

# DECENT WORK ZIMBABWE



## The State of Four Pillars of the Decent Work Agenda in Zimbabwe

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## List of Abbreviations

CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DWA	Decent Work Agenda
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FGM	Focus Group Meeting
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
NECs	National Employment Councils
PDL	Poverty Datum Line
TNF	Tripartite Negotiation Forum
DWCP-Z	Decent Work Country Programme for Zimbabwe





# The State of Four Pillars of the Decent Work Agenda in Zimbabwe

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of Decent Work

Decent work primary goal of the International Labour Organization (ILO). (ILO,1999). According to ILO, decent work is defined as work that:

- is productive and gives a fair wage,
- gives security and social protection for families,
- gives freedom to express workers concerns,
- provides human dignity, and
- provides equal opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

Decent work concept was formulated into an agenda that is now commonly referred to as the Decent Work Agenda (DWA), adopted by the ILO at its 87th Session in 1999 (ibid). The DWA is built upon four pillars namely: job creation, worker rights, social protection and social dialogue. Ten years later at the 97th Session in June 2008, the ILO adopted the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization that institutionalized the DWA as the key policy and operational concept of the ILO (LEDRIZ, 2010).

The discussion on the need to promote decent work came after the realization that the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), implemented in various countries, were causing deficits for workers in the world of work, namely:

- gaps and exclusions in the form of unemployment and underemployment;
- poor quality and unproductive jobs;
- unsafe work and insecure income;
- denial of workers' rights;

- gender inequality;
- exploitation of migrants;
- lack of representation and voice; and,
- inadequate social protection and solidarity in the face of disease, disability and old age.

This led to the realization that economic growth generated under SAPs was not sufficient to promote decent work and reduction in poverty. In fact, the neo-liberal economic growth model of the SAPs did not automatically increase employment, redistribute wealth and reduce poverty. Therefore, “decent work” was regarded as the key instrument to further wealth distribution and eliminate poverty. To recognize the importance of decent work in the world of work, the ILO dedicated 7 October as the World Day for Decent Work and encouraged trade unions around the world to act together to organize a wide range of activities to promote the concept of “decent work”. The importance of achieving decent work was further institutionalised in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG 8 - Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all. In fact, this came after the realisation that not all jobs guarantee an escape out of poverty, what is essential for both economic and sustainable human development is a decent job.

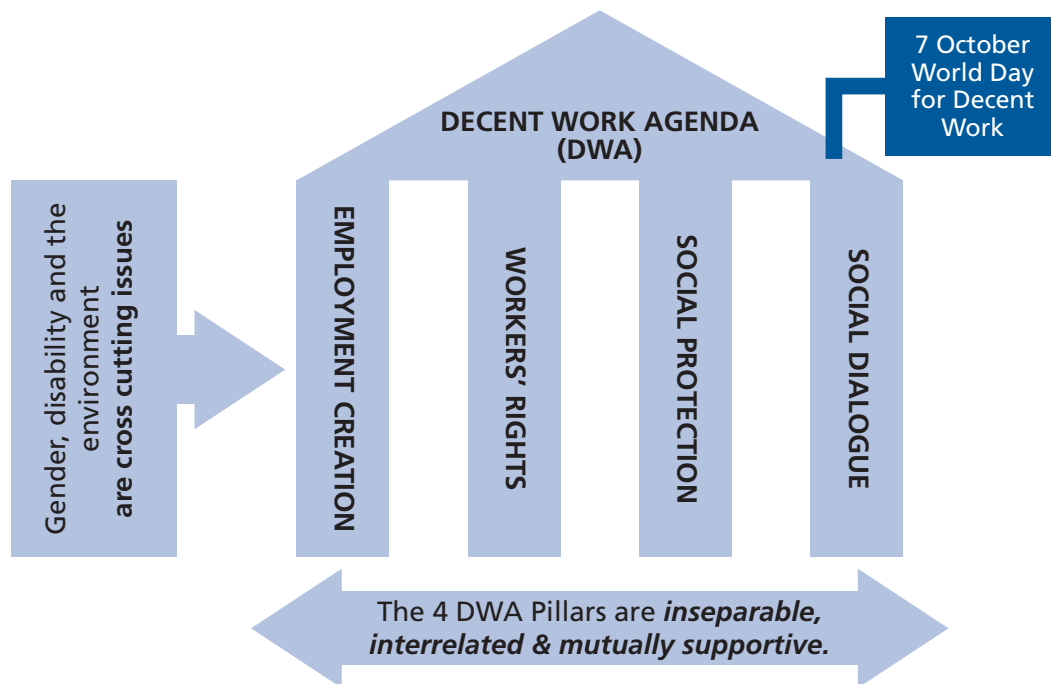
Within Zimbabwe, the discussion on decent work has gained currency, with workers championing this cause as a key to raising people out of poverty. In collaboration with the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, the ILO’s development of the Decent Work Country Programmes in Zimbabwe (ZDWCPs) has assisted the three social partners: government, employers and trade unions to have a common voice in addressing the decent work deficits in the country.

This paper aims to examine the state of each of the four pillars of the DWA, by tracing the emerging developments in Zimbabwe and the state of each of the four pillars. The objectives are to inform the three social partners of the current extent of the decent work deficits and consider ways in which these may be addressed. Our findings will feed into the various departments of the trade unions –education, organising, advocacy and engagement – in order to promote decent work at all levels.

## 1.2 What is the Decent Work Agenda (DWA)?

The decent work agenda is built upon four pillars i.e. employment (job) creation; workers’ rights; social protection; and social dialogue as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Pillars of the Decent Work Agenda



### Gender, disability and the DWA

Gender, on the one hand, and disability, on the other, are regarded as cross-cutting issues. In June 2009, the International Labour Conference (ILC) held a general discussion on 'Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work'. At this conference, the ILO launched an awareness-raising campaign about gender equality and the world of work as part of its overall decent work campaign. The ILC also adopted a resolution on gender equality, pointing out that 'crises should not be used as excuses to create even greater inequalities nor undermine women's acquired rights.' (ITUC, 2009).

The unique scope of the four pillars lies in the fact that they are ***inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive***. This means that failure to promote any one of them would harm progress towards the achievement of the other pillars.

Apart from the interdependency, the ILO has identified seven decent work securities that complement the four pillars of the DWA. Table 1 shows the family of decent work securities. Unfortunately, due to Zimbabwe's deteriorating socio-economic environment, including the introduction of new technologies, economic liberalization, and labour market flexibility (outsourcing and casualization of labour), these securities have been eroded and have turned into insecurities.

