

BOTSWANA FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (BFTU)



POLICY POSITION PAPER ON GLOBALIZATION – 2007

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FOREWORD

Globalization is based on a neo-liberal agenda that believes in the efficacy of unfettered market forces. It is driven by corporate capital and largely serves its interests at the expense of the masses. It is characterized by the uneven distribution of benefits, growing inequality within and between nations and increased volatility of capital markets.

As workers, we understand the clear context of global injustice driven by globalization. We actually know who is shaping it, that is, *who owns it, who benefits, who wins, who loses and who has the future in it*. We also know that in the name of globalization, we have kept on cultivating, planting and working while others harvest and eat the product of our collective sweat. We also know that those who seek to cancel our labour rights do not see globalization with the same spectacles as us. Thus globalization has been accompanied by increased insecure types of employment, mainly through the phenomenon of casualisation. Increased competition, especially for foreign direct investment, has resulted in the undermining of human and trade union rights, especially the right to organize and negotiate. Thus, apart from thousands of workers losing their jobs because of market liberalization, the specter of the working poor has also developed. Many workers are not only employed in tenuous jobs but thousands are now working in the unprotected informal economy. In all, globalization means the ever-changing and intensifying network of global consciousness, interdependence, human interaction and societal transformation. These changes influence the fortunes of workers in economic, political, cultural terms.

In order to counter-balance the influence of global corporations, there is need for capacity building in the area of knowledge on trade and investment and global processes to ensure that trade unions can play a more effective role in shaping the global economy. The emergence of global unions is a positive development to countering the globalization process. This has been necessitated by the emergence of transnational companies which are part of capital's global strategy in the wake of globalization. This means that national trade unions such as the BFTU should align themselves with these global unions to fight for global justice as matter of practical survival. This is so because trade unions in Botswana should not and cannot be considered in isolation. They are part of the "global village" and consequently what is happening in other countries impacts on them in as much as what happens in them impacts on other countries. This policy position paper is therefore meant to guide and entrench the workers agenda on globalization. It is hoped that the paper will

stimulate more consciousness about the globalization process among the workers in Botswana.

Long Live the Workers Struggle!

Henry Tebogo Makhale
SECRETARY GENERAL
January, 2007

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy position paper arises out of the BFTU's thorough engagement of its affiliates with a view to developing a unified position regarding the globalization process and its effects on labour in Botswana. The policy paper involves detailed research work and consultations with affiliates and puts forward consolidated policy guides for dealing with the challenges of globalization for the workers in Botswana.

The policy paper examines the concept of globalization and discusses what it entails, its global and national challenges, prospects and failures and more importantly how it has impacted on trade unions in Botswana. This is so because trade unions in Botswana should not and cannot be considered in isolation. They are part of the global village and consequently what is happening in other countries impacts on them in as much as what happens within their structures impacts on other countries. The need to mitigate the negative influences and take advantage of the positive aspects of globalization is thus very critical to their survival. The policy guidelines will thus act as basis for informed action by the labour movement in Botswana.

2.0 MEANING AND SCOPE OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is said to be the integration of trade, technology, investments, capital and labour markets throughout the world. It involves opening up of national economies into the global one, creating a global village. Sutcliffe sums it up as "the conversion of the world into a single economic space, one macro economy, or perhaps mega economy, and so... as a result, into a single seamless society and culture" (Sutcliffe, 1999:1).

Globalization is often "associated with increased reliance on the regulation of economic relations by markets." (Bezuidenhout; 2000:1). Most national governments adopt liberal approaches to "macroeconomic management, implying privatization, monetary liberalization, reduction in import tariffs, labour market flexibility and fiscal discipline". (Bezuidenhout; 2000:1). It is a degree of interdependence which goes far beyond simple expansion of free trade, the main indication of the

internationalization of the economy in the past. (ICFTU¹; 2001:9). It includes integration of production across national boundaries with significant increases in international investment by multinational enterprises. (ICFTU; 2001:9)

Globalization is not just a change in production and supply relationships. (ICFTU; 2001:9) It is an unprecedented rapid and massive movement of capital. This interdependence and integration is facilitated and accelerated by new technology, particularly information technology. (ICFTU; 2001:9). Globalization is said to be a result of several developments and processes which are generally linked together. These include the growth and relative importance of foreign direct investment, which provides a greater role for multinational companies, internationalization of financial markets, deregulation and liberalization of markets, privatization of the public sector and the development and diffusion of communication transport and technology. (ICFTU; 2001:10)

Globalization is based on a neo-liberal agenda that believes in the efficacy of unfettered market forces. It is driven by corporate capital and is largely serving its interests at the expense of the interests of the people. (BFTU; 2004:56). It is characterized by the uneven distribution of benefits, growing inequality within and between nations and increased volatility of capital markets. (BFTU; 2004:56)

The Global Unions (2006) ably summarizes the scope and effects of globalization as centering on the following key players:

- **Companies:** Markets have widened but there is now increased competition from overseas competitors making it harder for local businesses to make profit and thus being forced to cut costs which include labour. There is now the trend to outsource or subcontract certain parts of production to cheaper suppliers in other countries to increase profit margins. Production has also become mobile where investment can easily be switched to favourable countries. In most poor countries, investors are setting their terms and conditions. There is also the attendant use of export processing zones where workers are exploited and trade union rights denied.

¹ The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour amalgamated to form the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) on 1st November, 2006.

