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Emthonjeni Women's Forum

The Promise, the Gap and the Shifting Realities:

Tracking the Implementation of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 from a Gender Equality Perspective in Zimbabwe



RESEARCH REPORT

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

"Casualisation" refers to the increasing reliance on temporary, short-term, irregular or insecure forms of employment that deny workers the stability, benefits and protections associated with permanent employment.

"Decent work" refers to productive and fairly remunerated employment undertaken in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The concept is founded on four strategic objectives, namely employment creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue.

"Gender equality" refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and treatment of women and men, girls and boys. It implies that the interests, needs and priorities of different groups are recognized and that no person is disadvantaged because of their sex or gender.

"Gender-based violence" refers to harmful acts directed at individuals based on their sex or gender. In the world of work, GBV includes physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence and can occur in workplaces, work-related settings or during work-related interactions.

"Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023" is legislation enacted by the Government of Zimbabwe to amend the Labour Act [Chapter 28:01] and strengthen protection of workers' rights, improve labour administration and promote fair labour practices and gender equality.

"Labour broking" refers to an employment arrangement in which workers are recruited and supplied to a client enterprise through an intermediary or third party rather than being directly employed by the entity for which they perform work.

"Maternity protection" refers to legal and workplace measures intended to safeguard women's health, employment security and income during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. It includes maternity leave, protection against dismissal and protection against discrimination arising from pregnancy and motherhood.

"Precarity" refers to a condition characterized by insecure and unstable employment, uncertainty of income, limited access to social protection and vulnerability to exploitation and weakened bargaining power.

"Sexual harassment" refers to unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, physical or psychological, that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment may also involve abuse of authority and coercion linked to employment opportunities, promotions, contract renewals or other workplace benefits.

"Social and economic inequalities" refer to disparities in access to opportunities, resources, income, power and social protection that result in unequal outcomes and life chances among individuals and groups.

"Violence and harassment in the world of work" refers to a range of unacceptable behaviours, practices or threats, whether occurring once or repeatedly, that aim at, result in or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm. This includes gender-based violence and sexual harassment and extends beyond the physical workplace to work-related travel, communications and social interactions.

"Women's economic security" refers to women's ability to access decent work, fair remuneration, social protection and economic opportunities that enable them to enjoy sustainable livelihoods, financial independence and protection from economic vulnerability.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 represents one of the most significant labour law reforms undertaken in Zimbabwe since the adoption of the Constitution in 2013. The Act sought to strengthen labour rights, align domestic legislation with constitutional and international labour standards and advance gender equality through provisions relating to maternity protection, equal remuneration, unfair labour practices and violence and harassment in the world of work. The reforms emerged against a backdrop of economic constraints, growing informality, precarious employment and persistent gender inequalities that continue to shape workers' experiences in the labour market.

This study was commissioned by Emthonjeni Women's Forum (EWF) to assess the implementation of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 from a gender equality perspective. The study examined levels of awareness and understanding of the Act, workplace implementation and compliance, experiences of workplace violence and harassment, implications for women's economic security and maternity protection, institutional effectiveness and emerging implementation challenges.

The findings demonstrate that the Labour Amendment Act has established an important foundation for labour rights and gender equality and has contributed to greater visibility of issues such as workplace violence, sexual harassment and maternity protection. However, the study finds that awareness of the legislation has not translated to understanding of its provisions, limiting the ability of many workers to effectively exercise their rights. Labour rights education remains fragmented and uneven, with workers relying heavily on social media, trade unions and civil society organizations rather than systematic workplace or government-led awareness programmes.

The study further finds that while many workplaces have adopted policies on sexual harassment, discrimination and workplace misconduct, implementation remains weak and worker confidence in reporting and accountability mechanisms remains low. Gender based and sexual harassment and exploitation continue to persist in many workplaces, sustained by unequal power relations, patriarchal workplace cultures, economic insecurity and fear of retaliation. Women workers remain particularly vulnerable due to occupational segregation, unequal care responsibilities, discriminatory workplace practices and concentration in precarious forms of employment.