**Table 1: Decent work securities, ILO Conventions and status of ratification in Zimbabwe**

Security Type	Description	Supporting ILO Convention	Status of ratification
<b>Labour Market Security</b>	Access to reasonable income-earning activities	Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)	No
<b>Employment Security</b>	Protection against unfair and arbitrary dismissal; Workers obtain redress if they are subject to unfair dismissal.	Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)	No
<b>Job security</b>	Opportunities of building a career, e.g. within the same firm a worker's tasks and skills cannot undergo changes that will force him/her to adjust or even discontinue the job or change occupations	Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	Yes (1989)
		Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	Yes (1999)
		Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)	No
		Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)	Yes (1998)
<b>Work Security</b>	Safe and healthy working conditions	The Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1)	No
		Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103)	No
		Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)	No
	Protection against so-called modern scourges of stress, overwork and "presenteeism"	Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)	Yes , 2003
		Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)	
		Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)	Yes, 2003
		Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171)	No

Security Type	Description	Supporting ILO Convention	Status of ratification
<b>Skills Reproduction</b>	Availability of a wide range of opportunities for training, apprenticeship and education whereby knowledge and skills can be acquired and refined	Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)	No
		Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	Yes, 2000
		Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140)	Yes, 1998
<b>Income Security</b>	Assurance of an adequate income	Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)	No
		Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)	No
		Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26)	Yes, 1993
<b>Voice representation security</b>	Any individual or group must have the effective right to be represented by a body that can bargain on their behalf.	Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87)	Yes, 2003
		Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	Yes, 1998
		Rural Workers' Organizations Convention, 1975 (No. 141)	No

Source: Bonnet, Figueiredo and Standing, 2003 [Adapted from *International Labour Review*, Vol. 142 (2003), No. 2.] and other literature.

It is clear from Table 1 that the government of Zimbabwe last ratified ILO Conventions about fifteen years ago. The majority of the Conventions that support the decent work securities remain unratified meaning the likelihood of more workers facing decent work deficits and insecurities. There has been no political will by the government to ratify these conventions. This calls for trade unions to intensify their advocacy and engagement in order to facilitate movement in ratification of ILO Conventions.

### 1.3 The right to decent work in International Frameworks

The right to decent work is stipulated in various international frameworks. These affirm that having a 'decent job' is a 'right'.

## *International level*

At international level, the following frameworks exists:

- The ILO Philadelphia Declaration (1944)
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- ILO Employment Policy Convention No.122 (1964)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008) (Box 1 below)
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) (Agenda 2030) especially SDG 8.

Table 2 explains the international frameworks.

**Table 2: International frameworks supporting DWA**

International Frameworks	Provisions
<b>The ILO Philadelphia Declaration of 1944</b>	<p>"The central aim of national and international policy is to attain conditions in which all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity."</p>
<b>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948</b>	<p>Article 22 states: "Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security ..."</p> <p>Article 23 states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment."</li> <li>(2) "Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work."</li> <li>(3) "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection."</li> <li>(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.</li> </ul> <p>Article 25 (1) decrees that: (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.</p> <p>(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.</p>
<b>ILO Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No.122)</b>	<p>Article 1 decrees: "that there is work for all who are available for and seeking work. Such a result should be the aim of an explicit policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment."</p>
<b>The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)</b>	<p>The covenant decrees:</p> <p>"the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen, to just and favourable conditions of work, which ensure in particular remuneration which provides all workers with fair wages, equal remuneration for work of equal value, a decent living, and safe and healthy working conditions."</p>
<b>ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008)</b>	<p>States that: "In the context of accelerated change, the commitments and efforts of Members to place full and productive employment and decent work at the centre of economic and social policies... through which the Decent Work Agenda is expressed... In particular, developing and enhancing measures of social protections – social security and labour protection – which are sustainable and adapted to national circumstances, including healthy and safe working conditions; ... and adapting its scope and coverage to meet the new needs and uncertainties generated by the rapidity of technological, societal, demographic and economic changes."</p>
<b>SDG 8</b>	<p>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</p>

### **Box 1: Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization as an integral part of the DWA**

The Declaration endorses the DWA as defined in its two principles below.

1. That all countries should pursue policies based on the strategic objectives which include employment, social protection, social dialogue and international labour standards.
2. The recognition of the indivisibility of these objectives which the Declaration describes as 'inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive,' (page 2). Failure to promote any one of these objectives hinders progress towards achieving the others. For example, the application of the fundamental international labour standards or rights at the workplace is not only of moral worth but can also result in higher productivity; social protection satisfies people's need for security and in the process result in improvement in labour market functioning; social dialogue focuses on workers' and employers' right to freedom of association and participation in decision-making through collective bargaining and also enhances dialogue in problem solving, increase commitment and transparency and speed adjustment to change.

*Source: ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008+*

### **Continental Frameworks**

The African Youth Charter of 2006 supports the need to promote decent work. Article 15 on Sustainable Livelihoods and Youth Employment states that:

1. Every young person shall have the right to gainful employment; and
4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures with a view to achieving full realization of this right to gainful employment and shall in particular:
  - Ensure equal access to employment and equal pay for equal work or equal value of work and offer protection against discrimination regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, disability, religion, political, social, cultural or economic background;
  - Develop macroeconomic policies that focus on job creation particularly for youth and for young women;
  - Develop measures to regulate the informal economy to prevent unfair labour practices where the majority of youth work.



## *SADC Frameworks*

There exist two frameworks that support promotion of decent work. These are:

- SADC Decent Work Programme SADC – 2013-2017
- SADC Employment and Labour Protocol – Article 18 – Decent Work for All.

## *National Frameworks*

The right to decent work is stipulated in the Labour Act and CBAs. The right to decent work is also stipulated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, Section 65:

- **Section 65 (1):** Every person has the right to fair and safe labour practices and standards and to be paid a fair and reasonable wage.
- **Section 65 (4):** Every employee is entitled to just, equitable and satisfactory conditions of work.

These two areas of Section 65 clearly contain the elements provided for in the definition of decent work i.e. productive work, freedom at work, security at work and human dignity at work.

### **1.4 The Decent Work Country Programme for Zimbabwe (DWCP-Z)**

In order to achieve progress towards decent work, the ILO calls for action at both the global and national level. Within the former, there is need to mobilize the principal actors of the multilateral system and the global economy around this agenda. At the national level, integrated DWCPs developed by ILO constituents (government, business and labour), define the priorities and the targets within national development frameworks. The overall aim is to tackle major decent work deficits through efficient programmes that embrace each of the four DWA pillars. The role of the ILO is to provide support in formulation and implementation of the DWCPs.

Zimbabwe is now entering the fourth generation of the DWCPs which were implemented in the following periods: 2005-07/09; 2009-11; 2012-15/17; and 2018-2021. Table 3 shows priority areas under each of the different generations of the DWCP-Z.