- **Consumers:** Some have argued that consumers have cheaper goods and that there is more choice. Others argue that big global players wipe out small local producers and thus limit consumer choice. This is coupled with lack of information of where goods are produced and how they produced or the working conditions under which they were produced.
- **Governments:** Most governments in poor countries are desperate for investment and are willing to silence the workers to create a “docile” workforce through banning trade unions, preventing collective bargaining, allowing child or forced labour, creating export processing zones with weaker labour laws and ignoring discrimination of workers such as women. This is implemented through weak national labour legislation and lack of implementation of international convention to which they have ratified as a public relation exercise.
- **Workers:** As asserted throughout in this policy paper, workers bear the full brunt of the globalization as first targets of cost cutting, retrenchments in event of companies shifting to production where there are lower costs. There is also the inherent violation of core or fundamental labour standards and substantive social rights.

3.0 INTEGRATION INTO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY: LESSONS FROM SADC

In discussion the effects of globalization, it may be useful to look at positive and negative impact of how Southern African Development Community (SADC) has managed to integrate in the global economy. It is clear that from its original objectives in 1980, the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) did focus on developmental goals; emphasizing political and social goals as much as economic ones. Thus infrastructural development was seen as a priority. (Kanyeze, 2006). However, the shift to SADC in 1992 was accompanied by a move towards ‘free trade’ and market outcomes, the adoption of neo-liberal approaches. Thus the opening up of individual and the regional economies is on going swift pace. For countries such as Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, that implemented Structural Adjustment (SAP) policies during the 1980s and 1990s, the process of global integration started much earlier. However, even the ANC Government in South Africa abandoned its Reconstruction and Development

Programme (RDP) only after two years when it adopted the market-inspired Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) in 1996. (Kanyeze, 2006).

It is evident from the “reconfiguration of the region through the various free trade agreements” (negotiated with the various developed countries (AGOA with the USA, EPAs with the EU, EU/South Africa Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement of 11 October 1999) that the original regional developmental agenda has been replaced with a neo-liberal one.”² Even the harmonization of policies in the region implies adoption of market-driven strategies. (Kanyeze, 2006).

As observed by Kanyeze (2006) this reconfiguration of the region has “overlapping and confusing membership across regional groupings.” For example, under the “EPA negotiations, Zimbabwe and Zambia are not under SADC, but are under the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region. SADC member States are simultaneously members of other groupings such as SACU, COMESA, East African Community (EAC) which was revived in 1999 with the signing of the EAC Treaty on 30 November, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).” (Kanyeze, 2006).

It also clear that under globalization, the interests of international capital drive the processes and influence the outcomes yet the regional performance has not improved substantially following integration into the world economy. The social areas (health, education) have suffered reversals in terms of the gains that had been achieved prior to liberalization, especially post 1990. The human condition has, on average, deteriorated and because of its structural nature, poverty remains endemic to the region. New challenges such as the HIV / AIDS pandemic have proven difficult to deal with under conditions of deteriorating health care services and endemic poverty. Even diseases that had been brought under control such as malaria and tuberculosis have re-emerged as leading killers. The deteriorating situation is in spite of the pronounced integration of the region into the world economy. (Kanyeze, 2006).

The UNDP, 1996 quoted in (Kanyeze, 2006) sums this that “the context of the inherited enclave structures of the economy, emphasizing the market-orientation” has ultimately resulted in the following forms of growth:

- jobless growth (growth that does not expand employment opportunities);

² Following the collapse of the talks around the proposed comprehensive round of liberalization at the WTO Ministerial held in Cancun (October 2003), the developed countries (especially the USA and EU) have focused on concluding regional trade agreements that even incorporate the rejected Singapore issues.

- ruthless growth (growth associated with increasing inequality and poverty);
- voiceless growth (growth in the absence of democracy or empowerment);
- rootless growth (growth that withers cultural identity); and Futureless growth (growth that squanders resources needed by future generations)

Kanyeze (2006) attempts to trace the economic indicators to see whether globalization (integration) is bringing the promised benefits. Table 1 below traces the extent of economic integration, using the conventional measure, namely, share of trade in GDP for the periods 1981-83, 1990 and 2000.

Table 1: Global Economic Integration, 1981-83, 1990 and 2000 (% of GDP).

Country	Trade in Goods		
	1981-83*	1990	2000
Angola	34.1	53.5	127.5
Botswana	106.9	99	92.9
DRC	14.9	20.2	14.7
Lesotho	83.3	118.8	100.1
Malawi	33.3	53.1	55.4
Mauritius	50.1	106.4	81.6
Mozambique	-	40.8	35.6
Namibia	-	88.9	85.2
South Africa	28.3	37.5	47.4
Swaziland	-	144.7	131.2
Tanzania	26.2	33.9	24.2
Zambia	46.1	76.9	54.3
Zimbabwe	29.3	40.7	44.9
SADC	45.3	70.3	68.8
SSA	28.8	41.2	56.8
World	27.3	32.4	40
East Asia & Pacific	24.6	48.8	65.6

Source: World Bank, 2002 and 1997: World Development Indicators, The World Bank, pages 334 & 294 respectively.

Notes: Asterisks * is real trade, which is the sum of exports and imports of goods and services measured at constant prices. Trade for 1990 and 2000 is the sum of merchandise exports and imports (excluding services) at current US dollars.

