

Session 5 - Decent Work Policies in Africa

Module 1: Decent Work: A Requirement for Social Justice

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29 June 2011
The Sarova PanAfric Hotel, Nairobi

1. Overview

- Introduction
- Conceptual issues
- Global, Regional and National Thrusts on DW
- A Brief Review of the Labour Market in Africa
- Assessment of Policies of Employment vis-à-vis DW
- Some Challenges Associated with DW
- The Status of Implementation of DWCP in Africa

2. Introduction

- Existing literature posits that while low income households possess few assets of their own, the most abundant resource at the disposal of the poor is their labor.
- Thus, a development strategy that more fully employs a country's human resources and raises the returns to labour becomes a powerful tool for raising household incomes and reducing poverty.
- In other words, when employment expands along with production, the benefits of economic growth will be widely shared.
- The ILO posits that not just any type of employment will lift the poor out of poverty but that it should be decent work
- This input explores the concept of decent work in order to understand how it becomes a requirement for social justice.
 - It also attempts to locate the role that trade union research can play in advancing the decent work agenda.

Introduction contd.

- The following questions guide the discussion of this input:
 - What is decent work and what global, regional and national thrusts are in place to promote the DWA?
 - How can we characterise the African labour Market, particularly the employment challenge?
 - How can we characterise the policy structure dealing with employment in Africa and how is this policy structure responding to the guidelines of the African Union Extra-Ordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa (Quagadougou, 2004, 2009) and the 2007 African Regional Meeting on Decent Work in Africa?
 - What is the status of implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) in Africa at the edge of the Global Jobs Pact?

3. Conceptual issues

- As used in this presentation, **social justice** generally refers to the idea of creating a society that is based on the principles of equality and solidarity that understands and values human rights, and that recognises the dignity of every human being
- **Decent work** is generally used to refer to the availability of employment in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity

Conceptual issues contd

- According to the ILO, “decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organise and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men”
- Accordingly, a **Decent Work Deficit** or lack of Decent Work is defined as “the absence of sufficient employment opportunities, inadequate social protection, the denial of rights at work and short-comings in social dialogue”

Conceptual issues contd

- The term **decent work agenda** is used to generally refer to the ILO's integrated programmatic approach for pursuing the objective of full and productive employment and decent work for all at the global, regional and local levels.
- It is centred around **four pillars** (with gender equality as a crosscutting objective):
 - Standards and rights at work
 - Employment creation
 - Social protection, and
 - Social dialogue
- The ILO's decent work agenda provides a vitally important rights-based lens for assessing and analysing issues affecting the labour market.

4. Global, regional and national thrusts for promoting DW .

- The African Regional Meeting in 2007 agreed on the Decent Work Agenda in Africa to be implemented between 2007 and 2015
- The Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-2015 re-affirms and consolidates the conclusions of the Ouagadougou Summit of 2004 which agreed on the priority of employment creation for poverty alleviation as *an explicit and central objective of economic and social policies at national, regional and continental levels*

Global, regional and national thrusts for promoting DW contd

- Specific elements of the conclusions of the ARM on DW Agenda in Africa include:
 - Mainstreaming decent work into national, regional and international development strategies
 - Investing in enterprise and decent work opportunities in Africa
 - Decent work for Africa's youth
 - Closing the skills gap
 - Social inclusion through job creation for conflict prevention and reconstruction
 - Investing in a basic social protection for poverty reduction
 - Tackling the HIV/AIDS crisis through work place action

Global, regional and national thrusts for promoting DW contd

- Implementing labour standards at the workplace
- Tripartism as a key governance mechanism for inclusive poverty-reducing growth
- Freedom of association
- Effective implementation for fundamental principles and rights at work
- Getting African children into school and out of work
- Rooting out the remnant of slavery
- Eliminating discrimination in employment
- Escaping the informal economy trap
- A fair deal for africa's migrant workers
- Improving information for better polices

Global, regional and national thrusts for promoting DW contd

- Further, against the backdrop of the 2008 Global crisis, a Global Jobs Pact was adopted in June 2009 to guide national and international policies to refocus crisis recovery efforts around the decent work agenda:
 - Creating jobs
 - Safeguarding rights
 - Protecting people
 - Promoting voice
 - Participation and sustainable enterprises

Global, regional and national thrusts for promoting DW contd

- In 2008, a landmark declaration was adopted by the International Labour Conference,
 - The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a fair globalisation, which emphasises the inter-relationship and mutually supportive nature of the four priorities introduced through the DWA.
 - In the declaration the four strategic objectives are presented in the following order: Employment creation, social protection, social dialogue and fundamental principles and rights at work
 - This is meant to show that promotion of rights should underpin all the activities in order to achieve real decent work, and that employment has to be created as a first instance.

Global, regional and national thrusts for promoting DW contd

- Decent Work Country Programs are being established as the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries.
- They have two basic objectives.
 - To promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies.
 - To organize ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework.
- Each DWCP is organised around a limited number of country programme priorities and outcomes.