**Table 3: Generations of DWCPs in Zimbabwe**

DWCP Generation	Period of implementation	Priority Areas
1st Generation	2005-07/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty reduction through employment creation;</li> <li>• Social Protection and Reduction of the impact of HIV and AIDS at the workplace; and</li> <li>• Upholding and strengthening of social dialogue and tripartite consultation.</li> </ul>
2nd Generation	2009-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment and poverty;</li> <li>• Social protection and HIV and AIDS at the workplace;</li> <li>• Tripartism, social dialogue and industrial relations; and</li> <li>• Gender equality and women empowerment.</li> </ul>
3rd Generation	2012-15/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Jobs;</li> <li>• Improving the application and implementation of international labour standards;</li> <li>• Strengthening Social Dialogue capacities and processes for sustainable socio-economic development; and,</li> <li>• Coverage of Social Protection Increased Through Mainstreaming Elements of the Social Protection Floor.</li> </ul>
4th Generation	2018-2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Creation Promotion; and,</li> <li>• International Labour Standards in Zimbabwe.</li> </ul>

Whilst the DWCPs-Z are comprehensive and rich in content and at times ambitious, the major weaknesses is that they largely remain un-implemented due to the lack of political will by the government to finance the programme, and because the DWCP priorities have not been integrated into government programmes. This lack of progress has resulted in the extension of DWCP generations, especially the first and the third ones. As a result, social partners decided to be less ambitious for the fourth generation, reducing priorities from the standard four to two in view of limited resources.

## 2. The State of the Decent Work Pillars in Zimbabwe

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of all the four pillars of decent work which are employment creation, workers' rights, social protection and social dialogue. The chapter also analyses the gains and losses, the causes and consequences on workers and trade unions over the past years under each decent work pillar.

## 2.1 Pillar One: Employment Creation

There is growing global consensus that it is impossible to look at employment issues without a concern for the quality of the employment (jobs) generated (Ghai et al, 2006). The ILO further stresses that the nexus between economic growth and poverty reduction is decent employment. In other words, it is not the quantum of employment created that matters, but the quality and decency of employment, and whether such employment is able to uplift workers out of poverty. According to the ILO, decent employment is characterized by:

- **Work of acceptable quality:** decent employment should not be precarious in nature and should be void of occupational risks. It should also be characterized by a decent wage and adequate social protection.
- **Opportunities:** having a job is a right on its own. Therefore, the concept of work opportunity relates to the availability of work for those who are available for and seeking employment. It also refers to work that is freely chosen and work that is not forced on individuals.
- **Remunerative employment:** Everyone works in order to earn money that should be able to meet their basic necessities. Hence, remunerative employment refers to the right to a living wage (one that can enable an average family to meet their basic requirements).
- **Productive work:** refers to the ability to produce more and better with a given quantity of resources.
- **Conditions of work:** this relates to fair treatment in employment, stability and security of work and occupational health and safety. Poor conditions of work are evidenced by poor morale among working people, shirking, moonlighting, multiple-jobbing, low productivity, high turn-over and corruption, which undermine human development (LEDRIZ, 2010).

It is, therefore, the responsibility of national governments to put more effort and resources in ensuring decent employment as an instrument of moving people out of poverty.

### *Employment creation - national level analysis*

Zimbabwe has been experiencing structural regression for the past two decades characterized by de-industrialization and informalization. Rather than job creation, the country has experienced increased the opposite - job destruction. For instance, the number of formal sector workers shrank by about half from 1.4 million in 1998 to about 700,000 in 2008 (Sachikonye et al, 2018). Table 4 shows the extent of company closures and jobs lost during the period 2011 to 2014 when a total of 4,160 companies closed, resulting in 55,443 jobs being lost. The worst affected sectors included distribution, hotels and restaurants, agriculture, manufacturing, mining and construction. In addition, the once proclaimed two million job creation target set by the government has failed

to be reached. The Financial Gazette of June 20, 2014<sup>1</sup> indicated that official data showed that over 120 firms applied to the Retrenchment Board in 2013 for permission to retrench, while more applications were lodged with the board by troubled firms that were planning to lay off over 1 500 workers by the first quarter of this year. The same report further stated that at least ten firms have been closing down every month since the beginning of the year 2014 due to declining company utilization and failure to recapitalize coupled by the liquidity crisis.

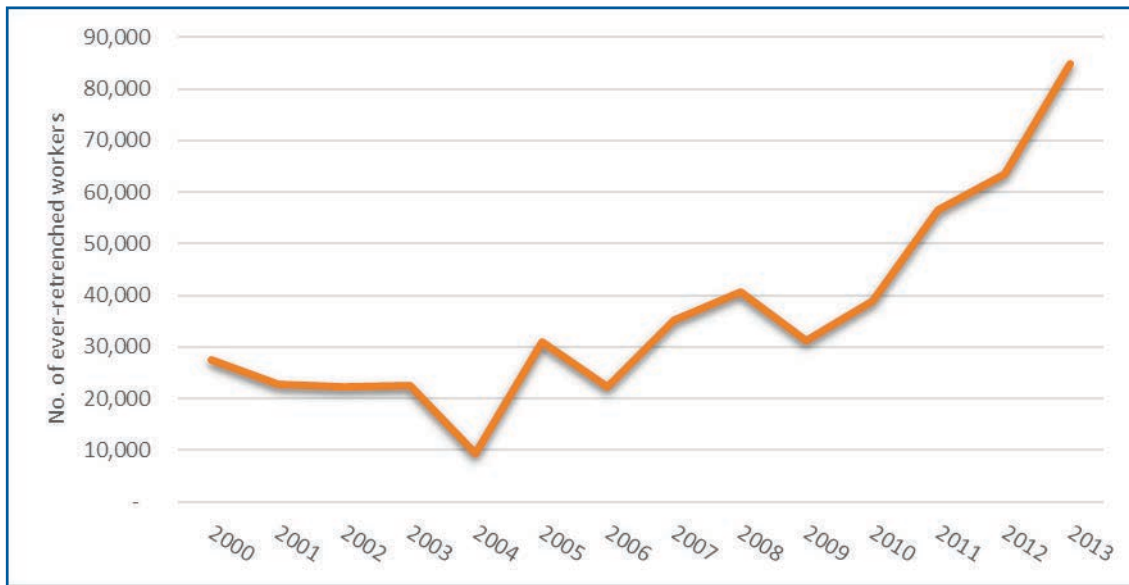
**Table 4: Impact of deindustrialization on jobs**

Companies no longer employing						Employees affected				
Sector	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Agriculture	189	124	54	1	368	3020	1854	515	76	5465
Mining	34	33	13	2	82	1530	1410	351	17	3308
Manufacturing	179	153	113	13	458	2021	4683	3214	60	9978
Electricity & Water	1		1		2	3				3
Construction	154	111	46	6	317	1463	687	1479	22	3651
Finance & Insurance	23	11	7	1	42	68	105	21	2	196
Real Estate	19	16	9	0	44	131	58	29		218
Distribution, Hotels & Restaurants	970	683	407	82	2142	6897	4356	6632	528	18413
Transport & Communication	134	62	43	6	245	1177	432	455	32	2096
Public Administration										0
Education	35	20	15	2	72	168	67	78	7	320
Health	18	15	11	0	44	183	123	38		344
Domestic Services	8	24	11	1	44	41	117	205	6	369
Other services	366	216	148	20	750	2489	6933	1482	178	11082
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,130</b>	<b>1,468</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>4610</b>	<b>19,191</b>	<b>20,825</b>	<b>14,499</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>55,443</b>

In addition, between June 2011 and May 2014, a total of 227,369 workers were once laid off, with males constituting 72 percent and females 28 percent of the ever-retrenched population (Sachikonye et al, 2018). Figure 2 shows the trends in ever-retrenched workers from 2000 to 2013 has been on the increase.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.financialgazette.co.zw/ten-firms-close-monthly/>

**Figure 2: Number of ever-retrenched workers, 2000-2013**



Source: Labour Force and Child Labour Survey (LFCLS) 2004, 2011, 2014

Figure 2 shows that highest number of retrenchments were witnessed in 2013 at 84,789 (ibid).

