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Trade Union Participation in the PRSP Process

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TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS*

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* PRSP Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PRSP approach offers an opportunity for civil society organizations to join governments in the development and implementation of poverty reduction strategies. Trade unions have been encouraged to participate. This report notes that most unions have been invited to the discussions leading to formulation of the PRSPs but none has been included in the drafting, implementation, monitoring or evaluation. Based on findings from 23 PRSP countries, the study identifies a number of weaknesses and shortcomings which have limited the effective participation of trade unions, mainly capacity issues, time constraints, and lack of structured participatory processes. Lack of consensus on contentious issues like privatisation, pensions reforms and labor code reform, have been worrisome to some unions. The paper calls for, among other things, more dialogue between the labour movement and the IFIs, strengthening trade unions, building union capacity and more analytical work on labor market policies and core labor standards.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Bank and Fund-supported policies, particularly structural adjustment programs (SAPs) were contentious within the trade union circles; the main concerns mainly centered around the lack of consultations that was often associated with the programs. The supposed imposition of SAPs usually met with opposition from a broad spectrum of non-state actors, particularly civil society organizations, including unions. In an attempt to ensure that these policies became more socially responsive; the international trade union movement¹ initiated dialogue with the International Financing Institutions (IFIs) with poverty reducing employment policies and the need for the incorporation of internationally recognized labor standards featuring prominently amongst their demands. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) approach provided an avenue through which all stakeholders would in principle participate in policy making and implementation.

This paper provides an overview of the nature and extent of trade union participation in the PRSP process in 23 client countries² and also assesses the labor content of (I)PRSPs. For purpose of this paper, participation is defined as the process by which stakeholders influence and share control over priority setting, policymaking, resource allocations, and/or program implementation. In the PRSP approach, trade unions are among the stakeholders identified for consultation. The international trade union movement subsequently called on unions to take part in the poverty reduction strategy processes as a way of guaranteeing the

¹ This comprises the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the Global Union Federations (GUFs), the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD and the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). The ICFTU, TUAC and GUFs are part of the Global Unions alliance. The ICFTU has 231 affiliated organisations in 150 countries and territories, with a membership of 158 million. TUAC represents national trade union centers of the 30-member OECD countries. The GUFs have as members national unions, which represent workers from a specific sector, industry or occupation. The WCL unites 144 trade unions from 116 countries and has a membership of 26 million.

² Albania, Benin, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

inclusion of their interests in the national poverty reduction strategies. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)'s agenda for participation is premised on the following aspirations: (i) the PRSP process provides a forum where workers as citizens have the right to be part of economic decision-making in their countries; (ii) workers' interests can best be articulated by unions themselves; (iii) they can ensure that the respect for fundamental labor rights, decent work, and environmental standards must be key elements are incorporated in the national poverty reduction strategy; (iv) since their actions – higher wages, better working conditions, and more secure jobs – help lift low-wage workers out of poverty, these should become part of any poverty reductions plan; (v) unions help reduce poverty and inequality; (vi) many IMF and World Bank-supported policies such as privatization schemes and pension reforms, directly affect union members and workers in general³. The World Confederation of Labour (WCL) “welcomed the intention of the IMF and the World Bank to focus on poverty reduction and participation,” as well. Union Network International (UNI), the main confederation of service workers, said “PRSP framework offers a unique opportunity for trade unions in developing countries to influence the path of development that their country pursues.”

Initially hopeful when the mechanism was announced in September 1999, the international trade union movement expressed concerns in subsequent years about inconsistent union participation in the development of PRSPs (i) that unions sometimes cannot participate in the PRSP process because of restrictions placed on the freedom of association; (ii) the lack of attention devoted to redistribution as well as growth; and (iii) problems posed by World Bank conditionality; (iv) the documents are inadequate in their coverage of labor market and trade union concerns in general; that (v) governments were self-censoring based on their perception of what the IFIs would find acceptable. This paper identifies synergies and gaps with regard to the union participation in the PRSP process and the on-going World Bank dialogue with unions and suggests recommendations on how best to strengthen partnership between the IFIs and the international union movement.

³ See ICFTU (2001)

METHODOLOGY

The study covered the period from January to October 2003. A ten-point questionnaire was mailed to trade union federations in the PRSP countries by the World Bank, ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). The following information was sought:

- i. had the unions being invited to participate in the PRSP process;
- ii. was the invitation general nature or specifically addressed top the union leadership;
- iii. steps taken by the union to ensure that they were invited;
- iv. the role played by the national federation play in the debates;
- v. union collaboration with other CSOs;
- vi. union views submitted to the authorities;
- vii. number of meetings/sessions the unions were invited to;
- viii. difficulties encountered;
- ix. actions taken (in case of difficulties); and
- x. union plans for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the PRSP. Based on the response from the trade unions, the information was shared with the World Bank and IMF Country Teams. Therefore the 23 countries are those from which information was received from the unions as well as the World Bank and IMF staff. Government websites; the International Labor Organization (ILO); ICFTU; WCL; CSOs; World Bank/IMF Joint Staff Assessments (JSAs); and other academic literature were also consulted.

Various secondary sources were used to collate the individual country reports available in Annex 1, which provide a brief assessment of the state of social dialogue in the country, trade union participation in PRSP, and the labor content of the (1) PRSP. .”

MAIN FINDINGS

1. **Most unions have been invited to the PRSP discussions.** Most governments have incorporated unions in the PRSP formulation; a few did not involve them, or opted to deal with some unions but not others. Where consultations have taken place, it is more their quality and depth that have come under scrutiny. The stage at which unions were invited also

differed – some participated from the inception stages; while others were invited when the process was underway. No union has reported participation in program implementation, monitoring or evaluation; and neither was any incorporated in the final drafting of the PRSP.

Where the culture of dialogue among social partners already exists unions were readily invited to the PRSP discussions. For example in Albania, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Ghana, Honduras, Malawi, Mongolia, Senegal and Zambia unions were invited from the onset. In Georgia, Cambodia and Pakistan, the unions requested for participation before they were invited to discussions. In Zambia the ZCTU was the lead organization in charge of the Civil Society Consultation Group on Industry, Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods while the Mineworkers' Union of Zambia sits on Civil Society Consultation Group. In Ghana in mid-2001 a national committee comprising of government, the TUC, the Private Enterprise Foundation and the Ghana Association of Private Organizations and Development was constituted to administer the Emergency Social Relief Program (ESRP).

In Uganda the unions missed the formulation of the initial PEAP in 2000 but have been accommodated in the review process currently taking place. The Tanzanian authorities did not invite the caretaker General Secretariat that was in place following the dissolution of the Tanzania Federation of Free Trade Unions (TFTU) on July 1, 2000. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the second largest labor federation, the, *Confédération Démocratique du Travail* (CDT) requested to participate but has not been invited by the authorities at the time of writing.

The existence of a more structured participatory process provides an avenue for union involvement. In Nicaragua for instance a more formal consultative structure, the *Consejo Nacional de Planificación Económica Social* or the National Council for Social and Economic Planning (CONPES), includes labor unions. In Albania, trade unions' inclusion in the 24-member National Civil Society Advisory Group led to their involvement in the formulation of the Medium-term Program of the Albanian Government's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS). In Uganda, the setting up of four PRSP subcommittees at the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development facilitated the participation of labor unions.

2. **Shallow and ill-prepared consultation deters effective union engagement.** The quality of the consultative processes has also been called to question due to the “rushed nature of the process” and the number of sessions to which unions were invited. In their Statement to the 2003 Spring Meetings of the IMF and World Bank (Washington, 12-13 April 2003), the Global Unions classified the participatory process as consisting “of an exercise in which a few trade unionists were invited to a meeting to be told about the government's draft PRSP..” In Benin, the *Centrale des Syndicats Autonomes du Bénin* (CSA) regrets “the fact that the participation of trade union federations was merely symbolic...trade union federations did not play a major role,,” as the union was only invited to only two meetings/sessions. Sri Lanka’s National Workers' Congress (NWC) was invited to “two seminars and some consultation meetings..” In Bangladesh, unions were invited to the two-hour kick-off informational meeting when the PRSP process was entering it's drafting stage. The *Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Sénégal* (CNTS) took part in five meetings in all. In Tanzania, a labor leader “gate crashed” the national workshop (Dar es Salaam, August 3-4, 2000) that adopted the final PRSP.

Unions have variously complained about documents being availed to them “at the door,,” making it impossible to effectively respond to the contents of the background documents or draft PRSPs. The reason the CNTS (Senegal) did not make a written submission was due to non-distribution of the background document and “the information time frames were rather short..” A related case has to do with language - in its submission to the January 2002 World Bank/IMF International Conference on PRSPs, the WCL said:- “although most countries were French speaking, the documents to be consulted on the IMF/World Bank website were all in English...A clear example of this was provided at the seminar, where one representative from the Central African Republic reported that, in preparing for the seminar, he had contacted his government to receive a copy of the PRSP. The official answer was that such a document did not exist...whereas this document can be found (in English) on the IMF’s website..” In Benin unions complained of very short notice, and “in some cases the invitation preceded the actual meeting only with a couple of hours,” and that not a single document was being presented in the case of Senegal.

3. **In countries where more than one national trade union federation exists, some unions did not participate.** In some cases where union pluralism exists, not all unions have been able to partake of the process as the invitees have been the most representative or the official unions. In Indonesia, the workers' slot is occupied by the *Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia* (KSPSI), the official union under the leadership of the Minister for Manpower and Transmigration. In Sri Lanka, a majority of unions were not invited to the PRSP consultations. Some 72 trade unions joined the Alliance for the Protection of National Resources and Human Rights (ANRHR), a network of CSOs, in rejecting the PRSP as being representative of the people's views. In Albania, while the Independent Confederation of Trade Unions of Albania (BSPSh) reports non involvement in the PRSP, the Confederation of Albanian Trade Unions (KSSH) and its affiliates were on board. In Malawi, the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU) and not the Congress of Malawi Trade Unions (COMATU) represented labor interests in the PRSP discussions.

4. **Unions remain sceptical of Bank and Fund programs.** Given past trade union experiences with IMF and Bank-supported adjustment policies, a number of unions remain skeptical about the "change of heart" by these institutions. Some unions view PRSPs as a continuation of the same policies but under new names, particularly where Bank or Fund policies are seen as unpopular. The Ghana Trades Unions Congress (TUC) asserts that the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) is a new name for an old program. In the case of Sri Lanka, the situation is not made any easier where despite unions' vehement opposition to labor law reform and privatization of banks, water, power, energy, and public transport, these are policy recommendations contained in the Vision and Strategy for Accelerated Development, the country's PRSP. To the *Central General de Trabajadores* (CGT –Honduras), it was felt that a desire to access funds rather than the interests of the government and people of Honduras led to the formulation of the PRSP.

There are also complaints that macroeconomic issues are still predominant in the PRSPs, yet debates on them have never been opened to other stakeholders. Both the ICFTU and the WCL have interpreted the "umbilical link to macroeconomic fundamentals" and the active involvement of the Bank and the Fund in program design to signify a lack of independence of poor nations to design their own development programs as well as the

inadequate attention paid to qualitative participation. A Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)-sponsored resolution on the World Bank and the IMF, subsequently adopted by the ICFTU-AFRO 13th Congress (Nairobi, May 2001) says thus

The IMF and World Bank have become appendages of the U.S. government and other powerful countries, which use the multilateral institutions to strengthen their domination of the international economy and in the process, impose a neo liberal hegemony...These institutions, which were not elected in any country, use their control over credit to developing countries to dictate policies and priorities to democratically elected governments, including attacks on labor rights...The World Bank and IMF now admit that their policies have sent many countries into the abyss of poverty, broadening the gap between poor and rich.

In Senegal, the *Union Nationale des Syndicats Autonomes du Sénégal* (UNSAS) boycotted the PRSP process for the reason that “the draft paper was lacking a social dimension and was only dealing with macroeconomics.” On IMF advise the Zambia National Commercial Bank (ZNCB) was earmarked for privatization as a condition for a PRGF loan arrangement negotiated with the government, without civil society participation or parliamentary oversight, six months after the PRSP was endorsed⁴.

