



International
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SPIREWORK Project Empowers Informal Workers

“Dairy farming is a lucrative business. Imagine, I started with one cow, but now I have 18 animals out of these I am milking nine. I am bringing 60 litres of milk per day now just because I am only milking four animals and the other animals have been weaned and are expecting”

Full story on page 12

VISION OF COUNTRY OFFICE-LUSAKA

A united team that delivers sustainable decent work results through strategic partnerships and increasing development cooperation portfolio



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► Foreword



I am delighted to share with you some thoughts as we continue to life in the “better normal” grappling with the negative effects of the coronavirus, especially on the labour market in the three locations- Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique.

I would to stress that despite witnessing the reduction in the number of COVID-19 cases and a significant decrease in number of deaths related to COVID-19, we do not need to drop our guard. Let's continue to abide by the health guidelines and protocols, so that we can further reduce the risks of contracting the disease.

We need to stay safe and always follow the golden rules established the World Health Organization (WHO).

In this edition of our newsletter, we have captured major events and activities that took place from May 2021 to July 2021 in the three locations.

Starting with the International Labour Day commemorations that took place on the three countries, we note that despite living in this situation where physical interaction is restricted our tripartite constituents- Governments, employers and workers made it sure that this important day is celebrated.

We are proud of our governments, workers and employers' organizations for providing leadership in this regard.

The edition also provides an insight of the first-ever virtual International Labour Conference (ILC) that took place in June.

During the gathering delegates from 181 countries representing the governments, workers and employers adopted unanimously a Global Call to Action for a human-centred COVID-19 recovery that prioritizes the creation of decent jobs for all and addresses the inequalities caused by the crisis.

Again, the edition highlights the happenings during the World Day Against Child Labour in the three locations. The New Global Estimates of child labour report indicates that the number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide – an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years.

That means one out of every 10 children worldwide is in child labour. Seventy percent of child labour is happening in agriculture. An additional nine million children are at risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022 as a result of COVID-19.

Another major event that has been covered in the three countries is the 10 year anniversary of the adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No.189).

Finally, the edition aptly covers the Zambia Decent Work Country Programme 2020-2022 (Z-DWCP 2020-2022) Launch. This is the third Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) Zambia has crafted, following the second that covered the period 2013-2016.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that unless we specifically address the inequalities that have deepened during this crisis there is a very real risk that the economic and social consequences will cause long-term scarring, particularly for disproportionately-affected groups such as young people and women, and the small and microenterprises that provide most of the world's employment.

The ILO will continue to play a leadership role and use all means of action to support the design and implementation of recovery strategies that leave no one behind, including by reinforcing cooperation with other institutions of the multilateral system.

Stay safe!

George Okutho
ILO Country Office Director for Zambia,
Malawi and Mozambique



▶ Thomas Maleka Defies all odds as he Excels in his Automotive Engineering Career



Thomas at his workshop

By Muya Mwiya

34-year-old Thomas Maleka is married with two children and he is a heavy and light-duty professional mechanic.

At his age, he is also the breadwinner of four siblings and is also taking care of his mother.

Through the funded United Nations Joint Programme on Social Protection Phase II, the International Labour Organization (ILO) recently undertook a countrywide disability photo bank documentation to support various themed messaging on disability.

It is during the execution of this activity when the project team interacted with Thomas as he has demonstrated that persons with disabilities are productive members of society. Therefore, persons with disabilities need to be accorded reasonable accommodation and provided with skills that will enable them participate on an equal basis with others.

Thomas is the only child who was hit with polio at the age of two which affected his legs, thereby leaving him with a physical impairment that has resulted in a physical disability.

Despite being a person with disabilities, Thomas was never swayed but determined

from a young age that he will not succumb to the beliefs of society that persons with disabilities are beggars with productive members of society.

"Having completed my secondary school in 2013 at Temwani High School, through a Government initiative I went to Chipata province under Zambia National Service (ZNS) to study Automotive Mechanics light-duty level 3 certificate which I acquired in three years. When I come back I worked for ZNS and Road Development Agency (RDA) where I became a workshop supervisor despite my disability. As I worked I saved up money to take myself to school and finally in 2016 I went to NORTEC [Northern Technical College] to study heavy duty certificated mechanic. My driving force has always been to change the perception of persons with disabilities," he narrates.

Even with his accomplishments, Thomas has faced a lot of challenges in finding employment because of his disability.

"When I go to fix trucks and the owners of the trucks see me they get discouraged some of them chase me away saying they would prefer able-bodied people to me, some after some hesitation decide to give me a chance and when I do a great job they are impressed. Either way, I don't resent those that chase me because I believe as a

Christian when one door closes God opens another one," Thomas explains.

It is this zeal that was cultivated by the encouragement of his lecturer in College who saw his ability to be a great mechanic that encouraged him to set-up his own workshop unlike just waiting to be employed because most people will judge his appearance before they give him a job.

Thomas is now the head and owner of a workshop. He relates: "My time of being a supervisor has given me the experience of knowing that no man is an island and so I have employed three more people who are specialized in other things but all to do with mechanics, I have a boilermaker, welder and auto work-electrician. My workers respect me because of my work ethics, and because at the end of the month I'm able to give them a salary which also helps sustain their families."

"My advice is very short and straight to the point, the disability that affects is the one that attacks the mind and it doesn't matter whether you are able-bodied or disabled. I have personally seen people who are able-bodied but spending their days drinking and wasting away. Being disabled physically shouldn't discourage you from achieving what you want," Thomas adds.

► Over 600 delegates attend High-Level Meeting on Employment in Mozambique



"This action plan contains guidelines and actions respective to employability, stimulating job creation, the informal economy, entrepreneurship, green jobs, inclusion and matters related to decent work, inclusive fighting against child labor, amongst others," said the Prime Minister. Meanwhile, ILO Director-General Mr. Guy Ryder pledged ILO's continued support to the Government of Republic of Mozambique in the implementation of the National Employment Policy.

"The ILO is pleased to be providing technical and policy support to our friends in Mozambique in the areas of employment creation, infrastructure development and Social protection. Recently, we have been able to contribute to the reconstruction of technical and vocational training centers which have benefited many students who have been employed in rehabilitation work and enabled many more to resume their education," said Mr. Ryder.

And Ambassador of Sweden in Mozambique, Ms Mette Sunnergren commended the ILO for promoting decent employment opportunities for citizens of Mozambique.

