inclusion of provisions on social protection, social dialogue and labour standards. Through their engagement in the NDP9, FESTU was involved in the UN Framework and this has led to a strong focus on decent jobs.

In Cote d’Ivoire trade unions initially faced challenges to engage in the country framework. Unions were not initially invited to contribute to the discussions and the rules and engagement mechanisms were not clear. ACTRAV played an important role in engaging trade unions in the process. Thanks to the presence of trade unions in the discussion groups, progress was made in linking governance to labour rights and to strengthening social dialogue.

In Zimbabwe the work on the trade union SDG country profile helped trade unions to engage with the government on Agenda 2030. LEDRIZ was contacted by the office of the president to undertake a report on the implementation of the SDGs in Zimbabwe, with the aim of using it in the VNR session of the last HLPF. Although the presentation of the Zimbabwe VNR was finally cancelled, the process helped trade unions to strengthen their relation with the cabinet of the president.

In South Africa, COSATU has been engaging on the SDGs and has worked with other CSOs in this process, this has led to the elaboration of a joint shadow report. Through the national tripartite structure, NEDLAC, unions have analysed the impact of the pandemic on SDG8.

Following the interventions from trade unions, the Director of the UN Regional Office took note of the different inputs and informed that he will provide feedback to to the UN Resident Coordinators on unions’ expectations to be part of the cooperation framework processes in the different countries. He highlighted that he will be looking forward to continuing the conversation with the ATUDN.

Alexio Musindo, from the ILO, also confirmed his support in this engagement and informed of the support the the ILO is giving to trade unions in Somalia and Ethiopia.

Conclusions

The meeting ended with an emphasis on the need for trade unions to strengthen the dialogue with the resident coordinators and seek the support of the ILO in this engagement. The meeting was closed with the final remarks from the ITUC and ITUC-Africa Deputy General Secretaries



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