

The Decent Work Agenda in Zimbabwe

THE HEART OF SOCIO - ECONOMIC PROGRESS

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- i. Continuous training and exchange programmes for the TNF representatives of each social partner. For example, there is need to link with regional and international institutions such as the National Economic Development and Labour Council in South Africa amongst others in countries highlighted in Table 7;
- ii. Increased training which should trickle down to workers and those working in the informal economy on the importance of social dialogue;
- iii. Approaching development partners for funding in social dialogue in the short-term so that the concept and practice of social dialogue is widely understood; and,
- iv. The need to make social dialogue a practical tool to build consensus on contemporary issues such as unemployment playing particular attention to youth employment and the gender issues.

Overall Summary

This book clearly indicates that the four pillars of decent work agenda should be considered in their totality and not concentrates on some leaving others behind as they all are equally important in the world of work. In fact, social dialogue is one of the vehicles that can be used to advance all the other three pillars of the decent work agenda. Through consultation and negotiations, all issues regarding employment creation, workers rights and social protection can be advanced. These issues are obviously interlinked as the essence of decent work and poverty reduction encompasses them all.

Box 10: What are our Demands to ensure Decent Work?

1. **The right to work, to organize & to bargain** - Access to construction sites and to workers for the purposes of communicating their rights and recruitment, without fear of discrimination.
2. **Decent work** agreements with companies must ensure that there is real improvement in wages, working conditions and safety for workers.
3. **A living wage** - a wage that takes workers out of poverty.
4. **Zero Accidents** - Enforcement of Health & Safety measures and fulltime health & safety union representatives on site.
5. **No downward variation** - All subcontracting terms to reflect that of principle tender.
6. **Quality Jobs** - Maximize the creation of quality jobs especially for woman and youth so as to contribute to resolving unemployment.
7. **Improve basic conditions** - Decent accommodation and improvement in working conditions for all workers.
8. **Health Awareness** - Promote awareness on HIV/Aids; provide voluntary testing, accessible counseling and treatment.
9. **Skills development** - Effective skills development programmes that promote the future employability of workers.

Source: The Decent Work, Decent Life Campaign, www.decentwork.org

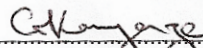
FOREWORD

Since the launch of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s Decent Work Agenda (DWA) at its 87th Session in 1999, the concept has gained widespread currency and is widely used. At the 11th African Regional Meeting held in Addis Ababa in April 2007, the ILO and its social partners, labour, business and government launched the Decent Work Agenda in Africa: 2007-2015. Furthermore, at its 97th Session in June 2008, the ILO adopted the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation which institutionalised the DWA as a key policy and operational concept of the ILO. Also important to note is that decent work is an aspect of the rights- based agenda which sees certain rights in the world of work as goals for societies to strive for so as to achieve socio-economic development that is people-centred.


In this light, the ILO has been promoting the DWA at national level. Zimbabwe first adopted its Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) on 14 December 2005 which was later revised and extended to 2011. In order to play an active role in the DWCP, the ZCTU organised a conference for its General Council in December 2008 in Nyanga. The conference lamented the collapse of the formal economy and the emerging dominant position of the informal economy with its huge decent work deficits. The General Council called on the ZCTU and its affiliates to work relentlessly in promoting full, productive and decent employment.

Hence, this book explains the DWA and its four pillars namely; employment creation, workers' rights, social protection and social dialogue which are entrenched in the various ILO Conventions and Recommendations as well as other international legal instruments. The book also presents the status of these four pillars in Zimbabwe. This will also provide a reference point to benchmark future assessments of progress made in implementing the DWCP.

It is our sincere hope that this book will empower the social partners particularly workers to effectively mainstream the DWA in all their activities. In this regard, we would like to thank FOS-BELGIUM for providing funding for this project as well as all the researchers for the extensive research on which this book was drawn.



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Acronyms

CSO	Central Statistical Office
CZI	Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries
DWA	Decent Work Agenda
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NECs	National Employment Councils
PDL	Poverty Datum Line
TNF	Tripartite Negotiation Forum
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ZAPF	Zimbabwe Association of Pension Funds
ZEDS	Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy

Box 9: The Barbados Case

The Barbadian economy experienced an unprecedented economic crisis at the beginning of 1990s with its economy characterised by increases in unemployment rates of 23% in 1992, inflation of 6% in 1991 and GDP growth of 3.6%. The country's external account weakened to a deficit of 4.5 % of the GDP in 1990/91. As a result, the country's foreign reserves were down to 1.33 weeks of imports. This meant that they needed to devalue the Barbados dollar.

However, both workers and employers were determined to sacrifice short-term benefits for long-term prosperity through social dialogue with the government. Thus, as a result Barbados experienced the following economic benefits during the social partnership era (Fashoyin, 2001):

- i. A steady annual growth rate of 4 per cent in the economy since 1993;
- ii. A decrease in the unemployment rate from 21.9 per cent in 1994 to 9.8 per cent in 1999;
- iii. A decrease in the rate of inflation, with an annual average of less than 3% since 1995;
- iv. Real industrial wages rising steadily since 1996, as a result of increases in productivity;
- v. A reduction in the number and scale of trade disputes as shown by the perceptible decline in the number of workdays lost between 1992 (36,472) and 1997 (428).

Thus, Barbados managed to achieve the above as a result of the following:

- i. A reasonable level of trust, understanding and cooperation among social partners;
- ii. A manageable level of internal cohesion in the business community and labour movement;
- iii. Political will particularly on the part of government;
- iv. A degree of acceptability at the top political and administrative levels;
- v. A united and disciplined labour leadership and well organised all embracing private sector business; and,
- vi. A common vision shared by all stakeholders (Fashoyin 2001).

6.9 The Way Forward and Conclusion

Despite the challenges faced as regards social dialogue in Zimbabwe, there is a clear indication that social dialogue is a key governance issue as when applied well promotes citizenry representation and participation in socio-economic decision making processes. Opportunities for social dialogue in Zimbabwe are vivid both in the region and internationally. There is therefore need to draw lessons from countries' experiences and tailor-make them to suit the Zimbabwean environment. In addition, the following are required for effective social dialogue in Zimbabwe:

6.8 International Success stories on Social Dialogue

Table 7 shows in summary other countries experiences with social dialogue.

Table 7: A summary of other countries experiences with social dialogue

Country	Success Stories
El Salvador	Social Dialogue has been an important contributor to the peace progress / process
Indonesia	Since June 1998, broad tripartite consultations have worked towards reshaping the country's labour laws in line with ILO standards
Ireland	"Tripartite plus" pacts have contributed to developing a cooperative labour relations climate, a healthy economic growth and low unemployment
Italy	Social dialogue has been an important tool for employment generation initiatives in a region in Northern Italy. Each of the social partners has a role in attracting investment to the area to create decent jobs in enterprises using state-of-the-art technology
The Netherlands	Effective social dialogue marked the turning point in the fight against economic misery and unemployment in the 1970s and early 1980s. The process resulted in a positive impact in the recovery of the labour market and employment performance in the late 1980s and 1990s, collective bargaining and industrial relations in general.
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Republic of Korea	Tripartite consultations have helped to cushion some of the shocks of the economic crisis
South Africa	The National Economic Development Labour Council (NEDLAC), with its "tripartite plus", has helped build consensus around changes in policy and law on a wide range of issues
United States	In New York City, an arrangement involving manufacturers, trade unions and local government aims at improving working conditions for garment workers while promoting investment and upgrading for small manufacturing units
West Africa	With support from the ILO technical cooperation project funded by Belgium, the five countries that make up the Entente (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger and Togo) have reawakened social dialogue as a means of attacking economic as well as social problems

Source: Adopted from the Report of the Director General, International Labour Conference, 87th Session, 1999 and others.



Definition: Decent Work

Decent work is defined as the right to productive work in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity.

"The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity." - ILO Director-General Juan Somavia (2008).

Historical Background

The Decent Work Agenda was adopted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) at its 87th Session in 1999. Ten years later at the 97th Session in June 2008, the ILO adopted the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization which institutionalized the Decent Work Agenda as the key policy and operational concept of the ILO.

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

The Declaration recognizes two principles which define decent work which include:

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

Rationale behind the decent work agenda



Since the 1990s when Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were introduced in many developing countries, growth has not been inclusive. Poverty has continued to be prominent in most of these economies. Economic growth emanating from opening up of economies has even today **not trickled down** to the poor. Wealth has continued to remain in the hands of a few rich people and poverty abounds. Economies of the developing and the developed countries are growing more and more unequal. In fact, the United National Development Programme (UNDP) found that where conventional approaches have been implemented, they have resulted in the following forms of growth:

- ✓ Jobless growth - *growth that does not expand employment opportunities;*
- ✓ Ruthless growth - *growth associated with increasing inequality and poverty;*
- ✓ Voiceless growth - *growth in the absence of democracy or empowerment;*
- ✓ Rootless growth - *growth that withers cultural identity;* and
- ✓ Futureless growth - *growth that squanders resources needed by future generations.* (UNDP 1996 Human Development Report).

This led to the notion that economic growth alone is not enough. Thus, decent work is the key instrument which can be used to distribute wealth and eliminate poverty.

6.5.6 The 2007 Five Protocols

Given the persistent hyperinflationary environment, escalation of prices of basic commodities, shortages of commodities on the formal market and the growth informal market activities and the growth of the working poor over the years, the TNF reconvened in June 2007. Negotiations resulted adoption of a holistic approach to the resolution of the crisis as represented in the five protocols adopted by the TNF on the 1st of June 2007. These protocols include:

- i. Restoration of Production Viability Protocol
- ii. Incomes and Pricing Stabilization Protocol,
- iii. Foreign Currency Mobilisation, Pricing and Management Protocol,
- iv. Restoration of Production Viability Protocol,
- v. TNF Founding Principles and the Kadoma Declaration Towards a Shared National Economic and Social Vision

Most unfortunately, these protocols have not been implemented, in spite of the fact that they had been crafted and adopted by consensus of the three key stakeholders, Government, Labour and Business. However, following the establishment of the Inclusive Government in 2009, the three social partners have taken the initiative to revise these protocols and facilitate their implementation.

6.6 Challenges faced by social dialogue within TNF in Zimbabwe

Most the initiatives failed to take off or remained ineffective due to the following challenges:

- Absence of political will;
- Mistrust among government and social partners. For example, labour is viewed as an enemy;
- Absence of clear implementation structures;
- Unlevelled playing field characterized by inhibitive legislation, POSA, AIPPA, violations of human and labour rights which makes it difficult for labour especially to consult its constituency;
- Approval of TNF's recommendations is subject to by the Cabinet;
- Absence of independent and professional secretariat;
- Absence of legal framework as compared with the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) in South Africa;
- Absence of personnel and financial resources; and,
- Lack of systematic gender mainstreaming. There is also no gender equality in terms of representation and participation of women. The number of women participating in the TNF is still very low.

6.7 The Proposed National Economic Council (NEC)

Under Article III of the Agreement of the Government of National Unity between ZANU P.F and the two MDC factions, there is a proposal to form the NEC which will take the form of the TNF. The NEC will form a tripartite plus structure which includes representatives of the civil society. The NEC will be composed of representatives of the Parties in the following sections; mining, agriculture, manufacturing, Tourism, Commerce, Financial, Labour, Academia and other relevant sectors. According to the agreement, the terms of reference for the council is to give advice to the government, formulating economic plans and programmes for approval by government and such other functions as assigned to the council by Government.

6.5.2 The Kadoma Declaration: Towards A Shared National Economic and Social Vision

The Kadoma Declaration was developed on 8 November 2001. The declaration focused on the “political risk factor” and it identified what had to be done. It identified social, economic and political problems facing the country and actions to be taken to address the risk factors. However, the deteriorating relationship between government and labour impaired the negotiations.