"It is a challenging and continuous mission of leadership in the area of youth employment, we as development partners are available to provide the necessary tools, persist in fighting. We are united for the creation of decent jobs, as a key instrument to fight poverty," said Ambassador Sunnergren.

By Stelio Marerua

On May 20, 2021, the International Labour Organization (ILO) through its Swedish funded project 'MozTrabalha', and the Secretariat for Youth and Employment held a high-level hybrid meeting on employment in Mozambique at the Joaquim Chissano International Conference Centre in Maputo.

The hybrid meeting, which focused on the promotion of economic growth, productivity and employment generation, was officiated by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mozambique Mr. Carlos Agostinho do Rosário Mozambique, with the special participation of ILO Director-General, Mr. Guy Ryder.

The first-ever meeting attracted over 600 delegates drawn from all walks of life. Among the participants were; Her Excellency Ambassador of Sweden in Mozambique, Ms Mette Sunnergren, senior government officials from three ministries- Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Others were: representatives of the Confederation of Economic Associations (CTA), the National Institute of Statistics (INE), and public and private institutions.

The objective of the meeting was to commemorate the launching of the National Employment Policy Plan (NEP), whose goal is to create and stimulate

employment creation for Mozambican women and men.

The event also presented an opportunity for various stakeholders to deliberate on macro-economic and sectoral policy measures being undertaken by the Government of Mozambique.

Speaking during the event, Mr. Augustinho do Rosário, who represented the Republican President of Mozambique President Filipe Nyusi, emphasized the need to set-up an action plan for the National Employment Policy as it would contribute to job creation for the youth.



Mozambique's Prime Minister His Excellency Mr. Carlos Agostinho do Rosário speaks during the meeting

ILO, NZP+ Empowers People Living with HIV/AIDS to Cushion the Negative Impact of COVID-19



(Far right) Mr. Denis Chibuye NZP+ programmes manager receives a cheque from Mr. Joseph Mwenya Black International Limited Director.

they suffer multiple layers of vulnerabilities. In implementing the IGA, the ILO has collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO) – Zambia to provide technical support by providing guidelines on local production of hand sanitizers and with Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE) to supplement NZP+ marketing initiatives by creating market linkages for the IGA through its membership.

The NZP+ is also providing administrative structures to ensure appropriate production of Sanitizers as well as managing the disbursement of funds to the targeted beneficiaries.

The production and sale of the hand sanitisers has since commenced.

This initiative has demonstrated the importance of synergy creation in project implementation among stakeholders particularly during times of crisis. Working with ZFE among other stakeholders, demonstrates the tripartite nature of ILO's work. Supporting PLHIV whose livelihoods have been negatively affected by COVID-19 and fully engaging PLHIV in the initiative exemplifies ILO's commitment to leaving no one behind in addressing vulnerabilities faced by PLHIV while protecting workers in the work place.

By Theresa Mukeya Maseka

Zambia has not been spared by the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in the derailment of gains made in addressing HIV and AIDS in multiple ways, including the disruption of livelihoods for people living with HIV/AIDS.

COVID-19 prevention measures such as restrictions on gatherings and closure of borders (affecting movement of essential goods) in some neighbouring countries where Zambia depends for imports and exports led to loss of income by most households and disrupted livelihoods.

This coupled with increased commodity prices has made it difficult for most People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLHIV) to afford food and other essential commodities. This is particularly so given the fact that PLHIV are already disadvantaged by stigma, discrimination and marginalization, and have inadequate or no access to social protection.

Although PLHIV receive free Anti-Retroviral Treatment, paid by governments and donors, they struggle to cover their out-of-pocket health care expenses. It is for this reason that the International Labour Organization (ILO) has partnered with the Network of People Living with HIV to step up economic empowerment efforts to mitigate the devastating impact of the pandemic on the PLHIV in Zambia.

The ILO has provided financial and technical support to the Network of Zambia People

Living with HIV (NZP+) to start a Hand Sanitizer producing Income Generation Activity (IGA). In its initial stage the IGA is expected to generate income to support 210 households negatively affected by COVID-19. This support will be in form of emergency social cash transfer will benefit about 1,260 indirect beneficiaries. Sixty percent of the target beneficiaries are women and People living with disability as



NZP+ members packaging the hand sanitizers

► ILO Holds First-ever virtual 109th International Labour Conference



By Allan Mulenga

The 109th International Labour Conference (ILC), the first to take place virtually due to restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic was successfully concluded in June.

Omar Zniber, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, was elected President of the Conference in its opening session, on 20 May 2021.

He described his election as “a source of pride” for his country and the African region.

“As it is often said, the International Labour Conference is the global parliament of labour, affording governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations of Member States a unique opportunity to hold tripartite discussions about social and labour issues, as well as matters related to the world of work,” he said. “This year, our Conference takes on a special format and is particularly significant, in view of its deferral last year for reasons we all know too well. Needless to say, high expectations have been placed in the work we will undertake over the next few weeks, and at the

resumption of our session, later this year. I shall do my best, together with my Vice-Presidents, to guide our work in that spirit, and will spare no effort to ensure that this Conference is a success for all.”

ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, welcomed the start of the ILC and the important role to be played by the newly-elected Conference President.

“After the unavoidable deferral of this session last year, I believe that all ILO constituents – Governments, Employers and Workers – shared a common determination that this Conference should go ahead at this time because we had essential work to do and because the institutional continuity of our organization depended very heavily upon it,” said Mr. Ryder.

He added that: “Mr President, by conducting this Conference successfully under your leadership, the ILO will be taking one more step, and a crucially important one, in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic which has devastated the world of work over the last year and a half, and in so doing will be making a crucial contribution to building forward better.”

Three Conference Vice-Presidents were also elected during the session: Chad

Blackman of Barbados, representing the Government group; Ronnie Goldberg of the United States, representing the Employers’ group; and Annette Chipeleme of Zambia, representing the Workers’ group.

The session closed following the appointment of officers to the committees and working parties. It reopened on 3 June, when most Conference committees began their work, and ran over a period of two and a half weeks.

The plenary resumed on 7 June and was in session until 19 June.

Items on the agenda in June included a special outcome document on the ILO response to COVID-19, the discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General, the ILO’s programme and budget for 2022-23, the recurrent discussion on accelerating social protection, and consideration of the reports on the application of labour standards during the pandemic and related country case discussions.

The second segment of the Conference will take place from 25 November to 11 December, with an agenda that includes thematic discussions on inequalities and the world of work, as well as skills and life-long learning.