5. Review of the African Labour Market

- How can we characterise the African labour Market, particularly the employment challenge?
 - Despite appreciable improvement in the level of economic growth on the continent in recent years, aggregate employment growth has been slow relative to the population growth
 - Ratio of employed to adult population in SSA has persisted around 65%
 - The official rate of unemployment has persisted around 8% over the last five years.

Review of the African Labour Market

- The number of working poor is increasing as a result of the declining number of well-paid jobs and the continuing exclusion of a sizeable number of the labour force from the benefits of economic growth
 - Based on the US\$1.25 per day PL, there were over 204 million working poor in SSA in Jan 2010, representing 81 % of total employed (ILO 2010)
 - Many of the working poor are located in the informal economy

Review of the African Labour Market

- The number of those in vulnerable employment (i.e. those in employment situations characterised by decent work deficits,) is on the high side
 - 79 % of those in employment in SSA are in vulnerable employment
- The exclusion of women in high paying jobs opportunities persist
- The high incidence and duration of unemployment among the youths is on the high side (ECA reports an average of 21%)

SSA: Unemployment rate (%) [Source, ILO, 2010, GET]

| UR | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Total | 8.2 | 8.2 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| Male | 7.8 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 7.6 |
| Fmale | 8.8 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.5 | 8.5 |

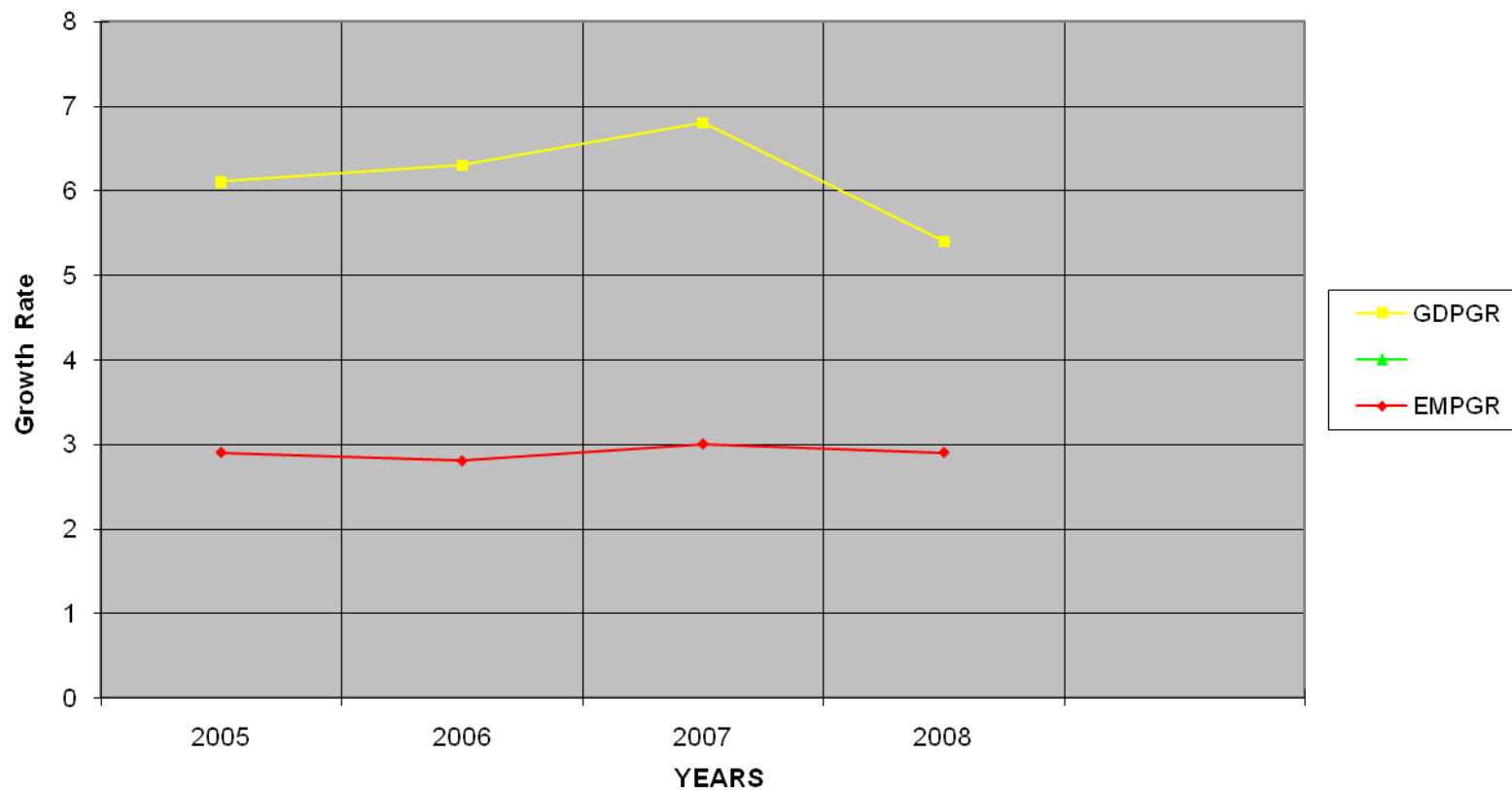
SSA: GDP Vs Emp Growth Rate [

Source: ILO, 2010 GET

| | GDP Growth Rate (%) | Emp Growth Rate (%) |
|------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2005 | 6.1 | 2.9 |
| 2006 | 6.3 | 2.8 |
| 2007 | 6.8 | 3.0 |
| 2008 | 5.4 | 2.9 |