However, after the establishment of the Inclusive Government, the Kadoma Declaration was revised and signed by all social partners in September 2009. The implementation of the Kadoma Declaration will be a major success of social dialogue in Zimbabwe, since this is a key governance document.

6.5.3 Formulation of the National Economic Recovery Programme (NERP) and the National Productivity Centre (NPC)

Apart from the above, the TNF was able to influence the formulation of the National Economic Recovery Programme (NERP) and the National Productivity Centre (NPC) in 2003. However, NERP has not been able to produce the expected results whilst on the other hand, NPC has been ineffective.

6.5.4 Labour Law Reforms in Zimbabwe

Apart from the economic and social issues highlighted above, the TNF has been successful in issues of labour law reforms as indicated below:

- ✓ Enactment of Labour Act which promotes the application of international labour standards, labour peace, social justice and social dialogue through empowerment of works councils at the shop-floor level and national employment councils at the sector level (Munyati-Nyamukapa, 2008);
- ✓ Between 1998 and 2005, TNF negotiations and consultations contributed to the ratification of ILO Conventions, in particular, the core human rights conventions.

However, challenge remains that of the draconian legislation used to undermine freedom of expression and association (see *chapter on workers' rights*).

6.5.5 The National Health Insurance Scheme

Through TNF negotiations, the government proposed the establishment of a National Health Insurance Scheme through the National Social Security Authority (NSSA). However, labour opposed the implementation of the scheme noting some problems with NSSA funds which the workers felt are being poorly administered as reflected in the meaningless payouts.

Box 2: The right to Decent Work in International Instruments

The ILO Philadelphia Declaration (1944)

“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.”

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Article 22 states: “Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security ...”

Article 25 decrees: “A standard of living adequate for the health and well being of people, and to the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, and the like.”

Article 23 states: “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”

“Everyone, without discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.”

“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.”

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) decrees:

“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.”

Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)

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”.

ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation (2008)

“ 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.”

The Zimbabwe Country Decent Work Programme (2007-2011)

In order to achieve some progress towards decent work, the ILO calls for action at the global and national level. At global level there is need to mobilise the principal actors of the multilateral system and the global economy around this agenda. At the national level, integrated Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs), developed by ILO constituents, define the priorities and the targets within national development frameworks. Hence, in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Decent Work Country Programme (ZDWCP) was initially adopted on 14 December 2005. The social partners (government, business and labour) highlighted the following main country priorities for Zimbabwe:

- i. Poverty reduction through employment creation;
- ii. Social and labour protection and reduced impact of HIV/AIDS at the workplace;
- iii. Enabling environment created through upholding and strengthening social dialogue; and,
- iv. Working out of poverty through promoting gender equality and empowerment.

This agenda is based on the prioritization of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1 (Poverty), Goal 3 (Empowerment of Women) and Goal 6 (HIV and AIDS) by Zimbabwe. Goal 8 Developing Global Partnerships for Development is overarching.

An interim evaluation of the programme after implementation in 2006-2007 was undertaken by the stakeholders on 15 January 2008. According to the updated version of the ZDWCP, encouraging results were recorded in areas of child labour, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) development, social security, HIV/AIDS, tripartism and social dialogue.

However, after the interim evaluation, the 2005 ZDWCP was revised leading to the extension in implementation to 2011. The three agreed in 2005 were rephrased as follows:

- i. Employment and poverty;
- ii. Social protection and HIV and AIDS at the workplace;
- iii. Tripartism, social dialogue and industrial relation; and,
- iv. Gender equality and women empowerment.

6.5 The TNF Initiatives

Below are some of the TNF initiatives from the day of its establishment including the successes and the challenges faced along the way.

6.5.1 A Declaration of Intent Towards A Social Contract: Together we can make Zimbabwe great (2001)

Definition: Declaration of intent



A declaration of intent states the powers and obligations of the parties. It is meant to diffuse tensions and build trust amongst parties. Other authors describe it as similar to an engagement party, which precedes the marriage ceremony. In a normal circumstance, the social contract is often preceded by a declaration of intent, which suggests the parties are serious.

Definition: Social Contract



A social contract is a package of agreements or protocols amongst parties aimed at turning around the fortunes of a given economy. It is an output of the social dialogue process. A social contract means that each party has to make forgo or contribute something for the betterment of the nation.

In 1999, the TNF developed a Declaration of Intent towards a Social Contract with a sub-theme "Together we can make Zimbabwe great." The parties agreed to negotiate and conclude the following protocols:

- Income and pricing;
- Economic recovery and development policy;
- Productivity enhancement;
- Urban transport;
- National health insurance scheme;
- Empowerment;
- Environmental management;
- Public confidence and image promotion;
- Health and safety at work
- Skills development
- Scientific and technological research;
- Anti-corruption;
- Labour law reform.

However, the signing of the declaration was delayed due to various political and institutional pressures for instance, the ZCTU Congress was due in February 2000, in the same year there was a constitutional referendum which led to the rejection by the people of the Draft Constitution and contested Parliamentary elections of 2000. The elections introduced a strong opposition after many years of one party state

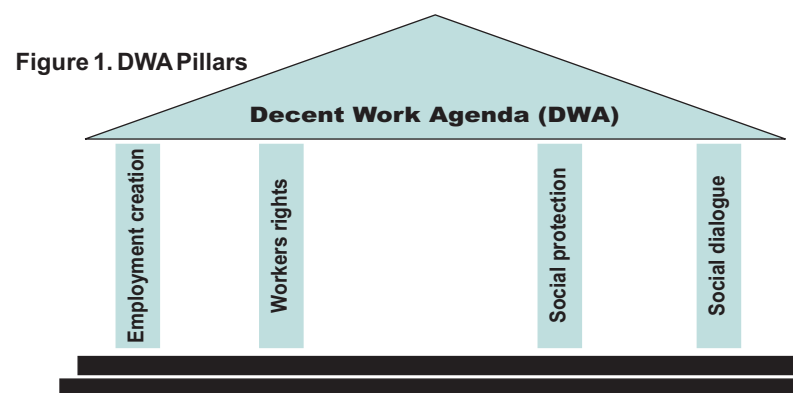
Table 6: Tripartite structures in Zimbabwe

Tripartite Body	Structures	Functions
Wages and Salaries Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It is made up of representatives from government's key ministries, EMCOZ and ZCTU; ✓ The Board is chaired by the Director of Labour Administration in the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Researching on economic, wages and incomes trends, facilitate consultations among social partners and making recommendations to the Minister on income policy.¹
Retrenchment Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It was established in 1990 through a statutory instrument; ✓ It is made up of the representatives from the government, ZCTU and the EMCOZ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analysing and evaluating retrenchment cases so as to ensure social and economic justice and adherence to the law; ✓ Making recommendations for appropriate action to the Minister.
National Social Security Authority (NSSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NSSA was established in 1990 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Administering social protection and social security schemes in Zimbabwe on behalf of workers, employers and the government (see chapter on social security).
Zimbabwe Occupational Health and Safety Council (ZOHSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Steamed out of NSSA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Advising government on health and safety issues.
Tripartite Negotiation Forum (TNF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It was established in 1998 within the framework of ILO Convention on Tripartite Consultation (Convention 144); ✓ It is made up of representatives from government's key ministries, EMCOZ and ZCTU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identifying and negotiating labour, social and economic issues; ✓ Making recommendations to Cabinet on possible solutions to the critical socio-economic challenges facing the country; ✓ Ensuring that agreements are implemented through employment councils and other labour market institutions; and, ✓ Monitoring the implementation of agreed positions ratified by Cabinet.

¹ Munyati-Nyamukapa, 2008

THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE DECENT WORK AGENDA (DWA)

The decent work agenda is built upon four pillars as illustrated in Figure 1



According to ILO, people throughout the world face deficits in each of these areas namely:

- ✓ gaps and exclusions in the form of unemployment and underemployment;
- ✓ poor quality and unproductive jobs;
- ✓ unsafe work and insecure income;
- ✓ rights which are denied;
- ✓ gender inequality;
- ✓ migrant workers who are exploited;
- ✓ lack of representation and voice; and,
- ✓ inadequate protection and solidarity in the face of disease, disability and old age.

Hence, the four pillars are built upon six dimensions which include the following:

- ✓ Opportunity to work;
- ✓ Productive work;
- ✓ Freedom at work;
- ✓ Equality at work;
- ✓ Security at work; and,
- ✓ Dignity at work.

Table 1: Family of Decent Work Securities and Status of ratification in Zimbabwe

Security Type	Description	Supporting ILO Convention	Status of ratification
Labour Market Security	Access to reasonable income-earning activities	Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)	No
Employment Security	Protection against unfair and arbitrary dismissal; Workers obtain redress if they are subject to unfair dismissal.	Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158),	No
Job security	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)
Work Security	Safe and healthy working conditions; Protection against so-called modern scourges of stress, overwork and "presenteeism"	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
		Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155);	Yes (2003)
		Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159);	Yes (1998)
		Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161);	Yes (2003)
		Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171)	No
Skills Reproduction	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)
Income	Assurance of an	Social Security (Minimum Standards)	No

- inspections;
- ii. NECs act as appeal bodies in disciplinary issues. Companies within an industry refers matters to the NEC before reference to the Labour Court;
- iii. NECs carry labour inspections; and,
- iv. Some NECs operate successful pension and medical aid schemes.

6.2.1 Challenges at NEC level

- i. The collective bargaining process faces a number of challenges. For example, registration of a CBA takes forever long. There is also some reported ministerial interference with the bargaining process whilst some employers sometimes ignore directives from the NECs;
- ii. Following the dollarization of the economy as from early 2009, the collective bargaining process has been facing new challenges arising from the inability and unwillingness of most employers to pay decent wages. There has been an increase in deadlocks and arbitrations and some cases of strike action; and,
- iii. Some employers are forever applying for exemptions as they try by all means to escape from awarding the agreed wages.

6.3 Social Dialogue at the tripartite level

Tripartite parties include the government, business and labour. Tripartism is recognised in the ILO conventions (Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) and Recommendation No. 152), particularly with respect to the discussion of the International Labour Standards. Nevertheless, tripartism has been adopted to be of critical importance in dealing with issues of a national nature, hence the importance of the establishment of the necessary institutional infrastructure.

6.4 Tripartite Structures in Zimbabwe

Table 6 indicates the tripartite structures in Zimbabwe.

Functions of Works Council

- i. Engaging in collective bargaining. Since collective bargaining exists at both the NECs and works council. Collective bargaining at works council should be in conformity with the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) at the NECs. Ideally, collective bargaining at works council level should top up standards set at NEC's collective bargaining. During the hyperinflationary environment prevailing in Zimbabwe, in the period 2000-2008 and the hardships emanating from the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, many collective bargaining agreements have been unorthodox. In this regard, collective bargaining no longer focuses on monetary wages but now involves bargaining for basic food commodities, fuel coupons, accommodation and transport;
- ii. Upholding employment standards so as to ensure maximum use of resources (human and financial) and in the process maximise productivity;
- iii. Promoting good relations between the employer and employees;
- iv. Encouraging participation of employees in matters affecting their welfare at the company level such as retrenchments, company restructuring and closure, disciplinary matters and introduction of new technology as stipulated in Section 12 and 25A of the Labour Act.