5. **Lack of capacity within unions remains a major deficiency.** Unions in most developing and transition are not adequately resourced with technical personnel due mainly to the costs of hiring and maintaining such high caliber staff. Furthermore, most unions do not usually have the requisite financial resources to do research and elaborate alternative development scenarios. Unions in most client countries face many competing priorities. PRSP consultations take time are held in various parts of the country and so there is a question of resources to enable union representatives adequately follow proceedings. Moreover, unions themselves need to mobilize and sensitize their members in order to develop and disseminate their positions and also to ensure that the membership is well versed with union views. They are also required to prepare well-argued analyses and present alternative workable policies. The Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU-Kenya) and *Union Nationale des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Bénin* (UNSTB- Benin) leadership acknowledge this fact as having limited their effectiveness in the discussions. The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) could not make a written submission partly because the person charged with

⁴ Statement by the Global Unions to the 2003 Spring Meetings of the IMF and World Bank (Washington, April 12-13, 2003).

that responsibly left the organization. Internal weaknesses within the unions in Cambodia are also to blame for the non-invitation.

6. **With adequate capacity within unions, their participation and/or involvement of the ILO, there is stronger coverage of labor related issues in the PRSPs.** The ILO (2003) attributes the meager coverage of decent work issues to the general absence of labor ministries and other social partners. Labor market policies, like other social protection measures, reduce the vulnerability and protect the welfare of the poor, as per the PRSP Sourcebook.⁵ However labor market are not central in the PRSPs. Unions are concerned that while attention is paid to macroeconomics privatization; not an equal focus is directed at issues like employment creation, labor standards, child labor, wages policies, and occupational health and safety. Sometimes where labor market issues are addressed in the PRSPs, they remain contentious. For instance, in their JSA, the Bank and the Fund caution the Albanian authorities to reconsider government-run active labor market programs (such as public works schemes) as ill-suited to Albania's institutional capacity constraints. Proposals for labor law reforms and privatization have been contested by a number of unions in Sri Lanka. Overall, the impact of engagement of unions in the PRSP process appears to be positive as the study identifies a clear correlation between effective union participation and stronger coverage of labor related (and other social protections) issues in the PRSPs.

In Cambodia, the ILO played a big role and the result is that in the NPRS employment creation takes a center stage and so do workers' rights. For instance, the document states: "...companies in Cambodia must pay relatively high minimum wage...and improved conditions for workers (gender equity, health, safety, and appropriate wage levels)

⁵ The PRSP Sourcebook is a guide on process and practical aspects with respect to poverty reduction objectives. However countries have the liberty to build their PRSPs based on individual circumstances and characteristics. In its Chapter 17, the following are identified as potential labor market sources of vulnerability and risk warranting intervention:- Seasonality of employment, income, or consumption needs; Poor labor and social policies; Low asset levels and lack of asset portfolio diversification; Low skill levels of labor force; Structural unemployment (for example, for youth, graduates, or women); High levels of child labor; Economic downturn or crisis, for example, recession, transition, inflation, wage arrears, changes in taxation or spending, decline in production in sectors from which workers are immobile, job loss. The Sourcebook provides the following checklist of interventions:- Food-for-work or labor-intensive public works; Employment legislation, including hiring and firing rules (including severance), contracting for labor, minimum wages, and so forth; Unemployment assistance; Job search assistance; Unemployment insurance; Job retraining programs; Exchange of labor (for farming, construction, and so forth) between households; Child fostering; Reliance on children; Migration; Tied labor.

are also key objectives... the development of better industrial relations within the established legal framework is also needed.” In Pakistan, in March 2003, the ILO was requested by the Ministry of Finance (PRSP Secretariat) to assist the Government in preparing the Poverty-Employment Nexus (in coloration with trade unions, employers and the labor ministry) which was identified as a major gap in the I-PRSP. Subsequently, Pakistan’s Draft Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper in its Chapter Five on “Addressing I-PRSP Gaps: Employment, Gender and Environment” underlines the centrality of employment generation for poverty reduction. - Creating employment and increasing productivity in Ghana were well articulated by the TUC and they are all contained in the GPRS. Benin and Malawi PRSPs put focus on vocational education and training. Bolivia’s Intensive Employment Program (PIE) is to generate employment for unskilled labor currently unemployed and located in urban and peripheral urban areas. Kenya’s I-PRSP pledges that “in order to emphasize the promotion of productive and freely chosen employment as a priority and fundamental base for national economic and social policy, there will be a shift towards jobs creation and improvement in the productivity of labor..” Employment targets, micro enterprise development, and skills development are some elements presented by Zambian unions and are reflected in the PRSP.

7. **Unions bring in more than just “bread and butter” issues.** While the traditional trade union agenda has been the defense of jobs and better working and living conditions for their members, in their submissions unions have addressed other issues of national importance and not limited themselves to their core functions. In Ghana’s case, the macroeconomic framework, equity, taxation, agriculture and investments were all included in their document. In Sri Lanka, the National Workers’ Congress (NWC) submitted a text detailing its members’ views on issues such as public health, education, nutrition, water supply, sanitation and social protection. In the case of Bosnia & Herzegovina, the unions called on the authorities to expedite the privatization of banks. In Pakistan, All Pakistan Federation of Labor (APFOL) argued the putting in place alternative arrangements (like cooperatives, agricultural extension and marketing) to cushion the effects of a withdrawal of subsidies.

8. **Trade unions in many developing countries lack ties with other CSOs and do not often identify with them.** Trade unionists see themselves as belonging to representative, democratic,

and accountable organizations that ought to be consulted on matters of national importance. As a general policy, the trade union movement encourages its affiliates to “defend the interests of workers by building alliances with those who share our views and through debate and argument with those who do not.”⁶ In his report to the 91st session of the International Labor Conference entitled “Working Out of Poverty,” the Director General of the ILO says, “... The emphasis on the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) by the international community can cause difficulty in that few trade unions and employers’ organizations identify themselves with this relatively new all-embracing term. Furthermore, other CSOs sometimes do not think of unions and employers’ organizations as part of their movement.” In a recent survey in Malawi by the MCTU, CSOs complained that the trade unions never show up when they are being invited to meetings concerning development of the country. In Uganda, despite the invitation, NOTU did not join other CSOs that had formed a network through which to present the views of civil society on the PEAP. In some countries union/CSO collaboration is more advanced. For example, during the PRSP formulation the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) operated under the banner of the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR). In Bolivia, the alliance between the unions, Catholic Church, and other community based organizations led to a more inclusive process.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The presence of unions and other CSOs adds value to the PRSP process. Where the culture of social dialogue has traditionally existed, unions have participated in the PRSP formulation, although no union has reported being engaged in the drafting, implementation, or monitoring and evaluation. In a number of cases, unions have attended meetings on the PRSP but have not been able to make responses due to late delivery of background material, lack of capacity to analyze and present alternative proposals or simply because they were

⁶ The joint statement titled “*Globalising Social Justice*” to the World Social Forum (Porto Alegre) and the World Economic Forum (New York), Jan./Feb. 2002, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the International Trade Secretariats (ITS), the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD, the World Confederation of Labor (WCL), and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). “Trade unions are part of civil society just as they are part of industry. In order to be relevant to our members, we must be willing to engage in dialogue with employers for which workers toil, just as we are ready to negotiate with them, while, at the same time, working together with others in the community.”

invited to only one or two such sessions. They have variously classified such a process as “cosmetic,” “symbolic” and “unsatisfactory.” Where structured PRSP participatory mechanisms are lacking, there is no guarantee that the authorities call for the participation of unions, particularly in countries union/government relationship is not good. In some cases, union networking with other CSOs and other like minded organizations is only beginning to take shape, but in most cases because unions view themselves as representative and democratic, they would rather the authorities dealt with them separately.

Union positions have been the defense of their traditional role – collective bargaining, the defense of jobs and working conditions, as well as the need for the ratification and implementation of ILO standards; creation of employment; and dialogue during economic reforms. In case of threats to the above, frustrations with the PRSP process has been the case. This only helps to build up the skepticisms that some unions still harbor about the Bank and the Fund.

The following recommendations, addressed to various audiences –IFI’s, governments and unions themselves unions - are aimed at mainstreaming union participation in program formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

World Bank and the IMF: As a way of developing better understanding of each other’s policies, the on-going dialogue between the international trade union movement and the IFIs has to be maintained. “Secondments” of union staff to the IFIs that begun in January 2003 should be expanded to relevant departments at the Bank. The IFIs should as a matter of policy, consult with unions at national level on all major programs. A small but important gesture is the need for Bank staff to meet union leaders at their offices! It is also important to have more in-house training for IFI staff on working with unions. More analytical work on the contribution of unions and core labor standards to national development is needed. at the IFIs. In the meantime, dialoguing and capacity building on these standards with the ILO and the international trade union movement should continue.

Governments: Reaching out to the unions and the ILO would add more value to the PRSPs, particularly on issues of poverty reducing employment policies. A more structured participatory approach needs to be operationalized at national level where unions, based on their competence on labor issuers, should be incorporated. Consultations with unions should

take place from the onset - at I-PRSP level as a way of guarding against accusations of "endorsing a flawed process." The debate on macroeconomic issues should be opened up. Adequate notice and timely delivery of documents has to be ensured in order to allow advance preparation. The organizational structures, education and mobilization potentials of unions should be tapped in PRSP implementation, monitoring and evaluation, perhaps for instance, in implementing sectoral policies, participating in budget making and planning, as well as monitoring government accountability, spending and service delivery.

Unions: Participation in the PRSP process can be quite demanding. Given time, capacity and financial constraints, unions need to determine how much of a priority participation in the PRSP is and what aspects and stages they would like to be involved in. Attention needs to be paid to capacity building programs particularly on economics literacy and research to help strengthen unions. The international trade union movement, ILO, World Bank, IMF and other labor-related international organizations should be instrumental in this endeavor. Furthermore, resources should be made available to unions for organizing meetings, sensitize their members, carryout research, disseminate their views/findings, and prepare detailed policy alternatives to submit during the PRSP formulation process. On their own unions should continue to demonstrate their relevance by taking on other broader development roles, beyond the core functions of collective bargaining. In partnership with likeminded CSOs, parliaments, the media and faith-based organizations, unions are well placed to pressure for greater transparency and digestibility of information on macro, budgetary and sectoral issues. Initiatives such as the Parliamentary Implementation Watch set up by the Parliamentary Network on the World bank to monitor the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a good example, another is the monitoring of the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) in Uganda by the Uganda Debt Network (UDN) currently operational in 12 districts. In collaboration with the ILO, unions should demonstrate the developmental and poverty-reducing role of employment and international labor standards.

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ANNEX 1: COUNTRY REPORTS

Each country report is in three parts. The first part – the State of Social Dialogue – looks at the enabling environment for consultations in a particular country. Included are the trade union situation, constitutional provisions, labor legislation, ratification of ILO core conventions, etc. The second part – Trade Union Participation in the PRSP process, looks at the level of involvement of unions in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the PRSPs. The third part – Labor Content of the PRSP - focuses on the labor market issues covered in the PRSPs.

ALBANIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

All ILO core conventions have been ratified by the Republic of Albania. The [1998 Draft Constitution](#) guarantees the right to form trade unions and workers exercise this right in practice. The state controlled United Trade Unions of Albania, formed in 1945 was to dominate the labor union landscape until the early 1990s. A new Labor Code, Law 7961 was adopted in 1995, which law also reaffirms the right of workers to form trade union federations or confederations. A minimum of twenty persons can form a trade union. The *Konfederata e Sindikatave te Shqiperise* or Confederation of the Trade Unions of Albania (KSSH) and the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Albania (*Bashkimi I Sindikatave Te Pavarura Shiqiptare*, BSPSh) affiliated to the International Confederation of Free trade Unions (ICFTU) in November 2002. In between them they represent slightly under 200,000 workers. The KSSH has links with the ruling Socialist Party while the BSPSh supports the opposition Democratic Party. The Council of Employers' Organizations (*Këshili i Organizatave të Punëdhënësve*, KOP) represents employers' interests.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The national PRSP preparatory structure had three levels – the Steering Committee, the Working Group, and the Sector Technical Working Groups. CSOs were represented at all these levels. The [May 28, 2002 JSA](#) makes the following remarks regarding CSO participation:- “Civil society generally welcomed the participatory process and seized the opportunity for dialogue—even if short timeframes and inexperience limited the opportunity for substantive discussions—with the expectation that the process would improve in the future.” The [Department for International Development \(DfID\)](#), [Carter Center](#), and [Oxfam](#) were some of the international NGOs that facilitated CSO participation.

Some trade unions were part of the process leading to the formulation of the Medium-term Program of the Albanian Government's [Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy \(GPRS\)](#). While the BSPSh reports non-involvement in the PRSP, the KSSH and its affiliates were on board. Under the 24-member National Civil Society Advisory Group, there were four thematic groups – agriculture, education, health and labor and social affairs, of which trade unions were

represented in the latter two. Two unions - the Health Trade Union and the Commercial and Industrial Confederations - were particularly active.