► ILO's Trade for Decent Work Project Holds Stakeholders Meeting in Mozambique

By Stelio Marerua

On 22 July 2021, with the support from the European Union (EU), the International Labour Organization's Trade for Decent Work Project organized and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security held a stakeholders virtual meeting in Maputo.

The virtual meeting was attended by representatives from various institutions ranging from social partners, private and public institutions, as well as academic institutions.

Among the notables were: the European Union, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries, the Secretariat of State for Employment and Youth (SEJE), The Parliament (AR), and the National Institute of Social Security (INSS).

Others were: Mozambique's Workers Organization-Central Trade Union (OTM-CS), Confederation of the Independent and Free Trade Unions of Mozambique (CONSILMO), Confederation of Economic/Business Associations (CTA), academic institutions, like the Alberto Cassimo Institute of Vocational Training and Labour Studies (IFPELAC), the Mozambique Fishing High School (ESPM), amongst others.

The objective of the stakeholders meeting was to discuss the importance of the implementation of the fundamental ILO Conventions and the need to strengthen the Government's capacity to put them in a better position to correspond and report on the status of compliance with international obligations and recommendations, and observations made by the ILO supervisory bodies, namely the Committee of Experts



on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CPACR).

The Trade for Decent Work Project was formulated as a result of a consultation process which commenced in 2019 with constituents.

With funding guaranteed by the European Union, ILO begun the roll-out of the Project. This is an international project that is being implemented in five African countries (Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Madagascar and Mozambique) and six countries in Asia (Bangladesh, Philippines, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan and Vietnam).

In Mozambique, the project aims to strengthen the capacity of the State, represented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

With this project the ILO and its partners aim to: increased compliance with the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; support the ratification and implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006); build the capacity of national trainers on International Labour standards; and lastly promote the tripartite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration).

During the meeting European Union Head of the Infrastructure, Investment and Private Sector Ms. Veerle Smet said

expressed gratitude over the implementation of the project, stating that there was need for the project to target direct beneficiaries for them to take ownership of the project.

"The EU is happy to contribute to the strengthening of the partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and thus encourage the further involvement of social partners and other government entities in promoting trade for decent work. Ms. Smet added that the Trade for Decent Work Project would contribute towards the realization of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"The EU considers Trade for Decent Work Project has a contribution to Sustainable Development Goal Number 8 by improving working relationships and conditions. In addition, the Project can be seen as a response by the Government of Mozambique to SADC's call to its member countries to improve compliance with the eight ILO core conventions," said Ms. Smet. Meanwhile, Ministry of Labour and Social Security Head of Department of Planning and Cooperation, Mr. Juma Mussagy said there was need to improve labour relations and strengthen the capacity of the national tripartite constituents.



► CONSILMO Completes Advocacy Campaign for Adoption of National Strategy for Mandatory Social Security in Mozambique

By Luis Cotinguiba and Stelio Marerua

With support of the ILO through the ACTION/Portugal project, the National Confederation of Independent and Free Trade Unions of Mozambique (CONSILMO) has rolled-out an advocacy campaign to support the formal adoption of the National Strategy for Mandatory Social Security (ENSSO).

Initiated in April, the campaign was successfully completed in June and consisted in a series of awareness-raising activities – including seminars, roundtables, debates, interviews, television reports, and advertising spots in radio and television – designed to foster the political and public debate on the ENSSO.

During the implementation, the special focus was given to the particular situation, challenges and needs of workers in the informal economy in Mozambique.

CONSILMO's advocacy campaign on extending social security kicked-off on 6 April 2021 with a televised debate on the management of mandatory social security at TVM (National Television), which had participants from several relevant institutions, including the INSS, CONSILMO and the Confederation of Economic Associations in Mozambique (CTA).

More activities were held within the month of May. This was followed by a similar debate which took place on 8 May on the radio program Linha Directa of Rádio Moçambique (main radio station in Mozambique), where representatives from INSS, the National Institute of Social Providence (INPS), CONSILMO and CTA had the chance to discuss key challenges faced by mandatory social security in the country.

On 12 May, CONSILMO held a press conference

about the need for adoption of the ENSSO. On that occasion, the Secretary General of CONSILMO, Mr. Jeremias Timana highlighted that while social security is enshrined as a constitutional right in Mozambique, most people lack access to it, hence the high levels of vulnerabilities being witnessed among the citizens.

"The extension of social protection is a necessity in order to alleviate poverty and promote an inclusive society where development benefits populations and contributes to social and economic development towards progress and social welfare," he said.

On 25 May 2021, CONSILMO organized a roundtable on the adoption of the ENSSO. Representatives from several organizations took part in the event, including from governmental institutions, such as the INSS and Balcão de Atendimento Único, workers' organizations and the private sector.

During the discussion, CONSILMO representative, Mr. Anésio de Castro presented the ENSSO proposal and an open discussion followed.

After which, ILO Social Protection Programme Manager Rubén Vicente commended CONSILMO for promoting the adoption of the strategy, stating that it would greatly contribute towards the extension the coverage of social protection to workers in the informal sector and realize their right to social security as prescribed by international social security standards and in Article 95 of the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique.

Through ILO's support, CONSILMO planned several other advocacy activities for the Month of June to spark public debate and raise

awareness on the importance of the adoption of the ENSSO by the government, and the need for extending social security to workers in the informal economy.

In addition, CONSILMO organized more events in June as part of its advocacy strategy pushing for the adoption of the ENSSO by the Government. A round-table discussion was held in Maputo on 16 June 2021 to discuss the particular vulnerability of workers in the informal economy, who have been hardly hit by the socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and remain largely uncovered by the contributory social security system.

Finally, a closing seminar was held in Matola on 18 June 2021 to signify the end of the advocacy campaign. During the seminar, panel discussions did not only centre on the adoption of the ENSSO, but also revolved around other relevant topics, including the importance of social dialogue and the challenges being faced in efforts to extend social security to workers in the informal sector. Ms. Ruth Munhequete, City Councillor from Matola, drew attention to the particular situation and decent work deficits of workers in informal markets, calling for the need for integrated approaches for ensuring the safety and health at work and social protection of the workers.

CONSILMO is hopeful that the advocacy activities carried out during the past three months with ILO's support garnered attention to the critical need of the adoption of the ENSSO, as this would represent a significant step on the way towards achieving universal social protection to all Mozambican workers.