6.2 Social Dialogue at Sectoral / Industrial level

This is a form of a bipartite social dialogue conducted at NECs. In Zimbabwe, there are two types of employment councils, that is, the statutory employment councils⁷ and voluntary employment councils. However, the majority of the employment councils are on voluntary basis. According to Section 57 of the Labour Act, an employment council is a voluntary sector-specific bargaining and social dialogue chamber comprised of equal representatives of employers drawn from a registered employers' organization or federation of employers on one hand, and representatives of employees drawn from a registered trade union or federation of trade unions. There were about 48 registered employment councils by the end of 2008.

The employment councils receive their income through a statutory levy contributed by both employers and employees which is directly paid to the employment council. Furthermore, some employment councils administer their own medical and pension schemes.

Functions of the NECs

- i. The major function of NECs is to negotiate, bargain and dialogue on labour market and welfare issues of a particular industry with a legal and registered collective bargaining agreement being the outcome (Munyati-Nyamukapa, 2008). The negotiated outcome is registered in the form of a statutory Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) which is legally binding (*ibid*). The CBA is legally binding to all employees falling within the scope of the industry inclusive of the informal sector and small to medium enterprises (SMEs), irrespective of whether the employers or employees belong to the respective trade union or employers' association. Compliance in the informal sector and SMEs is however low and the situation is aggravated by limitations in labour

7. The minister has the discretion, where national interest so demands to order registered employers organization or federation of such employers organisation on one hand a trade union or federation of trade unions to form an employment council and if the parties fail to do so within 3 months, the minister has power to order such equal numbers of persons to represent employers and workers. In a national employment council

Income Security	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)
Voice representation security	Any individual or group must have the effective right to be represented by a body that can bargain on their behalf.	Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87);	Yes (2003)
		Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98);	Yes (1998)
		Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141).	No

Source: Bonnet, Figueiredo and Standing, 2003 [Adopted from International Labour Review, Vol. 142 (2003), No. 2.] and others.



Who are the actors in the Decent Work Agenda?

- ✓ **National Governments** create decent work through economic and industrial policies. This calls for integrated decent work country programmes which are developed by ILO constituents. These programmes should define the priorities and the targets within national development frameworks. However, the forces of globalization create a major challenge due market liberalisation including labour market liberalisation or deregulation. Proponents of deregulating the labour market aim to reduce labour costs (wage and non-wage labour costs) in order to raise labour demand and lower unemployment or labour surplus. All this has limited the ability of national governments to achieve this goal on their own.
- ✓ **Businesses** create jobs from the local to international levels, and those operating across borders can affect international wages and working conditions. Some multinational enterprises have been accused of locating operations in countries where wages are at their lowest and workers' rights at their weakest, but others are finding that providing decent work has had a positive impact on their bottom lines.
- ✓ **Trade Unions** assist employees in advocating for the four elements of decent work so as to improve the working conditions.
- ✓ **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** provide loans or other assistance to national governments, and require loan recipients to implement certain policy measures. Existing programs generally exclude employment targets and have even been known to have a negative impact on job creation and decent work. Good examples are the prescriptions under ESAP which included deregularisation of the labour market, reduction of government expenditure on subsidies and social services and privatization of public enterprises.

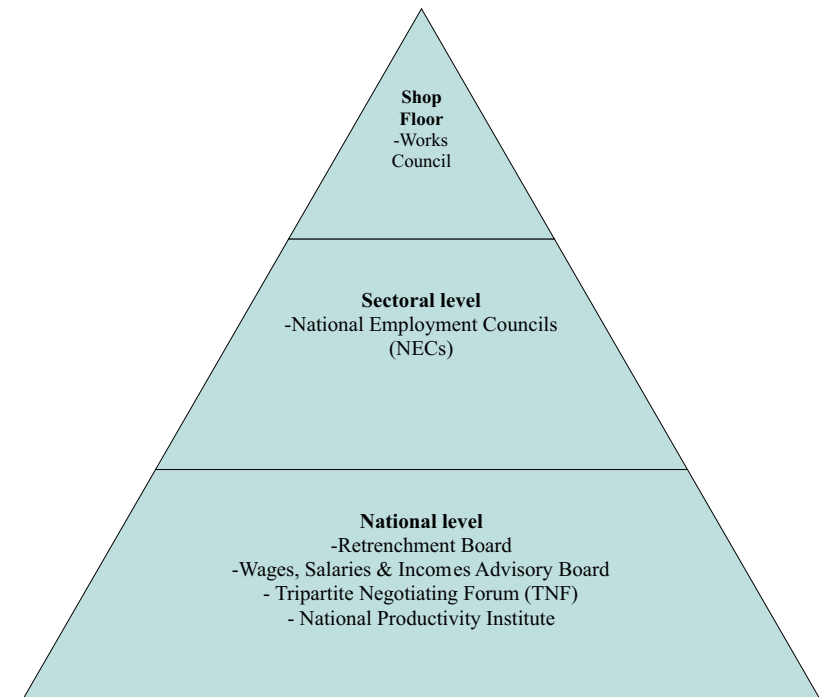
- ✓ **ILO** works in partnership with government, business and labour to foster the decent work agenda. It also provides in-depth expertise and key policy instruments for the design and implementation of decent work country programmes. ILO also assists in capacity building of institutions to carry the programmes forward and for the measurement of progress.
- ✓ **Trade Negotiators** elevate the quality of work globally by including labor standards in trade agreements, while legislators (among others) can support their implementation. Over the past years, liberalization of trade has opened doors to all kinds of abuses such as forced labour, overexploitation and absence of trade union freedoms leaving workers in a worse off situation (PSE, 2008).

In a nutshell, decent work is both a means and an end to human development. It is an international agenda and has to be integrated into economic and social policies of a nation.

6. Forms of Social Dialogue in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, there are two major forms of social dialogue which are the bipartite (Two-Way process) and the tripartite (Three-Way process). Figure 14 shows the levels of social dialogue in Zimbabwe.

Figure 14: Social dialogue levels in Zimbabwe



6.1 Social Dialogue at Shop Floor Level: Works Councils

This is a form of a bipartite social dialogue. Shop floor bipartite consultations were legally recognised as from 1982 through works councils. The works council is an enterprise / shopfloor labour market institution comprised of equal representatives of management and workers drawn from a workers committee (Munyati-Nyamukapa, 2008).

Box 7: International Labour Standards Relevant to Social Dialogue

Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)

It involves the right of workers and employers to form and join organisations of their own choosing, and to do so without prior authorization, the right to strike and right to bargain freely.

Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)

It involves the right to organise and bargain freely.

Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)

The convention, ratified by Zimbabwe calls upon governments to consult with the representatives of workers and employers organizations on matters of the ILO such as ratification of conventions and reporting on progress made on the ratified conventions.

Recommendation 160 (No. 113)

It calls for effective consultation and cooperation at national level between public authorities and employers' and workers' organisations. Such consultation and cooperation should ensure that the competent authorities seek the views, advice and assistance of employers' and workers' organisations in respect of such matters as the preparation and implementation of laws and regulations affecting their interests and the elaboration and implementation of plans of economic and social development.

5. Requirements for Social Dialogue

According to ILO, the following are critical in ensuring effective social dialogue:

- i. Institutions or mechanisms that permit individuals to express their views individually or collectively through unions and associations on issues that affect their daily lives on both professional and personal basis;
- ii. A democratic culture;
- iii. Respect for rules and laws;
- iv. Strong and capable trade unions which are well resourced (financial and human resources);
- v. Willingness and readiness to consult, negotiate in good faith and share information; and,
- vi. Enabling macroeconomic and legislative environment.

Once the above requirements are not met, social dialogue becomes ineffective.

EMPLOYMENT CREATION PILLAR



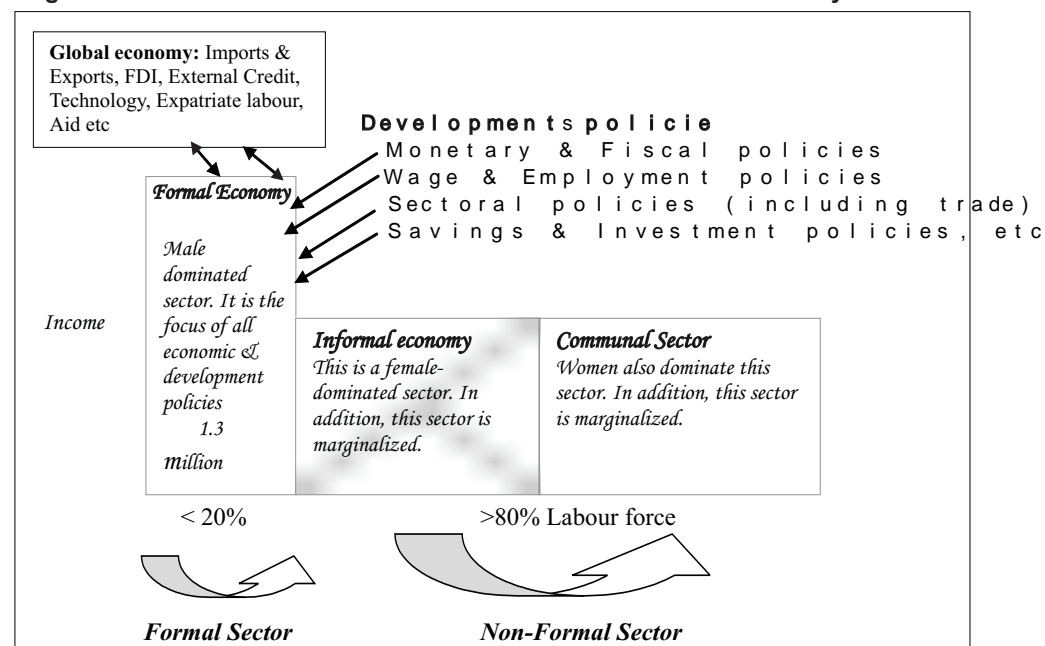
1. Employment Creation and the Decent Work Agenda

According to ILO, the goal of full, productive and freely chosen employment is embedded in Convention 122 of 1964 and was reaffirmed and expanded in the Copenhagen Declaration of 1995. ILO recognises the creation of work and appropriate payment system as a vehicle towards poverty reduction and fostering cohesion. In fact, more work and better jobs are not mutually exclusive but rather complement each other.

2. The Structure of the Zimbabwean Economy in relation to Employment

Figure 2 illustrates the dual and enclave nature of the Zimbabwean economy as well as the nature of employment in the three different sectors of the economy.

Figure 2: An Illustration of the Dual & Enclave Structure of the Economy



Past policies have remained focused on the formal sector, which is male dominated, and have neglected the non-formal sector that accommodate the majority of the population, and especially women. Most of the developmental policies such as fiscal and monetary policies have been directed towards the formal economy only. The effect has been the reinforcement of the inherited dual (separate) and enclave (isolated) structure of the economy inherited by the government at independence. It is therefore important to mainstream the hitherto excluded sectors and groups (women, children, youths, and people living with disabilities) into the mainstream of the economy.

2.1 Formal Sector Employment

In 1998, employment figures reached a peak of 1.4 million employees but however declined to 998,000 by 2004, which represents 13% of the labour force. Figure 3 shows the employment growth rate in the formal sector.

Figure 3 indicates that the growth rate figure was fluctuating between 1985 and 1995 before rising again to 3.9% in 1997. Thereafter, the growth rate declined drastically to levels below the 1980s, just after independence. Overall, the percentage of population employed in the formal economy declined from 14% in 1980 to 10% by 2004 and around 6% in 2007. The decline after 1998 is an indicator of the economic crisis which started in earnest in 1997. The economy has not been able to generate more job opportunities especially for the school-leavers. Furthermore, most of the workers in the formal economy are employed on a casual basis creating insecurity of tenure (CZI Report, 2007).