Compared to 1981-83, SADC has been integrated more markedly into the world economy. Trade in goods as a percentage of GDP in SADC is above the world average, the average for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and even East Asia and the Pacific. The expectation is that openness promotes economic growth. Table 2 reports

real GDP levels and the rates of growth of real GDP for SADC countries and other regions for the period 1980-2003. (Kanyeze, 2006)

Table 2: Real GDP (constant 2000 prices - US\$m) and Real Average Annual Economic Growth Rates of SADC Countries and Selected Regions, 1980-2003

Country	2003	1980-90	1990-'03
Angola	11,139	3.4	3.2
Botswana	6,084	11.0	5.2
DRC	4,610	1.6	-3.9
Lesotho	948	4.5	3.4
Malawi	1,776	2.5	3.0
Mauritius	5,063	6.0	5.2
Mozambique	4,789	-0.1	7.0
Namibia	3,717	1.3	3.7
South Africa	145,338	1.0	2.3
Swaziland	1,487	6.9	3.1
Tanzania	11,079	-	3.7
Zambia	3,687	1.0	1.4
Zimbabwe	5,354	3.6	1.1
SADC	-	3.6	2.9
World	-	3.3	2.8
SSA	-	1.7	2.8
East Asia & Pacific	-	7.9	7.6
Europe EMU	-	2.4	2.0

Source: African Economic Indicators, World Bank, 2005, Table 2.1, page 15 & World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2005, Table 4.1, page 198-200.

Although the average annual growth rates for SADC during the period 1980-2000 are higher than those for SSA and the world, they however are way behind those of the East Asian and the Pacific States and are close to the average annual rates of population and labour force growth of 2.6% during the period 1980-2000. The Millennium Development Goals projected that for Africa to reduce poverty by half by 2015, she must grow at an annual rate of 7%. Given the average rates of growth in SADC of 3.5% and 2.8% during 1980-90 and 1990-2000 respectively, the region will not meet its Millennium Goals by 2015. The average annual rate of growth within SADC is at par with the traditional rate of 3% largely seen as the yardstick to surpass (ECA, 2002). On a positive note, the number of SADC countries surpassing the traditional 3% threshold increased from 6 during 1980-90 to 9 during 1990-2000. (Kanyeze, 2006)

Table 3, traces the growth of merchandise trade by region for the period 1980-95.

Table 3: Growth of Merchandise Trade, 1980-2002 (Average Annual % Growth)

Country	Export Volume		Import Volume		Export Value		Import Value	
	1980-90	1990-02	1980-90	1990-02	1980-90	1990-02	1980-90	1990-02
Angola	9.1	5.4	-2.0	9.0	15.7	7.1	3.7	8.5
Botswana	14.7	4.5	9.5	3.2	18.4	3.8	9.0	1.3
DRC	9.6	2.3	12.1	8.0	2.7	-5.2	3.1	-1.6
Lesotho	7.0	15.8	4.0	2.1	3.7	12.9	3.4	-0.5
Malawi	2.4	2.5	-0.1	-1.3	2.0	0.7	3.2	0.0
Mauritius	11.5	3.3	11.5	3.6	14.3	3.2	12.9	2.8
Mozambique	-9.6	18.4	-2.7	2.4	-9.5	12.8	0.2	2.6
Namibia	-	1.9	-	7.3	-	-0.2	-	3.3
South Africa	1.7	4.5	-0.9	6.4	0.8	2.2	-1.3	4.4
Swaziland	7.6	4.9	2.4	3.7	4.8	5.0	-0.4	3.9
Tanzania	-	6.5	-	1.0	-	7.2	-	0.9
Zambia	-0.5	6.0	2.0	4.6	0.9	-1.2	0.0	2.7
Zimbabwe	3.8	7.2	3.4	7.3	2.5	1.2	-0.5	1.1

Source: World Development Indicators, 2005, World Bank, Table 4.4, pages 210-212.

The trade performance of SADC countries, as is the case with SSA is weak, especially when benchmarked against the world average and East Asia and the Pacific. Countries and regions that have experienced high levels of growth in trade also experienced significant improvements in their terms of trade. Poor performers generally experienced declining terms of trade.³ Terms of trade for the SADC region declined from an index of 130 in 1980 (with 2000 as base year) to 104 by 1995 and 91 by 2003 (with some variations).

³ Terms of trade are the ratio of the base year export value index to the corresponding import price index.

Table 4 summarizes intra-regional exports for the period 1970 to 2003. (Kanyeze, 2006)

Table 4: Intra-Regional Exports, Selected Regional Areas (% of bloc exports), 1970-2003

	1970	1980	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
FTAA	45.0	43.4	46.6	52.5	58.1	59.7	60.8	60.6	60.9	60.1
EU	59.5	60.8	65.9	62.4	56.8	62.9	61.6	60.8	60.6	61.1
NAFTA	36.0	33.6	41.4	46.2	51.7	54.6	55.7	55.5	56.7	56.1
CARICOM	4.2	5.3	8.1	12.1	17.3	16.9	14.6	13.9	13.0	12.4
MERCOSUR	9.4	11.6	8.9	20.3	25.0	20.6	20.0	17.1	11.5	11.9
ASEAN	22.9	18.7	19.8	25.4	21.9	22.4	23.9	23.2	23.7	23.0
COMESA	9.6	6.4	7.1	8.2	9.5	8.1	6.3	7.1	6.7	8.0
EAC	16.9	10.2	13.4	17.4	19.0	14.4	16.1	13.8	13.4	14.1
ECOWAS	2.9	10.1	7.9	9.0	10.7	10.4	7.9	8.5	10.9	8.4
SADC	8.0	2.0	4.8	8.7	10.4	11.9	12.0	9.7	8.8	9.4

Source: World Development Indicators, 2005, World Bank, Table 6.5, page 335.

Notes: EU denotes European Union; NAFTA, North American Free Trade Area (USA, Canada & Mexico); CARICOM, Caribbean Community and Common Market; MERCOSUR, Southern Cone Common Market (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay & Uruguay); COMESA, Common Market for East and Southern Africa; ECOWAS, Economic Community of West African States; EAC, East African Community (Kenya, Uganda & Tanzania).