Employment insecurity emerged as one of the most significant barriers to the realization of labour rights. The widespread use of fixed-term contracts, casualisation and other insecure employment arrangements discourages workers from asserting their rights or reporting violations. At the same time, weak labour inspections, limited institutional capacity, low visibility of labour administration institutions and limited confidence in enforcement mechanisms continue to constrain implementation of the Act. These challenges are particularly pronounced among women workers and workers in informal and vulnerable forms of employment.

The study concludes that the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 has provided an important legal framework for advancing labour rights and gender justice in Zimbabwe. However, its transformative potential is constrained by a gap between rights contained in law and workers' ability to realize those rights in practice. Legal reform alone cannot deliver gender justice where workplace cultures remain patriarchal, power relations remain unequal and labour market insecurity limits workers' agency. Sustainable progress will therefore depend on strengthening labour rights education, improving workplace compliance, enhancing labour administration and enforcement systems, promoting gender-responsive workplaces and fostering stronger collaboration among government, employers, trade unions and civil society organizations.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. ABOUT THE STUDY

The enactment of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 marked one of the most significant reforms to Zimbabwe's labour legislation since the adoption of the Constitution of Zimbabwe in 2013. The amendments sought to align the Labour Act [Chapter 28:01] with constitutional provisions and international labour standards while strengthening protection against unfair labour practices, enhancing employment security and promoting gender equality in the world of work.

Among the most notable reforms introduced by the legislation were strengthened safeguards against unfair dismissal, expanded maternity protection, improved dispute resolution mechanisms and the introduction of explicit provisions prohibiting violence and harassment in the world of work, including sexual harassment. The Act further reinforced the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value and introduced criminal sanctions for certain labour rights violations, reflecting a shift towards a more rights-based and gender-responsive labour framework.

These reforms were enacted against the backdrop of growing concerns about workplace inequality, gender-based violence, insecure employment and limited access to justice for workers. Although the legislation represented an important milestone in labour reform, the extent to which its provisions have been implemented and translated into meaningful improvements in workers' lives remains an important area of inquiry. Experience from many countries demonstrates that progressive laws do not automatically produce transformative outcomes. Effective implementation depends on awareness, institutional capacity, enforcement mechanisms and the willingness of employers and other stakeholders to comply with legal obligations.

Particularly important from a gender equality perspective are the provisions relating to violence and harassment in the world of work, maternity protection and equal treatment. Women continue to experience multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage in the labour market arising from occupational segregation, unequal care responsibilities, discriminatory workplace cultures and exposure to violence and harassment. Understanding whether the Labour Amendment Act has contributed to addressing these structural inequalities is therefore critical.

This study presents comprehensive and representative data to assess the implementation of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 from a gender equality perspective. The study sought to examine the extent to which the rights and protections introduced by the Act are being realized in practice and to identify achievements, implementation gaps and emerging challenges.

More specifically, the study sought to:

- Assess levels of awareness and understanding of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 among workers and key stakeholders.
- Examine the extent to which workplaces have implemented provisions relating to gender equality, workplace violence and harassment and workers' rights.
- Explore workers' experiences of discrimination, violence and sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Assess the implications of the Act for women's economic security and maternity protection.
- Examine the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms responsible for implementation and enforcement.
- Identify emerging issues and implementation challenges affecting realization of the rights contained in the Act.
- Generate evidence-based recommendations aimed at strengthening implementation and advancing gender equality in the world of work.

The study contributes to ongoing efforts to promote decent work, strengthen labour governance and advance women's rights and economic empowerment. The findings are intended to support government institutions, employers, workers' organizations, civil society actors and development partners in strengthening implementation and ensuring that the benefits envisaged under the Labour Amendment Act are realized for all workers and particularly for women.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods to generate comprehensive evidence on the implementation of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 from a gender equality perspective. A rights-based and gender-responsive approach guided the study, with particular attention paid to workplace violence and harassment, women's economic security, maternity protection and access to justice.

Desk Review and Legal Analysis: The study undertook a review of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023, related legislation, constitutional provisions, international labour standards, policy documents and existing literature on labour rights, gender equality and violence and harassment in the world of work. Particular attention was paid to the provisions relating to maternity protection, equal remuneration and workplace violence and harassment.