► Mozambique Holds 1st National Planning Meeting of the National Institute of Social Security

By Luis Cotinguiba and Vanádio Monteiro

The International Labour Organization (ILO) through the ACTION/Portugal project in Mozambique provided financial support for the holding of the 1st National Planning Meeting of the National Institute of Social Security (INSS) of Mozambique took place between 19 and 23 April 2021 in Chidenguele, Gaza Province.

The event was organized in compliance with precautionary measures to help prevent the COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting drew participation from 35 representatives of different institutions, including technical officials from INSS's Central Body, representatives from INSS's provincial and district delegations.

The ILO was represented by Mr. Rubén Vicente and Mr. Vanádio Monteiro from

ILO's Social Protection team in Mozambique.

The objective of the meeting was to discuss the strengthening of internal capacities of INSS at the levels of provincial and district delegations, and its Central Body.

According to INSS, the meeting was important as it provided the framework towards improvement and harmonization of its institutional procedures, planning methodologies and work techniques, particularly regarding sectoral plans and their operationalization, as well as mechanisms of planning and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

The event was opened by the Director of Social Insurance, Ms. Hermenegilda Maria Carlos, and the Provincial Delegate of INSS in Gaza, Ms. Eugénia Aristides.

Ms. Maria Carlos pointed out that the national planning meeting provided an

opportunity for technical officials to consolidate the activity plans, streamline M&E models, and improve processes related to data collection and systematization.

She expressed gratitude over ILO's support to the INSS over the years, stating that the partnership has greatly contributed to the improvement of the social protection contributory system in Mozambique.

During the meeting, ILO Social Protection Programme Manager, Mr. Rubén Vicente said there was a need for proper planning based on robust and reliable statistical data on social protection in strengthening social protection systems in the country.

He also stressed the importance of enhancing the coordination and communication between different national social protection schemes.

► ILO under GRZ-UNJP-GBV Phase II Project Trains 81 Ministry of Community Development and Social Services Officials in Community Savings Groups

By Kalunga Chikate

The International Labour Organization (ILO) through the Government of the Republic of Zambia –United Nations Joint Programme (GRZ-UNJP) on GBV Phase II Project has concluded a series of five (5) days trainings in Savings and Credit Groups for 81 officials across the country at the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS).

Having successfully participated in the trainings, it is hoped that with support from the ILO the Trainers of Trainers (ToTs) and Supervisors would soon conduct community based trainings to 500 GBV survivors and those at risk in savings and credit groups using the Community Savings Groups (CSG) methodology in 15 districts, where the project is being implemented.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia and five United Nations Agencies with support from Sweden and Ireland are currently implementing the GRZ-United Nations Joint Programme on Gender Based Violence (GRZ-UNJP-GBV) Phase II. The participating UN Agencies are: the ILO, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

The joint programme, which runs from 2019 to 2022 is a multi-partner programme designed to reduce the prevalence of GBV in Zambia. The programme builds on and consolidates the gains made in the GRZ-UN



Some GBV survivors and those at risk attend trainings

Joint Programme Phase I implemented from 2012 to 2017.

The ILO is responsible for the component on economic empowerment that is ensuring that GBV survivors, those at risk and communities are empowered to break the cycle of abuse.

The main objective of the virtual trainings, which was provided via zoom platform to Trainers of Trainers (ToTs) and Supervisors, was to strengthen and support GBV survivors and those at risk in the formation of savings and credit groups.

Among the topics covered during the trainings were: gender equality, overview of community savings groups, mechanism of savings groups, stages of savings groups formation, group leadership and elections.

Others were: development of a community

savings group constitution, first saving meeting, first loan meeting, first loan repayment meeting, share out, record keeping, monitoring and evaluation, introduction to data collection tools, field experience sharing/observations, provincial/districts work plans and budgets, as well as post evaluation/ training evaluation.

The participants in the trainings for supervisors were drawn from the 10 provincial community development offices of Central, Eastern, Luapula, Lusaka, Northern, North-western, Sothern and Western Provinces, while the ToTs were from the 15 District Community Development Offices of Chililabombwe, Chinsali, Choma, Itezhi-Tezhi, Kabwe, Kalumbila, Kasama, Lundazi, Lusaka, Mansa, Mazabuka, Mongu, Mumbwa, Senanga and Solwezi Districts of Zambia respectively.

Of the 81 officials trained, 21 were from the provincial offices (13 males and 8 females), while 60 came from 15 districts offices (41 females and 19 males). Once the trainings are rolled-out to 500 GBV survivors and those at risk, it is hoped that participants will not only be empowered economically, but also be able to confront and challenge gender abuse and the negative social and cultural norms present in their communities.

Recently, the ILO provided start-up kits (material/ financial support) worth ZMW 658,000.00 kwacha to 329 individuals out of 398 trained GBV survivors and those at risk as part of its economic empowerment strategy to the affected individuals.



Some GBV survivors and those at risk attend trainings

Zambia, Mozambique Commemorate International Labour Day in style amid COVID-19 restrictions



(Far right) President Edgar Lungu poses with Labour Minister Mrs. Joyce Nonde-Simukoko, ZFE Acting President Mrs. Myra Ngoma and ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho.

By Allan Mulenga and Stelio Marerua

Each year, the International Labour Day a rare opportunity for governments and employers to honour and recognize workers' contributions to society in the world of work.

Usually pomp and splendour characterize May 1 celebrations with parades and speeches, as well as festivities being the norm. However, this year's commemorations were unique, due to COVID-19 health guidelines and restrictions as the world embraces the 'better normal'.

In Zambia, the national commemoration under the theme: "Promoting Industrialization through Productivity, Decent Work and Sustainable Economic Growth amidst COVID 19", was held at Lusaka's Mulungushi International Conference Centre and attended by selected invited guests with the rest following the proceedings on the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) television and other social media platforms.

Officiating at the ceremony, President Edgar Lungu directed the Ministry Of Labour and Social Security to extend sector-based minimum wages to other sectors in the country in order to protect the rights of vulnerable categories of employees.

President Lungu said his government has continued putting in place sector based minimum wages to protect the rights of vulnerable categories of employees, as demonstrated on 18 December, 2020, when government issued the minimum wages and conditions of employment for truck and bus

drivers to regulate the terms and conditions of service for them.

"There are still other sectors that need to be considered. I, therefore, wish to direct the minister of labour and social security to ensure that the process of coming up with the sector minimum wages is expedited," said President Lungu.

