



PROMOTING SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR ALL AND GENDER EQUITY in SOCIAL PROTECTION AND GENDER EQUALITY

Declaration of the Participants to the Continental African Seminar, 9 November, Johannesburg, South Africa

Preamble

1. Taking forward the Abidjan declaration from the 2017 conference, 23 delegates from 17 African trade unions affiliated to ITUC Africa and 2 labour support organisations, gathered from 6 to 10 November in Johannesburg, in the framework of a continental seminar organized by FEDUSA, ITUC Africa and CSC / IIOE, in order to appreciate the trade union challenges for the promotion of the universal right to social protection for all workers and gender equality as two equally important pillars of the trade union's mission to further social justice.
2. Unions assert that **social protection** is a **human right**, enshrined in several international and regional legal instruments and texts such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Charter of the African Union, the Agenda 2030, the Agenda 2063 of the African Union as well as several Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in particular Convention 102 concerning Minimum Standards of Social Security and Recommendation 202 concerning National Social Protection Floors.
3. Social protection plays a pivotal role in the reduction of poverty and inequalities, and in furthering inclusive and sustainable development. Social protection guarantees every person a decent life and ensures, across the life cycle, access to essential health care, goods and services, and basic income security. Even so, the stark reality is that access to adequate social protection is to date denied to 73 % of the world population and up to 90 % of the African population.
4. Women have a particular stake in social protection, seeing that they face a number of gender-specific risks, such as maternity and unpaid family responsibilities which can hamper their efforts to have an income of their own. Whereas, they are at the same time also severely disadvantaged with regards to access to social protection, as they contribute less to contributory schemes, being overrepresented in precarious and informal economic activities, low paid jobs and often have Women have a particular stake in social protection
5. Violence and harassment to workers in precarious and low paid jobs continues to pose a severe threat to the right to health and safety at work and thus to the right to social protection, with 1 in 5 workers falling victim throughout their working lives. Whilst both men and women experience violence and harassment in the world of work, unequal status and power relations in society and at work often result in women being far more exposed to violence and harassment. Gender-based violence remains one of the most tolerated violations of workers' human rights.
6. We, the unions assert that gender equality is a key human rights goal and key component of social justice. Women's rights and gender equality are human rights goals as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Discrimination to Women, the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women, the Agenda 2030, the Agenda 2063 of the African Union as well as several Conventions and

Recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in particular Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration, Convention 111 against Discrimination, Convention 156 on Workers with family responsibilities, Convention 183 on Maternity Protection and Convention 189 on Rights for Domestic Workers.

7. In spite of important achievements in recent years as far as equality before the law of men and women in international, regional and national legal frameworks is concerned, there remain important gaps in the socio-economic dimensions of substantive equality between men and women.

Recommendations

Having heard the interventions of ITUC Africa and ILO experts, the exchange and discussions of good practices of African and European unions & having been enriched by field visits in South Africa, in particular the Commission for Gender Equality and the Commission for Conciliation, Mitigation and Arbitration (CCMA), the participants recommend the following,

A. On the promotion of the universal access to social protection

1. Engage government in social dialogue for better legal and political frameworks to extend the right to social protection to precarious and informal economy workers and the Implementation thereof.
2. Engage in political action, campaigns and social dialogue with the government to **ratify and transpose into national legislation** the ILO standards concerning social protection, in particular Convention 102 and Recommendations 202 concerning National Floors of Social Protection and 204 concerning the Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy.
3. Engage in political action for **portability of social protection rights** at national and continental level, in order to ensure access to social protection for migrant workers on the continent.
4. **Organize precarious and informal workers, including domestic and agricultural workers** who have limited or no access to social protection systems in order to claim in their name extension of social protection to these vulnerable workers.
5. Form alliances with CSOs and research centres, or even academic circles, with expertise in the matter for strengthening of trade union capacity.
6. Build synergies between trade union actors and with social and youth movements, , for joint political action in favour of the access to social protection and for the setting up of services for union members in the informal economy.
7. **Build and strengthen the capacities** of trade unions in their role in the development, implementation and follow up of social protection policies, like the governance of social security institutions and in social dialogue..
8. **Make social protection a clear priority** of trade union action at national, sub-regional, continental level and set up structures and focal points at all these levels for adequate follow up of the objectives on the right to social protection.

