

ITUC-Africa New Year School Commission on Trade

23.02.2023

Questions.

- What are the challenges related to: AfCFTA in Africa?
- How can trade unions contribute effectively to overcoming these challenges for the benefit of African economies and the workers ?
- What should be the strategies for trade union action on AfCFTA for development in Africa in the short, medium and long term?

What are the challenges related to: AfCFTA in Africa?

Subdivided into 3

- National
- Subregional
- Regional

1. lack of/ access to 'sufficient' information.

❑ Lack of efficiency of trade unions to gather available information on :

- What are the implementation stages of afcfta at country levels
- What are the products, goods and services being agreed on in the agreement
- Know which doors to knock to advance the agenda
- Afcfta is a new Agenda to some unions and trade and investments interests aren't a priority to unions
- It becomes difficult to participate in the process when we are not fully equipped with knowledge

2. inadequate capacity of Trade unions to deal with AFCFTA issues

- Trade unions aren't well informed and updated on ongoing processes to engage and influence governments at both national and subregional levels
- Trade unions haven't collaborated with other non state actors being engaged by AFCFTA

Cont.....

3. Low level of influence by Trade unions on Trade

- Lack of awareness from grassroots within trade unions , workers aren't aware of AFCFTA which pose challenges of influencing at National levels
- Havent mastered AFCFTA to influence

4. Non Inclusion of Trade Unions by state on matters trade

- No tripartite committee has been established to advise the secretariat on labour

4. Lack of research

- No updates or reports on implementing processes
- No comprehensive and continuous reports from the Tus
- No supporting findings conducted especially country specific progress

5. Lack of labour provisions in the AfCFTA is the reason governments don't see the reason of engaging with trade unions. Its perceived not to be a trade union agenda and therefore not involving workers

How can trade unions contribute effectively to overcoming these challenges for the benefit of African economies and the workers

- Trade unions must look for information in all ways possible
 - Acquire the document
 - Pay attention to National processes in their respective countries
 - Prepare submissions
- Trade unions to capitalize on / initiate Human capacity development where it is able to create awareness by building the capacity of workers on areas of skills on employment , decent wages, trade discussions, tariff regimes, infrastructure as a way of contributing towards implementation of the AfCFTA

What should be the strategies for trade union action on AfCFTA for development in Africa in the short, medium and long term?

- There is a pressing need of building the capacity of trade unions personnel to become experts in Trade
- Lobby for involvement of Trade Unions to be in the afcfta committees for different protocols
- Lobby for inclusion of labour protocol
- Carry out capacity building activities like workshops, media engagements, IEC materials, to sensitize on existing protocols in a simplified way. Meetings can also be convened at the borders
- Build alliances/ partner with civil society organizations

Cont..

- Engage ministry of trade and industrialization for direct interface. A stepping stone to making trade unions visible.. To influence
- Establish economics and trade desk
- Invest in education, research on trade and investment to inform advocacy approach
- ITUC to Develop materials that informs on developments at country level on issues touching in trade and investments. This will depend on needs analysis of different countries. materials should explain relevant issues on trade and investment for affiliates countries.
- Train ToT who'll convey messages in simplified way

Cont...

- Convene discussions with Trade Union Leaders especially those making good progress on monitoring, lobbying and influencing conversations in their countries on how they did it.
- Ituc to develop a model protocol(charter) that guides on safeguarding rights of workers in which it can make reference to when engaging AFCFTA secretariat . This should have followed the Tunis declaration and its more bigger

THE END