President Lungu, who led the Labour Day celebrants in observing a minute of silence for workers that had died due to COVID-19, said government has prioritised interventions aimed at supporting enterprises, safeguarding jobs and creating creation.

The Head of State presented awards to Amadeus Mukobe for being the most hardworking civil servant with 33 years of service, while Zambia Revenue Authority's Marko Sikalumbi and Professor Yakub Mulla were also awarded from quasi government and the private sector.

Meanwhile, International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho observed that COVID-19 has adversely affected the world of work globally and in Zambia.

"Many people have lost their jobs while others have to work for less hours and others forced to accept lower pay. Enterprises' productive capacity have been curtailed due to interruption in inputs supply, limited productive capacity, low tourists inflow. The impact on workers in the informal economy –where majority – more than 75% of Zambian workers depend, has been devastating," Mr. Okutho said. "It is therefore very important,

as we commemorate this year's International Labour day, to deeply reflect and take stock and analyse the impact of the pandemic and collectively plan on how we can recover and build back better."

He added that the pandemic has exacerbated the already existing labour market crises in the country, notably:- youth unemployment, inadequate social protection, high levels of informality and the challenge of social dialogue and collective bargaining.

In Mozambique, the Organization of Mozambican Workers (OTM) commemorated the International Labour Day, at Praça dos Heróis Moçambicanos in Maputo.

This year's ceremony was celebrated under the theme: "Trade unions together in the struggle for well-being, peace and progress" in adherence to the COVID-19 protocols.

Only a few workers attended the event and there were no parades typical of previous year's commemorations with a restricted number of participants including representatives from public and private institutions. The ILO was represented by Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Eduardo Viera based in Mozambique.

The national ceremony took place in Nampula, where approximately 15,000 workers from public and private sectors marched in solidarity of victims stricken by both IDAI and Kenneth cyclones that struck the central and northern regions of the country.

In Tete, more than 10,000 workers and over 100 motorcades paraded in the streets in commemoration of the workers' day.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Alexandre Munguambe, the General Secretary of the Mozambican Workers' Organization stated that COVID-19 has negatively affected the Mozambican economy, resulting in over 57,000 workers being driven into unemployment.

Mr. Munguambe explained that the lowest minimum wage of MZN 4,200 in Mozambique observed mainly in the fishing sector contrasts with the highest minimum wage of MZN 11,600 in banks and insurance companies, while a family of five members survives with a budget of MZN 25,300 needed for groceries.

"The minimum wages in place in the country, are far below the budget needed to meet the basic needs of the worker and his family. On the other hand, we are two years into successive price escalations of prices of goods and services, which has elevated the cost of living for workers who, as we know, have low incomes", said Mr. Munguambe.

▶ Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique Celebrate Child Labour Day



Pupils join in the commemoration of World Day Against Child Labour in Lilongwe.

By Dylan Van Tromp, Allan Mulenga and Paulo Romao

Each year on 12 June, the World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) brings together governments, employers and workers organizations, civil society, as well as millions of people from around the world to highlight the plight of child labourers and what can be done to help them.

This year's commemorations for the Child Labour Day were held under the theme: 'Act now: End Child Labour!'. This international day was launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2002. World Day Against Child Labour aims to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it.

To mark the day, Malawi organised a series of activities leading to the national commemorations on 12 June, 2021 in Lilongwe. Malawi's Deputy Minister of Labour, Honourable Vera Kamtukule, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Malawi, Maria Jose Torres graced the occasion.

The Government of Malawi renewed its commitment to eliminate child labour in the country by 2025, in line with Target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for which Malawi is a Pathfinder Country under the Alliance 8.7 initiative.

The Government also used the occasion to launch its Action Pledge to 'Adopt and

launch the National Child Labour Advocacy and Communication Strategy and build media and stakeholder capacity for implementation'.

In addition, four social partner organizations (MCTU, ECAM, TAML and TAMA) launched their 2021 IYECL Action Pledges.

Commemorating the day, UN Resident Coordinator Maria Jose Torres said that, despite several strides, there was an urgent need for all stakeholders, including national authorities, employers, trade unions, civil society, and local leaders, to step up efforts to end this human rights violation against children in Malawi.

"We have only four years left to go to achieve Target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which calls for an end to child labour in all its forms by 2025," said Ms. Torres. "New estimates on child labour call on us to take stock of where we stand in the global effort to end child labour as the current situation is alarming."

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister of Labour Vera Kamtukule said the Government was taking necessary actions to end Child Labour.

"We are empowering our district and regional labour officers to ensure that they are going in all sectors to smoke out child labour and forced labour. We are doing this together with other stakeholders to ensure effective inspections," said Ms. Kamtukule.

Several UN agencies are supporting government to eliminate child labour in

Malawi. ILO is implementing the ACCEL programme to accelerate elimination of child labour in tea and coffee supply chains, as well as a project to address decent work deficits, including child labour, in the country's tobacco sector.

In Zambia, the Child Labour Day national commemoration, which was held at Lusaka's Government Complex, was graced by Ministry of Labour and Social Security Permanent Secretary Mr. Chanda Kaziya, and punctuated by song and dance from pupils.

Officiating at the commemoration, Mr. Kaziya said ending and eradicating Child Labour, was among the Government's priorities.

He noted that child labour perpetuates intergenerational poverty, threatens national economies and undercuts rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of Children.

"Government is working towards ensuring improved quality of education for all our children. Our Government's commitment is also evident through the approval of appropriate policies and action plans aimed at broadly at eliminating hazardous child labour and improve the safety and health of young workers," said Mr. Kaziya.

Also present at the commemorations was Labour Commissioner Givens Muntengwa, who disclosed that the ministry has recorded positive results through initiatives aimed at ending child labour.

He stated that with the help of stakeholders, the Ministry has managed to direct child labour policy and implemented programmes that are targeted at ending child labour.

"The Ministry has made considerable progress in the fight against Child Labour through policy direction and implementation of child labour Programmes with various stakeholders," he said.

And speaking at the same event, International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho called for sustainable solutions, to end all forms of Child Labour.

Mr. Okutho called for actions towards the escalating numbers of children in Labour, which has risen to 92 million in Africa.

"The implementation of comprehensive and holistic policies through sustainability solutions is required, in the fight against Child Labour. In Africa the number has risen



Pupils join in the commemoration of World Day Against Child Labour in Lusaka.

to 92 million, meaning that one out of every 5 children on the continent is in Child Labour," he bemoaned.