Survey: A structured questionnaire was administered to workers across Zimbabwe to generate quantitative evidence on awareness of the Labour Amendment Act, workplace practices, experiences of workplace misconduct and perceptions regarding implementation. A total of **243 workers** participated in the survey, with respondents drawn from all ten provinces and representing the public sector, private sector, local authorities, parastatals and civil society organizations.

Focus Group Discussions: Five (5) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving **56** participants were conducted with civil society workers, trade unionists, private sector and government workers (nurses and teachers). The discussions explored participants' awareness and understanding of the Labour Amendment Act, experiences of workplace discrimination and violence, perceptions regarding implementation and emerging challenges affecting women workers. The FGDs provided rich qualitative insights into workers' lived experiences and enabled deeper exploration of issues identified through the survey.

Key Informant Interviews: The study conducted **16** Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with representatives of civil society organizations, trade unions and government representatives involved in labour rights promotion and implementation. The interviews explored awareness raising initiatives, workplace compliance, enforcement mechanisms and institutional challenges affecting implementation of the Act. The interviews also provided perspectives on emerging issues and gaps in the implementation process.

1.3. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study adopted a national perspective and included respondents from all ten provinces. However, primary field engagements were concentrated in Harare and Bulawayo, with some consultations conducted virtually to ensure wider geographical representation. While the findings provide important insights into implementation of the Labour Amendment Act, they should be interpreted within the context of the study's scope and available resources.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The implementation of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 takes place within a labour market characterised by persistent economic challenges, widespread informality and entrenched gender inequalities. While the Act strengthens legal protections for workers, women's experiences of employment continue to be shaped by broader structural factors that influence access to economic opportunities, decent work and workplace justice. Labour rights therefore cannot be understood in isolation from wider questions of gender equality, economic inclusion and social justice.

Feminist political economy scholars argue that labour markets are not gender-neutral but reflect broader social and economic power relations that shape access to employment, income and decision-making [i]. Even where legislation guarantees equal rights, women often continue to experience unequal labour market outcomes because of discriminatory social norms, occupational segregation, unequal access to productive resources and the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work.[ii]

These dynamics remain evident in Zimbabwe. Women continue to be overrepresented in low-paying, insecure and informal employment while remaining underrepresented in leadership and decision-making positions [iii]. The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (2023–2027) similarly identifies women's economic empowerment and access to decent work as critical priorities for achieving substantive gender equality. The African Development Bank (2022) also highlights unequal access to productive assets, finance and employment opportunities as continuing barriers to women's economic participation.

Zimbabwe's labour market has been profoundly shaped by decades of economic restructuring, deindustrialisation and recurring economic crises. Since the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme in the early 1990s, formal employment has declined while informal and precarious forms of work have expanded[iv]. These developments have fundamentally altered the nature of work, leaving growing numbers of workers outside stable forms of employment and social protection.

Standing (2011) describes this emerging group as the "precariat" i.e workers characterised by insecure employment, unstable incomes, limited social protection and weak bargaining power. In Zimbabwe, women constitute a significant proportion of this precariat. They are disproportionately concentrated in informal, temporary and low-paid employment while simultaneously carrying a disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic responsibilities[v]. These intersecting vulnerabilities reduce women's economic security, limit their ability to negotiate fair working conditions and make them less likely to report labour rights violations for fear of losing their livelihoods. Consequently, strengthening labour protections for women requires not only progressive legislation but also addressing the structural conditions that reproduce precarious employment and economic insecurity.

Access to labour rights depends not only on legislation but also on workers' awareness of their rights and their ability to exercise them. Labour rights education has traditionally been supported through trade unions, workers' committees, labour officers and civil society organisations. However, the decline of formal employment and trade union membership has weakened these traditional channels of legal literacy[vi]. As a result, many workers, particularly women, young workers and those in non-standard forms of employment, remain unaware of important labour protections and available mechanisms for redress[vii].

Violence and harassment in the world of work have increasingly been recognised as both labour rights and gender justice concerns. The adoption of ILO Convention No. 190 marked an important shift in recognising every worker's right to a workplace free from violence and harassment while acknowledging that women are disproportionately affected [viii]. Workplace harassment is frequently reinforced by unequal workplace power relations and insecure employment, where fear of losing employment discourages workers from reporting abuse or

seeking justice[ix]. The Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 therefore emerged within a broader struggle to ensure safer and more dignified workplaces for women workers with organisations like Emthonjeni Women's Forum advocating stronger legal protections, documenting the limitations of previous legal provisions and advocating for reforms that ultimately informed amendments to the Labour Act[x].

