



BENIN



TRADE UNION TAKE ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION

#HLPF2018



Meeting of the president with women market workers by Présidence de la République du Bénin (flickr.com – creative commons)

ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The SDGs form the basis of the ongoing redrafting of the National Development Plan of the government of Benin. The redrafting process follows the analysis and prioritisation of the SDGs to select relevant goals and indicators and align them with the Government Programme of Action (PAG). In addition, Community Development Plans have been aligned with the 2030 Agenda objectives. The 2016-2021 PAG is implemented through a series of reforms, flagship and priority projects and focuses on three pillars: (i) democracy, the rule of law and good governance, (ii) structural transformation of the economy and (iii) improvement of living conditions.

The implementation of the SDGs is overseen by a state minister charged with the oversight of the National Development Plan. All ministries are involved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and have designated SDG focal points.

A Directorate General for the Coordination and Monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (DGCS-ODD) has been created within the Ministry of Planning and Development. The DGCS-ODD presides over the steering committee coordinating the consultative framework with civil society. Consultations are centred around four themes: social issues, the economy, the environment and governance. Trade unions remark that the working methods of the consultative framework rely too heavily on unreliable or imprecise statistics and fail to recognise the reality on the ground.

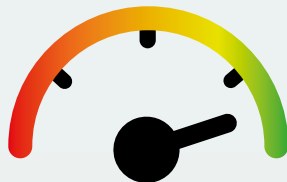
No additional resources have been allocated to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; the majority of resources allocated to SDG implementation come from donors such as FAO, UNICEF, UNDP or GIZ.

TRANSPARENCY



Regular access to limited information

CONSULTATION



There is a structured consultation/ multi-stakeholder platform

SOCIAL DIALOGUE



There are individual contributions from social partners to the national government





IS THE (DECENT) WORK BEING DONE?

The government of Benin, although working on all the SDGs prioritised by trade unions, has limited its action to only some of the targets within these goals. Trade unions have concerns with regards to the fulfilment of several other targets however.

With regards to **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)**, 2015 data indicates that 49.6% of the population of Benin is living below the international poverty line; trade unions stress that the number of people living in poverty in the country has been rising over the last ten years. In addition, 29.39% of workers lived under the poverty threshold in 2016. Indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** show that the majority of the population, primarily those in the informal economy, is excluded from social protection; only 9% of the population is covered by health insurance and unemployment assistance is not provided.

There is a need for improvement to achieve progress on **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as according to trade union sources, women spend on average three times more time on unpaid domestic work than men. Furthermore, 95% of working women are employed in the informal economy. **Target 5.5 (ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life)** is far from being reached, as between 2005-2015 only 15.8% of women and girls had accessed at least some secondary education. Trade unions cite the primary obstacles to the continued education of girls as forced marriage, early pregnancy and sexual harassment.

With regards to **target 8.3 (promote policies that support productive activities, decent job creation)**, in 2012, 90.4% of employment outside of agriculture was informal. As indicated above, the informal economy is heavily

feminised. In 2010, 87.7% of jobs were considered precarious due to the lack of respect of workers' rights and failure to provide the minimum wage. On **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, while the official unemployment rates were low, at 2.7% in 2011, underemployment concerned 37.3% workers in 2010. Young people, and especially young women, are more affected by unemployment, with overall levels at 14.3% - 18.1% for women and 11% for men between 15 and 24 years of age. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 20% for youth, with young women once again affected more severely (25.7%, compared to 15% for young men). There is progress to be made on reaching **target 8.7 (end child labour)**, as 2011 data indicate that 15.2% of children between the ages of 5 and 14 are engaged in labour, primarily in rural settings. While child labour is banned in Benin, its practice has not yet been fully eradicated. Concerns remain with regard to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments)**, as several violations of trade union rights have been registered in 2015, including violations of fundamental freedoms, the right to freedom of association, collective bargaining rights and the right to strike. Fewer than 100 labour inspectors are in service as of 2018, with trade unions alerting that at least 150 more of these posts should be created.

Significant wealth inequalities remain to be tackled in Benin, as demonstrated by indicators on **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**: in 2015, the top 10% of income earners accounted for 37.6% of overall GDP, while the bottom 20% of income earners accounted for only 3.2% of GDP.

WHERE TO NEXT?

TRADE UNION RECIPE TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Trade unions from Benin call on their government to ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda by:

- Strengthening social dialogue around the implementation of the National Development Plan;
- Capacity building and training of staff involved in SDG implementation and its monitoring;
- Better coordination between ministerial SDG focal points;
- Operationalising the SDG priorities through the adoption of a rights-based approach to the design and implementation of public policies.



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