Mr. Okutho also commended the Government for putting in place interventions aimed at the elimination of child Labour.

In Mozambique, the event was officiated by

the First Lady of Mozambique Mrs. Isaura Filipe Nyusi and Cabinet Ministers, President of the Employers' Organization (CTA), Secretary-General of the Workers' Organization, and Civil Society Organisations representatives.

The ILO was represented by Chief Technical Adviser, Mr. Eduardo Viera in Maputo and

the Brazilian Cooperation Agency was represented by the Minister of the Brazilian Embassy in Mozambique.

In her speech, the First Lady stressed the need to prevent children from leaving school to engage in child labour.

The commemoration was held under the auspices of ILO's Decent Work Cotton Project. The ILO is supporting the Mozambican government in the fight against child labour and especially the worst forms of child labour, through the implementation of the 'Cotton with Decent Work' project funded by the government of Brazil.

The objective of the project is to improve working conditions in the cotton supply chain. The Project has also been supporting the implementation of the National Plan against Child Labour and the List of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

According to global estimates, the number of children in child labour has risen by 8.4 million, to over 100 million children in child labour.

Stakeholders Kick-start Development of 3rd Edition of the National Statistical Bulletin on Social Protection in Mozambique

By **Luis Cotinguiba and Vanádio Monteiro**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) through the ACTION/Portugal project in Mozambique provided technical and financial support for the successful holding of the retreat on the development of 3rd Statistical Bulletin on Social Protection.

The meeting took place from 5 to 15 April 2021 in Bilene, Gaza Province, and brought together a team of technical officials from relevant national institutions working on social protection that are members of the Inter-Institutional Group on Statistics and Social Protection.

These are the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action (MGCAS), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MITSS), the National Institute of Social Action (INAS, IP), the National Institute of Social Security (INSS), the National Institute of Social Providence (INPS) and the National Statistics Institute (INE).

The ILO was represented by the social protection team in Mr. Rubén Vicente and Mr. Vanádio Monteiro.

In 2019 and 2020, members of the Inter-

Institutional Group collaborated remotely for the development of the first and second editions of the Statistical Bulletin. These publications represented important achievements for the social protection sector in Mozambique, contributing to more informed and evidence-based decision- and policy-making.

The first two editions of the bulletin have been widely disseminated by ILO's social protection department, receiving great attention from countries interested in learning from Mozambique's lessons.

But in 2021 the MITSS, as the acting chair of the group, requested the organization of a technical retreat for providing a dedicated space for technical officials to get together and develop the third edition. This laid a foundation for improving the development of the annual bulletins and a clear indication of governmental ownership over the process.

Relying on lessons learnt from previous editions as well as from the 3rd Social Protection Statistics Course that was organized by the ILO in December 2020, the technical team once again joined forces for the development of the 3rd Statistical Bulletin on Social Protection using social protection data for 2020.

During the retreat, participants focused on collecting, processing, analyzing and harmonizing the statistical data and indicators produced by each institution for use in the new edition.

As previously done, a special chapter highlighting a key topic was included in the bulletin. In line with current challenges, this time around the team decided to cover the national social protection response to the COVID-19 crisis. In particular, they focused on the measures put in place by INAS to mitigate the negative impacts from the pandemic and the related economic slowdown on poor and vulnerable populations, as well as by INSS to reduce the effects on the crisis on the formal sector.

In addition, during the retreat participants held discussions on dissemination action points for the 3rd Bulletin and next steps for consolidating the statistical data reporting models at the level of the institutions they represent.

The ILO social protection team in Mozambique will continue to provide technical support for the finalization of the Statistical Bulletin, and will support its dissemination at the national, regional and international levels.

► ILO, Zambian Government Holds First-ever Virtual Social Protection Week



By Taonga Mshanga

The International Labour Organization (ILO) under the United Nations Joint Programme for Social Protection Phase II and the Government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services and Ministry of Labour and Social Security recently held the 4th Social Protection week which was the first-ever to be held virtually. The Virtual Zambia Social Protection Week 2021 which took place from 28th June to 2nd July, was held under the theme “Responsive Social Protection in a Changing World”. This was a timely theme as the whole world is grappling on how to live in the ‘better normal’ sparked by COVID-19 pandemic.

The annual Social Protection Week is an open, public event that seeks to bring together a range of stakeholders including Government, Civil Society Organizations, Academia, Faith-Based Organizations, social partners, cooperating partners, private sector, media and the general public.

For this year, social media networks were utilized as a platform to initiate and shape public debate and gave all participants a chance to make their voices heard and contribute to the development of social protection in Zambia.

The Week was characterised by a series of discussions that were held virtually using multi-media platforms that included radio, television, Zoom meetings, Facebook Live

and Twitter.

Topics of discussion included: Rights of Domestic Workers in Zambia; Better systems for social protection service delivery in Zambia; Impact of COVID-19 among learners with disabilities; Using data for decision-making in social protection programs; Extension of coverage to the informal economy; Coordination for Sound and Responsive social protection systems: a case of the single windows approach; Responsive social protection in a climate change environment; Social accountability for responsive social protection, a review of policy responses and potential alternatives for responsive and sustainable social protection systems in the context of COVID-19.

Speaking at the virtual media briefing, ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho stated that it was gratifying that the virtual Social Protection Week had brought together various stakeholders; the Government and nonstate actors to re-design social protection systems in the country. Mr. Okutho added that: “the timing of the Social Protection Week was even more critical as Zambia re-builds its economy, health and livelihoods following the devastating impact of COVID-19”.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services Permanent Secretary Ms. Pamela Chibonga-Kabamba observed that the changing social protection needs would

require new strategies to eradicate poverty and vulnerabilities among the Zambian population.

The World Food Programme representative Ms. Jennifer Bitonde said social protection enhanced the resilience and adaptive capacity of people to cope with economic shocks. Ms. Bitonde added that: “effective social protection programmes maintain standards of living, promote peoples wellbeing and can provide safety nets to prevent the most vulnerable from slipping into poverty”.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Labour and Social Security Permanent Secretary Mr. Chanda Kaziya said the Government had put in place measures aimed at protecting workers amid COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Kaziya expressed gratitude to the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, Germany and the European Union for their financial support towards enhancing social protection in the country.

The event had an overall virtual reach of 78,563 and an attendance of 15,812 people. This did not however depict the total estimated audience engagement for each radio/television station with a combined weekly audience of 20.1 million across the 6 radio stations.