Furthermore, according to the ZCTU's reports, the 17 July 2015 Supreme Court Ruling resulted in more than 20,000 workers losing their jobs in three weeks following the judgement (ZCTU, 2016).

Those who lost their jobs had no alternative but to find different sources of livelihood within the informal economy, which experienced exponential growth. The 2014 LFCLS revealed that 94.5% of the persons then currently employed, 15 years and above, were informally employed; up from 84.2% in 2011 and 80% in 2004. A total of 98% of the currently employed youth aged 15-24 years were in informal employment whilst 96% of currently employed youth aged 15-34 years were in informal employment (Sachikonye et al, 2018).

The exponential growth of the informal economy is mainly due to the failure of the formal sector to absorb new entrants from universities and colleges (which are also growing in number) and re-absorb those who were retrenched or lost jobs in the formal economy. Youth unemployment, underemployment and high numbers of young workers employed under informal or precarious conditions continues to be the order of the day. Moreover, young women and men are more likely to face decent work deficits at workplaces through exploitation, victimisation, harassment, unpaid internships, wage theft. The future of the youths is .

Hence, the informal economy now has a "youth face", apart from a "woman's face" and "disability face". The informal economy is highly characterized by decent work deficits: none of the five components of decent employment described above are being met. Hundreds of graduates from

university and tertiary institutions are resorting to vending in the streets of CBDs in order to make a living. In fact, indecency of employment in the informal economy gave rise to spats of demonstrations between 2016 and 2018 by graduate youths demanding the government to create decent employment for them through re-industrialising the economy.



<http://www.dev.theindependent.co.zw/2016/07/15/govts-two-million-jobs-promise-valid-justified-expectation/>

### *Employment Creation - a sectoral level analysis*

To assess the state of employment creation at sectoral level, LEDRIZ undertook focused group meetings (FGMs) with workers in six regions namely; Harare, Mutare, Masvingo, Chinhoyi, Bulawayo and Gweru. The assessment from the FGMs clearly indicated that decent employment as characterized above remains a pipe dream for workers. Table 5 summarizes the key developments in recent past in selected sectors as regards the type of employment and decency of employment.

**Table 5: The state of decency of employment by sector**

Sector	Key developments
Cement and Lime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased casualization of labour.</li> <li>Labour broking.</li> </ul>
Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proliferation of small retail shops employing casual and contract workers.</li> <li>Big retail shops employ casual, part-time and contract workers; casual workers constitute around 90% of the labour.</li> <li>Existence of task work e.g. loading tasks.</li> <li>Existence of seasonal workers especially during the festive seasons and the agricultural seasons.</li> <li>Increase in labour broking especially for till operators.</li> </ul>
Banking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacement of full-time and contract workers with students on attachment.</li> <li>High casualization.</li> <li>Existence of two-year contracts for some who have spent over five years on the job.</li> <li>Existence of one-month contracts.</li> <li>Rise in labour broking.</li> <li>Existence of sub-contracting work across borders. For instance, some banks were subcontracting production of bank cards to India.</li> </ul>
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth of informal security guard companies employing workers on a contract basis.</li> <li>Some contracts are being reduced from six to three and then two weeks.</li> </ul>
Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most workers are on six-months contracts.</li> <li>Retirement age was reduced from 65 years to 60 years.</li> <li>Some genuine workers are irregularly classified under "food for work".</li> </ul>
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the number of casual workers on fixed contracts – usually for three months, and sometimes as little as ten days.</li> </ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in casual and seasonal workers.</li> <li>Increase in "silent employment"<sup>3</sup>.</li> <li>Increase in task work "maricho" especially in farms owned through the Fast Track Land Reform Programme.</li> <li>Most seasonal contracts are reduced from six to three months.</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rise in contract employment due to the proliferation of (unregistered) private informal schools and colleges in the CBD and in suburbs.</li> </ul>
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth of piece-rate employment.</li> <li>Increase in labour broking.</li> <li>Increased use of students on attachments specially in the baking industry replacing other permanent and casual workers.</li> </ul>
Railways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since 2009 all workers were changed from permanent to contract workers most with three-month contracts.</li> <li>Politicization of permanent employment.</li> </ul>
Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in fixed-term contracts mostly ranging from one month to a year.</li> <li>Increase in preference for graduate trainees than permanent and casual workers.</li> </ul>
Journalism/ Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rise in casual workers.</li> </ul>
Motor industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rise in contract and casual workers due to the mushrooming of informal companies selling imported ex-Japanese vehicles.</li> </ul>
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in contract workers due to the nature of work which is usually contract-based or project-based.</li> </ul>
Mining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in contract employment.</li> </ul>

Source: Gathered from FGMs discussions

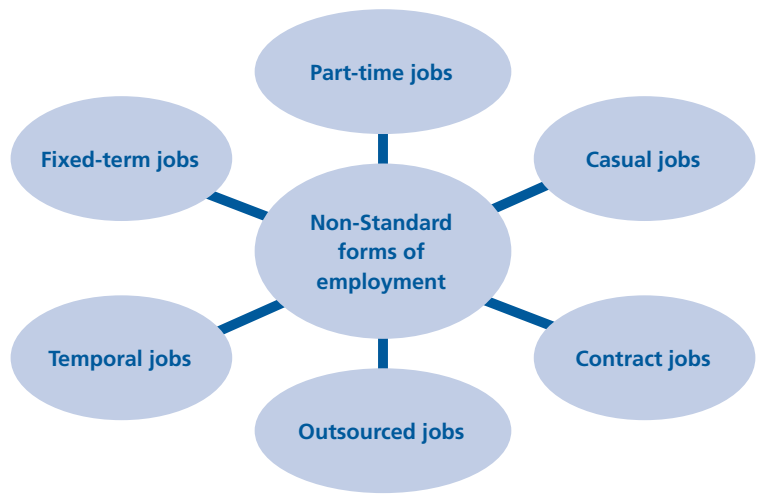
<sup>2</sup> Students are rarely paid salaries. Most are paid money enough to just cover meals and transport

<sup>3</sup> Silent employment in the agriculture sector is when an employer forces the spouse of his/her worker to also work at the farm basically because they are being offered accommodation by the employer, otherwise they risk losing the accommodation. The spouse is not formally registered as a worker and is absent in the farmers' record of employees.



