



International
Labour
Organization

Virtual Meeting

ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)

ACTRAV Webinar Series 2.0:

ILO Policy Framework on COVID-19 and
the World of Work in Africa



Thursday, 11 June 2020

@ 10h00 GMT

(Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone)

@ 11h00 Central African Time

(Nigeria)

@ 12h00 Southern Africa Standard Time

(Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe)

@ 13h00 East African Time

(Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda)

@ 14h00 Indian Ocean Islands Time

(Seychelles and Mauritius)

@ 12h00 Central European Time

(Geneva, Switzerland)

Duration: 90 minutes

Language: English



BACKGROUND

The global Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has profoundly affected the world of work. Due to the various lockdown and containment measures, millions of enterprises in Africa have had either to reduce or close their operations.

This led to the concomitant effect of massive job losses, and amid the complete absence of unemployment benefits in existing social security schemes and the lack of alternative comprehensive safety nets, majority of workers in Africa have adversely been impacted.

In order to protect workers' jobs, wages and benefits, some African countries promulgated special labour protocols, aimed at explicitly outlawing the lay-off of workers during this pandemic.

At the same time, some governments put a freeze on collective bargaining, while others have made it illegal to reduce the remuneration of workers unless the employers is unable to pay and has negotiated an agreement with relevant trade unions.

As many countries are now easing out the lockdown conditions, many questions linger in the minds of policy makers and union leaders on the kind of employment policies needed to tackle widespread unemployment and underemployment.

It is pivotal to focus on the economic sectors that contribute to job-rich growth guided by the principles of a just transition, sustainable economic recovery program, commitment to achieve decent jobs, extend social protection and health care coverage for all.



OBJECTIVES AND MODALITIES OF THE MEETING

The purpose of the information sharing session is to provide a virtual platform for trade union in Africa to share information on (i) measures put in place by governments to deal with the economic effects of COVID-19 in the immediate and short term, and (ii) concerns by workers' organizations when negotiating at workplace, sectoral and national levels. On its part, the ILO will share information on the ILO Policy Framework in addressing Covid-19, using International Labour Standards.

The specific objectives of the session include:

- Exchange experiences on unions' responses to the challenges rained on the world of work by the raging Covid-19 crisis in Anglophone African countries.
- Share experiences concerning the protection of workers' jobs, wages/salaries, benefits, incomes and livelihoods during the raging Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdowns.
- Analysis the effects of different governments and employers Covid-19 response measures on the world of work.
- Discuss best practices, actions and recommendations taken by unions in the context of the Covid-19 crisis at national, sub-regional and continental levels

The target group for this webinar is top leaders and activists of the trade union movement in English-speaking countries in Africa.



PROGRAMME

Session Moderator: Mohammed Mwamadzingo, Regional Desk Officer for Africa, Bureau for Workers' Activities, ILO/HQ Geneva

TIME	PRESENTATION	PRESENTER
5 minutes	Introductions and housekeeping issues	Mohammed Mwamadzingo , Regional Desk Officer for Africa, Bureau for Workers' Activities, ILO/HQ Geneva
15 minutes	Opening and Welcome Remarks	Maria Helena Andre' , Director, ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities, ILO/HQ Geneva
15 minutes	ILO Policy Framework on Stimulating Economic Recovery from Covid-19 Crisis	Sangheon Lee , Director, Employment Policy Department, ILO/HQ Geneva
15 minutes	Role of Trade Unions in Stimulating and Promoting Employment during Covid-19	Ayuba Wabba , President, Nigeria Labour Congress, and President, International Trade Union Confederation Kwasi Adu-Amankwah , General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation-Africa Arezki Mezhoud , Secretary General, Organisation of African Trade Union Unity
3 minutes, max per input	General discussions: role of trade unions in stimulating and promoting employment during Covid-19 The session is meant to give an opportunity for trade unions to share some of the information and latest developments at the national level. To guide these inputs, the trade unions wishing to speak are requested to respond to the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What employment policies (active labour market policies) are needed to support workers who are unemployed to find their way back to the labour market? 	General Secretaries/Presidents/ executive committee members/ designated officers in trade unions

TIME	PRESENTATION	PRESENTER
.....3 minutes, max per input	<p>Are there any specific groups that need to be supported?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sectors need to be strengthened to retain as many jobs as possible and to promote employment growth and more decent work in the future? • What should governments do in terms of financing the economic recovery? Is the current tax base sufficient to finance the widespread employment and social protection programmes needed to support workers through this crisis? 	General Secretaries/Presidents/ executive committee members/ designated officers in trade unions
5 minutes	Responses by panelists	Panelists
5 minutes	General conclusions and next steps	Mohammed Mwamadzingo , Regional Desk Officer for Africa, Bureau for Workers' Activities, ILO/HQ Geneva



Participating countries

1. Botswana: BFTU
2. Eritrea: NCEW
3. Eswatini: TUCOSWA
4. Ethiopia: CETU
5. Gambia: GAMTUB
6. Ghana: TUC, GFL
7. Kenya: COTU
8. Liberia: LLC
9. Malawi: MCTU
10. Mauritius: CDS
11. Namibia: NUNW, TUCNA
12. Nigeria: NLC, TUC
13. Rwanda: CESTRAR, COTRAF, COSYGA
14. Seychelles: SFWU
15. Sierra Leone: SLLC
16. Somalia: FESTU
17. South Africa: COSATU, FEDUSA, NACTU
18. South Sudan: SSWTUF
19. Sudan: SWTUF
20. Tanzania: TUCTA, ZATUC
21. Uganda: NOTU
22. Zambia: ZCTU
23. Zimbabwe: ZCTU



Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations

1. EATUC
2. OTUWA
3. SATUCC
4. ITUC Africa
5. OATUU