This virtual interphase would be a good platform for the poverty reduction and vulnerability cluster to take advantage of to continue with ongoing stakeholder engagement.

► SPIREWORK Project Empowers Informal Workers

By Allan Mulenga

Recently, the Government of the Republic of Zambia and the International Labour Organization (ILO) in collaboration with the Finnish Embassy in Zambia, the National Pension Scheme Authority (NAPSA), the Workers' Compensation Fund Control Board (WCFCB), and the Zambia Industrial Commercial Bank (ZICB) conducted the site visits of Magoye and Munjile Milk Collection Centres in Southern Province, as well as Copperbelt's Fisenge and Kampelembe Milk Collection Centre.

The Cooperative Unions draw membership from the Dairy Association of Zambia and their activities are being implemented under the Social Protection for Informal and Rural Economy Workers (SPIREWORK) Project in Mazabuka and Luanshya districts respectively.

The SPIREWORK Project, which has been running from 2017 to-date, has been co-funded by the Government of Finland, through the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), and implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security through NAPSA and WCFCB, with technical support from the ILO. NAPSA has further signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ZICB, Mayfair Insurance Company Zambia, and the Dairy Association of Zambia.

Interestingly, the Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union is a local women-led dairy co-operative formed in 2008 to alleviate poverty among the women folk and their families in Luanshya and other communities.

It all started with one woman who gave out 10 of her own cows to other women after learning from other countries like Kenya. The first primary cooperative that was formed and received the 10 cows was Jele cooperative. When these cows gave birth to female calves, they were given to other women as a "pass on a gift" program.

Fisenge produces approximately 2,300 litres of milk per day from its farmers which is sold as raw milk to Parmalat Zambia Ltd and Dairy Gold, a subsidiary of Trade Kings group of companies.

The stakeholders also used the occasion to launch the new mobile platform that will allow the dairy farmers to make registrations and contributions from their mobile phones at anytime from anywhere. Furthermore, a disbursement of micro loans to qualifying dairy farmers under the support of the ZICB was undertaken. ZICB has made available K2, 000,000 as credit



Mrs. Evelyn Chona Malambo of Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union.

facility to support the dairy farmers.

Among the women supplying milk to Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union is Mrs. Evelyn Chona Malambo.

Mrs. Malambo narrates that she started dairy farming in 2009 after her friend from the same community gave her a calf to rear.

She adds that she has found dairy farming to be a lucrative business as she is able to provide for the family and sponsor her children to school.

"Dairy farming is a lucrative business. Imagine, I started with one cow, but now I have 18 animals out of these I am milking nine. I am bringing 60 litres of milk per day now just because I am only milking four animals and the other animals have been weaned and are expecting," explains Mr. Malambo.

The 60-year-old woman has since urged women in the area to embrace dairy farming, saying that there are a lot of benefits derived from the activity.

"Dairy animals are docile and friendly to women. It is easier for the women to do dairy farming. We are 25 and only six women are supplying milk to Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union," says Mrs. Malambo.

On the micro loans disbursed by ZICB, she explains that the micro loans will not only help dairy farmers buy medicines for the animals when they get sick, but also feed animals properly to be more productive.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Labour and Social Security Permanent Secretary Mr. Chanda Kaziya observed that the pilot project, which seeks to extend social protection coverage to the informal sector, has scored

successes to warrant full scale implementation across the country.

Mr. Kaziya added that it was pleasing that NAPSA has implemented new solutions that would facilitate easy and flexible payment structure for both future and past contributions without penalties, thereby providing relief to dairy farmers whose incomes are very irregular and easily affected by the weather pattern.

"This will be a huge boost as the major challenge faced by the informal sector in general and small-scale farmers in particular is lack of access to affordable credit," said Mr. Kaziya. "This benefit could not have come at a better time than this when the country is experiencing significantly high interest rates that make borrowing a bit expensive, especially for small scale farmers."

And ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho urged dairy farmers to take advantage of the financial offerings to make productive investments to their farming initiatives, as well as to make savings for retirement when they could no longer work and earn as they used to.

"We expect to receive feedback on the possible areas of improvement to our service quality and product offering. Other key features we will be looking to incorporate to our product offering include weather index insurance- which is intended to protect farmers against weather related losses; as well as worker compensation- to provide income support should you become sick or injured through a work related incident," said Mr. Okutho.

Meanwhile, NAPSA Director General Mr.



Youths display their milk supplies to Magoye Milk Collection Centre.

Yollard Kachinda said his organisation has developed a new tailor-made benefit package with expended benefits being piloted among small scale farmers to attract members from the informal sector,

stating that the new package constitutes the standard pension, invalidity and survivors' benefits with inclusion of short-term benefits of maternity and access to credit.

"The pilot will be extended to marketeers and other priority areas in order to gauge acceptability and appropriateness before full roll-out to the rest of the country," said Mr. Kachinda.

And Finnish Ambassador to Zambia Her Excellency Ms. Pirjo Soumela-Chouwdhury said the ground-breaking efforts on extending social protection to informal sector workers in Zambia could provide important lessons for the whole continent and beyond.

Her Excellency Ambassador added that she was honoured to meet representatives of the women-led dairy cooperative comprising visionary and hardworking professionals determined to make things happen.

Meanwhile, WCFCB Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer Mrs. Priscilla Bwembya thanked the Finnish Government for funding the Project as it would help extend social protection coverage to the informal sector, particularly the dairy farmers in the area.

► SESA Project Constitutes Project Steering Committee

By Allan Mulenga

On 22 July 2021, Skills for Energy in Southern Africa (SESA) – a regional Private-Public Development Partnership Project- held its inaugural Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting.

With support from the Government of Sweden, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is supporting the Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC) to implement the Skills for Energy in Southern Africa (SESA) Project, a three-and-a-half-year intervention.

The project's overarching development objective is to contribute to "increased uptake of Renewable Energy (RE), Energy Efficiency (EE) and Regional Energy Integration (REI) interventions in Southern Africa, leading to a more sustainable and low-carbon energy mix".

It seeks to achieve this objective through skills development in renewable energy, energy efficiency and regional energy integration. During the virtual meeting, which was chaired by Ministry of Energy acting director – Department of Energy Mr. Arnold Simwaba, the Terms of Reference for the PSC were presented and approved. Thereafter members discussed the inception report and project progress, as well as the annual work plan and budget for 2021.