Table 5 shows a disappointing trend where permanent employment is quickly being eroded and replaced by contract, part-time, casual and seasonal workers (Figure 3). Hence, the biggest challenge as indicated earlier goes beyond the quantity of jobs created to the quality of jobs created- which is sadly increasing precariousness and worker insecurity. The shift to non-standard forms of employment was also causing serious violation of workers’ rights (see section on workers’ rights pillar). The research revealed a positive correlation between non-permanent employment (jobs) and violation of worker’s rights. In fact, casualization of labour has a gender-dimension. The research revealed that high casualization rates are found in sectors employing mostly female workers such as agriculture, domestic, food, hospitality and the informal economy. Meaning that female workers were bearing the brunt of the casualization effects as it relates to decent employment.

**Figure 3: Emerging forms of non-standard employment**



*Source: Author's assessment*

A key issue raised in the FGMs affecting employment creation and the future of work was the impact of technological advancements, digitalization and auto machines. Digitalization is transforming business operations including the world of work. Whilst digitalisation has the potential to improve working conditions and creating another set of new jobs and skills, in many cases, workers bemoaned that they were losing jobs which were being gradually replaced by machines. For trade unions, loss of jobs also meant loss of membership thus affecting the strength of the union. Several cases mentioned were in sectors such as food, banking, agriculture especially tobacco. Thus, workers and trade unions noted that digitalization, automation and technological advancement was slowly eroding the seven ILO securities that workers are interested in that guarantee decency of employment.

Overall, the deteriorating macroeconomic environment, low industrial capacity utilization levels, liquidity crisis were all pointed as the major cause of the rapid rise in indecent employment and lack of employment opportunities in the economy. The structural regression of the economy was taking a huge toll on worker’s securities and decent work. The impact of decline in employment was also being largely felt by trade unions whose strength lies fundamentally on high membership and members with stable rather than precarious employment.



## 2.2 Pillar Two: Workers' Rights Pillar

Workers' rights are defined in the various ILO instruments expressed in the form of Conventions, Recommendations, Declarations and Codes of Practice. The ILO Governing Body has identified eight Conventions as "fundamental, universal and indivisible human rights". The eight Conventions cover four subjects that are considered as fundamental principles and rights at work. These are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: ILO Fundamental Principles and Conventions**

Fundamental Principles	Fundamental Conventions
Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to CB	Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87) Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
The elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour	Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
The effective abolition of child labour	Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation	Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

The study revealed that the steep increase in different forms of precariat workers is giving rise to serious violation of workers' rights shown in Table 6 such as freedom of association and collective bargaining; occupational safety, health and environment; decent wage, working time, training and skills development, maternity protection and social security. There is no sector that has been spared by the wave of violation of workers' rights, with the July 15 Supreme Court Judgement heightening workers' rights violations, clearly showing the failure to protect workers' rights.

This section presents testimonials drawn from workers and trade unionists working in various sectors. The testimonials were gathered through individual interviews and FGMs.

**Violations to freedom of association** – there was general consensus by the respondents that there has been an alarming increase in violation of freedom of association, and the victimisation of trade union activists was highlighted. In some cases, employers would transfer strong trade union activists to other branches or threaten non-renewal of contracts, just to destabilise trade unionism at the workplace. Some of the workers in the catering industry noted that they were not afforded freedom of association, as they were forced by employers to join a trade union aligned to the employer or the government and those that went against such orders were threatened with

contract termination or non-renewal of contract. Due to their vulnerable state and fear of job loss or non-renewal of contract, some casual workers succumbed to the demands of the employer.

The violation of freedom of association was also extending to workers being forced to join a specific social security programme such as medical aid and insurance companies which were however inefficient in terms of service provision. Selection of a medical aid scheme should be done through social dialogue. For instance, in the banking sector, workers lamented that they were being forced to join Ecolife insurance:

*“We are all being forced to join ecolife insurance by our employer where the employer is deducting \$80 from my salary. We are not being given the freedom to choose our own insurance company.”*

In addition, workers in the security guards sector also highlighted that they were being forced to join a certain private medical aid scheme but the scheme was inefficient.

**Lack of payslips** – the lack of payslips is a common problem for most non-permanent workers. Contract and casual workers are not being provided with payslips and as a result they are not aware of their employment grade, wage and deductions if any from their wages. From the interviews, it was revealed that the lack of payslips undermines the worker’s ability to open bank accounts or have access to any credit facilities offered on the financial market. Moreover, the lack of payslips was also leaving workers at the mercy of the employer in terms of wages and salary payments. Some of the workers did not even know if the employer was paying the obligatory NSSA contributions from the wages and salaries.

**Lack of job security and late renewal of contracts** – the research also revealed that contract renewal can take unnecessary time and this may be associated with late wage or salary payments, thereby threatening job security. On the other hand, casualization is associated with lack of job security as the employer has the flexibility to hire and fire at any time. The research also revealed that bribes and sexual harassment especially targeting female workers were some of the methods that some supervisors were using for contract renewal.

**Lack of personal protective clothing / equipment (PPC / PPE)** – this was cited as a serious challenge in almost all sectors. Whilst most Collective Bargaining Agreements including the Labour Act were clear on provisions of PPC/E, employers were not obliging to these statutory provisions citing economic challenges, liquidity crisis and declining profits – hence PPC/E were taken as secondary issues yet they are fundamental worker’s rights.

Whilst the Labour Act gives powers to a worker to refuse dangerous work if not provided with adequate PPC/E, the research revealed that most workers continued to work without in fear of

losing contract if they raise the issue to the employer. Sadly, in most of the sectors highly vulnerable to OSHE risks such as agriculture, food and catering, cement, railways, and energy, workers complained the lack of PPC/E, thereby exposing them to various types of (serious) workplace-related sicknesses, diseases and accident which can be fatal at times.

The research also revealed an emerging trend where employers instead of providing the obligated PPC/E, they were asking workers to bring their own tools of trade as a sign that they seriously want the job, are committed to work and that they want their contracts renewed next time. For instance, in the catering sector, (new) casual workers starting from the day of interview for a job were being asked to bring their own uniforms (in line with hotel colours) as a sign of commitment to work. Again, in the catering industry some chefs were being forced to bring their own knives and tools of trade from home. In the agriculture sector, some employers were forcing workers to bring their own hoes, overalls and gumboots from home. Overall, this means that a lot of workers were subsidising their employers (apart from the meagre wages) as a show of commitment to work. In an environment where there is high unemployment level, workers ended succumbing to the pressures and demands of the employer in order to save their jobs, a clear sign of indecency of the jobs.