The main concern for the unions was the need for strengthening participation of social partners in economic and social issues. Employment policies, as well as wages and pensions were also called for. The Labor and Social Affairs strategic priority group of the National Civil Society Advisory Group made a number of recommendations. Under employment policies, they included the following:- (i) Greater support for employees' rights through developments in the legal framework; (ii) Increased local government capacities in the field of employment and social service; (iii) Institutional agreement on reduction of job informal market; (iv) Closer relations between professional training and demands of job market; and (v) Development of job programs for women and young people. With regard to social protection, the recommendations included Financial limits for receiving economic assistance benefit; Expansion and further dissemination of the social services; Drafting programs for continued integration of the needy groups; Support for social services offered by the NGOs etc. Social safety recommendations were Support for stabilization of private institutes by offering them equal chances; and Improvements in social insurance market.

We were left out, complains Albania union

“We have not had any information on the PSRP in Albania. Such information we learned only through Media. We never are invited to take part. We have contact with NGO and Civil Society for different qualifications but not for PSRP. In our opinion we are ignored as social partner in PSRP process.”

Report by the BPSSh dated March 31, 2003

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The GPRS identifies unemployment as one of the main causes of poverty – and recommends the development of the labor market and the promotion of employment. Professional training, expansion of vocational education, increasing the number of employment services, and the promotion of employment are the job market strategies that the GPRS targets. Increased employment is to be attained by stimulating the SME development and the implementation of public works programs. This however does not go well with the IMF and World Bank as the [May 28, 2002 JSA](#) warns:- “The staffs urge the government to reconsider government-run active labor market programs, such as public works schemes, which are probably not the most efficient method to promote employment given Albania’s institutional capacity constraints.”

The GPRS recognizes the need for a targeted and inclusive social protection strategy. Albania is developing an active social service policy (policy for the development of the social capital) as opposed to a passive policy (policy for alleviating the consequences of the transition). The social care program would imply full coverage of the territory with social services, and the increase of the number of the social services in the relevant institutions and their qualitative improvement. The IMF and World Bank similarly warn against committing to fully merge the rural and urban pension schemes for self-employed workers.

BANGLADESH

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Article 38 of the [Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh](#) states thus:- “Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interests of morality or public order.” Official authorization is however required before any group of workers can form or join trade unions, as per the Industrial Relations Ordinance of 1969. The law also stipulates that up to 30 percent of the workforce must sign up before a particular workplace can be unionized. Workers in the railway, postal, telegraph, telephone, police force, military, and managerial grades of civil servants are prohibited from belonging to unions. Of the eight ILO core conventions, Bangladesh has not ratified convention No. 138 on Child labor.

There are thousands of unions operating in Bangladesh leading to various degrees of inter-union rivalry. According to the [US Department of State](#) (2002) an estimated 15 percent of some 5,450 unions are affiliated with the 25 officially registered National Trade Union (NTU) centers. In 1999, some 4.45 percent of the labor force belonged to unions (RAMA). Union affiliation to political parties is not uncommon. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) has five affiliates in the country - Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC), Bangladesh Jatyatabadi Sramik Dal (BJSD), Bangladesh Mukto Sramik Federation (BMSF), Jatio Sramik League (JSL) and Jatiya Sramik Party (JSP). In between them they represent over three-quarters of a million workers. The Bangladesh Sanjunkta Sramic Federation (BSSF) is affiliated to the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). The Bangladesh Employers’ Federation represents business interests.

The Employment of Labor (Standing Orders) Act, the Industrial Relations Ordinance, and the Factories Act do not apply in the country's EPZs, which in effect is a violation of the workers’ right to freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively, and set forth wage and hour and occupational safety and health standards. The Bangladesh

Not everything glitters in Bangladeshi EPZs

Many employers in the zones take advantage of the absence of trade unions to commit violations of international labor standards: sexual harassment, physical violence, unpaid overtime, child labor, non-compliance with minimum wage regulations, deplorable safety conditions etc.

ICFTU Annual Report on Violations of Trade Unions Rights, Brussels, 2003

Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA), charged with the role of enforcing EPZ regulations, has introduced welfare committees in which management and employees’ representatives address workers’ grievances. The [2003 ICFTU Annual Report on Violations of Trade Unions Rights](#) notes that, faced with the threat of losing trade preferences for its exports to the US and Canadian markets, the government has announced that unions will be allowed in the zones as from January 1, 2004.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Bangladesh's I-PRSP, titled "[A National Strategy for Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction and Social Development](#)" was finalized and submitted to the World Bank and IMF in March 2003. According to the [June 5, 2003 JSA](#), "A large number of stakeholders, including the grassroots poor, nongovernmental and community organizations, the private sector, trade unions, government, academia, research organizations, donors, and other public community leaders, were consulted over an eighteen-month period at various stages of the document's preparation." This was after an initial I-PRSP had been prepared in April 2002.

In a number of correspondences with labor groups operating in Bangladesh, the consensus is that the level of engagement with the unions was and continues to be superficial⁷. The unions were eventually invited to the 2-hour kick-off informational meeting when the PRSP process was entering its drafting stage. Union concerns have mainly concerned establishing an export earnings fund to improve conditions in the garment sector, the issue of freedom of association in the EPZs, the question of democratic labor laws, job creation, job losses due to privatization, and also the need to have monies to pay workers being laid off from factories their due severances. Without offering policy alternatives, the BSSF submission to the authorities decries the negative effects of structural adjustment - the main ones being loss of employment; and withdrawal of agricultural subsidies.

In January 2003, the ICFTU sponsored a 3-day workshop with the Bangladesh affiliates on how unions could best get involved in the PRSP process. In June 2003 the government declined a request by the ILO Dhaka office to provide assistance on involving a broader audience in the PRSP development process (including supporting dialogue forums and training for various organizations that might be interested in participating in the process), which the.

According to Md. Mojibur Rahman Bhuiyan⁸,

The voice of the poor should be heard. Only poor people can say what they need, what are the strategies to be followed to eradicate poverty. We need to establish social justice, we need to create jobs, we need the rule of law, not terrorism, we need fair trade not smuggling and bribery, we need honest and dedicated civil servants, good governance and accountability on the part of govt. and above all participation of people in building their own fate. Only democratic development can eradicate poverty. Consultations and involvement of genuine organization of poor people can only provide suggestions for democratic development.

⁷ The BMSF leadership claims it wrote to World Bank and IMF Dhaka offices requesting for involvement in the PRSP process but got no response. Further information is provided by Robert Wayss, Solidarity Center representative in Bangladesh on June 5 and June 9, 2003.

⁸ BMSF General Secretary. The paper - Participation of Civil Society in "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Annual Budget." by BMSF, Bangladesh - is available on the ICFTU website <http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991216316&Language=EN>

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

“... the strategy aims at expanding decent employment opportunities through both wage and self employment,” notes the I-PRSP. The paper is emphatic that while growth will be pursued, “several direct interventions will be made to make the process more employment-friendly in the short run.” Agro processing and information technology are seen as potential

avenues for realizing this objective. Promoting employment friendly private investments; strengthening special and targeted employment programs for the vulnerable poor; and skills upgrading are major policies highlighted. Labor-intensive infrastructure programs like public works

The importance of labor relations is recognized in Bangladeshi I-PRSP

The strategy “would broaden the social dialogue on labor policies to include dispute settlements along with issues related to skills development, social protection, productivity, gender discrimination, and child labor.” Elimination of child labor is another problem mentioned in the strategy. Measures to curb the rampant practice include ensuring work for an adult member of the family or provision of a compensatory income. In cases of extreme poverty where the child cannot afford education, the strategy offers a “learn-and-earn methodology” in which “students of appropriate ages” will be offered education and at the same time be allowed to work for reduced hours.

and micro enterprise development (in conjunction with NGOs) are other interventions in this regard. The twin problems of educated youth unemployment and lack of women entrepreneurship are to be tackled through carefully designed credit and support services. Likewise informal sector focused policies like entrepreneurial skills development, infrastructure support, provision of credit are some of the actions to be undertaken. In the area of education, the strategy puts emphasis on vocational and technical education.

The SME sector is viewed as a key contributor to pro-manufacturing growth. The government’s overall approach is intended to be through the removal of barriers that make it harder for SMEs to thrive. Because targeted lending has been unsuccessful in the past, a reform in the financial and fiscal sectors is envisaged as a way of addressing credit problems.

BENIN

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

In Article 30 of its [Constitution](#), the Republic of Benin reaffirms the respect of workers’ rights. Besides all eight ILO core conventions have been ratified. The labor code - Loi n° 98-004 of January 27, 1998 - allows for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. The Ministry of Public Works, Labor and Administrative Reform enforces this and other relevant labor laws. Workers’ representatives are included in the Benin Economic and Social Council which was established in 1994. The *Conseil National du Patronat du Bénin* represents employers’ interests.

Major Trade Union Federations in Benin

Trade Union Federation	Number of Members	International Affiliation
<i>Centrale des Syndicats Autonomes du Bénin (CSA)</i>	51,000 (Dec. 1999)	ICFTU
<i>Union Nationale des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Bénin (UNSTB)</i>	40,000 (Dec. 1994)	ICFTU
<i>Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Bénin (CGTB)</i>		WCL
<i>Confédération générale des travailleurs du Bénin (COSI)</i>		WCL
<i>Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Bénin (CSTB)</i>		
<i>Centrale de Syndicats du Prive et de l'Informel du Bénin (CSPIB)</i>		
<i>Centrale des Syndicats Unis du Bénin (CSUB)</i>		

Source : ILO; union membership is provided by the ICFTU

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

[Benin's PRSP](#) was completed in December 2002 after a process that the authorities classified as “consultative and participatory.” This was made possible through an institutionalized mechanism called the National Commission for Development and the Fight Against Poverty (CNDLP), whose membership was drawn from various sections of the Benin society.

The CSA was invited to participate in the PRSP preparation process, although “trade union federations did not play a major role,” as the union was only invited to only two meetings/sessions. According to the leadership of the UNSTB lack of capacity within the UNSTB and CSA was mentioned as a major constraint to unions’ effective participation as well as the ability “to develop policies and to disseminate the arguments among the shop stewards and local leadership⁹.”

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The PRSP rests on four main pillars: (i) strengthening the macroeconomic framework over the medium-term; (ii) developing human development and environmental

The PRSP is to our satisfaction, says Benin labor leader

“Trade union federations have not participated in the PRSP in the manner expected. This frustration, although legitimate, is mitigated by the fact that a number of the concerns of the Benin-CSA appear in the final version of the Benin document.”

Mr. Guillaume Attiobé. Secretary General CSA

⁹ Based on an interview between Peer Coret and Nicodeme Assogba/Mathieu Ayelabola in Cotonou, April 2003.

management; (iii) strengthening good governance and institutional capacity; and (iv) improving employment or income-generating opportunities for the poor and strengthening their capacity to participate in decision making and production.

Constraints facing agriculture; rural urban migration; lack of professionalism in the informal sector; and the mismatch between labor supply and demand are cited as the major causes of unemployment. The PRSP recognizes that “the best way to reduce poverty is to provide people with the opportunity to earn incomes through participation in the production process.” The employment policy so formulated is meant to create favorable and sustainable conditions for the achievement of full employment.

The strategy places TEVT second to basic education in priority. Access to TEVT will be increased by enhancing the existing infrastructure in the sector and by strengthening pre-vocational training at all levels of the educational system. The proposed measures include professionalizing traditional higher education through the introduction of specialized degree programs, continuing the experimentation of with dual learning and extending it, increasing the availability of on the job training, developing new programs consistent with labor market demand, integrating women into traditionally male occupations by promoting women’s access to technical education and vocational training, and rehabilitating and/or constructing and equipping TEVT schools. The quality of TEVT will be increased by introducing teachers to new training methods, recruiting teaching staff, training supervisory and monitoring staff, and developing partnerships with the private sector. Institutional reforms will involve improved planning, organization and management of the system, the creation of an equitable school map, and the finalization of the ten-year program.

“The sector strategy also aims at improving the higher education capacity to meet labor market demand while promoting equal opportunities.” Planned initiatives include TEVT reform, increased access and improvements in quality and institutional framework. The traditional apprenticeship system is to be formalized and streamlined through a training strategy, with young people as the primary beneficiaries. Promotion of research, and the introduction of short and more relevant professional courses are the main components of changes in reforming the secondary and tertiary education systems.

Benin’s industrial and investment policy is hinged on SMEs. As such, policies towards encouraging private sector-led development and SME operations are variously contained in the strategy. Income generating activities are to be strengthened through improved access to micro finance/credit by enterprising women, craftsmen, and small farmers.

BOLIVIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Of the eight ILO core conventions, Bolivia has not ratified the two relating to the prohibition of child labor. The General Labor Act, dating back to 1942, grants the right to form or join unions, with prior government authorization. This right as well as the right to strike is however denied to public sector workers, although in practice most civilian government workers are unionized. No union is allowed to organize in a workplace where another union already exists. The main national federation is the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)-affiliated *Central Obrera Boliviana* - Bolivian Labor Federation (COB); under whose umbrella up to 50 percent of all workers employed in the formal economy are organized. The other federation is the World Confederation of Labor (WCL)-affiliated

Corriente de Renovación Independiente y Solidaridad Laboral (CRISOL). For a long time the COB had the *de facto* authority to negotiate salaries, minimum wages, and other work conditions each year on behalf of all workers employed in state-owned enterprises. It is only with

Percentage of labor force in unions	16.4% (1994)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	11.1% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	Yes
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes

Source: * RAMA; ** ILO

the privatization of most of these enterprises, that COB's role has been scaled down giving way to decentralized bargaining. Most unions are politically inclined and most political parties have labor committees. Cooperative miners, truckers, indigenous groups, women groups, informal sector workers, indigenous and subsistence farmers have strong lobby groups. The *Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*- the Single Trade Union Confederation of Rural Workers of Bolivia (CSUTCB) is one such a confederation of agricultural workers and small farmers. The Catholic Church is an active player in Bolivia's economic and social landscape.

The enactment of the Popular Participation Law in part led to ceding of authority to the 311 municipal governments, putting them in charge of managing the supply of public services. Popular participation and administrative decentralization have also contributed to a much more visible participation of civil society in resource allocation by way of putting in place participatory planning mechanisms through which rural communities and indigenous peoples took part in decision making.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Trade unions were treated as any other CSO during the formulation of the [*Estrategia Boliviana de Reducción de la Pobreza*](#) (EBRP), Bolivia's PRSP. A first National Dialogue on Bolivia Towards the 21st Century in October 1997 kick started Bolivia's formulation of a poverty plan. Under the office of the Vice President, the UNDP coordinated much of the process which civil society criticized for the little attention paid to preparation time

(documents not circulated in time) and lack of transparency. Nevertheless, a year later the *Propuesta Contra la Pobreza*, a document outlining public policy responses to poverty in the country was produced. COB and CSUTCB, among others, issued open letters to the government outlining "their concerns and conditions for engaging the Second National Dialogue" and published them widely. Common elements between their declaration and other NGO networks included having timely access to the same official information as other actors, e.g. donors; participating in the design of the methodology of the dialogue and in defining its focus and content; and participating in the monitoring and evaluation of policies agreed in the Dialogue. These rights were publicly accepted by the Minister of Finance at a meeting with NGO's on December 7, 1999.¹⁰

Due to the narrow consultative process in National Dialogue I, National Dialogue II held in 2000 was more inclusive of stakeholders. A Steering Committee and a technical Secretariat were set up by government to over see National Dialogue II. COB was the representative of social organizations in the Steering Committee. The UNDP earmarked some \$300,000 towards civil society initiatives for popular consultations. The *Consulta de la Sociedad Civil* and coordinated by the *Comité Nacional de Enlace* (National Liaison Committee) was set up as a means of ensuring that civil society organizations made an input into the PRSP process. The Jubilee 2000 Bolivia Network (of which COB was a member) as well as the *Consulta de la Sociedad Civil* were to play leading roles in marshalling civil society participation. Inputs from the National Dialogue II were useful in producing the full PRSP, which was approved by Cabinet in February 2001. The [May 10, 2001 JSA for Bolivia](#) notes that as a result of workshops to discuss the PRSP, the document was revised in several areas. The JSA also indicates that plans were made for extensive follow-up of the PRSP through existing social oversight channels at the municipal levels, and newly created agencies at the departmental and national levels; and that the PRSP review would be formalized in the new National Dialogue Law to be discussed further in the Congress.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

High unemployment rates, insufficient job opportunities, and low wages were problems that were identified at Dialogue I and II as well as the "Government Listens" Workshop. The EBRP notes, "From the standpoint of the poor, however, the problems of poverty are exacerbated in

Bolivia's Intensive Employment Program (PIE) targets unskilled labor

The Economic Recovery Program (PRE) has suggested implementing the Intensive Employment Program (PIE). The purpose of this program is to generate employment for unskilled labor currently unemployed and located in urban and peripheral urban areas in Bolivia's various departments. The program currently has US\$20 million, of which US\$8 million comes from the Telecommunications Fund and US\$12 million comes from international cooperation. Administration is entrusted to the FNDR.. The PIE is creating employment in the cities of El Alto, Cochabamba and La Paz. It is estimated that a total of 40,000 direct jobs and 12,000 indirect jobs will be created in a period of 6 to 8 months.

¹⁰ "The Bolivia Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: A Preliminary Analysis of the Opportunities for Civil Society Participation"; Report for DFID by Sean Coventry, December 1999; p.12
[http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/Networks/ESSD/icdb.nsf/D4856F112E805DF4852566C9007C27A6/ADD34E8B F91BBFA18525688E0063F845/\\$FILE/bolivia+prsp.pdf](http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/Networks/ESSD/icdb.nsf/D4856F112E805DF4852566C9007C27A6/ADD34E8B F91BBFA18525688E0063F845/$FILE/bolivia+prsp.pdf)

particular as the result of insufficient stable opportunities for wage-earning and self-employed jobs, which in turn reflects the labor market's incapacity to absorb the increasing supply of labor, which affects women above all."

The EBRP has four strategic components: (a) enhanced employment and income opportunities; (b) building the productive capabilities of the poor; (c) enhanced security and protection; and (d) promotion of social integration and grassroots participation. To expand employment opportunities and incomes for the poor, the BPRS proposes strategic actions and specific policies relating to: (i) promoting rural development; (ii) encouraging development of micro- and small enterprises; (iii) developing micro financing; (iv) supporting technological assistance; (v) increasing the road infrastructure; and (vi) expanding income-earning opportunities for Bolivian citizens as asset owners.

As a way of ensuring improvements in higher education, government has created a Higher Education Quality Improvement Fund (*Fondo de Mejoramiento de la Calidad—FOMCALIDAD*) and the National Council of Higher Education Accreditation (*Consejo Nacional de Acreditación de la Educación Superior—CONAES*) with the objective of strengthening and improving the performance of public universities.

In the area of social protection programs, actions will include the implementation of the National Plan for Gradual Eradication of Child Labor actions, coordinated between the Vice Ministry of Gender, Generational and Family Matters and the Social Management Units of the prefectures as well as the Municipal Ombudsperson's Offices. "Programs will be created for children and adolescents to reduce high rates of mistreatment, abandonment, drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, job exploitation and other factors that can keep children and adolescents from fully exercising their rights, affecting their health and overall development," notes the EBRP.

Under policies and actions to improve opportunities for women government intends to review labor legislation with respect to domestic work, temporary work and prohibitions on women's work, the objective being the elimination of the legal and regulatory barriers in the way of women's equal access to opportunities and capabilities.

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

All eight ILO core conventions have been ratified by Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Freedom of association is guaranteed in the constitutions of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the Republika Srpska (RS). The two entities have separate labor laws, and so does the district of Brcko. There is no ministerial function at BiH level to represent the government of BiH in ILO, OECD and in bilateral labor agreements, due to the decentralization of labor policy to the two entities. The BiH Law on Associations and Foundations, adopted in December 2001 does not have provisions for registering a union federation at BiH level. Union membership in the Federation and RS tend to be ethnically

based, except in the district of Brcko where a multiethnic union was established in 2000. Unionization rates in the formal sector are as high as 70 percent in the Federation. While the *Savez Sindikata Republike Srpske* or the Confederation of Trade Unions (SSRS) organizes workers in RS, the *Savez Samostalnih Sindikata Bosne i Hercegovine* or the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (SSSBiH) does the same in FBiH, although it has intentions of organizing in both entities. The SSSBiH is the legal successor of the former trade union confederation of Socialist Republic of BiH (ex-Yugoslavia) that re-registered in 1991 and changed its name to the present one, while SSRS was founded in 1992. However there are negotiations towards closer cooperation (and possible merger) of the two confederations as a step towards affiliation to the International Confederation of Free trade unions (ICFTU)¹¹.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

? [The office of the BiH Coordinator for PRSP](#), in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, was established at the beginning of 2002 by the decision of the Council of Ministers. PRSP coordination offices for RS and the Federation were subsequently created.

Consultations with civil society were initiated in February 2002 and trade unions were invited to participate in the Development Strategy BiH - PRSP process. In April some 50 trade union representatives, took part in consultations organized by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations. In May the Office of the BiH Coordinator for PRSP held a round table jointly with the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of BiH and the Confederation of Trade Unions of RS on "Poverty, Unemployment and Labor Rights." In May unions in the two entities and the ICFTU organized a conference on the process of privatization in BiH. The unions have been invited to other thematic consultations dealing with the problems of retirees, unemployed workers, social policy, and so on. In February and March of 2003 meetings between labor unions and the BiH Development Strategy – PRSP – were held in Banja Luka, Mostar, Sarajevo and Brcko.

In this series of consultations trade unions put across their desire to play a more active role in the PRSP process. They contended that unemployment remained the leading cause of poverty and therefore job creation ought to be central in the PRSP. Other views focused on the following: (i) micro credits for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises; (ii) consideration should be given to social protection

<p style="text-align: center;">BiH unions support poverty reduction and speedy privatization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trade unions will support a type of strategy whose main goal is the actual reduction of poverty, in which an economic policy and economic measures are proposed that will result in the fastest possible employment and reduction of poverty. • The trade unions are not opposed to the continuation of privatization in principle, considering that it is at the halfway point and it is not possible to stop its progress, although our expectations have not been met thus far... • Among measures to reform the banking system, we are proposing the following: Accelerate privatization of banks and stimulate a reduction in their number... <p>Excerpts from the joint SSRS/SSSBiH position paper on the I-PRSP</p>
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¹¹ "Joint Roof" negotiations between two confederations under mediation of the ICFTU are on going. The separate applications for ICFTU membership by both confederations are still pending awaiting the outcome of these negotiations.

for the poor and unemployed in the country¹²; (iii) human resource development has to be given attention; (iv) a reorientation of the privatization process was called for - during privatization workers should be a priority and not a victim, and that the process should be transparent; (vi) protection of labor rights and respect for the minimum wage to be guaranteed; and (vii); a need for labor law changes in Brcko District.

In March 2003, the confederations submitted a joint document titled, “Opinion and Commentary on the Development Strategy for BiH – PRSP and Proposals for its Improvement” to the Office of the BiH Coordinator for PRSP. The paper had a comprehensive coverage, underscoring the positions taken in above consultation meetings. The issues included the need for consensus building and involvement of unions at all stages of the PRSP process. Job creation is another strategy the unions wanted amplified in the document. They called for caution with regard to privatization, and that jobs should be protected. However, while approving of speedy privatization of banks and a reduction in their number, they remained opposed to "quick and naïve" privatization of telecommunications, the electricity industry, public utilities, gas, forestry, and mining. The BiH Telecommunications Trade Union recommended ERONET's immediate return to state hands. Likewise, regarding the process of privatizing the electricity power generation, the Union of Electric Power Industry Workers of BiH would rather first have a law in place that guaranteed majority state ownership. Better wages and social protection were also argued for. "Without safe, concrete, and obligatory social programs, the unions cannot and will not support the Strategy," the paper warned.

On other labor issues, BiH unions insisted that international and European standards of labor law and employment be included. They called for the enactment of a labor and employment law at BiH level. Free movement of labor within the two entities was also recommended.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

[The first draft of the Development Strategy BiH – PRSP](#) contains a chapter on labor market issues. A labor law at BiH level is to be passed covering various aspects. A national agency that will represent BiH in international forums is being mooted. Adoption of a new law on labor inspectorate “based on modern market standards” is also being considered, supposedly based on ILO standards. An Action Plan against Human Trafficking is to be implemented. Introduction of measures to encourage the geographic mobility of workforce in and between entities is another item under consideration in the new legislation. A reduction of wage taxes is being considered as a means of reducing public expenditures and at the same time stimulating labor demand over time. The intention to “ease minimum wage requirements and abolish the compulsory seniority salary supplement ...” could meet opposition from trade unions since they would rather have higher wages in place for their members. The development of SMEs is under consideration.