Welcoming members to the meeting, ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho said the effects of climate change were getting worse with high frequency of droughts and floods. Mr. Okutho said there was need for the whole

world to make a transition to cleaner and more sustainable technologies.

"The availability of innovative cleaner, efficient and sustainable solutions risks being of little use without an adequate number of skilled workers and trained professionals to enable their deployment. This is the challenge we are faced with in Zambia and SADC region," he said.

Mr. Okutho explained that in responding to the challenges of skills in the energy sector in Zambia and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, the ILO has in the past, collaborated with the Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC) through the implementation of the Skills Development for the Renewable Energy Sector (SkiDRES) Pilot Project- implemented from April 2019 to October 2020.

The Director expressed gratitude to the Swedish Government through Sida for funding the project.

Meanwhile, Swedish Embassy in Lusaka programme manager Magdalena Svensson observed that there was need to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies to mitigate the negative effects of climate change being experienced in many countries, including Sub-Saharan region.

"The Swedish government's support for initiatives such as; the power initiatives which are aimed at bridging financial investment and improve access to electricity will help resolve the energy problems being experienced. Furthermore, engagement with the private companies will help in having trainings that are driven by the market. These companies have capacity to bring about new

skills and at the same time demand for skills," said Ms. Svensson.

She expressed satisfaction over the composition of the PSC, stating that the PSC would bring different actors from both public and private sectors together that are crucial to skills development for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, as well as Regional Energy Integration.

Meanwhile, Mr. Simwaba, who was representing Ministry of Energy Permanent Secretary Mrs. Veronica Mwiche, said the Project Steering Committee was an important committee for the project as it would provide the needed strategic guidance.

He implored members to understand the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes of the project, stating that the project summary and inception report would be helpful to members as they get to know more about the project.

In accordance with the Project Document approved by the ILO and the development partner- Sida, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) is to be established to give strategic oversight and monitor progress in project execution.

Members of the SESA PSC are high-level decision-makers able to provide policy support and influence decisions in their respective institutions.

The PSC will be guided and advised on all technical aspects of project by Technical Working Groups to be created by the project. As the PSC will provide overall guidance to the project, it will not be expected to deal with day-to-day management and administration of the project.

► Z-DWCP 2020-2021 Launched ...as Tripartite Partners Celebrate the Launch



ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho speaks during the Launch.

By Allan Mulenga

On 30 July 2021, the Zambian Government through the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the International Labour Organization (ILO) along with the social partners- Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE) and the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) launched the Zambia Decent Work Country Programme 2020-2022 (Z-DWCP 2020-2022).

This is the third Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) Zambia has crafted, following the second that covered the period 2013-2016.

Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) have been established as the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries. DWCPs have two basic objectives- they promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies; and they organise ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework to advance the Decent Work Agenda within the fields of comparative advantage of the Organization.

According to Ministry of Labour and Social

Security Permanent Secretary Mr. Chanda Kaziya, the Z-DWCP 2020-2022 sets-out national priorities, which were agreed with by the tripartite partners and enshrined in the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP), particularly in the area of employment and labour.

Speaking at the official launch of Z-DWCP 2020-2022 held at Lusaka's Mulungushi

International Conference Centre Mr. Kaziya said the Z-DWCP 2020-2022 has incorporated good practices and key lessons learned from the implementation of previous Z-DWCPs.

"The Decent Work Country Programme aims at providing a blue-print to Government, social partners and key stakeholders in tackling the challenges of



the employment and labour market sector that range from inadequate social security systems, non-compliance to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards to lack of respect for fundamental principles and rights of workers,” he said. “The development of this DWCP has come at an opportune time when as a country, we are still focused on our implementing our vision 2030 aimed at accelerating development without leaving anyone behind.”

Mr. Kaziya urged social partners to collaborate with the Government in the implementation of the priorities of the Decent Work Agenda as they contribute to economic development.

Meanwhile, ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho said the Z-DWCP 2020-2022 would enable the Government plan properly in the execution of the labour

market policies at national, regional and local level as it cushion the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market.

Mr. Okutho called for collaboration among tripartite constituents and cooperating partners in the implementation of the Z-DWCP 2020-2022.

“We implore the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to facilitate regular and timely reviews of the programme. It is further proposed that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to quickly mobilize a tripartite steering committee that will spearhead the implementation and review of this programme,” said Mr. Okutho.

And Zambia Federation of Employers Executive Director Harrington Chibanda observed that the priorities set in the Z-DWCP 2020-2022 would help uplift the living standards of people.

Mr. Chibanda reaffirmed the federation's commitment towards contributing to effective implementation of the Z-DWCP 2020-2022, stating that there was need for tripartite partners to be fully engaged in the implementation process.

Meanwhile, Zambia Congress of Trade Unions Secretary General Mr. Cosmas Mukuka expressed concern that the Z-DWCP 2020-2022 was being launched at the time the country was grappling with the negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic, stating that the global pandemic has adversely affected productivity at various levels.

Mr. Mukuka urged the Government to formulate fiscal policies that would safeguard employment, promote rights at work and guarantee social protection for all workers.

► ILO Celebrates International Domestic Workers' Day

By Allan Mulenga

On June 16 2021, Zambia joined the rest of the world in commemorating the International Domestic Workers' Day under the theme: 'Making decent work a reality beyond COVID-19'.

All across the world, the International Domestic Workers' Day is observed to celebrate the work and contributions of domestic workers.

Since the adoption of ILO Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers, many countries around the world have worked to improve their protection. This year, the ILO celebrated the 10th anniversary of Convention 189 (C189).

Domestic workers have been among the workers the most affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Their contribution to households has been immense, even while the pandemic has threatened their livelihoods. Reflecting on the International Domestic Workers' Day, ILO Country Office Director for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique Mr. George Okutho called on tripartite partners to champion the ratification of Convention 189 in their respective countries, thereby improving the conditions of service for domestic workers.

Mr. Okutho said it was gratifying that the Zambian government has taken necessary steps leading to the ratification of the Convention.

“C189 has made domestic workers to be recognized just like any other workers around the world. In Zambia, we are engaging with our tripartite constituents to ensure that the ratification takes place. We are grateful that the Government has taken steps that supports the convention even if it has not ratified the convention,” he observed. “For example, the employment Act number 3 of 2019 and the rights of domestic workers in respect of extension of social protection to the informal sector.”

Mr. Okutho urged employers to provide domestics workers with written contracts of employment at the time of engagement, stating that the move would promote decent work among domestic workers.



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