The effectiveness of labour legislation ultimately depends on the institutions responsible for implementation and enforcement. Labour inspectorates, labour officers, the courts and dispute resolution mechanisms play a critical role in translating legal rights into practical workplace protections. However, concerns have been raised regarding delays in dispute resolution, limited labour inspections, institutional capacity constraints and weak enforcement mechanisms, all of which undermine workers' confidence in labour administration systems[xi]. These challenges are particularly significant for women, who often face additional barriers in accessing justice and navigating complaint mechanisms.

Against this backdrop, the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 introduced important reforms aimed at strengthening labour protection in Zimbabwe. The Act provides enhanced provisions on unfair dismissal, wage protection, maternity protection, equal remuneration, dispute resolution and protection against violence and harassment in the workplace. These reforms are broadly aligned with international labour standards, including the ILO Decent Work Agenda, the Social Justice Declaration and ILO Convention No. 190[xii].

The reforms have been widely welcomed by workers, employers and civil society organisations as an important step towards strengthening labour rights and promoting gender equality. However, stakeholders have consistently emphasised that legislative reform alone is insufficient. The success of the Labour Amendment Act will depend on effective implementation, stronger labour administration systems, increased labour rights awareness among workers and employers, and sustained enforcement of the new legal protections[xiii].

It is within this broader political, economic and institutional context that this study examines the implementation of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023. The research assesses workers' awareness of the new provisions, experiences of implementation, confidence in labour institutions and the extent to which the reforms are contributing to improved labour rights, gender equality and decent work for women in Zimbabwe.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS

3.1. AWARENESS OF THE LABOUR AMENDMENT ACT HAS INCREASED, BUT UNDERSTANDING REMAINS LIMITED:

Awareness of the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 is relatively widespread, with 62.1% of survey respondents indicating that they had heard about the Act. However, awareness has not translated into understanding. Only 19.3% rated their knowledge of the Act as good or very good, while 42.4% described their understanding as poor or very poor. Awareness was strongest on maternity protection and sexual harassment, but considerably lower on provisions relating to equal remuneration, unfair labour practices and dispute resolution.

Labour rights education also remains fragmented. Only 44.4% of respondents reported receiving labour rights education or training in their workplaces, while 30.0% said no such training existed and 24.7% were unsure. Workers relied primarily on social media, employers, colleagues and trade unions for information, with government institutions playing a relatively limited role. These findings suggest that implementation of the Act has not been accompanied by a coordinated national labour rights education programme.

3.2. PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN WORKPLACE POLICIES, BUT IMPLEMENTATION REMAINS UNEVEN:

Many workplaces have taken important steps to align their policies with the Labour Amendment Act. 74.5% of respondents reported that their organisations had workplace violence policies, 72.8% had sexual harassment policies, 65.4% had anti-discrimination policies and 64.2% reported the existence of formal grievance procedures.

However, implementation remains uneven. Only 44.9% reported that their organisations explicitly recognised gender-based violence as a workplace issue, while just 37.0% were aware of whistleblower protections. Interviews and focus groups further revealed that many workplace Codes of Conduct have not yet been fully aligned with the Act, particularly in smaller enterprises and less organised sectors. Participants also reported low confidence in reporting mechanisms because of fears of victimisation, lengthy complaint procedures and weak oversight.

3.3. EMPLOYMENT INSECURITY CONTINUES TO UNDERMINE LABOUR RIGHTS:

The study found that employment insecurity remains one of the greatest barriers to the effective realization of labour rights. Although the Labour Amendment Act has strengthened legal protections, many workers remain reluctant to exercise their rights because they fear dismissal, contract non-renewal or other forms of retaliation.

Survey findings illustrate the extent of this challenge. While 49.4% of respondents said they would feel comfortable reporting workplace violations, 29.2% would not and 21.0% were unsure. Among those identifying barriers to reporting, 50.2% cited fear of losing their jobs, 46.1% feared victimisation, 36.6% lacked confidence in reporting systems and 30.9% questioned the confidentiality of complaints.