¹² Both entities in BiH have an unemployment benefit system and active labor market programs for the unemployed.

The work of employment service providers in each entity are also being strengthened in order to enable them play a more active role in the labor market. Provision of subsidies to companies willing to hire young people is one strategy government intends to apply to create youth employment. Public works schemes are under consideration. In case employers are unable to pay for redundancies, a fund to assist them do so is being muted. While the existing model of harmonization of pension will be preserved, early retirement will be avoided and exemptions from payment of contributions will cease. Introducing new mechanisms for financing pension funds are being considered. The World Bank pension reform's roadmap over the medium term leading is aimed at making administrative and policy changes to the existing system; preparing for a systemic Pay As You Go reform; and drafting "preventive" legislation on voluntary private pensions to regulate them and avoid proliferation of pyramid funds.

Privatization of strategic companies form part of the draft PRSP. Selling the "remaining major strategic companies, telecommunication operators, electric power generation and distribution companies" is to go ahead.

CAMBODIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Article 36 of [the constitution of the Royal Government of Cambodia](#) guarantees the right to form and to be members of trade unions, which rights are further reaffirmed by the 1997 Labor Law. Save for ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labor Cambodia, has ratified the other seven core conventions.

Cambodia has a large subsistence economy with the majority eking a living from rice farming. Unions are mainly in the garment and footwear industries, but most workers have little or no knowledge of trade unions or of their labor rights. There are ten union federations mostly operating in the garment and footwear industries, with independent ones being in the minority. For example the Cambodian Union Federation (CUF) was formed by the [Cambodian People's Party](#) (CPP); the Cambodian Federation of Trade Unions (CAFTU), was created in 1979 by the communist government; while the Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC) was formed with the aid of [Sam Rainsy Party](#), the principal opposition party.

In February 2003, seven trade union federations signed a Memorandum of Understanding culminating in the formation of the Cambodian Trade Union Coordination Council (CTUCC), which confederation represents about 197,000 workers out of some 220,000 organized workers¹³.

¹³ Information from the ICFTU Asia and Pacific Regional Organization's website <http://www.icftu-apro.org/news/APLabour121.html>

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The preparation of the [National Poverty Reduction Strategy \(NPRS\)](#), Cambodia's PRSP started in May 2000 and an [I-PRSP](#) was produced five months later. The NPRS took over two years to complete, with the final version coming out in December 2002. The General Secretariat of the Council for Social Development (GSCSD), an inter-ministerial body chaired by the Minister of Planning, coordinated the exercise. Fourteen other line ministries including the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSALVY) were part of the GSCSD.

In April 2002 and later in October 2000, NGOs organized their own forums both of which were aimed at having inputs into the PRSP. Being new and weak, Cambodian unions were not initially in the picture. Unions in the garment and teaching sectors only got involved after intervention by the ILO and the [American Center for International Labor Solidarity \(ACILS\)](#). These institutions' capacity-building programs as well as discussions with government officials and donors responsible for facilitating the PRSP process led to the inclusion of workers' representatives in national consultations in August 2002. Prior to this, partly in response to their non-invitation to the consultative meeting, two trade union organizations together with some NGOs, farmers organizations, and students' associations were part of some one thousand demonstrators in front of the Parliament on June 18, 2002.

In June 2002, the ILO organized a forum for union leaders from the Coalition of Cambodia Apparel Worker Development Union (CCAWDU); Worker Union for Economic Development (WUED); National Independent Federation of Textile Union of Cambodia (NIFTUC); Cambodian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (CFITU); Cambodian Union Federation (CUF); Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC); Cambodian Labor Organization (CLO); ACILS and the Star Kampuchea. In this particular seminar, union participants' views were that they did not wish to have labor flexibility and privatization of public utilities feature in the PRSP. Trade union participants strongly demanded from the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Planning, their consultation in the process of PRSP formulation which was agreed to in principle. As a follow-up, ILO wrote to the Under-Secretary requesting invitation of two trade union representatives, who were elected as chair and vice-chair of the trade union committee on PRSP.

In another ILO-sponsored event in July 2002, employers' and workers' representatives identified corruption and lack of transparency in governance; a weak judicial system, loop holes in the law and poor enforcement; low education and skills; and lack of fair distribution of support to the poor as the greatest contributors to poverty. In terms of poverty reduction strategies, they singled out the reform of the judiciary and enforcement systems; introduction of an anti-corruption law; consistent enforcement of the law; inclusion of business and workers in the planning process; enhancement of the consultative process; introduction of an effective labor dispute resolution system; and education programs for management and labor on better industrial relations.

Following this series of discussions, in August 2002, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific subsequently submitted to the government a report entitled "Generating Decent

Work for Poverty Reduction in Cambodia - the Voice of Workers, Employers and the Government” as an input in the PRSP process.

The NPRS sums up consultations with unions in the preparation of the document as follows:-

Soon after the August 2002 national workshop a number of trade unions formed a ‘Union Committee for PRSP.’ The committee became actively involved in the process; the committee met monthly, presented their views at the final workshop, prepared comments on second draft of the NPRS. Their contributions focused on labor conditions (especially related to reducing minimum wages), employment issues, and corruption.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

Cambodia’s NPRS contains some very labor-friendly provisions. Employment creation takes a center stage and so do workers’ rights. For instance the document states:- “...companies in Cambodia must pay relatively high minimum wage...and improved conditions for workers (gender equity, health, safety, and appropriate wage levels) are also key objectives... the development of better industrial relations within the established legal framework is also needed.” A labor export policy and labor intensive industrialization are part of the paper. The government also foresees the participation of poverty-related civil society NGOs in monitoring and evaluating the NPRS.

The NPRS underscores the ILO’s position that creation of jobs and improving working conditions will be key to poverty reduction. Government policies in this area are expected to be through facilitating private sector development, expanding exports and increasing tourism. US\$1 billion over the three year period is earmarked for job creation opportunities and education, while another US\$102 million and US\$174 million respectively is for institutional strengthening and governance and reducing vulnerability.

Cambodia’s PRSP earmarks out trade union role

“The RGC looks to the private sector to play a crucial role in poverty reduction, especially, through job creation. The private sector is therefore expected to be actively involved in the process of monitoring and evaluating the NPRS. Through such organizations as the Chamber of commerce and Worker Federations/Trade Unions, the private sector is expected to participate actively in meetings, workshops and national poverty forums.”

In the area of social protection and the fight against human trafficking, government strategies involve promoting tripartite dialogue; improving working conditions through labor inspections; disseminating labor law to both employers and employees and enforcing labor law; monitoring working conditions in private enterprises in cooperation with the ILO; training labor on workplace relations; and helping to establish Council of Arbitration of labor conflict. Prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile children is another strategy. Awareness campaigns; development of guidelines, policy and regulations; and establishment of care centers to deal with juvenile delinquents are some key measures contained in the NPRS. Elimination of child labor; rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration for people victimized by trafficking through law enforcement; and increased coordination mechanisms

for combating sexual trafficking are also to be done. Despite acknowledging their contribution to poverty reduction, the paper underscores the need for Foreign Direct Investment and export activities to pay attention to labor standards, environmental regulations and accountability mechanisms.

Under income generation, measures include promoting non-formal education and vocational training for the poor (especially women); promoting and support innovative savings and credit/micro-finance for the poor; improving understanding of informal sector and apply measures to regularize it; in close collaboration with key ministries, employers associations and unions identify jobs for urban poor women and men including community and household level, among others. Additional TVET institutions to underserved provinces is foreseen, with the private sector playing a leading role while government does facilitate the process. Curriculum modernization into subjects like core science and core science and technology areas, business studies and languages in secondary, finance and investment analysis, business management and accounting are also foreseen.

Mainstreaming gender issues in all government departments through equal access rights of women to economic resources and opportunities and their equitable participation in national decision-making, development, planning and poverty reduction processes forms another critical area in the NPRS. Income generating opportunities women entrepreneurs and workers through micro-enterprises and credit schemes is the main area of action in this aspect.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

All eight ILO core conventions have been ratified by the Democratic Republic of Congo. Trade union rights are enshrined in the new transitional [Constitution](#) enacted on April 4, 2003. However the political turmoil, the informalization of the economy, falling real wages and the economic mismanagement that have plagued the country for much of the post independence period have not spared trade unions. There are several union operating in the Congo, the largest ones being the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)-affiliated *Confédération Démocratique du Travail* or the Democratic Confederation of Labor (CDT) and the *Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Congo* or National union of Congolese Workers (UNTC), whose total membership is close to 600,000. Unions often assert that employers ignore labor laws and neither does the government enforce them¹⁴.

¹⁴ ICFTU Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union rights, 2003.

Major Labor Federations in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Trade Union Federation	Number of Members	International Affiliation
<i>Confédération Démocratique du Travail (CDT)</i>	200,000 (Dec. 1999)	ICFTU
<i>Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Congo (UNTC)</i>	326,452 (Feb. 2000)	ICFTU
<i>Confédération Syndicale du Congo Démocratique (CSC)</i>		WCL
<i>Organisation des travailleurs unis du Congo (OTUC)</i>		
<i>Syndicats des Travailleurs Libres (STL)</i>		
<i>Conscience des Travailleurs et des Paysans du Congo (CTP)</i>		

Source : ILO; union membership is provided by the ICFTU

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The CDT, upon notification by the ICFTU, wrote to the Ministries of Planning and of the Economy requesting to participate in the PRSP process. Despite various reminders, no invitation to date had been extended to the federation¹⁵. It is the intention of government to create a National Poverty Reduction Charter to formalize the coordination of poverty reduction strategies. The Charter will define each player's rights and obligations at all levels of the poverty reduction strategy process. Since civil society is expected to play a pivotal role, trade unions could take advantage of this opening to ensure that government's projects and programs are contracted out in the following earmarked areas: Health; Education; Environment; Safe water and electricity; Equality between men and women; Food; Good governance and peace; Leisure; Employment and human resources; Financial resources or cash income; and Road and socioeconomic infrastructure. However, the effectiveness of the poverty-reduction strategy depends on the existing as well as potential political, economic, and social risks in the country.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

[Congo's I-PRSP](#) strategies are based on three pillars, namely: (i) the restoration and consolidation of peace; (ii) macroeconomic stabilization and the stimulation of pro-poor growth; and (iii) community dynamics.

One problem that gets recognition is unemployment . For instance, in 2000, only 2 percent of the total population were employed! As a result, "the government has made job creation and sustainable income generation a short- and medium-term objective." Other related programs aimed at attracting investments and jobs include (i) creation of a favorable environment for private sector activity by establishing regular consultations between the government and the Congolese Entrepreneurs Federation (FEC); (ii) human resource

¹⁵ As per letter dated May 26, 2003 from the Mr. Mulamba Mbumba, President of the CDT.

development, through appropriate training tailored to the needs of the population; (iii) employment promotion and protection (Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, and the Social Security Institute (INSS)); (iv) support for employment-generating private initiatives (government, FEC, private enterprises, community dynamics); (v) mobilization of human resources for community and labor-intensive projects (grassroots organizations); and (vi) Establishment and application of a realistic wage policy (with the involvement of government, FEC, trade unions).

Development of a national strategy in the area of education and human resource development is aimed at improving the quality of teaching. Rehabilitating infrastructure and equipment in schools, centers of higher education, and universities; establishing vocational training; promoting technical, vocational, and scientific skills to ensure adequacy of education with employment and development; and rehabilitating professional training and extension institutes are also being considered.

ETHIOPIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Of the eight ILO core conventions, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has not ratified Conventions 29 (forced labor) and 182 (worst forms of child labor). [The constitution](#) provides for the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. The labor law is however not that generous - teachers and civil servants, including judges, prosecutors, security services, air transport and railway services, urban and inter-urban bus services, filling stations, banks and postal service workers are prevented from organizing unions¹⁶. The Labor Proclamation of 1993 particularly bars teachers and civil servants from engaging in trade unionism.

For years now, the government has been accused of interfering in the affairs of the 250,000-strong Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU)¹⁷, including effecting a leadership change in 1997. In its report, adopted by the International Labor Conference in 2002, the ILO's Committee on the Application of Standards devoted a special paragraph to Ethiopia in relation to Convention 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize. This is as a result of the state's detention of trade union leaders and interference with trade union rights. Dr. Taye Wolde-Semayat, President of the Ethiopian Teachers Association (ETA), incarcerated since 1996 was only freed in May 2002. A number of CETU and ETA leaders are in exile or in detention. CETU has vehemently denied any close links with the government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. For instance on November 2, 2001, it issued a press release condemning the imprisonment and sacking of labor leaders.

