



Ulandssekretariatet
LO/FTF Council

Danish Trade Union
Council for International
Development Cooperation

MALAWI CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS' POSITION ON IMPACT OF DECENT WORK DEFICITS ON WORKERS' PRODUCTIVITY.

According to the Malawi Decent Work Country programme, decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

The main objective of trade unions is to improve the standard of living of workers. This can only be achieved if jobs or decent jobs are created and wealth is generated. High productivity leads to higher living standards through wealth creation, hence if productivity increases, living standards of workers can improve.

An employee contributes a lot to the given roles depending on the conditions of work. Happy employees are productive employees. An employee with a positive attitude usually enjoys the work that they do and feels empowered and recognized for their contributions.

The more effective or productive the national economy, the higher the personal income of workers would be. When a country is productive, it means more national income. Better productivity also provides more profit to invest in promoting economic growth in underdeveloped regions.

Where are most of the deficits found?

Working hours

Employees work up to 12 hours especially in the informal sector. In both formal and informal a large number of employees work up to 9 hours without getting paid for the extra time. The biggest concern with is lack of sleep and fatigue, which can negatively impact performance, productivity, and safety- on the job and at home.

Holiday

The importance of having holiday brings about higher productivity, stronger workplace morale, greater employee retention, and significant health benefits. Most managers consider employees who take all of their leave to be less dedicated. Even worse, most domestic workers do not even go on holiday.

Salary

Most of the employees do not have a fixed pay day. It is more prominent in the informal sector but also in the public sector. They sometimes get a salary on the 7th to 10th day of the following month.

Sick leave

There are more problems discovered in workplaces where they have verbal contracts than signed contracts. Most of the employees under verbal contracts complain of having non paid sick leave. If shop attendants skip work for few days due to sickness they get fired.

Union membership

In most cases the employers do not allow employees to join any associations which deny them the freedom of Association. . In this scenario, workers do not voice out their concerns hence still operate under harsh conditions anyway while contributing less to their work.

Social dialogue

There is no social dialogue in their workplace. An employer and employees do not come together and discuss anything about their welfare. Achieving fair terms of employment, decent working

conditions, and development for the benefit of all cannot be achieved without the active involvement of workers and employers

Social protection

Pension scheme and medical aid are not provided in the informal sector. Most people in informal jobs lack awareness on social protection schemes and this includes both the employer and employees.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is the duty of both employers and employees to ensure productivity is increased and ensuring that decent work is achieved. Where employees do not understand and agree with employers they need to negotiate and bargain for all their needs. Most employees are not necessary happy with their jobs, but they have to work anyway in order to survive. With the high unemployment levels, employees are afraid of losing their jobs because finding a new one would not be easy. However, employees in some circumstances admit not to put extra effort towards improving their companies because there is no motivation.

We therefore as MCTU recommend that:

- Improvement of dialogue between workers and employers in all sectors. The social dialogue is a tool that employers need to utilize to discuss about the growth of the company. Furthermore, there should be a strong cooperation between employers' organizations, trade unions and government.
- The Government and Employers should improve in social protection to extend to all workers. .
- Employers should seek to understand the labor laws and apply them on the work place.
- Employers and employees should be able to cooperate with each other to plan and implement productivity improvement measures
- Employers should be encouraged to produce written contracts other than verbal contracts.
- Ministry of labor to put much effort in inspecting workplaces
- Ministry of labor should take an initiative to continue working towards establishing a productivity center

- Increase awareness on the decent work agenda
- Unions should increase awareness campaigns on rights at work