Key informants and focus group participants highlighted the increasing use of fixed-term contracts, labour broking and other insecure employment arrangements that weaken workers' bargaining power. Women are particularly affected because they constitute a significant proportion of Zimbabwe's ***"precariat"*** —workers employed in insecure, low-paid and informal forms of work with limited social protection. Their economic vulnerability reduces their ability to challenge unfair treatment and increases their exposure to discrimination, exploitation and workplace harassment.

3.4. GENDER EQUALITY REQUIRES STRUCTURAL CHANGE BEYOND LEGAL REFORM:

The Labour Amendment Act has strengthened legal protections for women, particularly through provisions on maternity protection, equal remuneration and protection against violence and harassment. However, the findings demonstrate that legal reform alone cannot eliminate the structural inequalities that shape women's experiences in the world of work.

Survey respondents consistently identified low wages, insecure employment, limited promotion opportunities, occupational segregation and the unequal burden of unpaid care work as major barriers to gender equality. Participants also highlighted the absence of family-friendly workplace policies, childcare facilities, lactation rooms and gender-sensitive workplace infrastructure. Women in the informal economy remain among the least protected despite representing a large share of Zimbabwe's workforce and a significant proportion of the country's precariat.

3.5. WEAK ENFORCEMENT REMAINS THE GREATEST IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGE:

The study concludes that the principal challenge facing the Labour Amendment Act is no longer the legal framework itself but weaknesses in implementation and enforcement. Participants consistently reported limited workplace inspections, weak institutional coordination, lengthy complaint procedures and inadequate

sanctions against employers who violate labour rights.

Overall, the findings suggest that Zimbabwe has made important progress in strengthening labour legislation. However, realizing the full benefits of the Labour Amendment Act will require stronger labour inspectorates, increased labour rights awareness, better protection for workers in precarious and informal employment, improved institutional accountability and closer collaboration between government, employers, trade unions and civil society.

3.6. EMERGING ISSUES

Beyond implementation challenges, the study identified several emerging issues which warrant attention with regards to the successful implementation of the act.

- **Growth of precarious forms of employment**: Key informants reported that some employers are increasingly relying on fixed-term contracts, labour broking and other insecure employment arrangements, which may reduce workers' ability to benefit fully from the protections provided by the Labour Amendment Act. Employment insecurity also discourages workers from reporting violations for fear of losing their jobs.
- **Care Work:** Participants further argued that labour legislation should move beyond formal equality and better recognize workers' caregiving and family responsibilities. Several issues were repeatedly identified as requiring future policy attention, including paid paternity leave, family responsibility leave, leave following miscarriage or stillbirth, workplace accommodation for pregnant workers, menstrual health support and more comprehensive family-friendly workplace policies.
- **Gender-responsive workplaces**: Participants emphasized that achieving gender equality requires more than legal compliance. Employers should create workplace environments that support women's participation through flexible working arrangements, gender-sensitive infrastructure, effective prevention of workplace harassment and equal opportunities for recruitment, promotion and leadership.
- **Continued exclusion of informal workers from labour protection**: Participants observed that labour rights discourse remains largely centred on formal employment despite the growing proportion of Zimbabweans, particularly women and young people, earning their livelihoods within the informal economy. Future labour reforms should therefore explore mechanisms for extending labour protections and social security to workers engaged in informal and non-standard forms of employment.
- **Strengthening institutional collaboration**: Finally, respondents emphasized the importance of strengthening institutional collaboration among government, employers, trade unions, civil society organizations and the justice sector. Effective implementation of the Labour Amendment Act will require coordinated awareness campaigns, regular workplace inspections, stronger enforcement mechanisms and accessible reporting systems that encourage workers to seek redress without fear of retaliation.

3.7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The findings suggest that Zimbabwe's labour governance challenge has shifted from legislative reform to effective implementation. While the Labour Amendment Act No. 11 of 2023 has strengthened the legal framework for protecting workers' rights and promoting gender equality, its impact ultimately depends on effective institutions, workplace practices and broader socio-economic conditions. Labour rights therefore need to be understood not only as legal entitlements but also as outcomes shaped by governance systems and workplace power relations.