B. Promotion of gender equity in social protection

1. Engage in political action, campaigns and social dialogue with the government to **ratify and transpose into national legislation and domestication of** the ILO standards concerning gender equity in social protection, in particular Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration, Convention 111 against Discrimination, Convention 156 on Workers with family responsibilities, Convention 183 on Maternity Protection and Convention 189 on Rights for Domestic Workers. Actively engage in the ILO supervisory mechanism for respect of these ILO normative instruments, once they are ratified by the governments.

2. **Actively campaign and engage in advocacy work towards government and employers for the adoption in 2019 of a new normative instrument on violence and harassment in the world of work. Invest in awareness raising campaigns for workers and trainings of workers to stop violence and harassment at work and gender based violence in particular.**
3. Engage in political action and campaigns with the government, in close alliance with CSO and women's organisations, for the ratification for international and regional African normative instruments on gender equity.
4. Advocate and campaign for employment equity (gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation...) legislative and policy frameworks. To address the gender gap in social protection we must advocate and campaign for specific targeted programs in social protection towards women, such as cash benefits or social transfer programs. Advocate access to public social services, especially child care services and acces to electricity, water and energy services to reduce women's care burdens.
5. Engage in industrial action and collective bargaining for minimum wages and living wages and increase in wages for lowly paid sectors (cleaners, catering staff, carers, cashiers and clerks).

C. Promotion of gender equality

1. Organize women, esp in vulnerable groups eg nonstandard employment, informal economy, precarious working conditions, domestic workers, free trade zones, migrant workers so as to give voice to women and access to trade union representation and social dialogue.
2. Amplify women's voice in trade unions and promote participation of women in leadership. Adopt and implement a gender policy and program (eg gender audit, adapting trade union culture and practices eg meeting hours), having a dedicated women and / or gender desk and dedicated structures for women's voice in trade unions.
3. Engage in Gender awareness raising campaigns and training for both men and women on gender equality (men gender champions) and train on normative instruments that have gender equality as objectives. Invest in vulgarization and dissemination of legal texts (national, regional, international).
4. Promote gender equality through social dialogue and collective bargaining taking into account women's practical and strategic needs (e.g. breastfeeding leave, maternity leave and payment, child care facilities...) and integration of violence and harassment concerns in workplace policies and procedures.
5. Build and strengthen alliances with women's movements for gender equality, training and awareness raising and joint political advocacy for better legal and political frameworks. Actively engage with public institutions and authorities on gender equality for the implementation of these policies and legal framework, especially in the field of decent work and social protection.
6. Set up legal and social / psychological assistance services for women victim of violence and harassment and of discrimination or alternatively conclude cooperation agreements with specialized agencies or NGO's for services to women

Participating organizations

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| Burkina Faso | CNTB |
| Burundi | CSB |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | CSC |
| Guinée | CNT |

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| Madagascar | SEKRIMA |
| Mauritania | CLTM |
| Niger | CNT |
| Senegal | CNTS |
| Sierra Leone | SLCC |
| Togo | ITUC Africa-TOGO |
| Zambia | ZCTU |
| Zimbabwe | ZCTU |
| Kenya | COTU |
| Tanzania | TUCTA |
| South Africa | FEDUSA COSATU NACTU |
| Belgium | CSC / IIWE |
| Zambia | FES |
| South Africa | LRS |

We pledge to support this statement and to convey its message to the 4th ITUC Congress in December 2018 and the 4th ITUC Africa Congress in November 2019.