The level of intra-regional exports in SADC increased from 2 percent of total regional exports in 1980 to 12 percent by 2000, before declining to 9.4 percent in 2003. Compared to other regions, the level of intra-regional exports is very low in SADC. This suggests individual SADC countries are more integrated globally than within the region.

Table 5 shows the total merchandised exports by regional trade bloc for the period 1970-2003.

Table 5: Share of World Exports from Selected Regional Trading Groups (%): 1970-'03

Region	1970	1980	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
FTAA	26.7	21.1	19.1	19.7	21.8	21.7	22.2	21.9	20.2	18.5
EU	45.6	41	44	39.7	39.9	39.2	35.9	37.5	38	38.7
NAFTA	21.7	16.6	16.2	16.8	18.7	18.8	19	18.7	17.2	15.5
CARICOM	0.4	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
MERCOSUR	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
ASEAN	2.3	3.9	4.3	6.4	6.1	6.3	6.7	6.3	6.3	6.1
COMESA	1.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
EAC	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0	0.1	0.1	0.1
ECOWAS	1.1	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
SADC	2.2	1.6	1	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7

Source: World Development Indicators, 2005, World Bank, Table 6.5, page 336.

Notes: As in Table 3. The African regional trading blocs' share of world exports is not only very low, but has declined over time. While SADC countries accounted for 2.2% of world exports in 1970, their share declined to 0.6% by 2000 and 0.7% by 2003.

The differentiated trade performance by region cannot be explained without reference to the structures of their economies. Almost all SADC countries other than South Africa and Mauritius's merchandise exports are primary commodities. Several are typically monolithic economies, almost wholly dependent on the export of a single commodity (copper in Zambia, diamonds in Botswana and Namibia, oil in Angola etc.). SAPES *et.al*, (2000) estimate that about 90% of the region's exports are mineral and agricultural commodities in raw form. On the other hand, almost two-thirds of the region's imports consist of intermediate and capital goods. The terms of trade for primary commodities are unpredictable, and in most cases have deteriorated over time. In the context of declining terms of trade for most primary commodities, this leaves most of these economies exposed to the vagaries of international commodity markets. (Kanyeze, 2006)

However, a positive development is the increase in intra-SADC trade. Merchandise exports within the bloc as a percentage of total SADC exports rose sharply from 2% in 1980 to 4.8% by 1990, 8.7% by 1995 and 12.2% by 2000. This rise in trade also reflects the entry of new members into the regional bloc such as Mauritius, Seychelles, Namibia, the DRC and South Africa during the 1990s. AFDB (2000) observed that there exists scope for an increase in intra-SADC trade. It was noted that in 1998 for instance, South Africa's imports from other SADC countries were double the value of its imports from the rest of Africa. Its exports in that year were three times its exports to the other African countries (SAPES *et.al, op.cit.*). AFB (*op.cit.*) argued that an interesting development in the SADC region is the complementarity between South Africa's exports and imports of other SADC countries. While South Africa mainly exports commodities to the developed countries, it mainly exports consumer, intermediate and capital goods to the region. While intra-SADC trade increased from 27.8% of GDP in 1991 to 39.5% by 1996, there are possibilities for further expanding intra-regional trade and enhancing the complementarity of regional economies. (Kanyeze, 2006)

A key feature of high performers is the high level of savings and investment in their GDP. Savings are critical to investment, as investment is critical to growth. Table 6 reports the levels of savings and gross domestic investment as a percentage of GDP by region for the periods 1980, 1990 and 2000.

Table 6: Percentage Share of Savings and Gross Domestic Investment in GDP by Country / Region, 1980, 1990 & 2000

	Gross Domestic Savings			Gross Domestic Investment		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Angola	-	30	44	-	12	28
Botswana	28	37	14	38	32	20
DRC	10	9	-	10	9	-
Lesotho	-60	-53	-20	42	53	40
Malawi	11	13	1	25	23	13
Mauritius	10	24	22	21	31	26
Mozambique	1	-12	10	22	16	34
Namibia	39	26	17	29	35	24
South Africa	36	18	18	28	12	15
Swaziland	-	21	4	-	20	20
Zambia	19	17	3	23	17	18

Zimbabwe	16	17	12	19	17	13
SSA	27	16	17	23	15	17
World	25	24	23	24	24	22
East Asia & Pacific	28	35	35	28	35	30

Source: World Bank, 2002 & 1997, pages 238 & 176 respectively.

The level of savings and investment are typically high in high performers (such as East Asia and the Pacific). The recommended savings and investment to GDP ratio is at least 25%. For the SADC region, it would appear only Angola, Botswana and Namibia managed to attain the ‘optimal’ level of savings. Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Namibia have achieved the ‘optimal’ investment threshold of 25% of GDP. The case of Lesotho, which experienced significantly negative savings ratios, but high investment ratios is peculiar. The high investment to GDP ratio reflects the predominance of foreign (South African) investment in that country. These differences in savings and investment performance illustrate the divergences in economic performance, with economies experiencing high levels of investment generating higher levels of economic growth and vice versa. (Kanyeze, 2006)

Despite the integration of the SADC into the global economy the region continues experience persistent decline in socio-economic indicators. Data from World Bank (2002) suggests that whereas in every other region life expectancy improved over time, it declined for SSA and all SADC countries except for Angola and Mauritius since the mid-1980s. This is so due to the high incidence of HIV / AIDS in SSA and SADC.⁴ According to Equinet, the statistics on HIV / AIDS in SADC are as follows:

- 14 million adults and children are currently infected with HIV;
- 51% of all infections in Africa;
- 10 million people died of AIDS related diseases to date;
- 5 million children aged 0-14 years were orphaned due to AIDS;
- 120 million people are directly or indirectly affected by the epidemic (2004: 3).