### *Victimization at the workplace*

The study revealed rampant victimization of workers especially in Chinese companies in the construction and metal sectors. Chain stores in the commercial and food sectors were also reported to victimizing workers interested in joining a union. In some instances, the trade union were being barred from addressing workers, for instance during their lunch hour which is a violation of workers rights. Victimization of workers was also rampant in the agriculture sector, especially on farms owned by “black” farmers, most of whom were reported to be military and police officials. Victimization was also noted in the public sector where leaders of Zimbabwe Teachers Association were targeted by government. Nepotism was also said to result in victimization of workers.

**Wage theft** – wage theft was a common problem for both permanent and non-permanent workers. Workers cited going for months without wages and salaries being paid in full. The research revealed that since the time LEDRIZ undertook a study on wage theft in 2015, the problem had even grown to alarming levels as the economic crisis persisted with employers citing viability challenges with some even facing closure without paying outstanding wages and salaries. Given the rise in inflation, the research showed that workers facing wage theft were the biggest losers since inflation would have eroded the value of their money before receiving it. In addition, to wage theft, the research also indicated that most casual workers are not given wages set at the NEC level, a clear violation of workers’ rights and signs of indecent work.

**Long working hours and unpaid overtime and gender impacts** – this was cited as a serious challenge for most workers but worse for contract and casual workers. As companies continued to retrench, heavy workloads often remain for the few workers, leading to an escalation in unpaid overtime despite the fact that sectoral CBAs and the Labour Act are clear on payment of overtime work.

Some workers in the food sector also complained that due to obsolete machinery, it was becoming increasingly difficult to complete all the tasks assigned to them on time, thus they automatically fall into overtime. One of the workers in the food sector lamented:

*“The employer will sometimes refuse to take this into account and will respond by deducting wages for non-completion of task.”*

From the research, workers also complained of overtime-related sickness and diseases such as high-blood pressures, persistent headaches, back pains, swollen legs, chest pains, among others. The situation was even worse for female workers especially if they are pregnant. In addition, overtime and late dismissal from work was reported by workers as a threat to the safety of female workers when they travel home late night. In fact, it was noted in the FGMs that odd working hours exposes female workers to not only health challenges, but also social risks such as rape, robbery and marriage tensions especially given the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society and the gender roles assigned to women through gendered and social norms.

**Sexual harassment** – Any workplace that has sexual harassment automatically qualifies to be an indecent working environment. The rampant employment of non-permanent workers was increasingly exposing female workers to sexual harassment in exchange for contract renewal with young females facing the highest exposure to sexual harassment. The rise of sexual harassment of females at the workplace was particularly highlighted in sectors that are female dominated such as food, catering, banking and agriculture. The research revealed that some supervisors request sexual favours from females if they want their contracts to be renewed. At the time of the research the ZCTU was in the process of developing an education and training manual on gender-based violence at the workplace mainly because of the rise of cases of sexual harassment for females at the workplace. During the time of research, the banking sector union has embarked on a number of workplace demonstrations at banks where sexual harassment cases were rampant.

**Multi-tasking** – Multi-tasking occurs where a worker ends up assuming more duties than those he or she is “officially” hired to perform, but without accompanying multi-training or increment in wages or salaries. This challenge was highlighted in all sectors, especially for casual and contract workers. The rise in multi-tasking is being caused by company restructuring processes, where a worker is tasked with assuming the tasks of the retrenched worker. The research revealed that employers were not replacing workers due to the challenging macro-economic environment. However, the research identified the effects of multi-tasking without accompanying multi-training

being exposure to various types of workplace health and accident risks, rise in worker fatigue, inefficiency decline in labour productivity, which in turn and on the other hand the employer can use to terminate employment disregarding the fact the worker is just a victim on poor working conditions.

**Lack of benefits** – the research revealed that some employers regard casual labourers as “vapfuuri”, passers-by; they are told that they do not qualify for any benefits afforded to permanent workers. These include, bonus, sick leave, sick leave benefits, off-days, grocery vouchers. Some workers noted that if one insists on taking their statutory off-days, the employer recorded this as absenteeism from work which would not be paid especially if one is a non-permanent worker.

## 2.3 Pillar Three: Social Protection

According to the ILO, social protection refers to the provision of benefits to households through public or collective arrangements to protect against low or declining living standards. Social protection seeks to protect workers in the formal and informal economy against unfair, hazardous and unhealthy working conditions, sickness, unemployment, invalidity, loss of a provider or old age and provision of maternity benefits.

A decent work strategy aims at universality of social protection coverage. The concept of social protection goes beyond provision of public social security schemes to include other private and non-statutory schemes. Table 7 shows the various international frameworks and their provisions on social protection.

**Table 7: International frameworks supporting the right to social protection**

International Instrument	Provisions
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	<p>Article 22: “Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security.”</p> <p>Article 25: “...the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”</p>
ILO Convention No. 102 on Social Security (Minimum Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care benefits;</li> <li>• Sickness benefits;</li> <li>• Old age benefits, with the inclusion of pensions;</li> <li>• Unemployment benefits;</li> <li>• Occupational injury benefits;</li> <li>• Family benefits;</li> <li>• Maternity benefits;</li> <li>• Invalidity benefits; and,</li> <li>• Survivor’s benefits.</li> </ul>

Other ILO Conventions that support social protection as a right include:

- Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No. 121)
- Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128)
- Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130)
- Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168)
- Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
- Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118) and,
- Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982 (No. 157).

### *The state of social security – a national level analysis*

Within Zimbabwe, national pension coverage is very poor. According to the 2014 LFCLS only 2 percent of the population were receiving monthly pensions or any social security funds whilst only 9 percent were beneficiaries of any medical aid scheme/health insurance. At the time of the research, NSSA pension pay-outs were paltry at a minimum of about US\$60 per month versus a PDL of almost US\$500. This is despite the fact that workers' pensions and savings were entirely eroded by hyperinflation and the switch from the Zimbabwean dollar to the multi-currency system in 2009.

The research revealed a strong correlation between the increase in non-permanent workers and social security deficits for workers. Employers often hired casual and contract workers so as to avoid the financial obligations of providing social protection in the form of medical aid, pensions and allowances such as housing. For example, some banks were hiring workers as volunteers meaning that they only received a monthly wage without any other social protection entitlements.

### *Pensions and medical aid*

The continued deterioration of the macro-economic environment coupled with the instability of the multi-currency system, the recent division of the Nostro FCA accounts and RTGS accounts by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, emergence of inflationary pressures has resulted in the erosion of social security benefits for workers.

The research revealed that the majority of companies were deducting pension from wages and salaries but were not remitting to the NSSA office. In addition, most workers under sub-contracting and labour broking were not contributing to pensions, as they could not afford to do so, whilst some of the workers were ignorant of the issue of pensions.

The research also revealed discrimination on membership to sectoral pension funds between permanent and non-permanent workers. In most sectors, non-permanent workers were not allowed to joining the sectoral pension funds, for instance in the commercial sector.