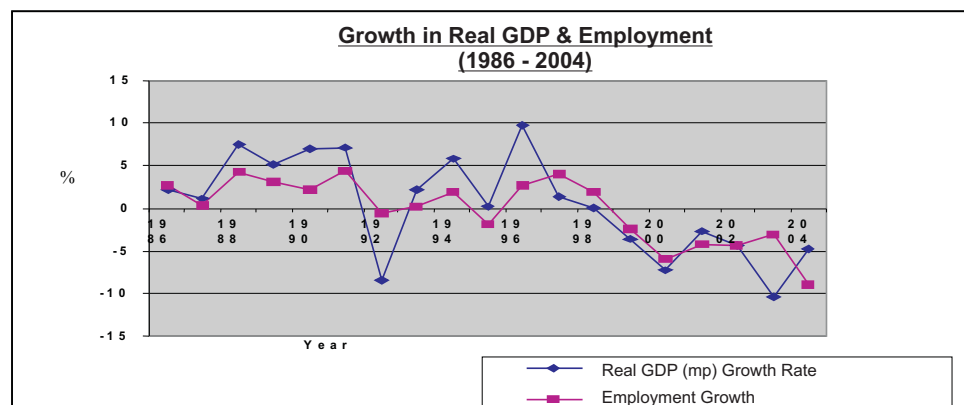
2.2 The Informal Economy

With the shrinking of the formal economy, it is the informal economy that has taken over as the mainstream economy. Using the enterprise-based definition, there were 710,000 people employed in the informal economy compared to 1.2 million in the formal sector (2004 Labour Force Survey). However, using the job-based definition, there were 975,000 people in the formal economy and 4.1 million in the informal economy meaning that 4 out of 5 jobs are in the informal economy (*ibid*). Jobs in this economy are insecure, unrepresented, unregulated and generally suffer from decent work deficits. In essence, what has happened over the years has been the “informalisation of the economy”.

3. Economic Growth and Employment Creation

Orthodox theories stipulate that growth is a precondition for employment creation and an assessment of progress of the pillar on employment creation. Figure 4 indicates the trends in real GDP and employment growth during the period 1986 to 2004.

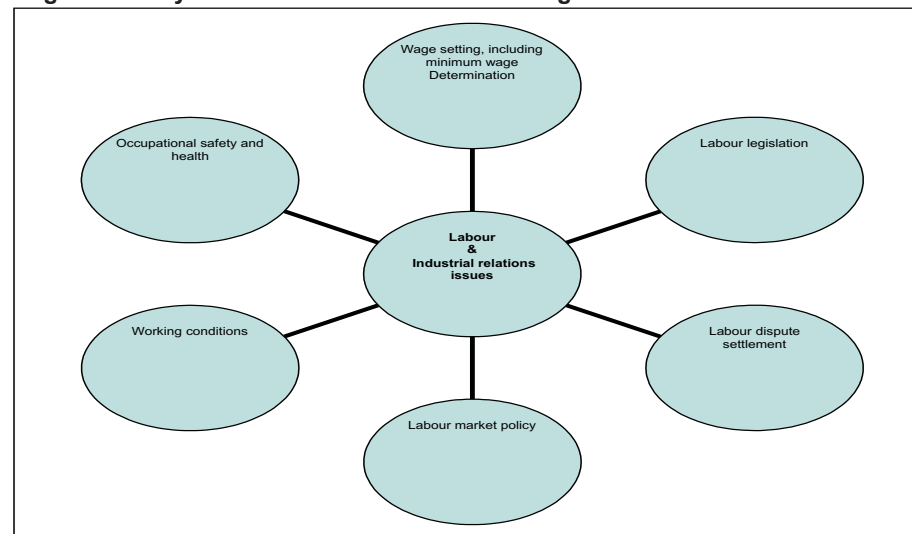
Figure 4: Trends in Growth of Real GDP and Employment



Source: Calculated from CSO Data.

Figure 12 below indicates the labour market issues within the social dialogue framework.

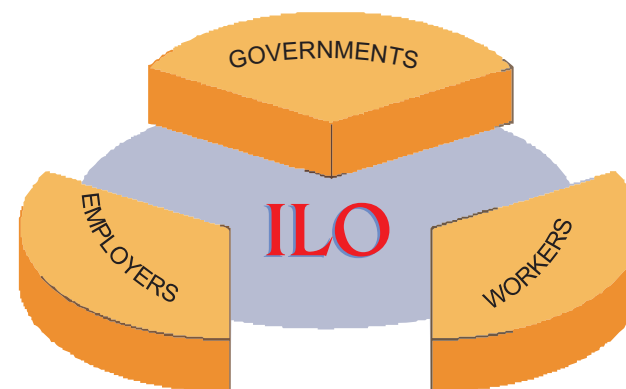
Figure 12: Key labour issues in the social dialogue framework



4. Social Dialogue at International Level

The ILO is the only unique tripartite United Nations (UN) specialized agency that fosters social dialogue through its Constitution. Figure 13 shows the tripartite structure of the ILO.

Figure 13: Tripartism at ILO

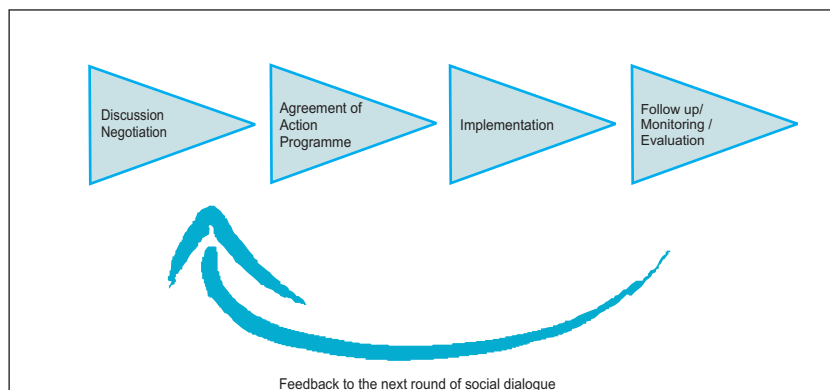


Source: Fashoyin (2001)

The ILO holds annual International Labour Conferences (ILCs) which are attended by representatives of governments, workers and employers organizations. Member states are obliged to sponsor the participation of at least one employer and worker delegate to attend the ILC. ZCTU annually participates in the ILC as part of the Workers' delegates. In addition, ZCTU is part of the workers delegates sitting in the Governing Board.

2. The Cycle of Social Dialogue

Figure 10 illustrates the cycle of social dialogue.



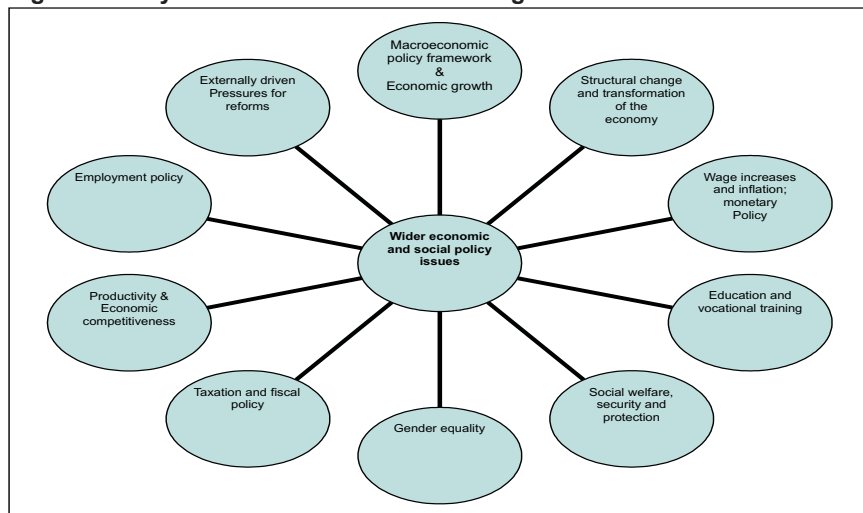
Source: Ishikawa, 2003

As illustrated in Figure 10, the cycle of social dialogue should start from discussions or negotiation (Figure 9). This stage is followed by agreement of the action programme after which follows the implementation process. The next stage is monitoring and evaluation which should feed back into the next round of social dialogue.

3. Issues for Social Dialogue at national level

Issues that can be discussed through social dialogue are vast. The list is non-exhaustive. Figure 11 shows some of the issues.

Figure 11: Key issues within the social dialogue framework



Source: Ishikawa, 2003

Figure 4 shows that employment growth fluctuated annually as real GDP with a marked persistent decline since 1997 and recording negative levels since 1999. It also indicates that employment appears to grow more slowly when the economy is expanding, and to decline more slowly when the economy is shrinking. This is as a result of employment being a quasi-fixed factor of production.

It is important to point out that even during periods of reasonably high growth, 1985-90, when the economy grew at an annual average rate of 4.6%, employment only grew at 2.7%, which was not adequate to absorb new entrants into the labour market (Kanyenze, 2008). This clearly indicates the contradiction of the orthodox theory to the reality. According to ILO, the introduction of ESAP in 1991 resulted in companies shifting towards greater capital intensity as the economy was opened to competing imports.

Overall, the Zimbabwean economy has not been able to generate the much needed employment because of the persisting economic decline since 1999.

4. Employment Elasticities and GDP Growth

The link between real GDP growth and employment is measured by the employment elasticity of output.



Definition: Employment elasticity of output

It is an indicator which measures additional employment created at a given level of economic growth. It is an indicator of the quality of growth.

For example, Table 2 indicates trends in employment elasticity of output.

Table 2: Employment Elasticities and GDP Growth (%), 1991-95, 1995-99 & 1999-2003

Years	1991-95	1995-99	1999-2003
Total	1.84	0.26	-0.21
Youth	4.45	0.42	-0.68
Female	1.67	0.26	-0.13
Male	1.99	0.27	-0.28
Annual GDP Growth	0.1	3.7	-6.3

Source: Adapted from Kapsos (2005), Table A2.9, page 41.

Table 2 shows that the employment elasticities of growth have declined sharply during the periods under review. This means that the additional employment created at a given level of economic growth has fallen over time. This also means that the relationship between growth and employment has regrettably been weakening over time. The situation is even worse for the youths where from a high level of 4.45% between 1991 and 1995 the level dropped to -0.68% between 1999 and 2003. However, this trend could have been influenced by other factors such as the sectoral composition of output, the productive technologies used, downstream and upstream linkages to other activities in the domestic economy, and the size of public employment (Kanyenze, 2008).

5. Elements of Decent Employment

It is important to note that not all employment is decent. Today, it is impossible to look at employment issues without a concern for the quality of the jobs generated (Ghai et al, 2007). In other words, it is not the quantum of employment that matters but the quality of employment, the decency of employment. The following need to be assessed when discussing the employment dimensions of decent work.

5.1 Work of acceptable quality

As indicated above, decent work goes beyond the concept of quantity of work. It also focuses on the quality of work whether in the formal or informal economy. Since the onset of the economic crisis in 1997 both the formal and informal economies have been characterised by jobs are of unacceptable quality as they are precarious in nature, lowly paid and also characterised by occupational risks and low levels of social protection.

5.2 Opportunities

The concept of work opportunity relates to the availability of work for those who are available for and seeking employment. In this regard, work relates to all forms of economic activity, including self-employment, unpaid family work, and wage employment in the informal economy (Ghai et al, 2007). For women, female labour force is regarded low partly because of the definition of “participation”. Women working at home taking care of children and the elderly, preparing food, collecting water and firewood are not considered as members of the labour force. The very high levels of unemployment in Zimbabwe estimated to be above 90% is a clear indication that it is very difficult to find work opportunities, which undermines the pillar of employment creation.