⁴ An estimated 40 million people are living with HIV / AIDS, with 20 million deaths since the disease was first identified. More than 13 million children are estimated to have been orphaned as a result of HIV / AIDS. It is the leading killer in SSA and the fourth cause of death worldwide (World Bank, 2002: 12).

While mortality rates improved for all regions, those for SSA and the SADC region are still too high. The proportion of a cohort group expected to survive to age 65 is typically low in SSA and the SADC, except for Mauritius where it is high.

It is estimated that abject poverty afflicts a third of the SADC population. Half the countries of SADC (7/14) are amongst the 38 least developed countries of the world. As much as 30-40% of the labour force is un- or under- employed. Income inequality in SADC, which itself is a product of the inequitable distribution of resources, is one of the highest in the world. Ten out of the fourteen SADC countries have gini coefficients in excess of 0.50 (SAPES *et.al*, 2000).⁵

As observed in SAPES *et.al*, (1998), poverty in SADC is endemic and reflects structural rigidities in the economies of the region. The high levels of poverty emanate from the inherited structure which is characterized by a high degree of inequality in resource and income distribution. In particular, the distribution of land is highly skewed and racially biased, especially in the settler economies of Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. For instance, in the case of South Africa, whites represent only 5% of the population, and yet they own 87% of the land (SAPES *et.al*, 2000). Poverty levels have not only increased, but have become more pronounced in urban areas and amongst female-headed families. Poverty levels were accentuated by the implementation of neo-liberal policies, and especially the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). (Kanyeze, 2006)

4.0 THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON LABOUR IN BOTSWANA

Botswana's economy has been dependent on the mining sector since the discovery of diamonds in 1967. Since then, the share of the mining sector increased significantly to a peak of about half of total GDP in the late 1980s, then falling to currently about one third. The dependence on the extraction of the diamonds has not lead to expansion in job creation while other sectors have not shown any significant growth. Thus, economic growth in the first half of NDP 9 is expected to be below the original projected levels, except in mining. This because while NDP 9 had forecast a much faster rate of non-mining GDP at 7.7% per annum, this is now expected to average

⁵ The gini coefficient measures the extent of income distribution among individuals or households within an economy. A gini coefficient of zero means total equality and that of 1 implies complete inequality.

closer to 5.4% per annum (BIDPA, 2006). Over the past years the vulnerability of the Botswana economy has been aggravated by other factors such as the cross exchange rate, devaluation of the pula, increases in interest rates, inflation and HIV/AIDS thus reducing the capacity of government and the private sector in creating employment. Thus in Botswana, globalization continues to breed social and economic injustice on the workers. Some of the effects are discussed below:

Trade Agreements and Workers

As earlier observed, there is a multiplicity of trade agreements being reached simultaneously in most SADC countries. Thus, Botswana now has to contend with a range of other trade arrangements such as the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) which brings together Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland (the BNLS States) together with South Africa, the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act of 2000 between the USA and Africa, the Cotonou Agreement of 2000 which is the successor to the Lome Agreement between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, etc. As is elsewhere in developing countries, unfair trade have results in a shrinking national export base. This in turn has adverse effects on the efforts to diversify the economy from the structural monolithic global economic enclave that stress extraction of non-renewable diamonds; which creates fewer jobs and whose contribution to the national economy is not guaranteed in the long run. Furthermore, the undermining of decent work due to the impact of the international division of labour has been worsen with the “assertive” entry of China and India into major world markets without due regard to the meeting the basic ILO standards. More pronounced effects have in the textile and clothing industry where most firms are unable to compete with Chinese goods leading to massive job losses. As has been demonstrated above in the SADC countries, the promises of the potentials of trade liberalisation have not been translated into higher growth and better jobs.

In addition, agriculture which is suppose to be the largest employer and on which the rural people depend on in Botswana has been undermined through subsidized exports and affect global over-supply, falling prices and a “trading system dominated by agri-food traders, processors and retailers to the detriment of workers and small producers”(Global, Union, 2005).

Job Security

Globalization has been accompanied by increased insecure types of employment, mainly through the phenomenon of casualisation. (BFTU, 2004:56) Increased competition, especially for foreign direct investment, has resulted in the undermining of human and trade union rights, especially the right to organize and negotiate. (BFTU: 2004:56).

One of the major consequences of globalization is privatization. This is one of the major challenges facing unions in developing countries in general and Botswana unions in particular. Some of the objectives of privatization include the promotion of competition, improving efficiency and increasing productivity of enterprises; increasing direct citizen participation in the ownership of national assets; accelerating the rate of economic growth by stimulating entrepreneurship and investment and relieving the financial and administrative burden of government in undertaking and maintaining a constantly expanding network of services and investments in infrastructure. (BFTU, 2004:29).

Privatization has been dogged by controversy wherever it has been undertaken. Its results have been mixed, with successes in some areas and failures in others. It has generally been opposed by unions the world over, and perceived to be driven by profit. As the BFTU position paper on privatization posits that “current transmission of the neo-liberal agenda which usually argue that foreign investment and job creation are key outcomes of a privatized market is flawed, given that in reality the indigenous private markets in Botswana are still fragile and driven by foreign capital. As has now been acknowledged at several fora, the indigenous private sector is still small and heavily dependent on government and that deliberate ways to integrate the indigenous private sector within the market cannot be accomplished by privatization per se. It should involve a holistic home-grown industrial strategy.” (BFTU, 2006:18).