The study further demonstrates that legal reform alone cannot achieve gender equality. Women's experiences continue to be shaped by structural inequalities, including unequal care responsibilities, occupational segregation, economic insecurity and the growing prevalence of precarious employment. These findings highlight the need for labour governance to adapt to changing labour market realities and extend meaningful protection to workers in informal and non-standard forms of employment.

Finally, the study underscores that effective implementation of the Labour Amendment Act is a shared responsibility. Strengthening labour rights will require greater collaboration between government, employers, trade unions and civil society to improve awareness, enforcement and accountability, ensuring that legal reforms translate into meaningful workplace outcomes for all workers.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Labour Amendment Act has provided an important foundation for labour rights and gender equality through provisions relating to violence and harassment, maternity protection, equality and non-discrimination. Hence, the Act has established a stronger legal framework for the protection of workers' rights and dignity at work.

There is a gap between awareness of the Act and transformative knowledge that enables workers to act as legal reform have outpaced labour rights education, limiting the ability of workers, particularly women and those in vulnerable forms of employment, to effectively claim and defend their rights.

Workplace compliance, accountability and alignment with the Act remain uneven with many workplaces having begun aligning policies and practices with the Labour Amendment Act but progress has often been constrained by limited awareness, weak accountability systems, inconsistent workplace compliance and resource and capacity challenges affecting institutions responsible for implementation, monitoring and enforcement.

Employment insecurity continues to undermine the realization of labour rights as **f**ear of job loss, insecure forms of employment and limited confidence in enforcement mechanisms discourage workers from reporting violations and seeking remedies. As a result, the effectiveness of the Act is often constrained by workplace realities that reduce workers' ability to exercise their rights without fear of retaliation.

Gender justice in the workplace requires more than legal protection because many of the barriers facing women are rooted in broader structural inequalities. Unequal care responsibilities, workplace discrimination and the concentration of women in precarious forms of employment continue to shape women's experiences of work. Workplace cultures, unequal power relations and deeply entrenched patriarchal norms continue to influence access to opportunities, leadership, decision-making and protection from violence and harassment. Achieving substantive gender equality therefore demands gender-responsive institutions and deliberate efforts to challenge the social and organizational norms that reproduce inequality and disadvantage women workers.

Sustainable progress will depend on stronger institutions and collective action amongst government institutions, employers, trade unions, civil society organizations and workers themselves. These actors must work collaboratively in strengthening awareness, compliance, enforcement and accountability. Translating rights into lived realities requires capable institutions, effective implementation mechanisms and a shared commitment to advancing decent work and gender justice in Zimbabwe.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT

Strengthen Labour Administration and Enforcement: The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare should strengthen labour inspection, enforcement and dispute resolution systems by increasing the capacity, visibility and resourcing of labour inspectors. Priority should be given to expanding inspections across all sectors, improving institutional coordination and ensuring that labour disputes are resolved efficiently, transparently and fairly.

Expand National Labour Rights Awareness: Government should develop and implement a coordinated national labour rights awareness strategy that translates the provisions of the Labour Amendment Act into accessible information and extends outreach to workers in rural areas, agriculture and the informal economy through multiple public communication platforms.

Strengthen Protection for Workers in Non-Standard Employment: Government should review legislation and labour market policies governing fixed-term contracts, labour broking and other non-standard forms of employment to reduce excessive casualisation and progressively extend labour protections and social security to vulnerable workers.

Continue Labour Law Reform: Future labour law reforms should address outstanding policy gaps identified during implementation, including care work and family responsibility leave, paid paternity leave, workplace accommodation for pregnant workers, menstrual health support, leave following miscarriage or stillbirth, and stronger protection against pregnancy-related discrimination.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

Align Workplace Policies with the Labour Amendment Act: Employers should review and update workplace policies, Codes of Conduct and grievance procedures to ensure full compliance with the Labour Amendment Act and communicate these policies effectively to all employees.

Foster Safe, Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Workplaces: Employers should promote workplace cultures that prevent violence, harassment and discrimination while advancing women's participation in leadership, supporting work-life balance and providing gender-responsive workplace facilities.

