



REPUBLIC OF CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE)

TRADE UNION TAKE ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION



#HLPF2018



ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

The government of the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) is planning to integrate the SDGs into its National Programme for Development for 2018-2022, which is currently still being drafted. The government has selected to focus on 14 of the 17 SDGs (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16), including all those prioritised by trade unions.

The Ministry of Planning, Statistics and Regional Integration oversees the integration of the 2030 Agenda into national programming and ensures the implementation of the SDGs. It is also in charge of managing the relationship with the UNDP, as a key partner. As a framework for the evaluation of the SDG

indicators has not yet been developed, public policies or additional resources to implement them have not yet been announced.

While the government organised a workshop to select priority SDGs in consultation with civil society and private sector representatives, trade unions were not invited to participate. Furthermore, trade union representatives have so far only had limited access to information on the SDG process from the government, despite submitting formal input. While a National Committee for Social Dialogue is in place, the SDGs or their implication on labour relations have not yet been discussed in that forum.

TRANSPARENCY



Irregular access to limited information

CONSULTATION



There is informal or ad hoc consultation

SOCIAL DIALOGUE



No involvement of social partners by the national government on an SDG national plan definition and implementation





IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

Numerous challenges remain to reaching the SDG targets in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville).

Of the Congolese population, 36.9% was living below the international poverty line in 2011 and 16.7% of workers were living under the national poverty line in 2016, indicating that **target 1.1 (eradicate extreme poverty for all people)** was far off being reached. This was despite the country's considerable economic growth in the past years, which has failed to translate into significant poverty reduction. In addition, indicators on **target 1.3 (implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures)** show that only 2.8% of the GDP was spent on social protection systems in 2011, covering just 22.1% of the population.

While no official data is available on indicators relating to **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, trade unions alert that unpaid domestic work remains heavily feminised. With regards to **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)**, challenges remain with regards to women's access to education, with only 45% of Congolese women and girls having accessed some form of secondary education by 2015.

Indicators on **target 8.3 (support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs)** is worrying, with 77% of the economy considered to be informal; 2005 estimates further suggested that 75.1% of jobs in that year were precarious. Worryingly, young people with university or technical education have the highest levels of unemployment; this is particularly true for educated women, whose unemployment rate stood at 10.8% (compared to 9.4% for men) in urban areas. This demonstrates an obstacle to reaching **target 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people)** and suggests the need to invest in the quality of

human capital. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 26.5% of youth (15-24) in 2015. Furthermore, indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate the worst forms of child labour)** show that 20% of children have been engaged in child labour in 2011 – due most likely to the high numbers of children displaced from the DRC and CAR as well as those made orphans due to conflict or the HIV/AIDS epidemic. **Target 8.8 (protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers)** is challenged by the dropping unionisation rates which have resulted from numerous violations of trade union rights, especially in the private sector.

Progress remains to be made for Congo (Brazzaville) to reach **target 10.4 (adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality)**, as in 2011, the share of the top 10% of income earners accounted for 37.9% of overall GDP, while the bottom 20% of income earners account for 4.2% of GDP.

Congo (Brazzaville) is committed to meeting **target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning)** in view of its particular vulnerability to the consequences of climate change, despite the fact that it itself emits only 1.1 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person per year. The country's vulnerability is aggravated by multiple biophysical constraints that hinder its ability to adapt to climatic changes and slow down its development process. Regrettably, no dialogue with social partners, especially trade unions, has yet been set up to discuss the effects of climate change on employment.

The country is on the right path to meeting the indicators set by **target 16.3 (promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all)** as illustrated by the fact that each administrative department in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) has a labour rights tribunal.

WHERE TO NEXT?

TRADE UNION RECIPE TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

COSYLAC calls on the government of Congo (Brazzaville) to:

- Invest in capacity building of the labour force;
- Strengthen the quality of education to effectively meet the needs of the fastest growing employment sectors;
- Ensure active trade union participation in government and other civil society activities on the SDGs.



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