SSA: GDGR Vs employmt growth

GDP Growth Rate Vs Annual Employment Growth Rate



SSA: Vulnerable employment share by Gender(%)

| Years | Male | Female |
|-------|-------------|---------------|
| 2005 | 71.3 | 84.9 |
| 2006 | 70.8 | 84.3 |
| 2007 | 70.3 | 83.5 |
| 2008 | 69.6 | 83.1 |

5. Assessment of policies, programs and Institutions of employment in Africa in the context of the decent work framework

- The overall policy approach to employment generation has been passive and incoherent, at best indirect.
 - For instance, in Zambia, the NELMP remains unimplemented due to ‘budgetary constraints’ and lack of an accompanying implementation action plan.
- For most countries implementing IMF-WB inspired economic policies, the employment objective is not placed at the centre of the macroeconomic framework – but a residual of it –contrary to the guidelines of the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration
- The various policies and programmes of intervention on employment appear to largely function as stand-alone initiatives that are not well coordinated nor linked to an overall employment strategy –

Assessment of policies, programs and Institutions of employment in Africa in the context of the decent work framework

- In the overall context of promoting a full, decent and productive employment, a direct approach to the employment objective becomes cardinal
 - Such a direct approach needs to place the employment objective at the centre of the macroeconomic framework, not as a residual of it.
 - This framework must guide the nation on job creation in the short, medium and long-term and provide for an institutional mechanism for coordinating and linking macro, meso, micro and all sector strategies and programmes on employment in a more targeted and integrated manner

Assessment of policies, of employment in Africa in the context of the decent work framework

- In most countries, decent work is not effectively mainstreamed into national development strategies and no targets are adopted for the creation of sufficient decent jobs to absorb new labour market entrants.
- Where promotion of FDI is being used as a strategy for employment creation, the investment incentives regime pay much attention to the determinants of investment, not to upgrading or formation of linkages between FDI and domestic companies.
 - In essence, the MSMEs sector which holds potential for employment generation have hardly benefited from the presence of FDI

Assessment of policies, programs and Institutions of employment in Africa in the context of the decent work framework

- The lack of effective linkages between FDI and domestic firms continues to undermine the conclusions of the 11th ARM on decent work which calls for investing in enterprises and decent work opportunities in Africa
 - It seems of the essence that Africa must appropriately govern foreign direct investment in order to ensure the creation of decent work

Challenges to DW Agenda

- Although few would disagree with DWA, achieving DW poses challenges and controversies.
- For instance, the DWA requires national and international actors to commit to the objective of creating quality jobs globally and pursue solutions to this challenge
 - However, capitalist governments, struggle to convince their publics that sustainable development and quality job creation abroad is imperative to prosperity and employment at home.
 - Some governments, particularly in Africa, face the temptation to lower standards to remain competitive in a world economy that is blamed for depressing wages and working conditions
 - IFIs provide loan or other assistance to national governments and require recipients to implement certain programs that generally exclude employment targets and have been known to have the negative impacts on job creation
 - No consensus exists on the inclusion labour standards in trade agreements

Challenges to DW Agenda

- Building on own research, trade unions should assist unpack the benefits of decent work to the publics and advocate elements of decent work from living wages to health insurance to workplace standards to basic social protection – to mention but a few.
- Overall, trade union research can demonstrate that decent work can be a vehicle for achieving a fair globalization, reducing poverty and achieving equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development.

8. Status of Implementation of DWCPs, as at May 2011

- Sierra Leone (2010-2012)
 - Final draft signed in October 2010
- Ethiopia (2009-2012)
 - Final document approved and duly endorsed by constituents
- Kenya (2007-2011)
 - Reconciliation underway of DWCP and its implementation plan with new constitutional dispensation
- Uganda (2007-2010)
 - Consultation for DWCP II underway

Status of Implementation of DWCPs, as at May 2011

- Tanzania(2006-2010)
 - Prioritisation for DCWP II underway
- Zambia (2007-2011)
 - DWCP revised in 2009 to incorporate Jobs pact and develop M+E and implementation plan
- Malawi (2011-2016)
 - Document being finalised and aligned to MGDS II
- RSA (2010 – 2015)
 - Under implementation
- Swaziland (2010-2014)
 - Under implementation

Concluding remarks

- Work is central to people's well-being. In addition to providing income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities.
- Such progress, however, hinges on work that is decent.
- Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives.
- The agenda for the community of work that the ILO is promoting is, therefore, beneficial and compatible with social justice.

Module 2: Group work

- Group work will focus on trade union actions to monitor national employment policies and the implementation of the decent work country programme in African countries for an efficient participation of trade unions in national dialogue
- Two case studies will be prepared and circulated to the participants and this will form the basis of the group work