The concept of work opportunities also refer to work that is freely chosen and work that is not forced on individuals. However, since the inception of the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, most people were forced into informal jobs just for the sake of survival. Some of these jobs included illegal exchange of foreign currency at the parallel market and street vending, cross boarder trading and prostitution for some women in order to earn a living.

5.3 Remunerative employment

Everyone works in order to earn money that should be able to meet their basic necessities in life. Hence, remunerative employment is an important concept of decent work which also has a reflection on the quality of work. In this regard, the right to a living wage (one that can enable an average family to meet their basic requirements) is an important attribute of remunerative employment and a necessity for all working people. Such a living wage should be realised without having to work extreme hours. Hence, working overtime in most cases is a sign of a living wage deficit (Ghai et al, 2007).

At independence, the government acknowledged the need to provide a living wage for the working people and thus, it intervened extensively in the labour market. It was at this point that the idea of a Poverty Datum Line (PDL) was introduced. PDL represents the cost of a given standard of living that must be attained if a person is deemed not to be poor.



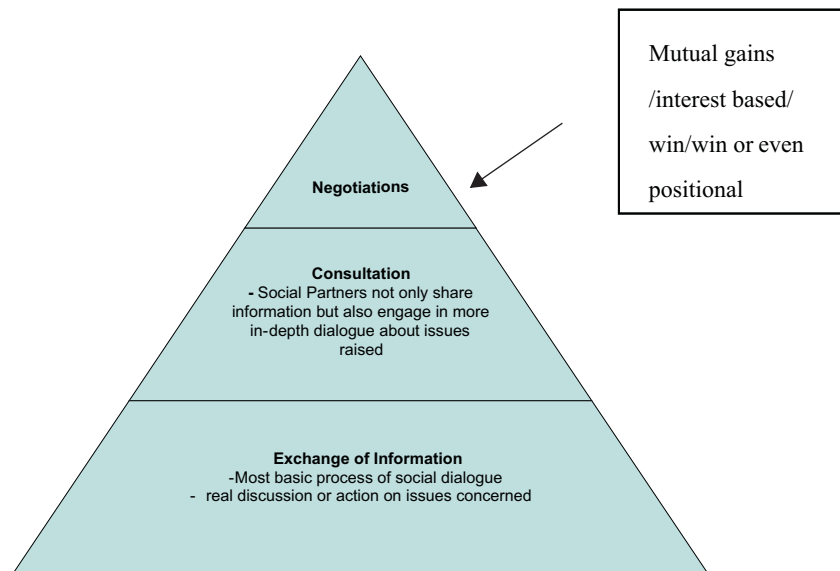
Definition: Social Dialogue

According to ILO, social dialogue is referred to as all types of joint and collaborative relationships which include negotiations, consultations and exchanges of information between representatives of governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy (Ishikawa, 2003).

1. Components of social dialogue

Social dialogue is usually between or among tripartite and bipartite partners, either by formal or informal means, through ad hoc or institutionalized frameworks on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy (*ibid*). From the ILO perspective, social dialogue has three major components which include negotiations, consultation and exchange of information. This is illustrated in Figure 9 below.

Fig 9:Components of social dialogue



Source: Ishikawa, 2003

As illustrated in Figure 9, the first stage in the social dialogue is the exchange of information, followed by consultations and finally negotiations.

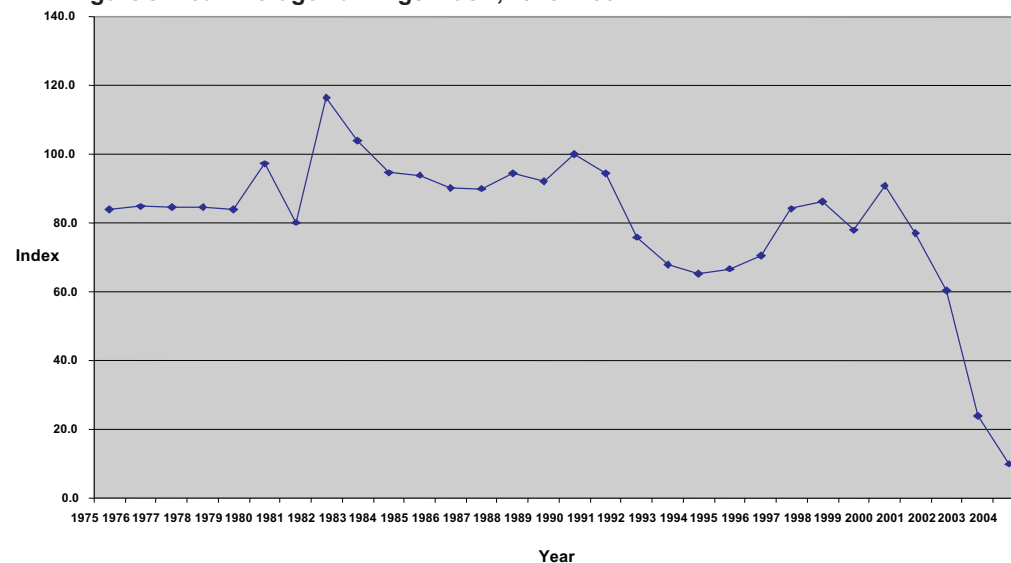
- ✓ Setting priorities according to local resources. Higher priority can be focused on adequate health and insurance against risks of incapacity and death;
- ✓ Reintegrating the marginalised groups in society into the labour market through public works or food for work. This increases incentives for people to work;
- ✓ Mainstreaming gender equality in social protection schemes;
- ✓ Inclusion of more contingencies in NSSA schemes such as short-term benefits like maternity, unemployment and sickness. Presently, NSSA schemes only covers long term contingencies such as retirement, invalidity and survivors' pensions; and,
- ✓ Resource mobilisation. The government cannot mobilise public funding for social protection on its own. Hence, in the short-term there is need to seek external support from donor organisations to finance social protection programmes.

However, as at September 2009, the average minimum wage of US\$155.00 was just about 32% of the PDL of US\$409.00 for the same month. This suggests that the majority of workers are the working poor, living below the poverty line.

5.4 Productive work

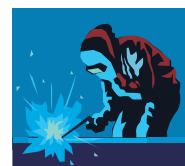
Decent work entails an adequate level of pay in the national context (Ghai et al, 2007). Figure 5 traces real average earnings for the economy during the period 1975 to 2004.

Figure 5: Real Average Earnings Index , 1975 - 2004



A look at the real average earnings indicates that they have dropped to the extent that they are currently below the pre-independence level. This can largely be attributed to the structural adjustment reforms in the 1990s which caused inflation levels to rise to three digit figures and the economic crisis which started in earnest in 1997, which caused wages to collapse as a result of the hyperinflationary environment. Even after the introduction of the multicurrency system in 2009, where workers are paid in foreign currency, wages and salaries have remained far below the PDL. Unfortunately, this means that even those who are employed cannot sustain their livelihoods in a meaningful way and thus, most workers have been reduced to 'the working poor.'

5.5 Conditions of work



Poor conditions of work is evidenced by poor morale among working people, shirking, moonlighting, multiple-jobbing, low productivity, high turn-over and corruption, which undermine human development. Conditions of work also relates to fair treatment in employment, stability and security of work and occupational health and safety. According to ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration (No. 100) it stipulates the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, meaning non-discrimination of workers based on gender.

Stability and job security are also critical components of decent work. However, ESAP, together with the economic crisis, has severely undermined these components. The use of non-standard forms of employment, including casual labour and contract employment by companies has left many workers in insecure employment situations. In 2009, some workers were forced to go on involuntary leave and indefinite leave. Some were forced to work for only two weeks instead of four weeks a month as companies tried to remain afloat.

In addition, every worker is entitled to a safe and healthy environment as these promote the workers' physical as well as emotional well being (Ghai, et al, 2003). According to ILO Convention on Occupational Safety and Health (No.155), all governments must establish a national policy to prevent work-related diseases, injuries and deaths.

6. Way Forward

Thus, what are required are strategies that resolve the enclave legacy. This can be achieved through the following:

- 6.1 Redistributive interventions to formalize the non-formal economy augmenting the backward and forward linkages with the formal sector.
- 6.2 Bias government support and interventions toward increasing productivity and rationalizing production in the non-formal economy. This can begin to generate demand for industrial final, intermediate and capital goods, and so that it can also contribute towards providing final and intermediate goods to the industrial sector and in the process create more employment (Kanyenze, 2008).
- 6.3 Introducing Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs). ALMPs are government programmes that intervene in fighting against unemployment and poverty. They are alternatively called employment-intensive policies and are part of the 10 core elements of the Global Employment Agenda and the ILO Decent Work Agenda. The opposite of ALMPs are Passive Labour Market policies (PLMPs). Table 3 shows the difference between ALMPs and PLMPs.

Table 3: Passive versus Active Labour Market Policies

PLMPs	ALMPs
Provides replacement income during periods of joblessness or job search	Concerned with active support for labour market integration through demand or supply-side measures
Involve social transfers unconditional upon joining a training or work programme	Explicitly contingent upon participation in programmes that enhance labour market (re) integration
Programmes involve unemployment insurance, unemployment assistance and early retirement	Programmes involve labour market training, job creation in the form of public and community work, enterprise creation and employment subsidies. Target group include the youths and older people, women and disabled. Overall, they contribute towards improvement in a person's employability and hence increase re-employment opportunities.

Source: Active labour market policies around the world: Copying with the consequences of globalisation, Second Edition, 2008

Box 7: Causes of low social protection in the informal economy in Zimbabwe

i. Priority to immediate needs

Given the economic hardships that most people are facing in Zimbabwe, informal economy workers tend to give more attention to immediate needs such as food, housing, education and health care as opposed to saving for retirement. Psychologically, informal workers are usually preoccupied with meeting these immediate needs for survival that they tend to ignore saving for a distant eventuality or calamity hence increasing their chances of falling into indebtedness.

ii. Lower contributory capacity

In most cases, workers in the formal economy tend to share with their employers some of the contributions towards social security as alluded to earlier. However, for the informal workers, it is difficult for them to pay the full amount due to the irregularities associated with the nature of work. Some of the employers in the informal economy may not want to assume responsible for ensuring social protection especially if it is associated with other financial or legal implications.

Source: ILO, 2003

12. Way Forward and Conclusion

A well-designed social protection system can play a vital role in providing security to the working population in Zimbabwe. For efficient and effective results to be obtained social protection schemes and programmes in Zimbabwe should address the following:

- ✓ Enhancing the capacity of the population to contribute to social protection. This means enhancing the opportunities for more people to participate in gainful employment and activities that will improve their capabilities to contribute towards social security programmes, invest in income security programmes, thereby reducing their dependency on coping mechanisms. In so doing, many people will be able contribute towards their own social protection, leaving the government to take care of a smaller proportion of people;
- ✓ Using social dialogue to deliver and strengthen social protection. Social protection policies can be deliberated at the TNF level through social dialogue. Social dialogue will ensure that the needs of all people, especially the vulnerable groups which include women, children, youths and disabled most of whom are now found in the informal economy are taken on board. In this regard, it is critical to strengthen the capacity of the social partners (Government, business and labour) to play their roles fully;
- ✓ Restructuring existing social security system in terms of breath and coverage. Currently, NSSA schemes only cover workers in the formal economy yet the majority of workers are found in the informal economy. Wage employees in the formal economy in Zimbabwe form a small proportion of the total working population. Hence, such a system of social security will fail to meet the urgent needs of the bulk of the vulnerable groups found in the informal economy and sectors such as agriculture where there are massive social protection deficits;

In response to the HIV / AIDS pandemic, the government introduced the AIDS levy in 1999 as a social safety net. Workers in formal employment pay 3% of their taxable income. The levy is administered by the National AIDS Council to fund HIV and AIDS programmes nationwide.