¹⁶ US Department of State. Ethiopia Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2002. Released March 31, 2003

¹⁷ In 1994, some 1.51 percent of the labor force belonged to unions (RAMA).

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Trade unions are mentioned as a stakeholder group in ‘The Consultative Process for the Preparation of PRSP (Ethiopia).’ Although the [August 27, 2002 JSA](#) describes the consultative process in preparing [Ethiopia’s PRSP: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program](#) as “deep and wide-ranging,” the involvement of trade unions was limited. The Ethiopian Economics Association (EEA) has helped facilitate participation of other CSOs in the PRSP process mainly through capacity building. CETU participated in the “PRSP Capacity Building and Civil Society Participation Labor Workshop” organized by the EEA. CETU’s major concerns have been the need for job protection, and privatization. Though the leadership initially intended to make a written submission of their views, it could not do so due to “the hurried nature of the process” and the person charged with doing so had left the union. CETU has not worked with the [Christian Relief and Development Association](#) (CRDA), the umbrella organization coordinating CSO response to the PRSP.

According to an Addis Ababa-based ILO official, CETU’s non-visibility in the PRSP process is two-fold:- (i) lack of capacity within the confederation; and (ii) its claim that the consultation process was insufficient. Two ILO fact-finding missions to Ethiopia in December 2002 and February 2003, more or less corroborated these assertions. As a result, a series of activities aimed at raising awareness and capacity building for the ILO’s tripartite constituents has been planned¹⁸.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The PRSP centers on agricultural-led industrialization; reforms in the judicial and civil services; governance; decentralization and empowerment; and capacity building, with the key sectoral areas being agriculture; food security; education; health; HIV/AIDS; roads; water and sanitation; private sector and export development; and macroeconomic policies.

With regard to labor relations, the PRSP intends to have in place necessary amendments in the law “to make it attractive to both local and foreign investors and enable employees to get benefits proportional to the growth of the entity for which they are working.” The establishment and growth of employers’ and labor associations is another strategic area of intervention. A National Labor Force Survey was also to have been carried out in 1999.

The ever increasing urban unemployment is to be tackled through the (i) design and implementation of extensive employment generation public works program through cash-for-work or food-for-work; (ii) provision of vocational and skill-training programs to promote self-employment and job creation; (iii) promotion of micro finance institutions in urban centers by facilitating access to working capital by promoting the establishment of community-managed savings, and credit cooperatives, micro finance institutions and community support mechanisms such as “*idir*” and “*iqub*”; (iv) promotion of community based rehabilitation programs for disadvantaged groups (elderly, handicapped, commercial sex workers, street children, orphans etc., with full participation of target groups and the surrounding

¹⁸ Based on internal ILO mission reports.

communities, CBOs and NGOs; (v) promotion of activities that are usually done by urban authorities and yet unutilized by the community (e.g. house to house solid waste collection and recycling), to be handled by unemployed citizens; and (vi) exploring and promoting self-employment schemes such as self-Employment & Enterprise Development Systems (SEEDS) in cooperation with NGOs and CBOs.

The PRSP mentions employment creating and income generating potentials of public employment generation and food for work schemes in rural areas, with the main focus being in the agricultural sector, which remains the backbone of the economy. Other related services intended to feed into the agricultural sector include technical and vocational training; and support to micro-finance institutions to improve rural financial services; micro- and small-scale enterprise development through industrial extension services.

Ethiopia's PRSP seeks to utilize labor-intensive growth processes

“Within the framework of the strategies enunciated above, accelerated and sustainable growth in Ethiopia can be brought about by utilising labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive production processes. This is more so for the agricultural sector than the other sectors. A labour-intensive agricultural development strategy, however, does not mean perpetuation of employment of unskilled labour force. An important mechanism that enables to introduce labour-intensive strategies and help to employ modern agricultural inputs and practices is the adoption of new agricultural technologies and the training of the agricultural labour force with effective skills.”

PRSP, page 51

In the area of human resources development, a recognition is made of the shortage of skilled/trained manpower in the economy. With regard to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TEVT), the government intends to increase enrolment from 25,000 to 130,000 by the end of the plan period, 2004/05. Other plans for TVET would include curricula modernization; skills upgrading for TVET teachers through in-service training; establishment of more TVET colleges; and introduction of a distance education program. Under Higher (Tertiary) Education, the program targets are to expand the undergraduate intake capacity of all higher education institutions in the country to reach 30,000 per annum by the end of 2004/05, and expand the postgraduate intake capacity of higher education institutions to reach 6,000 by 2004/05.

GEORGIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The [Constitution of Georgia](#) guarantees the right to form and join trade unions of one's choice. The Republic of Georgia has also ratified all ILO core conventions. The main trade union federation is the Georgian Trade Union Amalgamation (GTUA), a successor to the Soviet era union. Representing over 650,000 workers from 31 sector unions, the GTUA was affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in November 2000. Two other active sector unions - the Free Trade Union of Teachers of Georgia "Solidarity" (FTUTGS) and the Independent Trade Union of Metropolitan Employees – are not affiliated to the GTUA.

The basic law governing labor relations is the Labor Code of Georgia, a Soviet-era labor law that was amended by parliament in 1997. The new law on Trade Unions, the Law on The Rules for the Regulation of Collective Labor Disputes, and the Law on Collective agreements are other relevant laws. The GTUA stance against corruption, wage arrears, and government's perceived violation of union rights (mainly through harassment and intimidation of unionists) led to an uneasy relationship between the two for quite a while. The Palace of Culture, which had been a bone of contention since it was placed under the control of the Ministry of Defense in March 1992, was eventually returned to the GTUA in July 2002.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

? The Interim Document of the [Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth Program of Georgia](#) (PREGP) was produced in October 2000 and presented to the Executive Boards of the IMF and IDA the following December. The process towards the finalization of the full PREGP was slow – the initial target date of June 2002 was revised to October 2002 and the document was finally approved in June 2003.

Georgian unions actively participated in the PRSP discussions

“I made verbal censorious remarks at the meeting where the government presented an interim document of PRSP, concerning the insufficiency of the guarantees for unemployed people, minimum wage, I also stressed on the lack of transparency during the elaboration process of the document.”

Irakli Tugushi, Chairman GTUA, February 21, 2003

Upon requesting for participation in the PRSP process, the GTUA was officially invited by government in early 2001. Thereafter the GTUA conducted several meetings to popularize the PRSP among the workers throughout the country. The GTUA continues to participate in various PRSP meetings. Its representative took part in two PRSP forums held in Moscow and Budapest. In its [May 30, 2002 progress report](#), the PRGP Secretariat acknowledges, “One of the significant preconditions for the success of the Program lies in holding meetings and consultations with representatives of civil society, NGOs, business circles, trade unions, etc.” – an acknowledgement of the importance attached to partnership with non-state actors.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

The Interim PREGP address a number of labor related issues include labor law reforms, pensions reforms, and privatization of state-owned enterprises. Preparation and adoption of a new labor code is foreseen, i.e. “establishment of new labor relations answering to market economy requirements,” an anecdote for labor market liberalization which unions are apprehensive about. Wages policies will also be reviewed. Safety issues are to be tackled in line with the National Health Care Policy drafted and approved by the Government of Georgia in association with the World Health Organization. Labor migration is to be handled through the adoption of a new law. Under the auspices of the Georgian Social Investments Fund (GSIF), a \$28.3 million grant from the German Bank for Reconstruction (KfW) is

earmarked for the project titled “Employment program in Borjomi-Kharagauli National park zone.”

There are plans for reforms in social protection, including the pension systems, “because the social protection for unemployed is extremely low and there is practically no hope that registration will assist job seeking.” Cash and non-cash social protection mechanisms for the unemployed and disabled are also planned. The provision of training and retraining for unemployed persons provide part of the strategy.

Speeding up the privatization process; restructuring of enterprises; and reducing the scales of the informal economy are some measures that are in the pipeline. Because “the majority of those employed are in the informal sector of economy, where the productivity and remuneration is very low and there are no social benefits or guarantees,” more attention is being paid to the promotion of small and medium business development.

GHANA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana](#) guarantees the right of workers to form or join trade unions, and provides a major building block for the social dialogue machinery. Save for Convention 138 on child labor, Ghana has ratified the rest of the ILO core conventions. The Industrial Relations Act, Act 299 of 1965 institutionalized the National Advisory Committee on Labor, a tripartite organ that advises the minister responsible for labor on all matters of policy on labor and labor relations in the country. Workers are represented by the Secretary-General and other officials of the Ghana Trades Unions Congress (TUC) as well as officials from Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), Ghana Registered Nurses Association (GRNA), Civil Servants Association (CSA) and Judicial Services Staff Association of Ghana (JUSSAG). Employers are represented by the Ghana Employers’ Association (GEA).

Trade unions have documented cases in which government has used the Industrial Relations Act (IRA) of 1965, the Trades Union Ordinance (TUO) of 1941 and the Emergency Powers Act of 1994 to violate trade union rights. Downsizing, privatization and the spiraling informal sector have led to a fall in union membership over the years. The TUC with a membership of about half a million drawn from 17 national unions remains the dominant federation, and is affiliated

Percentage of labor force in unions	13.2% (1994)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	25% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	Yes
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes
Source: * RAMA; ** ILO	

to the ICFTU. The Ghana Federation of Labor (GFL), affiliated to the World Confederation of Labor (WCL), represents some smaller unions. The TUC has also been able to organize

informal sector workers into its ranks mainly through efforts of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), Ghana's largest union.

On May 7, 2002, the Minister for Manpower Development and Employment introduced the Labor Bill. The purpose of this bill is "to bring the existing enactments on labor into conformity with the Constitution and the several International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions to which Ghana is a signatory and to consolidate the several pieces of enactment on the subject into one statute." One significant change will be the end of the monopoly that the TUC has enjoyed as the sole national federation. Any two or more workers in an undertaking will be able to form a trade union if they so wish. Two separate tripartite organs - the National Tripartite Committee and the National Labor Commission - are to be formed.

Because trade unions were consulted when the government decided to set up export processing zones (EPZ's), they ensured that labor legislation applies in the zones. A Garment village is being built at the Tema Export Processing Zone for 112 factories to operate under the Textile and Garment Initiative.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Ghana's unions have traditionally been politically and economically active. The TUC was involved in the [Structural Adjustment Programs Review Initiative](#) (SAPRI). As a result and using other channels, the unions were able to provide alternatives to some reform policies. The [Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2003-2005 An Agenda for Growth and Prosperity](#) identifies unions as a stakeholder category that would be part of the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the GPRS in order to reach the desired goal of poverty reduction. Counselling of its members would be part of the union role during the implementation phase, while assessing the effects on incomes and employment would fall under monitoring and evaluation.

In Ghana, responsibility for the PRSP rests with a Taskforce within the [National Development Planning Commission](#) (NDPC), under the mandate of the Ministry of Planning and Regional Cooperation. In June 2000, Ghana submitted its [Interim PRSP](#) which was okayed by the Board of the IMF and World Bank. Subsequently core teams were established to deal with the following five thematic areas:- macro economy; production and employment; human resource development and basic services; vulnerability and exclusion; and governance. It was the inputs from the core teams that were discussed at the National Economic Dialogue held on May 15, 2001. The first draft of the GPRS was done in late May 2001. This was followed by comments from government ministries, departments and agencies; consultation workshops with other stakeholders; and receipt of comments from major NGOs and CSOs. Regional consultations, and the involvement of parliament were also carried out.

Perhaps as a result of complaints from CSOs about the depth of consultations - which issue was also echoed in the [February 4, 2002 JSA of the PRSP Preparation Status Report](#) - the participation of non-state actors was significantly enhanced. The GPRS identifies the following role for trade unions at the formulation stage:- "Assessment of the role of organized labor; assessment of effects on employment levels; concerns on incomes." To a large extent,

this was carried out by the TUC. The TUC continued to take part in various fora including those organized by other CSOs. A tripartite meeting (Ghana Employers Association, unions, government) was also held. On the request of labor unions, the NDPC organized a one-day's forum for the unions and labor associations (Ghana Association of Teachers and the Ghana Registered Nurses' Association) in August 2001. In May and December 2002 as well as February 2003, the TUC took part in World Bank-organized workshops. In mid 2001, the government launched the Emergency Social Relief Program (ESRP) targeting the poorest regions of the country. A national committee comprising of government, the TUC, the Private Enterprise Foundation and the Ghana Association of Private Organizations and Development was constituted to administer this short term emergency program.