The paper further argues that “privatization without social context [in Botswana] will lead to significant job losses and will not provide for more job creation or any social safety nets such as re-skilling/training the workers...most of the private companies would close down operations that are less profitable but which benefit the poor. They will also not take social responsibility for the survival of the workers. Even where companies plan to list shares, we believe these will be directed at the rich who can afford. The argument that new jobs will be created through restructuring is not supported by any practical and objective realities within the Botswana economy.

[Given that] unemployment now officially stands at 23.8% ...there is no guarantee those that lose jobs through privatization will be easily absorbed elsewhere. In other practical worst case scenarios, most of those that lose jobs may need re-training to enter the new job market.” (BFTU, 2006:22).

Job Work Security: The Question of Casualisation

It is now not unusual to find workers that have been working for a firm as daily-wage workers for almost a decade in Botswana. Casualisation seems to be widely entrenched in the economy now. This process is being experienced in both rural and urban areas, leading to a decline in the shares of both self-employed and formal workers. Some sectors like agriculture and construction, employing the largest section of the workforce, have always had a majority of the workers in casualised employment. The proponents of the casualisation process, mainly employers and their representatives, advance variants supporting arguments. For example, they argue that in the present circumstances of globalization and competition, employers need operational flexibility in order to respond quickly to changes in the market, to innovate technologically and to deal efficiently with ups and downs in the flow of work. However, it is clear that privatization in Botswana will also entrench casualisation of labour. As has been observed by the BFTU position paper on privatization “casualisation is intended to strike at the roots of workers’ collective spirit and organization. It takes away the power of labour as a countervailing force to the power of capital in the market place.” (BFTU, 2006:22). In addition, most practical realities point to the fact that the worst jobs are often forced onto casual workers since they cannot protest against such jobs. Apart from occupation and health hazards, such jobs have other implications for the workers as well. Since there will be no pressure from workers to better the conditions of employment, there is little incentive for employers to bring about positive and forward-looking changes in the working conditions. The process of production, in such situations, may even be characterized by very under developed technology, which ultimately thwarts national industrial growth. In other words, casualisation does not actually create decent jobs. The argument that casualisation leads to a process of creating more jobs because there is less pressure of retaining the workforce on employers is not, therefore, plausible in the context of efficient productivity for better economic performance (BFTU, 2006:22).

Work Security: Issues of Occupational Health & Safety (OHS)

In general, the effective monitoring of health standards is absent in Botswana. The Labour Inspectorate is a government unit under the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. It operates under the Factories Act that came into force in 1979. However, currently there are a handful and overburdened of Labour Inspectors carrying occupational safety and health inspections to verify compliance with the relevant law.

In other cases, some international labour standards ratified have not been backed up by legislation. For example, despite being a heavily mining dependent country, the ILO convention 176 which deals with health and safety in the mines has not been enacted at all, notwithstanding its ratification almost a decade ago. The government, like in many other cases continues to gloss over this very serious matter.

Decent Work and Informal Economy

Globalisation has transformed the production systems and employment relationships have changed with the emergence of the informal sector. Through outsourcing and subcontracting, more companies are reorganising their and decentralising work relying on small production units which are not registered and informal (ILO, 2004). In the face of stiff competition, companies are adopting flexibility of employment as a cost cutting measure in Botswana. This has led to contractual situations where employment relationships are disguised and escape the protection of the labour laws. The case of agricultural workers is one such predominant case in point in Botswana. There has also been little collaboration of the trade union movement with workers in the informal economy such as the agricultural and domestic workers including other entrepreneurs in the transport and construction sectors. The consequence is that a specter of the working poor has also developed with many workers employed in tenuous jobs and thousands are now working in the unprotected informal sector (BFTU, 2004:56).

Currently such workers have no clear legal recognition to form or join organisation of their own choosing to collective bargain for substantive social rights. Thus, the major thrust is that as a consequence of globalisation, there has been the creation of the informal economy that lacks the basic framework for the protection of workers' rights.

Income security

With globalization, there is wide spread income insecurity. In Botswana, the issue of minimum wage still remains of critical concern. The rates for the minimum wage itself and the effectiveness of the policing methods being deployed by government for firms to maintain a minimum wage are weak. The drive to get Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) continues to undermine the quest to have “equal pay for equal value of work”. As stipulated, in terms of figures, the minimum wage does not match the economic realities in Botswana. For example, most workers in the retail and distribution only get a paltry P2.90 per hour, while security guards get P2.80 per hour. This is in itself is a mockery of the sacrifices that most workers put in to produce wealth.

Skills Reproduction Security

Globalization requires that workers have critical skills for easy adaptability to the changing socio-economic and technological advances. It is, however, doubtful if under highly globalized environment, companies would bear training costs for skills training. For example, under privatization, efficiency from training would be a thing of the past since profiteers are more likely to ignore the importance of training but would require that employees pay for their own training or employ only those who already possess required skills. Even if government compels training standards the firms may simply hike tariffs to recoup training costs. In such a case, workers are likely to lose out on skills reproduction and security.

Shifting Production and Capital

One of the consequences of globalization is that investors and big companies can shift production quickly to where costs are lower. They also often threaten to move in order to refuse workers’ demands or union organizing drives. The cases of tax-free zones such Selebi-Phikwe are a case in point whereby at the end of tax holidays, most the companies reverted to South Africa and other places of strategic importance, leaving workers stranded without social protection. The case of Hyundai Motors and Volvo are other cases where firms simply relocated to South Africa citing high operational costs in Botswana.