*"Some of our trade unionists were suspended by the management after they queried pension issues". Security Sector Guard/ Worker*

There were also cases where workers' rights violations occurred when workers were forced by their employer to join particular social security schemes. For instance, Local Authority workers complained that they had to join Harare Municipal Medical Aid Society (HMMAS), to which they paid a contribution of \$35 per month. The problem was that private doctors were not accepting HMMAS, citing that companies were not remitting payments to the medical aid company, thus leaving workers stranded and unsupported when they required medical attention.

The FGMs also revealed that there was a high rate of pension and medical aid payment defaults by companies, meaning that their lives were being put at risk in cases of sudden death of worker or accident or injury of a worker or members of his or her family.

### **Maternity leave and benefits**

The research revealed that women who were non-permanent workers were being denied the right to maternity leave and associated benefits. Female workers highlighted:

*"If you fall pregnant, the employer will either tie the end of your contract with your delivery dates or decide not to renew your contract."*

*"Getting pregnant is a sure way of terminating your own employment contract."*

Another female worker noted that the lack of wage or salary before and after giving birth affected their decision to bear children although this at times made the young women particularly vulnerable to marriage problems as culturally they are expected to bear children for the clan. Striking a balance between keeping or holding a job and getting pregnant and risk non-renewal of contract was now a day-to-day thought for most female workers still in their reproductive age. However, the research revealed that many female workers were reporting violation of maternity leave and the unions were taking a case-by-case approach in dealing with such matters. However, some women were suffering silently when this right was violated.

### *Impact of wage theft on social security*

Wage theft was highlighted as seriously affecting worker's enjoyment of social security benefits. For instance, when wages are not paid or paid in instalments, workers and their families are unable to get access medical treatment. Wage theft also undermined the worker's ability to further their education, pay housing and accommodation and pay mortgage loans. Some workers have noted that they lost houses.

Overall, the research revealed that the social security deficits manifested in the following ways:

- A majority of employers were not contributing to worker's compensation fund, pension and or gratuity funds. In the event of an accident or death, workers and their dependants were left stranded and destitute because they cannot claim for injury on duty or work place acquired diseases from the National Social Security Authority (NSSA).
- Non-permanent workers cannot afford to join private insurance schemes due to low wages, inconsistencies in the job market, leaving most of them unprotected.
- Most women casual or contract workers did not enjoy maternity benefits. When they are on maternity leave, they feel insecure as they do not know if they will get their jobs back once their leave is over.
- Most women casual and contract workers did not enjoy the benefits of taking leave to attend family responsibilities. Therefore, they have to make a choice between work and family.
- The majority of women have their working lives interrupted due to family responsibilities and pregnancy, hence their pension contributions and eventual pension pay-outs will remain lower than their male counterparts.

## **2.4 Pillar Four: Social Dialogue**

According to the ILO, social dialogue is referred to as any type of joint and collaborative relationships that includes negotiations, consultations and exchanges of information between representatives of government, employers and workers on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy.

### *Structures for social dialogue in Zimbabwe*

There exist three structures for social dialogue in Zimbabwe namely: the Works Council, the National Employment Councils and the Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF) as illustrated in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: Structures for social dialogue in Zimbabwe**



Responses from the interviews and FGMs clearly indicated that social dialogue and collective bargaining processes were facing serious challenges.

These were divided into four categories: those emanating from (i) the government and political dynamics; (ii) employers; (iii) National Employment Councils (NECs); and (iv) workers.

### *Challenges emanating from the Government and Political factors*

- An absence of regular organising of tripartite negotiation meetings, a responsibility of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare in order to address the volatile politico-socio and economic environment.
- Delays in the finalisation of the TNF Bill that seeks to re-establish the TNF as a statutory body with an independent secretariat.
- Bias and prejudice, that is, some government officials and members of parliament are now also employers and have conflict of interest. Some of them have power to influence the negotiation process to the disadvantage of workers.
- Facilitation of multiplicity of trade unions in one sector by the government and politicians in order to destabilise the strength of the trade unions. As a result, employers choose to align or register an agreement with the union offering lower wage increases.

- Delays in the registering of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs).
- The continued linking of ZCTU affiliates to the opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the inference that they are both “enemies of the state”.
- Militarization of some sectors such as parastatals where security agents are given positions of authority, which negatively affects any negotiation processes.

### *Challenges emanating from the employers*

- Refusal to award wage increases, and non-compliance with agreed wages or timely payment of wages and salaries citing the following:
  - o declining capacity utilization rates;
  - o high production costs;
  - o liquidity challenges.
- Delays in gazetting agreed wages – some trade unions accuse employers of making unnecessary appeals to prolong the process.
- Unwillingness to negotiate in good faith. Some employers pay very high salaries at senior management level, while pleading inability to pay lower paid workers, whilst others offer false information or deliberately withhold information at the negotiating table.
- Delegation of human resources managers to negotiation meetings when they do not have a mandate and are unable to make concrete decisions.
- Non-remittance of union dues by employers thereby paralyzing trade union functions.
- Rise of factionalism and politicking among employers thus undermining progress during negotiations.
- Division among employers as some companies are performing well whilst others are struggling to survive;
- Shelving of current negotiations until the previous year’s negotiations are concluded.
- A preference by employers to pay their lawyers rather than honoring the awards.
- Delaying tactics by employers who do not submit counter positions in response to the trade union’s position papers. The NEC regulations provides that both parties (employers and employees) should submit their position papers in good time to allow both parties to come to the table with an informed position.

- Influence of Chinese employers and new farmers backed by the government who refuse to comply with national labour laws and CBA outcomes.
- Exercise of rigidity which eventually leads to deadlocks or reference of cases for arbitration and applications for exemptions where agreements have been reached, thus rendering collective bargaining dysfunctional.
- A reported increase in “corrupt” employers who have potential to bribe the NEC members or trade unions.

### *Challenges emanating from the NECs*

The following were some of the challenges noted during the research:

- Political interference by some members of NECs who are now employers.
- Narrow focus by NECs on wage negotiations alone with little or no attention given to other critical factors such as performance of the sector.
- Outdated CBAs – some sectoral CBAs were completed as long back as 1998 for commercial sector and 1990 for clothing sector.
- The developing trend of shifting from negotiation at NEC level to company / workplace negotiations which can undermine the NEC structures and collectivism of both the employers and trade unions.

### *Trade Union Challenges*

The research revealed below challenges facing trade unions regarding social dialogue:

- Deadlocks which remain forever unsolved. For example, some unions have cases pending as far back as 2008, 2011 and 2013.
- A loss of competent trade union negotiators, active trade union activists and shop-stewards due to company closures.
- Outdated CBA clauses and constitutions.
- Refusal by the Ministry of Labour to register new trade union Boards to facilitate sectoral negotiations. For example, the Ministry of Labour refused to establish a Board to facilitate negotiations for the union for music arts industry.
- Limited resources to adequately train negotiators and undertake extensive pre-negotiating forums with the general membership.