In September 2001, the TUC submitted to government a document titled "Views of the TUC on Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy." Though initially skeptical about Bank and Fund commitment to meaningful consultation, autonomy and independence of government to fashion their own PRS, and to debt rescheduling, the TUC addressed other key issues. While supporting government's initiatives that reduce poverty, the paper called for consistence in policy implementation and more meaningful engagement with the poor and civil society networks. On the macroeconomic framework, the paper noted that while inflation, high interest rates, and deficits do contribute to poverty, power relations and resource allocation that do play a bigger role have not been adequately addressed. Concern about adherence to Bank and Fund neo-liberal anti-poor orthodoxy pursued by Ghana and other African countries which "have not yielded any social and economic benefits to masses that suffer most from such policies" was also highlighted. The TUC warned against the planned privatization of water and electricity, liberalization and indiscriminate removal of subsidies. The paper also took an issue with the proposed privatization of the [Social Security and National Insurance Trust](#) (SSNIT) and would rather see its expansion in coverage as well as managerial restructuring instead. The TUC further called for the integration of labor standards in the GPRS since the "adoption and application of labor standards are at the core of poverty reduction and the promotion of social well-being." Equity policies through better salaries and wages were also mentioned. A call for the review of the tax structure was made in view of its bias against the poor. Special attention ought to be paid to women's employment and their provision with a special credit scheme and entrepreneurship.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

For the TUC, of all its submissions, the non-incorporation of workers' rights was one downside of the PRSP. Other areas were partially addressed.

The authorities hope to generate employment and enhance productivity through creating an enabling environment for private sector participation. One objective the GPRS puts forward is the attainment of adequate wage and self-employment opportunities for entrants into the labor market, including an emphasis on micro and small-scale enterprises and employment opportunities for women. Targets for employment creation include registration of the urban unemployed in 2002, while a National Manpower Development Plan is envisaged for 2004, banking on the 2001 pilot labor survey of households on occupation, income and expenditure, education and training facilities. Some of the elements to be highlighted in the

manpower development plan will include strategies for strengthening existing institutions to set standards and ensure quality training for apprentices; manpower projections by sector; national occupational safety and health policy for safe and healthy working environment; modernized public employment centers with career guidance and counseling services; determination of manpower needs in collaboration with stakeholders such as training institutions, industry and trade associations; modalities for absorbing unemployed youth; restructuring and upgrading the Labor Department; and labor law review “to enhance industrial growth.”

Cognizance is made of the need to ensure proper occupational risk identification and management through monitoring of work place health and safety. Efforts towards equipping the workforce in the informal sector with financial and management skills have been earmarked. Facilitating co-ordination and linkages between the formal and informal sectors of the economy; promoting technological proficiency; reforming the traditional apprenticeship system; and supporting organizations of persons with disabilities are other measures.

Social protection also forms a significant part of the GPRS. Some of the groups that are identified as disadvantaged include single mothers, children in difficult circumstances, including victims of child labor, street children, children living in institutions, children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, commercial sex workers, children and women suffering from sexual abuse, victims of harmful traditional practices, unskilled retrenched workers and the unemployed youth. The following targets have been set to be attained by 2005:- (i) street children reintegrated into mainstream society at

Determinants of growth and poverty reduction in Ghana

“Compared with other sub-Saharan African countries, in which per capita GDP fell by 0.3 percent per year during the past two decades, growth in Ghana has been largely positive (averaging 0.7 percent per year) and has contributed to a reduction in the level of poverty overall. Arguably, the most important factor contributing to growth has been a shift, from 1983 onward, away from administrative system of economic management to one more reliant on market forces. Policy reforms over the period helped to reduce fiscal deficits and inflation, improve infrastructure services, and shift relative prices and incentives toward tradables, exports in particular...The incidence in poverty in Ghana has fallen from the late 1980s onward, as growth contributed to poverty reduction through overall increased income and consumption levels that were only slightly offset by a modest rise in income inequality. Gains have not been shared by all regions, however, and have been smaller for the poorest segments of the society, in particular the rural poor.”

IMF Country Report No. 03/134. Ghana. Selected Issues. Washington DC, May 2003

10,000; (ii) new number of *trokosi* victims¹⁹ reintegrated into mainstream society at 2,000; and (iii) an increase in number of workers covered by social security schemes at 900,000 including informal sector workers. A regulatory framework for the operation of private social security

¹⁹ *Trokosi* is a form of slavery/bondage found among the Ewe ethnic group in the Volta Region in Eastern Ghana. It is a very old traditional system which is self-perpetuating. Under the *trokosi* system a debtor could give one of his daughters to his creditor to serve until the loan were repaid, in effect enslaving the girl to the creditor. Another means by which girls were enslaved was when a parent committed a crime or was perceived to have sinned against the gods in the community. A girl was given to the chief priest to "pacify" the gods. These girls and their children and their children's children would remain in perpetual bondage. The practice has been banned by law since early 1990s. NGOs have been actively involved in freeing these *trokosi*.

schemes is also planned. The GPRS proposes the expansion of social security schemes by 100,000 workers through increasing the effectiveness of the SSNIT and the introduction of a mutual health insurance scheme by SSNIT to cover at least 500,000 workers.

In the area of gender equity, “the strategy in the GPRS is to target women activities with support programs including credit, improved technological services and facilities, and skills upgrading in management and finance.” Women are also to be targeted in agro-processing particularly those already are in the extraction of shea butter, palm oil, groundnut oil, etc. While training and entrepreneurial skills development “could be free,” micro-credit, through the Women’s Special Micro-financing Fund of the Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs, will largely be market-based.

Introduction of entrepreneurial training at the universities, polytechnics and agricultural colleges is planned for. Support to investment oriented young graduates will be in the form of credit, technology, and access to markets and land. Entrepreneurial development will be focused through the pipeline Skills and Entrepreneurial Development Program by the [Ministry of Manpower and Development](#), with the support of the [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](#). On the other hand community-based apprenticeship scheme targeting barely literate young people is foreseen, while entrepreneurial development will target secondary and tertiary education leavers but are unemployed or wish to be self-employed. Emphasis will be on training and retraining, with emphasis on business management.

GUYANA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Going by the [Constitution of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana](#), co-operatives, trade unions and all socio-economic organizations of a national character are entitled to participate in the various management and decision making processes of the states and particularly in the political, economic, social and cultural sectors of national life. Freedom of assembly and association, and in particular freedom to form or belong to trade unions or other associations is guaranteed. Besides, all eight core conventions of the ILO have been duly ratified.

The main trade union federation, the Guyana Trades Unions Congress (TUC) is the umbrella organization for 22 affiliated unions of some 70,000 workers. It is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Guyanese unions have close links with political parties and the union leadership has always been politically active. The TUC retains ties with the [People’s National Congress](#) (PNC) which party was in power from 1964 to 1992. The Guyana Agricultural Workers’ Union (GAWU) which represents mostly sugar industry workers, together with other smaller unions, withdrew their affiliation from the TUC. The breakaway group is seen as comprising predominantly of allies of the ruling [People’s Progressive Party](#) (PPP). The Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry (CAGI) represents employers.

The 1999 Trade Unions Recognition Law, which requires employers to give automatic recognition to the union chosen by a majority of the workers in any workplace, has been slow in implementation. Depending on what the Ministry of Finance perceives as the likely effects on the economy might be, it can nullify wage contracts agreed to between unions and other government agencies.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

In its [I-PRSP](#) the government had pledged to ensure a wide consultation process that would include the public sector, academia, non-governmental organizations, the religious community, trade unions, political parties, representatives of the Amerindian community, women's organizations, youth, and trade, farming, forestry and agriculture associations and donors. When the I-PRSP was accepted by the Boards of the Bank and the Fund in December 2000, public consultations begun. The PRS Steering Committee, established by government comprised of two government representatives and ten members of civil society drawn from the trade union movement, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Amerindian groups, religious organizations, youth, women and the private sector. According to government over 200 consultations, consisting of 109 community and 98 target group consultations, attracting over 8,400 participants from each of the 10 regions of Guyana, were conducted for, *inter alia*, religious organizations, youth groups, farmers, persons with disabilities, and women groups.

Despite the overall positive impression, Guyanese unions are skeptical

The ultimate test of the PRSP exercise, according to Norris Witter of the Guyana Trade Union Council, "is whether it is truly a national strategy for reducing poverty or a government strategy for accessing funds."

Adapted from "Trade Unions Speak Up in PRSP Review", January 2, 2002 available at

<http://wbIn0018.worldbank.org/HDNet/HDDocs.nsf/vtlw/0C514DF4A02B49FF85256B64007D8D8C?OpenDocument>

Lack of constructive dialogue between the government on the one hand and the opposition parties and the labor unions on the other is seen as a potential risk factor that could derail the PRSP. Despite being on the PRS Steering Committee, the participation of the union was not systematic²⁰. The unions representing the civil servants, mining workers and some workers in public sector industrial activities limited their participation in the exercise, (with the civil servants' union boycotting most of the exercise), in large part because of their very limited trust and faith in the current administration. In general the relationship between President Bharrat Jagdeo's ruling PPP government and the TUC has been all but rosy. Unions that participated in the PRSP were mainly those in the sugar industry and their affiliates. Having attended some consultation sessions, the TUC leadership's skepticisms about the PRSP process increased and chose to stay away after what they perceive as government's lukewarm attention to pertinent issues they raised like job creation, workers' rights, the question of civil liberties, and corruption. The leadership was also uncomfortable about

²⁰ The August 2002 PRSP JSA decries the deep divisions along racial lines. The main opposition party, the PNC did not participate in the PRSP consultation process. Given the politically links between the TUC and the PNC, this might as well explain the reason why the TUC withdrew from the PRSP process.

working with NGOs which they view as government agents. No wonder the authorities are concerned that "...it is possible that a sufficient degree of consensus may not have been reached to implement the PRS...of particular importance in this regard will be the stance taken by opposition parties and the labor unions in engaging the Government in a constructive dialogue to move the process forward." It is hoped that the recent dialogue established by the two major political parties would provide the basis for reduced hostility between the various unions and political parties and that as the new PRSP Steering Committee begins its work in late 2003, there will be greater participation of the unions in the dialogue.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The PRSP acknowledges the importance of labor unions. In the I-PRSP, the Guyana Teachers Union is seen as an ally with which to identify ways of improving the conditions of service of teachers. Likewise, in the PRSP, the role of unions in arriving at a multi-year agreement wages policy as a way of implementing economic policies to stimulate growth is identified. Likewise with regard to modernizing the sugar industry, there is a pledge to continue discussions with trade unions to link wages and bonuses to productivity and profitability indicators.

The PRSP identifies the following as some of the many faces of poverty in Guyana: joblessness, underemployment, inability to access loans for self-employment or job creation through lack of collateral, and child labor. As a result, creating employment is seen as one particularly useful goal that the implementation of the poverty program should endeavor to attain. The Skills Training and Employment Program (STEP) aims at skills training and upgrading with focus on youth with primary and/or secondary education; civil servants in the lower grades; and self-trained artisans and technicians. Generation of some 15,000 jobs in rural and interior areas through the development of agro-industrial estates is also foreseen. Also contained in the PRSP are plans for the establishment of technical/vocational institutes and on a National Skills and Employment Register disaggregated by community and region. The development of a national certification program of technical and vocational education, including skills training and basic education for school dropouts and out-of-school youth is also included. Developing a national register of skilled and semi-skilled persons is another area of policy action.

Child labor, child abuse and domestic violence comprise another set of problems to be tackled through amending laws and increasing budgetary allocations to deal with them. Women issues are given some attention. Of particular relevance is the PRSP's objective to "educate and monitor employers and the public on desirable employment practices to women."