Representation Security: The Question of Collective Bargaining

In Botswana, collective bargaining and many other traditional forms of worker representation are still beset by the industrial, economic and political challenges arising from globalization. The current union membership decline can be attributed to the increasing hostile economic, legal, political and managerial environment. At organizational level, for example, the Botswana Mine Workers Union (BMWU), one of the largest workers unions, has been logged in a conflict situation that has many dimensions to it. However, among other issues have some elements in the Mines Management that continue to refuse to accept or recognize the elected National Executive Committee (NEC) per national labour laws. There is also the aspect where there has been the disregard of constitutions by those that were installed and supported by Management leading to protracted litigations. All these actions continue to undermine the unity of the workers and therefore leaving them vulnerable to exploitation. These dynamics of the conflict at BMWU have had the potential to completely fragment and destroy the BMWU and workers in the country.

Further, most of the national unions in Botswana are “in-house” rather than sectoral or industrial unions. These “in-house” unions have a small membership of about 30-40, in most cases without organizational ability and strength. This in itself is a challenge since the unity of purpose has in most cases been lost and employers have exploited the low rate of unionization against workers pursuit of solidarity and better conditions of service in a work place.

At national level, the BFTU membership has not grown over the years as could have been expected. The overall membership and trade union density is still low. Although, there are no conclusive official statistics, recent reports show that there about 60,000-70,000 unionized workers out of the total 298,900 formally employed work force. This represents an estimated union density of about 20%. It is however, estimated that with Botswana Secondary School Teachers Union (BOSETU), Botswana Teachers Union (BTU) and other public service associations being formally registered after the amendment of labour legislation in 2004, these figures will rise to augment the strength of the whole labour movement in the country.

In addition, though the 2004 amendments in labour legislation at least now provide a framework for increased participation in organising and collective bargaining, many labour rights remain restricted and currently there is very little collective bargaining taking place. Thus, for example, the tripartite structures are not effective and right to strike remains procedural, cumbersome and almost unattainable. The establishment

of dispute prevention and resolution system to address labour conflict still remains weak. The amendments to the Trade Disputes Act, which were promulgated on the 23rd April 2004, incorporated a new concept of mediation and arbitration as methodologies of resolving disputes in a less formalized set up than adjudication. This was also meant to bring about speedy and cost effective justice to the workers. However, there have been protracted delays the implementation thus denying workers the advantageous dispensation for labour relations in the country. In addition the process of appointing mediators has been too slow and that the numbers of those appointed is far short to meet this noble goal and those that have been appointed are highly under resourced making the process ineffective.

5.0 GLOBAL LABOUR FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES FOR GLOBALIZATION

As has been observed, globalization entails the ever-changing and intensifying network of global consciousness, interdependence, human interaction and societal transformation. These changes influence the fortunes of workers in many respects. It has economic, political, cultural, societal and many impacts. While globalization can have both good and negative influences on the existence of trade unions worldwide, the labour movement should mitigate the negative influences and take advantage of the positive aspects. Thus, the emergence of global unions is a positive development in managing the process of globalization. This has been necessitated by the emergence of transnational companies which are part of capital's global strategy in the wake of globalization. This has therefore meant that local unions should align themselves with these global unions as the most practical survival strategy. Other world organizations like the International Labour Organization (ILO), have also attempted to take a lead in managing the globalization process in as far as it impacts on the workers lives is concerned. Though a lot needs to be done, the following are some of the examples that the ILO and Global Unions have attempted to do: (ICFTU, 2006; ILO, 2004):

- They have influenced such bodies such as the World Bank to have stated commitment to the increase of core labour standards and to strengthen trade union involvement in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) process.
- They have influenced such bodies such as the World Bank to publicize the support for core labour standards with the launch of a book in 2003 entitled "Union and Collective Bargaining: Economic Effects in Global Environment".

The analysis and findings from this study shows that, contrary to other beliefs, freedom of association and collective bargaining does not harm growth but reduces inequalities. The study has become their basis for the support of core labour standards.

- Reports by the East Asia section of the World Bank published in June 3, 2004 also justifies the need for respecting the core labour standards and urges those developing countries (especially in Asia) opposed to reconsider their positions.
- The International Finance Corporation (IFC), which the private sector lending unit of the World Bank announced in September, 2003 that it would revise its lending policies to include core labour standards as a precondition. It is documented that that IFC's disbursement of loans for projects in Haiti and Dominican Republic in 1994 was conditional upon the respect of the freedom of association and collective bargaining.
- The International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) has also advocated for the inclusion of core labour standards clauses in the World Bank Procurement Guidelines and Standard Bidding Documents to provide for the observance of minimum labour standards not only by the borrowers from the Bank but by the contractors and subcontractors.
- The ILO established the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization in November, 2001. The Commission presented a report on "fair globalization: creating opportunities for all" in 2004. The report documents the ILO interventions on how "national policies can address globalization" in terms of
 - decent work in global production systems
 - global policy coherence for growth
 - investment and employment
 - constructing a socio-economic floor, the global economy
 - the cross-border movement of people, and
 - strengthening the international labour standards system.

The report also indicates the ILO response on calls for "mobilizing global tripartism." Among the recommendations are the need to entrench the tripartite structure, values and traditions which focus on creating a social partnership among trade unions and employer organizations staff through training in representation skills. Such initiatives will specifically include: union

organization of new members such the “self-employed” and the informal economy; broadening the membership base of employer organizations; increasing women representation in workers, employers’ organizations and government department; technical capacities of the social partners to analyze government policy proposals and develop alternatives; strategic alliances with the civil society in continuing the debate on the social dimensions of globalization; and enhancing the role of voluntary associations in governance by building on OECD guidelines on Decent Work to deepen the conceptual understanding of the role of collective organizations representing and providing services to workers, micro-entrepreneurs and small businesses.