- Presence of counter unions;
- Non-functional Works Councils and Workers' Committees;
- Loss of faith among trade union members due to failure by the employers to conclude negotiations.
- Limited networking among sister unions.

Overall, the respondents were of the opinion that there is now a structural shift from collective bargaining to collective "begging".

### 3. Conclusions and Recommendations

The research revealed that achievement of decent work is under threat and decent work deficits abound in various forms and nature. For pillar 1 – employment creation, it was clear that decent jobs are increasingly being lost rather than created. Simultaneously, there has been a rise in informalization of employment (casual, contract and part-time workers) which is the greatest threat to decent work attainment. Informalization of work means loss of workers' rights, social security benefits and loss of representation (social dialogue). Whilst some sectors were making progress in recruiting casual and contract workers into unions, most casual workers chose not to do so out of fear that they would then lose their job. Another major concern was the inadequate provision of protective clothing and equipment exposing the majority of workers to occupational hazards; workers who also often have no access to medical aid. Table below summarizes the erosion of decent employment due to the rise in non-permanent workers.

Trade union effectiveness is also being threatened by increasing retrenchments, company closures and informalization of work in both the formal and informal economy. This, in turn, has reduced the number of union members which debilitates trade union strength. It is in light of these challenges that trade unions need to rethink new ways of mobilizing and organizing workers and demanding decent work especially for the majority of the workers who hold informal jobs. All the seven ILO securities relevant to the ethic of decent work have now been negated. Social dialogue which is supposed to be at the core of achieving all other three decent work pillars (decent employment, workers' rights and social protection) continues to be undermined.

**Table 8: Impact of non-permanent jobs on elements of decent employment**

Key element of Decent Employment	Impact of non-permanent jobs on elements of employment
Work of acceptable quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is mostly of unacceptable quality characterized by low pay, occupational risks and lack of social security.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the very limited employment opportunities in the country, people will often accept any job/ on any conditions in order to survive.</li> </ul>
Remunerative employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low wages not commensurate with working hours or days.</li> <li>• Non-payment on non-wage benefits.</li> </ul>
Productive work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers can be deployed to different jobs at different locations at short notice which can undermine their productivity,</li> </ul>
Conditions of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High job insecurity as the employer can hire and fire workers easily, and occupational safety and health issues have limited or no attention by the employer.</li> <li>• Lack of protection by trade unions as most workers are not trade union members</li> </ul>

Below is a list of recommendations for the trade unions in order to ensure that decent work is achieved:

- **Building alliances with community service and informal economy associations** – Given the decline in union membership, it is critical that trade unions forge alliances with like-minded associations so as to increase their voice in fighting for decent work criteria.
- **Resource mobilization for implementation of the DWCP for Zimbabwe** – In theory, Zimbabwe is now in the fourth generation of the DCWP, which is a national programme. It is thus, critical for trade unions to continue engaging the government and the ILO for financial and technical resources to implement priorities in the DWCP.
- **Using the Framework of the Sustainable Development Goals** – The government has already committed to SDGs and prioritised SDG 8, among other priority SDGs. SDG 8 focuses on economic growth and decent work. It is therefore imperative for trade unions to use this SDG framework in demanding progress towards the achievement of SDG 8. In fact, all social partners (government, business and labour) should endeavour to operationalize the DWA for policy and intervention purposes.
- **Participation in national development programmes** – it is imperative for trade unions to demand their space in development of any national plan or programme so that they can influence policy on issues affecting workers. It is no longer sustainable for trade unions to remain outside the discussion on national development processes. As the SDGs mantra states “leaving no one behind” – trade unions cannot afford to be left behind.

- **Use of social media** – as the world of work is in transition due to digitalisation and technological advancements, social media is one of the platforms that trade unions have at their disposal. Trade unions need to invest in e-campaigns, e-organising, e-training and e-mobilization in order to create urgency among workers on decent work agenda.
- **Grassroots mobilization** – this remains key for trade unions in the face of loss of membership. Trade unions need to increase investment in grassroots mobilization through education on decent work and socio-economic rights for all structures to the district level so that workers develop a culture of demanding these rights from the government at various level.
- **Updating Trade Union constitutions and CBA** – in the context of the economic crisis, structural regression, new patterns of employment and the fast changing world of work due to technological advance, it is imperative that trade unions begin a process of trade union transformations. Outdated trade union constitutions and CBAs need to be revised to reflect these changes. For instance, integrating women, youths, people with disability issues and in leadership in their constitutions, policies and CBAs is critical to ensure inclusivity and safeguards decent work needs of all members whilst at the same time enabling dynamism and transformation of trade unions.

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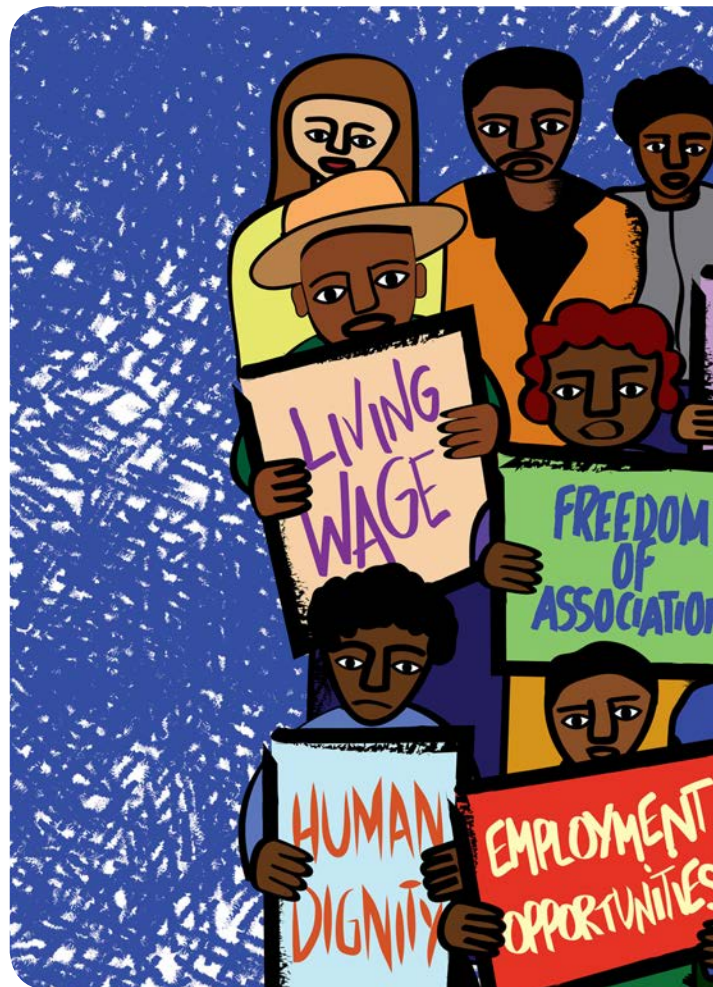








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