9. Other Social Protection Schemes

9.1 War Victims Compensation

The War Victims Compensation is provided for under the War Victims Compensation Act that came into effect in 1980. The fund is administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Services and financed by the state. Compensation is for injuries or the death of persons, which was caused by the war of liberation and which occurred before 1st March 1980. In the case of deaths, compensation is bestowed to the dependents of persons who died as a result of the war. This scheme is based upon the realisation that war injuries impaired claimants' capacity to earn income. Those who were dependent upon the persons who died as a result of the war had their source of support cut off hence the need for the State to intervene in providing income maintenance (Chikova, 2008).

9.2 The Health Assistance Programme

Under this programme, the government pays health fees for very poor households through the Hospital Referral System. According to UNDP (2008), the total number of people assisted declined by about 62% from 25,000 in 2007 to 9,625 in 2008.

10. Social protection and the informal economy

The informal economy suffers heavily from social protection deficits. It also forms the critical aspect of social exclusion (ILO, 2002). Social protection is also critical for the informal economy since there is a high level of job and income insecurity, exposure to serious occupational safety and health hazards associated with the nature of work and the lack of rights. However, according to ILO, there is a growing recognition to broaden the concept of social security set out in the ILO Conventions to include the broader concept of social protection include issues such as non-statutory schemes, mutual benefit societies and grassroots and community schemes for those in the informal economy.

11. Gender Dimensions of social protection in the informal economy

Gender equality is a cornerstone of social protection since women form a majority in the informal economy. Their lack of social protection can be translated to social exclusion. The situation is worse for workers in the agriculture sector who are mostly women as they are exposed to harmful pesticides and heavy work during crop cultivation and harvesting.

According to Bertcherman, (1999), ALMPs increases employment and incomes through the following ways:

- ✓ The potential social benefits in the form of the inclusion and participation that comes from productive employment;
- ✓ Act as a stabilization programme as governments directly provide temporary jobs through public works;
- ✓ Training, mobility incentives, and other employment services can reduce structural imbalances by improving the match between workers and jobs;
- ✓ By decreasing the number of vacancies at a given level of unemployment, ALMPs can also increase employment by reducing both upward wage pressures and labor bottlenecks;
- ✓ Employment and income effects can also be transmitted through attendant increases in skills and productivity. Even where net employment effects may not be significant for some active labor market programs, they can increase the attachment of the long-term unemployed to the labor force and decrease their dependence on unemployment benefits; and,
- ✓ By assisting the most disadvantaged workers, ALMPs can break down potentially negative consequences associated with "outsider" phenomena.

7. Conclusion

As highlighted above, it is important to note that economic growth is necessary but not sufficient to ensure equity, social progress and eventually eradication of poverty. What is critical is the extent to which economic growth translates to employment creation for the poor and the marginalised in the society which include the youths, women, people living with disabilities and people living with HIV and AIDS, most of whom are found in the low skill sectors such as agriculture, small and medium enterprises. Hence, inclusive labour intensive employment policies or ALMPs are required to ensure that economic growth translates into high labour demand. Such employment policies should focus on active labour market strategies highlighted above. This needs to be complemented by continuous skills training so as to match workers skills requirements of continuous global technological developments.

1. Introduction

Workers rights are defined in the various ILO Conventions which seek to define and guarantee labour rights and improve conditions of the working people. This is being done through what are known as international labour standards expressed in the form of Conventions, Recommendations and Codes of Practice. So far, ILO has adopted more than 180 Conventions and 190 Recommendations which covers all facets of the world of work. Of particular importance are three core sets of rights stipulated in the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work. These include:

- i. Freedom of Association and right to Collective Bargaining;
- ii. Elimination of forced and compulsory labour and child labour; and,
- iii. Elimination of discrimination at the workplace – equal pay for both men and women for equal work.

Each ILO member state should uphold the above three regardless of whether they have ratified the relevant conventions as they are regarded as central to achieving decent work. ILO members must submit reports even if they have not ratified the conventions.

2. Workers Rights and the Labour Relations Act in Zimbabwe

2.1 Freedom of Association and right to Collective bargaining

Freedom of Association is necessary for workers and employers to defend their interests, organise joint activities and to participate in negotiations and discussions affecting their interests. The ILO places emphasis on freedom of association, and the two major conventions to promote the principle are Conventions 87 and 98. The ILO also places emphasis on freedom to organise, freedom to enter into employment relationships, collective bargaining and tripartism. It is therefore undisputed that freedom of association is a basic human right, very pivotal to industrial relations and is of utmost importance to trade unions.

Freedom of Association
 “The right of workers and employers to form and join organisations of their choice is an integral part of a free and open society. It is a basic civil liberty that serves as a building block for social and economic progress. Linked to this is the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. Voice and representation are an important part of decent work.”
 ILO Reports

In Zimbabwe, the Labour Act allows for free collective bargaining through Section 74. Collective bargaining takes place principally at National Employment Council (NEC) level, and each agreement applies throughout the respective industries, usually with a provision for exemption should any employer claim inability to honour the agreed obligations.

2.2 Elimination of forced and compulsory labour and child labour

2.2.1 Forced Labour

Forced labour is prohibited in the Labour Act in conformity with the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29) which Zimbabwe ratified.

Table 9 indicates that the number of active contributors increased on an annual average of 15% between 2000 and 2003 before declining to 843,492 in 2006, a figure lower than in 2001. The pension payment figures in United States dollars have been fluctuating over time due to the multiple official exchange rates during the given period.

7. Social Protection and Health Care

7.1 The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and Medical Aid

Currently, Zimbabwe does not have a National Health Insurance. Instead, there exists private Medical Aid Societies which cater for the urban formal sector workers on a voluntary basis. It was estimated that private Medical Aid Societies only cover less than 10% of the population (Chikova, 2008). In 2001, it was found that 11% of households⁶ had some form of private health insurance. However, there were proposals to introduce the **National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS)**. Delays in the implementation of the NHIS have been as a result of much criticism from labour and the employers organisations. The main reason being that, NSSA is failing to administer the already existing programmes so that they can fully benefit the contributors. Therefore, adding another scheme in such a circumstance may not be fruitful.

7.2 Medical Treatment Orders (MTOs)

An MTO refers to a fee waiver or voucher issued to indigent persons to facilitate access to immediate and tertiary health care services such as a provincial or national hospital or other specialist facilities (Chikova, 2008). However, MTOs do not cover treatment at private health institutions. Implementation of MTOs started in 1980 through the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. MTOs cover the following:

- ✓ Persons over sixty years of age;
- ✓ Persons who are handicapped;
- ✓ Persons who suffer continuous ill health;
- ✓ Dependants of a person who is destitute or incapable to look after him / herself; and,
- ✓ Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs). Community members alert the authorities to situations of OVCs requiring medical attention, with extended family members applying for an MTO on behalf of the OVC.

However, the Ministry stopped providing block grants to clinics in 2000 (ibid). In addition, the shortage of drugs at referral hospitals has resulted in the collapse of the provision of the service.

8. HIV and AIDS and social security

HIV and AIDS has also posed a serious challenge on social security systems in Zimbabwe and has further threatened occupational safety and health. The pandemic also results in increase in labour costs due to low productivity, absenteeism, shortage of labour, fewer working hours and health costs to mention but a few. Therefore, the inclusion of HIV responses in the Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) assists in ensuring an integrated approach where even on a tripartite platform it becomes possible to mobilize governments, employers and workers to act together against HIV/AIDS.

6. 2001 National Health Accounts Study

are paid through the legal guardian. The scheme also pays a funeral grant to the contributor if the contributor had contributed for at least one year.

5.1.2 The Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Insurance Fund (WCIF)

According to ILO, accidents and ill-health at work impact not only on the lives of individual workers, their families and their potential for future work, but also on the productivity and profitability of their enterprises and ultimately the welfare of the society in which they live. In this case, poor conditions of work such as excessive hours of work and low pay are damaging to both workers and enterprises and costly to the whole of society.

WCIF is the full responsibility of the employer. This fund caters for work-related injuries and hence the main objective of the scheme is to remove from the employer the burden of looking after an injured worker, both in terms of medical expenses and wages during periods of temporary lay-off. Contribution premiums are based on industry risk assessed rates levied on the total wage bill up to a ceiling on earnings (Chikova, 2008). However, workers in government and private domestic employment are not covered by the fund.

The WCIF scheme pays out both short-term and long-term benefits. The short-term benefits include periodical payments, which provide income where it has stopped due to work-related accidents or injuries. The scheme also pays for all medical fees that include transport, drugs, hospitalisation, and prosthesis. Currently, there is no ceiling on medical expenses. The long-term benefits include employees' pensions, dependants' pensions and rehabilitation services. Other benefits under WCIF include the funeral grant, retirement grant, survivor's grant and invalidity grant. Statistics indicate that there has been a rise in the number of claims for the short-term benefits mainly due to the HIV / AIDS pandemic.

6. The Occupational Pension Schemes

This is an employer sponsored scheme where the arrangements are voluntary, privately managed and governed through the Pension and Provident Funds Act [Chapter 24:09] and supporting regulations both of which are administered under the Ministry Of Finance (ZAPF, 2008). Under this pension scheme, employees contribute towards their occupation pensions with employers usually matching their employee's contribution (Chikova, 2008). Members contribute between 5% and 10% of their basic earnings whilst employers contribute between 5% and 25% of members' basic earnings. Table 5 indicates the occupational scheme contributions between 2000 and 2006.

Table 5: Active Contributors and Pension Payments (2000-2006)

Year	No. of active contributors	Pension Payment (US\$)
2000	626,896	85,073.00
2001	881,456	143,745.50
2002	910,229	258,872.7
2003	898,932	27,349.90
2004	846,669	42,934.5
2005	853,869	9,359.40
2006	843,492	157,490.0

Source: Chikova (2008)

2.2.2 Child Labour

Zimbabwe ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) on the 6th of June 2000. On the 11th of November 2000 it also ratified the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). This is also supported by Section II of the Labour Act which states that an employer should not employ an apprentice that is under the age of thirteen, while any employment contract entered into between an employer with an employee between ages of 13 and 15 should have the authority from the apprentice's legal guardian, or the contract will be considered null and void.

The Labour Act in Section 11 also stipulates "... no employer shall cause any person under the age of 18 years to perform any work which is likely to jeopardise that person's health, safety and morals which work shall include but not limited to work involving such activities as may be prescribed..."

2.3 Elimination of discrimination at the workplace

The Core Conventions of the ILO stipulates that all workers must be treated equally, receiving equal remuneration for the same work done (Convention No. 100 of 1951). This was ratified by Zimbabwe in 1980, and through the Labour Act that stipulates that there shall be no discrimination based on sex in employment.

3. Workers' Rights in practice in Zimbabwe

Over the years, trade union rights have continued to be trampled and undermined through the repressive draconian laws, vitriolic propaganda, restrictive media laws and political victimisation (ZCTU Information Department, 2008). This is evidenced by arbitrary arrests, seizure of materials, threats and harassment of union organisations and their leaders.

3.1 Repressive / Draconian legislation

Draconian legislation is being used to undermine trade unionism. The Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act of 1998 was promulgated to criminalize strike action, which was expanded to include stay-aways. Employers were given powers to summarily dismiss anyone involved in a strike action or stay-aways. Until recently, the Law and Order Maintenance Act was used to suppress strike activity. In 2002, it was replaced by the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), Chapter 11:17 which incorporates the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) of 1998. The State always requests ZCTU to ask for permission to hold meetings despite the fact that there is no such provision in POSA. In fact, POSA only asks trade unions to 'notify' the police of its meeting and yet the police sometimes insist on sitting in ZCTU General Council Congress and meetings. Although ZCTU went to court and won its case barring the police from attending its meetings the police simply ignore the court ruling.²

Furthermore, the schedule to section 24(5) and section 41(1) of POSA state the requirement for the State to sanction a public gathering **does not** apply to public gatherings "held by a registered trade union for bonafide trade union purposes for conducting business in accordance with the Labour Act Cap. 28:01." This is ignored as well. The implications of such draconian measures such as POSA are that police approval is required for trade union meetings to be held.

2. Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions versus Officer Commanding Police Harare District and Commissioner of Police case number H.H 56 of 2002 at p11, the Court ordered the State not to interfere in trade union meetings. This order continues to be defied by the State.

However, ZCTU successfully challenged POSA through the High Court and got a favourable ruling in April 2002 that the ZCTU activities should not be subjected to POSA. As a result, the State, after realizing that POSA is getting them nowhere, promulgated the Criminal Codification Act which continues to interfere with trade union work, while violation of human and trade union rights continue unabated (ICFTU, 2005).

3.2 Vitriolic propaganda and blackout from the public media

In addition to POSA, is the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) Chapter 10.27 which has also curtailed trade union work. AIPPA culminated in the closure of the independent newspapers, The Daily News and the Daily News on Sunday. These papers gave extensive coverage on human and trade union rights in Zimbabwe. The government proceeded to have a stronghold on the public papers such as The Herald and the Sunday Mail, the only daily papers allowed to operate. These newspapers had been producing negative stories on the labour movement as they toed the government line (ZCTU, 2008).

The black out in the public media means workers' right to information is greatly compromised. Workers have to rely on information from their union structures or resort to other means of communicating with the workers. Publications like The Worker and radio stations which include Studio 7, VOA and SW Radio³ became the only means of communicating to the workers. Flyers, pamphlets and the internet also became handy.

3.3 Political victimization and intimidation

Prior to the establishment of the Government of National Unity, ZCTU had been under siege from the state and its allies as it was accused of political interest despite the fact that ZCTU has a right to protect the political interest of its members. ZCTU has also been accused of aligning itself to the Movement of Democratic Change (MDC) and labelled puppets of the West and every meeting it has called has been labelled an MDC meeting.⁴

3.4 Disruption of meetings and wanton arrests

Several trade union leaders have been arrested and tortured in prison for trying to hold demonstration and even hold a meeting. The most brutal attack on trade union's happened on 13 September 2006, when thousands of workers around the country took part in the ZCTU demonstration which was mainly for four reasons; poverty afflicting 80% of Zimbabweans, wages that were linked to the PDL, Government's commitment to fight inflation and to benefit from the HIV and AIDS fund through free distribution of anti-retroviral drugs and the halt in the implementation of the compulsory National Health Insurance Scheme that was to be administered by the National Social Security Authority (NSSA).

The result of the action shocked the world. A number of trade unions were battered and tortured in the streets and police cells. The injuries ranged from fractured radius, ulnar and phalanx, fingers and ankles (ZCTU Information Department, 2008).

3.5 Interference by the Government

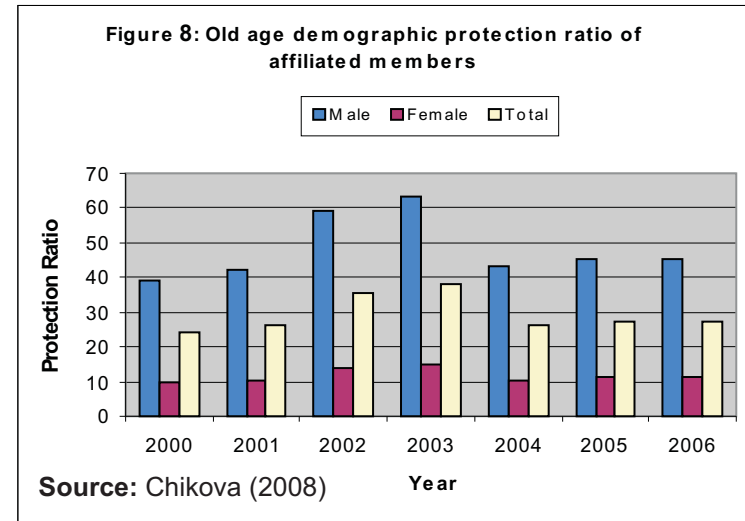
There is continuous interference in collective bargaining by the Minister through the Labour Act. Collective Bargaining Agreements voluntarily entered between employers and employee representatives still require Ministerial approval for it to be effective. Sections 79 and 81 of the Labour Act empower the Minister to do so. A clear example has occurred in the agricultural sector where the Minister declined to register a Collective Bargaining Agreement citing the reason that newly resettled farmers including the Minister cannot afford the agreed wages (ZCTU Information Department, 2008).

3. The Worker is a ZCTU publication established in 1992, while Studio 7, SW Radio and VOA are external radio stations.
4. ZCTU Information Department, 2008



Definition: Old age demographic protection ratio

It is a measurement which indicates to what extent the current working-age population is protected in old age.



i. Old Age Pensions

The normal retirement age for one to qualify for old age pension is 65 years. However, workers in arduous employment can elect to retire at 55 years with at least 10 years of contributions. There is also allowance for late retirement at 65 years. A retirement grant can also be paid if the insured does not meet the qualifying conditions for the pension. Figure 8 is an illustration of the last three columns from Table 4.

It is calculated as the number of current affiliates to a social security institution providing benefits in old age as a proportion of the working-age population. Figure 8 indicates that the demographic protection ratio improved for both males and females between 2000 and 2003 but however deteriorated thereafter with a higher protection ratio for males than females.

ii. Disability Pensions

Disability pension is paid to workers who are younger than age 60 years and have been assessed as disabled and permanently incapable of work by a medical doctor. They should have contributed for at least one year and the disability must not be work related.

iii. Survivor's benefits

Survivor benefit is paid if the deceased was receiving or met the qualifying conditions for the old age or disability pension at the time of death. Eligible survivors (in order of priority) are the widow or widower, children younger than age 8 (age 25 if a student, no limit if permanently disabled), parents, and other dependents. If there is no widow or widower, dependent children

Table 4: Pension and Other Benefits Scheme's membership, expenditure and revenue, 2000-2006

Year	Active Members			% of females	Benefits Outlays USD millions	Contribution Revenue USD millions	Old Age demographic protection ratio		
	Male	Female	Total				Male	Female	Total
2000	590,767	167,567	758,334	22.1	3.22	27.93	38.9	9.7	24.0
2001	635,905	180,370	816,275	22.1	5.16	36.96	42.1	10.5	26.0
2002	906,629	257,158	1,163,787	22.1	8.12	69.26	59.1	13.9	35.4
2003	958,624	271,906	1,230,530	22.1	1.37	16.78	63.4	14.9	38.0
2004	1,006,577	285,508	1,292,085	22.1	6.85	30.04	43.3	10.4	26.1
2005	1,044,444	296,249	1,340,693	22.1	1.67	5.93	45.1	11.1	27.4
2006	966,331	274,092	1,240,423	19.9	NA	NA	45.2	11.3	27.5

Source: NSSA Annual Reports – various, <http://www.ilo.org/>

Note: Irregular fluctuations in the pension figure is caused by the official exchange rate which was artificially fixed by the government

Table 4 indicates that the number of active members has been on the increase for both males and females. However, of importance is the fact that although the figure for females has also been on the increase nominally, the percentage figure for females out of the total members has been stagnant at 22.1 between 2000 and 2005 before declining to 19.9 in 2006.

POBS pays old-age pensions, disability pension, survivor's benefits, and funeral assistance. Unfortunately, it excludes domestic workers and those in the informal economy.

Box 3: Trade Union Rights in Law: Government's interference and limitations of the labour legislation

The Labour Relations Amendment Act (LRAA) which came into effect on 7 March 2003 still makes it very difficult for trade unions to exercise their rights as it allows some government's interventions in the following ways:

Exclusion of public servants from the right to strike: members of the public servants, as well as other government employees (with the exception of the armed forces) are allowed to form an d join unions. However, the new Labour Amendment bill enacted on 30 December 2005 deprives government employees of the right to strike.

Barriers to the right to strike: Although the LRAA recognizes the right to strike, there exist many procedural hurdles. For example, more than 50% of the employees must vote for a strike, followed by a 30 day conciliation period and possible referral to binding arbitration and then a 14 day advance notice period. The sum effect of all these delaying tactics is that it is practically impossible to organise a legal strike.

Prohibition of strikes in essential services: Strikes are prohibited in essential services. The definition of "essential" goes far beyond anything envisaged by the ILO, and includes railway engineers, electricians, transport and communications' employees, veterinary services and pharmacies. The Minister can decide what constitutes an essential service, and so declare that any service or industry is essential and thus impose a strike ban. Those taking part in an illegal strike face harsh prison sentences of up to five years.

Collective bargaining agreements are subject to Government's Approval: Although the LRAA recognises the right to strike, collective bargaining is not the exclusive prerogative of trade unions, as workers' committees may also bargain at company level and the law also encourages the creation of these committees in enterprises where less than 50% of workers are unionised. In this regards, they exist in parallel with trade unions, therefore creating the potential for employers to undermine the unions by pitting the workers' committees against them. Their role is to negotiate on shop floor grievances, while trade unions are supposed to focus on industry level issues, notably wages, and negotia te through National Employment Councils - where they exist. The workers' committees meet with representatives of management to discuss workplace issues in a Works Council.

If 50% or more of employees are union members, there is no parallel body, as the workers' committee becomes the trade union committee.

Barriers to strike action: The Labour Amendment Act also does not include provisions to prohibit employers from hiring replacement workers in the event of a strike. Hence, workers fear loss of employment if they engage in a strike. The Act also includes a section that enables employers to sue workers for liability during unlawful strikes, with penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment or both.

Source: ICFTU Annual Survey 2006 of violations of trade union rights: Period under review: January to December 2005

4. Conclusion

In the world of work, the sets of rights need to be realised in totality. These include all rights mentioned above which include the right to freedom of association, collective bargaining, freely chosen employment, and elimination of forced and compulsory labour and child labour. A situational Analysis indicates that workers rights in Zimbabwe are violated to a great extent.



Definition: Social protection

It refers to the arrangements a society makes to meet the basic subsistence needs and contingencies of its members (Ghai, et al, 2006).

Box 3: International Instruments Relevant to Social Protection

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 22: “Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security.”

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.”

1. ILO Conventions on Social Protection

According to the ILO Convention on Social Security No. 102 of 1952, recognition is given to the need for social protection in the following nine forms:

- Health care benefits;
- Sickness benefits;
- Old age benefits, with the inclusion of pensions;
- Unemployment benefits;
- Occupational injury benefits;
- Family benefits;
- Maternity benefits;
- Invalidity benefits; and,
- Survivor's benefits.

In the world of work, every worker requires a minimum level of social and income security. According to the ILO (2000), social protection mechanisms must ensure that people are able to work productively and safely and to face up to job loss, disability, sickness, maternity, and old age. In fact, a considerable difference between formal employment and informal, casual and irregular employment lies precisely in the dimension of security (Majid, 2001).

before the student sits for the examinations (ZEDS⁵ document and Chikova, 2008). As alluded to above, these challenges not only puts limits on many ways of enhancing labour productivity but also leads to insecurities at a individual and societal level.

5. Social Protection Schemes for Workers in Zimbabwe

5.1 The National Social Security Authority (NSSA)

National social security systems are designed to meet the needs of wage employees. However, given that in Zimbabwe 4 out of 5 jobs are in the informal economy, this means that the majority of the national social security system cannot meet the urgent needs of the bulk of the workers.