Strengthen Internal Accountability Systems: Employers should establish confidential reporting mechanisms, ensure prompt and impartial investigation of complaints, enforce appropriate disciplinary measures and protect complainants from victimisation.

Integrate Labour Rights into Human Resource Management: Labour rights education should form part of employee induction, supervisory training and continuous professional development to strengthen compliance and promote a rights-based workplace culture.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRADE UNIONS

Strengthen Worker Representation: Trade unions should strengthen workplace representation by supporting workers to assert their rights, expanding legal assistance and improving access to collective bargaining and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Organise Vulnerable Workers: Trade unions should expand organising efforts among women, young workers and workers employed in agriculture, the informal economy and other precarious forms of employment that remain underrepresented within traditional union structures.

Advocate for Decent Work Reforms: Trade unions should continue advocating for stronger labour standards, improved enforcement, secure employment and policy reforms that respond to emerging labour market challenges.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Promote Labour Rights Literacy and Legal Empowerment: Civil society organisations should complement government efforts by providing community-based labour rights education, legal literacy programmes and simplified information materials targeting women, young workers, rural workers and other vulnerable groups. These initiatives should strengthen workers' capacity to understand, claim and defend their rights under the Labour Amendment Act.

Strengthen Alliances with Trade Unions and Other Social Partners: Civil society organisations should build stronger partnerships with trade unions, workers' organisations, women's rights organisations and other social partners to coordinate labour rights advocacy, jointly monitor implementation of the Labour Amendment Act and promote collective responses to emerging labour rights challenges.

Support the Organisation of Workers in Non-Standard Forms of Employment: Civil society organisations should support the organisation and collective representation of workers employed in non-standard forms of employment, including workers in the informal economy, seasonal workers, domestic workers, platform workers and those engaged through labour brokers. Particular attention should be given to strengthening workers' voice, improving access to labour rights information and facilitating engagement with trade unions and other representative structures.

Generate Evidence and Promote Policy Dialogue: Civil society organisations should continue documenting labour rights violations, monitoring implementation of the Labour Amendment Act and generating evidence to inform public policy, advocacy and future labour law reforms. They should also facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue between government, employers, trade unions and development partners to strengthen labour governance and accountability.

6.0 EMERGING ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Advocate for Effective Implementation of the Labour Amendment Act:

Advocate for the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, the Department of Labour Administration and Parliament to prioritise implementation of the Labour Amendment Act by strengthening labour inspections, improving enforcement mechanisms, increasing institutional capacity and ensuring effective monitoring of compliance.

Advocate for Stronger Regulation of Precarious Employment:

Advocate for Government, Parliament and National Employment Councils to strengthen regulation of fixed-term contracts, labour broking and other forms of precarious employment that undermine decent work, while promoting greater employment security and equal protection for workers in non-standard forms of employment.

Advocate for the Extension of Labour Protection to Informal Economy Workers:

Advocate for Government, Parliament and social partners to develop policy and legislative measures that progressively extend labour rights, social protection and access to labour justice to workers in the informal economy and other currently excluded categories of workers.

Advocate for Gender-Responsive Labour Reforms and Workplace Practices:

Advocate for Government, Parliament, employers and National Employment Councils to adopt measures that eliminate workplace discrimination, strengthen protection against violence and

harassment, promote women's leadership, recognise unpaid care responsibilities and address outstanding gender equality gaps within the labour policy framework.

Advocate for Increased Investment in Labour Administration and Access to Justice:

Advocate for Government and the Ministry of Finance to increase financial and human resources for labour administration institutions, including labour inspectorates and dispute resolution mechanisms, to improve enforcement, accountability and access to timely justice for workers.

Advocate for Universal Labour Rights Education:

Advocate for Government, employers, trade unions and civil society organisations to institutionalise continuous labour rights education through workplaces, communities and public information platforms, with particular emphasis on women, young workers and workers in precarious and informal employment.

Advocate for Inclusive Social Dialogue and Collective Representation:

Advocate for Government, employers and trade unions to strengthen institutionalised social dialogue and to promote the organisation and effective representation of workers in non-standard forms of employment, including informal economy workers, ensuring that they are meaningfully represented in labour policy development, collective bargaining and implementation processes.

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