- There are also efforts by global unions to create a research consortium of building a research capacity network through the Global Union Research Network (GURN) which will promote information sharing using the Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) on issues of globalization.

6.0 BFTU POLICY POSITION ON GLOBALIZATION

The BFTU is a firm believer in the global social justice movement. It will thus adopt social trade unionism and seek global alliances and engagement in manner the aims to liberate the workers in Botswana from any global social injustice. The BFTU has the following fundamental concerns on globalization:

- Globalization in its current form alienates the workers and the people from their collective labour hence need for a people-centred approach to development which is internally sustainable.
- The current global trends do not take into account grassroots-led national and regional integration into the global economy.
- The present export-oriented strategy, based on foreign investments is a production system that is not based on national human needs that use of local resources. Such a strategy does not lead to the integration of agriculture and industry based on fair returns rather emphasizes the inherited vertical integration into the global economy with diminishing returns to social labour.

- The current global production and distribution system are structured on exploitative mechanisms of the workers and the people at large.
- The current global trends focus on developing countries being dependent on foreign technology with less local input rather than the building of local science and technology as well as indigenous knowledge.
- The present system of co-optation of social forces in the capital-led globalization process undermines the need for developing countries to have a common strategy of alliance and networking with national, regional and global progressive forces for the good of social justice.
- The present system is not based on a politically governed redistribution of the wealth and opportunities from the so-called formal sector in society to the informal sectors rather its the misallocation of resources, and the integration of the informal sectors into the global enclave through their provision of cheap inputs and a reservoir of semi-employed labour.
- The current global order does not take into account the need for a holistic strategy where women's rights are in focus as the basis for a healthy and productive society rather it is based on the exploitation of women labour, only followed by minor reparation activities to hide the hideous effects of capital led globalization on the women.
- The current global system does not guarantee national policies where education is linked with production, and with improving the technical and managerial as well as research and development skills of workers.
- The current global order lacks the basis for democratic expression of the democratic ideals of political, economic accountability through corporate governance for benefit of society.

7.0 WHICH WAY ON GLOBALIZATION FOR THE BFTU?

Arising out of the concerns above, in terms of practical engagement on globalization, the following policy statements will guide the Federation:

- Enhance the campaign for the implementation of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental principles and Rights at Work (No. 87 and 98 on rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining; No. 29 and 105 on the abolition of forced labour; No. 100 and 111 on the prevention of discrimination in employment and equal pay for work of equal value and No. 138 and 182 on child labour) in Botswana and elsewhere. The BFTU believes that effective implementation of this declaration would enhance the respect of workers rights and mitigate the negative impacts of globalization.
- Entrench social dialogue of the ratification of ILO Conventions 155 on Health and Safety, 161 on Occupational Health and Safety Services, 170 on Chemicals, 184 on Health and Safety in Agriculture and the enactment of 176 on safety and Health in Mines.
- Strengthen the visibility of the labour movement in influencing national, regional and international policies to ensure that development is human-centred. Policies such as blind privatization, cuts in public spending, high interest rates, devaluation, etc have consequences on workers and society at large. The BFTU believes that such policies are driven by economic and profit motives and thus advocate for policies with a social face and an anti-poverty drive that restores human dignity.
- Demand for an alternative socio-economic order based on equity in terms of market access of Botswana exports in industrialized world such as the removal of agricultural subsidies by rich industrialized countries. The BFTU believes that fair trade is the key to the disengaging from the enclave of underdevelopment and a sound basis for economic growth that is sustainable.
- Campaign for the democratization, transparency and accountability of global institutions such as the WTO, IMF and World Bank. The BFTU feels that participation in these world influential bodies by developing countries such as Botswana will enhance global economic decision based on social justice.
- Encourage national solidarity with other pro-labour and democratically legitimate civil society actors on issues of globalization. The BFTU believes that the struggle for social justice require alliances with strong grass-root organizations that exhibit a common agenda and a sense of oversight alertness on human justice.
- Encourage lobbying in government and national parliament for laws that mitigate the effects of unfair globalization. The BFTU advocates, as an important step in

countering effects of globalization, for the domestication of the core International Labour Standards and the substantive or social rights such as minimum wage and wage paying; hours of work; holidays and rest periods; protection of workers with special needs such as women during pregnancy and after birth; migrant workers; home workers and indigenous and tribal population; occupational safety and health and social service; settlement of labour disputes; full, productive and freely chosen employment; and employment services and human resource development.

- Lobby and ensure that the comparative advantage of Botswana (mining) is not sought and gained through the violation of workers rights. The BFTU advocates that the exploitation of natural resources endowed in Botswana which give us advantage over other nations should not be at an expense of the blatant disregard of workers basic rights which are enriched in ILO Conventions which the country is signatory to.
- Campaign and ensure that wealth generated through globalization is shared equitably within the country for Botswana. The BFTU feels that as matter of national interest the wealth of the country should benefit Botswana and mitigate the levels of poverty thrust onto the people as a consequence of globalization.
- Lobby for the amendment of laws that limit national and international solidarity on globalization. The BFTU advocates for entrenchment of the spirit of co-existence with other partners such as government and business for struggle of fair globalization.
- Encourage pro-labour research on current matters of globalization and its implication for labour. The BFTU believe that this enhance the exchange of ideas and improve communication channels between labour researcher and trade unionist.
- Encourage capacity building in the area of trade and investment and global processes to ensure that the labour movement and civil society can play a more effective role in shaping the global economy.
- Encourage legitimate labour research on issues of globalization, its ramifications and initiatives of mitigating impacts on workers’.

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