The NSSA scheme was introduced after the government realised the lack of an adequate and comprehensive social insurance for the Zimbabwean workforce. NSSA is a statutory corporate body, constituted and established in terms of the NSSA Act of 1989, Chapter 17: 04 and supporting regulations administered under the Ministry Of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare or any other Ministry the President may assign the administration of this Act.

Prior to August 2008, both the employer and the employee contributed 3% of the covered earnings respectively amounting to a contribution rate of 6% up to a ceiling on earnings that is adjusted from time to time (Chikova, 2008). Thereafter, changes were implemented on the National Scheme through Statutory Instrument 122 of 2008 and Statutory Instrument 123 of 2008. To this effect, the cap on Insurable Earnings was removed in August 2008. As of 1 January 2009, the contribution rate for both members and employers was increased from 3% to 4% of members' insurable earnings.

NSSA administers two schemes namely; the Pension and Other Benefits Scheme (POBS), also known as the National Pension Scheme (NPS), and The Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Insurance Fund (WCIF). WCIF caters for retirement, invalidity, death of a member and injury at the work.

5.1.1 Pension and Other Benefits Scheme (POBS)

This is a long-term public mandatory social security scheme based on a 50-50 contribution from both the employer and the employee. It caters for every employee between the ages of 16 and 65 years in permanent, seasonal, contract and temporary employment. This means that both the employer and the employee contribute 3% of the covered earnings respectively (translating into a contribution rate of 6%) up to a ceiling on earnings that is adjusted from time to time.

Table 4 shows the Pension and Other Benefits Scheme's membership, expenditure and revenue between 2000 and 2006.

5. ZEDS is the Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy

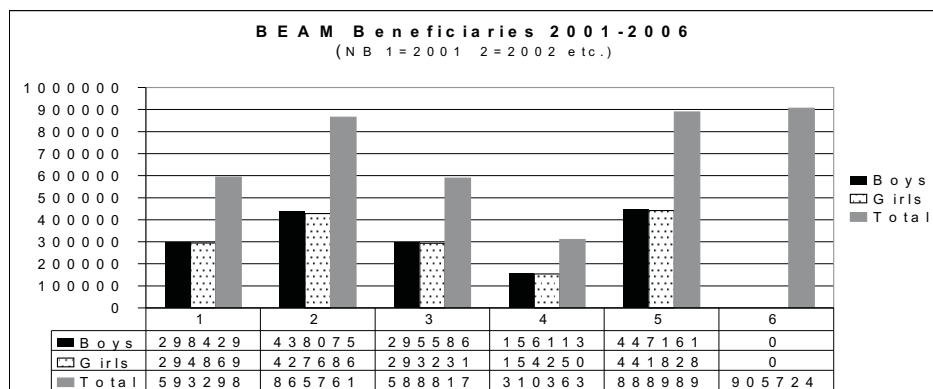
4. Social Protection Schemes for the Vulnerable Groups in Zimbabwe

4.1 Social Safety Nets (SSN)

Social safety nets are programmes which are of a copying nature. According to the World Bank (2002) social safety nets are designed to prevent the poor and vulnerable communities and individuals from falling into unacceptable living standards and from incurring irreversible welfare losses. Components of SSN include access to health, educational, food, water, clothing and other services and facilities. The target group includes children in general, children in especially difficult circumstances, the aged, poor living with disabilities, the chronically ill, the unemployed and children with special needs (ibid).

In Zimbabwe, one such programme to reduce the number of vulnerable children dropping out and or not attending school or children who have never been to school as a result of economic hardships and hence reducing the level of illiteracy is the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). It was introduced in 2001 by the government under the Enhanced Social Protection Project (ESPP). BEAM is a community driven programme in terms of beneficiary selection and programme monitoring. It targets children between the ages of 6 and 19. BEAM provides tuition fees, levies and exam fees. Figure 7 shows the number of beneficiaries under BEAM between 2001 and 2006.

Figure 7: BEAM Beneficiaries, 2001 - 2006



Source: Chikova, 2008

Figure 7 indicates that the number of beneficiaries declined by 32% in 2003 and further by 47% in 2004. Thereafter, the figure rose significantly by 186% in 2005 and again marginally by 2% in 2006. The figure increased by 22% to reach 787,449 in 2008. Analysis by gender indicates that the allocation for girls averaged 49.7% over the given period. However, the set target is to reach 25% of total enrolment each year. In 2007, the number of children assisted under BEAM constitutes around 19.6% of the 2006 enrolment, while in 2007 they constituted 23.8%.

BEAM has faced a number of challenges which includes the hyperinflationary environment which eroded the value of funds and continual reviews of school fees, human and technological constraints in the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare leading to late disbursement of funds and poor targeting and sometimes loss of continuity of support

Box 4: Why social protection?

- i. **Poverty Reduction:** Social protection aims at assisting people to cope with important risks in life hence reducing vulnerability to poverty. It also provides safeguards against falling into the poverty trap;
- ii. **Employment and productivity:** Social protection enhances and maintains the productivity of workers and creates possibilities for new economic activities with great employment potential and high employment rates especially for female workers;
- iii. **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):** Social protection contributes towards achieving MDGs which include MDGs 1, 5, 6 and 7;
- iv. **A tool in the management of change:** Workers who loose their jobs and income without social protection are naturally reluctant to take the sort of risks involved in job creation and more productive employment; and,
- v. **Investment in the quality of workers lives:** Occupational safety and health schemes embedded in national social security schemes are an investment in the quality of workers lives since a healthy workforce can warrant higher productivity.

Source: Ghai et al, 2003

2. Overview of Social Protection in Zimbabwe

2.1 Social Protection (1980-1990)

At independence, Zimbabwe's social protection was centred on traditional social safety nets under the Department of Social Services (UNDP, 2008). These traditional measures were in the form of drought relief programmes (free food hand-outs, grain loan, and food for work), maintenance of indigent children, relief of distress (maintenance allowances, pauper burial), supplementary public assistance and care of the elderly. Other traditional measures such as immunization of under fives, supplementary feeding and water and sanitation were implemented by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare. The main target beneficiaries included indigent persons, destitute, orphans, the physical and mentally handicapped, delinquent children, poor households and the elderly.

2.2 Social Protection (1991-1995)

During ESAP period, the government introduced the Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) Programme mainly to cater for some adjustments costs on the ordinary people especially the poor arising from cuts in government expenditures, removal of subsidies, retrenchments and introduction of cost-recovery programmes in most public institutions which included education and health. Hence, SDA was put in place to protect poor households and vulnerable groups (women and children) from these negative impacts of ESAP. The SDA was implemented through the Social Development Fund (SDF). The programme had the following components:

- i. An employment and training programme, including support for informal small-scale enterprises and public works;
- ii. Targeting of food subsidies;
- iii. Provision for exemption from cost recovery measures for vulnerable groups; and,
- iv. Monitoring and evaluation of development (UNDP, 2008).

However, the programme suffered as a result lack of adequate funds from the national budget, late appointment of the coordinator, delays in the disbursement of funds, weak structures resulting in abuse by non-deserving people, inaccessibility of the funds by the deserving recipients, loss in the value of the funds due to the high inflation rates and persistent depreciation of the Zimbabwean dollar especially between 1997 and 1999, and a high level of centralisation as it was based in Harare.

2.3 Social Protection (1995 to date)

After the failure of the SDF, the government implemented the Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (PAAP) in 1995. PAAP was designed to alleviate extreme poverty in the country. Its components included:

- i. Community development through social mobilisation, community infrastructure, and capacity building;
- ii. Micro enterprise and informal sector development through credit and technical assistance;
- iii. Poverty monitoring and strategic planning, and
- iv. Social safety nets to deal with problems in health, education and food security of poor families.

2.3.1 Challenges faced in implementation of PAAP

PAAP failed to mitigate the high levels of poverty due to several reasons among which were failure by the macro-economic policies to deliver on the social front, the uncoordinated, incoherent and sectoralisation of social protection, lack of mutually supportive and clear policy objectives, inaccurate targeting of needy communities and individuals due to the absence of a clearly defined selection criteria and limited political will and commitment as verbal policy statements and policy objectives were not followed by effective and tangible support, especially in the annual budgets.

As a result, at the end of the 1990s, the World Bank assisted the government to develop the Enhanced Social Protection Programme (ESPP).

Box 5: Components of ESPP

- i. Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), which aims to reduce the number of people failing to attend school because of hardships, and providing school fees waivers to reduce the rate of drop outs;
- ii. Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC), which aims to identify and assist children in difficult circumstances through community support and implementation of component;
- iii. Public Works Component (PWC), which seeks to put in place labour - intensive public works that offer employment to the poor;
- iv. Emergence Drugs and Medical Supplies component; and,
- v. Social Protection Strategy (SPS), which sets studies, analyses, consultations and technical assistance aimed at improving strategic planning, monitoring and implementing programmes in the Ministry.

2.3.2 Challenges faced in implementation of ESPP

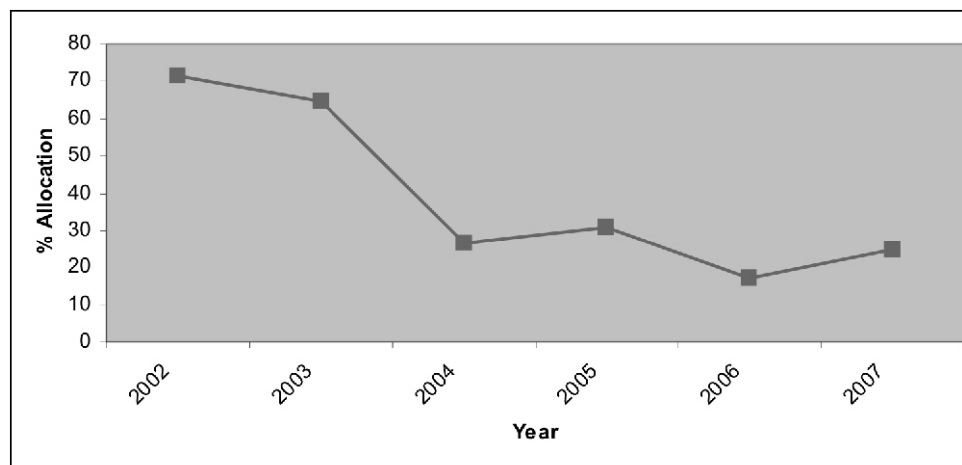
According to UNDP, external assistance for ESPP was made conditional on government paying the arrears on its debt with the World Bank. Failure to do so resulted in the programme being suspended in 2000. The hostile relationship between the then government and the international community has therefore seriously undermined the programme.

3. Indicators of Social Protection

3.1 Public Expenditure on Social Protection

The share of government expenditure on social protection reflects the extent of social security in a country and is also an indication of both the coverage and the level of benefits. Figure 6 indicates the proportion of budget allocation towards social protection under the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare between 2002 and 2007.

Figure 6: Proportion of budget allocation towards social protection under the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, 2002 and 2007



Source: Calculations from Blue Book Revised Budget Estimates Figures, 2003-2008

Figure 6 shows that the allocation towards social protection has been dwindling over the period under review. The Department of Social Protection got only 17.2 % and 24.6 % of the Ministry's vote in 2006 and 2007 respectively, from a high level of 71.4 % in 2002. Whilst the economic crisis has been continuing and increasing vulnerabilities to social protection for the vulnerable groups in society, the allocations to the Ministry have not improved at all. Overall, the small and dwindling allocations suggest that the social aspects of policy are not adequately catered for, and are not considered priority areas. In fact, this has exacerbated social exclusion and entrenched poverty.

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