HONDURAS

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The [Constitution of the Republic of Honduras](#) guarantees freedom to form and join unions of one's choice. All eight ILO core conventions have also been ratified. At least 30 workers can form a trade union, and there cannot be more than one trade union in an enterprise or institution. There are three main labor organizations in Honduras. The largest is the *Confederación de Trabajadores de Honduras* or Honduran Workers' Confederation (CTH) followed in turn by the *Central General de Trabajadores* or the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). The *Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores de Honduras* or Unitary Confederation of Honduran Workers (CUTH) is the third largest, only formed in May 1992. While the CTH is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the CGT is to the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). Most peasant organizations do affiliate with the labor movement.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Security is the custodian and enforcer of labor legislation. Employer interests are taken care of by the *Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada* or the Honduras Private Sector Council. The Honduran Association of Maquiladores

Percentage of labor force in unions	20% (1994)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	12.7% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	No
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes

Source: * RAMA; ** ILO

(AHM) represents the country's EPZ employers, informally conciliating between its members and the workers. "In practice, workers are harassed and even sacked for trade union activities, and some unionized workers are blacklisted in the export processing zones," according to the [ICFTU's 2003 Annual Report on Violations of Trade Union Rights](#). Solidarismo-style organizations as alternatives to trade unions are in place in some private enterprises and EPZs. While workers accuse government for not implementing the labor code, employers assert that the code is obsolete and a discouragement to investments.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The [Ministry of the Presidency website](#) contains detailed description of the PRSP consultation process. PRSP consultations are mainly coordinated through the *Consejo Consultivo de la ERP*, which was established by law and is made up of members of the Government, civil society and the donor community. One of the sector groupings represented at the *Consejo Consultivo* encompasses labor movements and *movimiento de obreros y campesinos* or farmers' associations. The three Federations mentioned (CTH, CGT and CUTH) are formal members of this sector grouping²¹. However informal feedback from some

²¹ The CGT for instance acknowledges that "the government called meetings of workers' organizations to draft the paper, and a series of meetings was held with the different sectors in order to provide information on the government's draft of this document."

of the federations that most of their recommendations during the consultation process were not incorporated into the strategy²².

Honduras was one of the five countries which the ILO selected for a special effort to demonstrate the role of the Decent Work Agenda. ILO activities in consultation with both the government, employers' and workers' representatives included a national tripartite seminar in late 2001 to present and discuss the results of an ILO-led study. The study included policy recommendations on the formulation of employment and income policies conducive to alleviating poverty and promoting decent work, and to seek commitments to carry out the necessary follow-up action. Since the full PRSP had already been finalized (the PRSP is officially dated September 27, 2001), the ILO hoped that recommendations of the study and tripartite seminar would be taken into account in the PRSP implementation stage²³.

Some groups in Honduras have opposed the PRSP

“The dialogue and consultation process have been intensive, although the results have been mixed. Some groups, while endorsing the process, have criticized elements of the PRSP. In particular, they criticized some structural measures (for example, privatization) and raised concerns over the macroeconomic framework which they equate negatively to structural adjustment. . . Other more vocal groups within Interforos have assessed the PRSP process more negatively and rejected the final PRSP as a document which does not represent a national consensus. According to Interforos, their position was partly motivated by the limited and biased discussion on the macroeconomic framework and more generally by the omission of many of its policy proposals...”

[September 17, 2001 JSA](#)

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

Creating employment is prominent in the PRSP. Policy measures toward strengthening investment and generating employment include, *inter alia*, creating conditions that permit improvements in the quality of employment, productivity and real incomes. This is to be attained through the “approval of Labor Code reforms, to guide the labor market toward an efficient and equitable model of social negotiation; and transform(ing) the Ministry of Labor and Social Security into an efficient institution for the design and implementation of employment and training programs, and the effective application of labor regulations.” Another earmarked objective is the creation of conditions that facilitate the development high employment potential areas - agro-industrial, forestry, light assembly and tourism sectors.

The PRSP aims at supporting the growth and competitiveness of micro, small and medium-size enterprises as sources for generating employment and income for poor families in urban areas. Policy measures to support MSMEs include (i) strengthening public and private entities that provide assistance to MSMEs; (ii) supporting the creation of alternative models of

²² Based on an e-mail from Ulrich Lachler, Lead Economist Honduras Country Team.

²³ ILO Governing Body report on “ILO relations with Bretton Woods institutions,” Geneva, November 2001, available at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/gb/docs/gb282/pdf/esp-3.pdf>.

savings and credit; (iii) stimulating entrepreneurship among youth by incorporating training in project design into the various educational modalities and levels, mainly those of a vocational nature by providing initial financing under favorable conditions preferably under the enterprise-incubators systems; and (iv) facilitating the opening of neighborhood markets and other centers for street vendors.

Improving educational services falls under the theme of investment in human capital. The document argues that middle-school and technical-vocational education need greater support in order to adjust education supply to labor-market demands, thus permitting continuous responses to technological changes. Moreover reforms in higher education in order to make it demand driven are part of the process.

INDONESIA

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

For much of the Suharto regime, the [*Federasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia*](#) or Federation of Indonesia Trade Unions (FSPSI) was the only officially recognized trade union federation. All unions had to affiliate to the FSPSI and those outside it were not recognized. Other labor organizations, operating “illegally” at the time, included the *Serikat Buruh Merdeka Setia Kawan* or Independent Trade Union (SBM) and the *Asosiasi Journalis Indonesia* or Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI). The [*Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia*](#) or Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union (SBSI) was another labor group founded in 1992, and only recognized in 1998. The SBSI currently represents some 1.7 million workers and is affiliated to the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). SBSI’s immediate past President - Muchtar Pakpahan - spent a number of years in jail and was only released in May 1998.

The [*Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia*](#) or Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Unions (KSPSI), a successor to the 1973 government-formed FSPSI, is the oldest trade union organization and remains the largest confederation with an estimated 4 million workers under its umbrella. It is the official union and is led by the Minister for Manpower and Transmigration. Since the fall of the Suharto regime, Indonesia has made some changes in its administration of labor. The Trade Union Act No. 21 of 2000 too provides broad rights of association for workers, with any 10 or more workers having the right to form a union. All eight ILO core conventions have been ratified by the Republic of Indonesia. Likewise the national constitution guarantees freedom of association and assembly. The new found freedom led to an immediate proliferation of trade unions. As of December 2001, more than 60 trade union federations existed in the country.

The *Kongres Serikat Pekerja Indonesia* or Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI), an umbrella for twelve union organizations held its founding congress in January 2003. Teachers mainly belong to *Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia* or the Indonesian Teachers’ Association (PGRI) which, though is technically classified as a trade union, is more of a welfare organization. Employer interests are taken care of by the [*Asosiasi Pengusaha Indonesia*](#) or Employers’ Association of Indonesia (APINDO).

Major Trade Union Federations in Indonesia

Trade Union Federation	Number of Members	International Affiliation
<i>Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia</i> (SBSI)	51,000 (Jun. 2003)	WCL
<i>Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia</i> (KSPSI)	4,000,000 (Jun. 2003)	
<i>Gabungan Serikat Buruh Industri Indonesia (PB-GASBIINDO)</i>	150,000 (Mar. 1988)	ICFTU*
Gerakan Organisasi Buruh Sjarikat Islam Indonesia (GOBSI)	52,633 (Oct. 1991)	ICFTU*
Kongres Buruh Islam Merdeka (KBIM)	130,000 (Mar. 1988)	ICFTU*
Sarikat Buruh Muslimin Indonesia (SARBUMUSI)	100,000 (Dec. 1992)	ICFTU*
<i>Serikat Pekerja Muslimin Indonesia</i> (SARBUMUSI)		
<i>Persaudaraan Pekerja Muslimin Indonesia</i> (PPMI)		
<i>Kongres Serikat Pekerja Indonesia</i> (KSPI)	3,112,059 (Feb. 2003)	

* Federations' rights and privileges as affiliates of the ICFTU remain in abeyance since the 104th Executive Board meeting (Brussels, 1-3 December 1993).

Source : ILO and ICFTU; union membership for SBSI and KSPSI is provided by the WCL. The rest is by the ICFTU.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Bianca Kühl, writing in an FES report published in April 2003 (Social Standards in Indonesia: A Review of Existing Tools and Regulations) characterizes the PRSP process in Indonesia as follows:- "there is no commitment by the government of Indonesia to establish participation with labor organizations through the IPRSP.

The government involves the private sector as a producer of goods and services, but not as an employer that takes over responsibility for people"²⁴.

What the SBSI wants

There is disquiet within the SBSI to the privileged position accorded by government to the KSPSI. The fact that the Minister of Manpower and transmigration is also the leader of the federation is seen as a conflict of interests. The SBSI would like the preferential treatment of the KSPSI brought to an end. It also calls on the government to look for internal sources of funding rather than deal with the IMF and World Bank.

²⁴ This assessment is attributed to Islam, Iyanatul 2002. Employment and the Indonesian I-PRSP: A Preliminary Assessment, a draft for discussion at the roundtable on Employment, Poverty and Productivity, organized by ILO and Bappenas, May 11, 2002.

The trade unions in Indonesia are at the very early stages of becoming involved in PRSP, with support of [ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities](#). A tripartite meeting in which unions took part was recently organized by the ILO to introduce the PRSP process and to seek to encourage participation. The ILO has also translated an adapted version of the [ICFTU Guide to PRSPs](#) into the local dialect, *Bahasa*.

The [American Center for International Labor Solidarity](#) supported a network of Indonesian trade unions that focus on reforming the IFIs ([Asian Labor Network on the IFIs](#) - ALNI) to hold two educational activities on the PRSP in May and a second one in July of 2003.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

Labor issues are not prominently featured in the 50-page [Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: A Process Framework of Strategic Formulation for Long Term Poverty Alleviation](#), adopted in March 2003. Nevertheless the document identifies four relevant policy interventions. These are (i) creating opportunities through provision of jobs and businesses for the poor; (ii) empowering the poor/community; (iii) capacity building in order to be able to work and produce in higher level of productivity, and to work for their own needs; and (iv) social protection for the poor.

In the area of labor policy, the government aims at “regulating a sensible provincial minimum wage” as well as offering protection to informal sector businesses and its workers. Human resources development policy will take the form of improving the quality of human resources by improved education and health; and social, economic, and cultural organization and institutional strengthening.

KENYA

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Of the eight core ILO conventions only convention 87 on freedom of association has not been ratified by Kenya. The [Constitution of the Republic of Kenya](#) Chapter V, 80. (I) states, “Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of assembly and association, that is to say his right to assemble freely and associate with other persons and in particular to form or belong to trade unions or other associations for protection of his interests.” The Industrial Relations Charter, executed by the Government, the [Central Organization of Trade Unions](#) (COTU), and the [Federation of Kenya Employers](#) (FKE), gives workers the right to engage in legitimate trade union organizational activities. The Trade Union Act, 1952 regulates the formation and management of trade unions and employer organizations. COTU is the sole national trade union federation, affiliated to the ICFTU and represents some 300,000 workers. As of 2000, there were 31 national unions in Kenya; all but 5 of these unions were affiliated with COTU. Together with their Ugandan and Tanzanian trade union counterparts, Kenyan labor leaders formed the East African Trade Union Consultative Council in 1988. The largest non-COTU union is the 240,000-member

Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT). The Kenya Civil Servants' Union, de-certified in 1980, was only reregistered on December 10, 2002²⁵.

The machinery for social dialogue is well developed in Kenya. The National Tripartite Consultative Committee, the Joint Industrial and Commercial Consultative Committee, the Labor Advisory Board; the National Industrial Training Council, and the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Health and Safety are some of such tripartite structures. The law permits workers in enterprises of seven workers or more to form and join trade unions, although the Registrar of Trade Unions has to consent. Most employers are affiliated with the FKE, an umbrella body representing employers' interests with regard to industrial relations and human resource development. Although all labor laws, including the right to organize and bargain collectively, apply in the export processing zones union leaders continually complain of hindrances to union activities in the EPZs.

Percentage of labor force in unions	4.34% (1999)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	35% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	No
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes
Source: * RAMA; ** ILO	

For much of the post-independence period, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) government sought to control COTU and ensured that the union's constitution gave the President the power to remove COTU's three senior leaders from office. In effect KANU determined the leadership of COTU. A new labor leader took charge of COTU in August 2001 promised to ensure the union's independence of government. In December 2002, the [National Rainbow Coalition](#) (NARC) of long time opposition leader Emilio Mwai Kibaki won the national election with promises of tackling graft and turning the economy around.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Kenya's own 15-year National Poverty Eradication Plan (NPEP), launched in June 1999, was concluded prior to the PRSP initiative, after what the government termed as "extensive participation of civil society, private sector, NGOs and Government agencies." The Secretary General of COTU participated in most of the discussions leading to the production of the NPEP, serving on its permanent commission.

The PRSP consultation process was much broader, climaxing in the National Stakeholders Consultative Forum in which some 300 Kenyans discussed the IPRSP. [The June 12, 2000 JSA](#) commended the government for its commitment to deepen consultations. COTU was part of the Human Resources Development Sector Working Group. However according to Noah Chune, COTU's Director of Research²⁶,

²⁵ Both the teachers' and the civil servants unions' affiliation to COTU was rescinded in 1965 by government directive.

²⁶ COTU's Report on trade Union Experiences with the PRSP in Kenya – presented at the ICFTU-AFRO Sub-regional Seminar on PRSPs in East Africa. Nairobi, May 26-28, 2003.

The trade union representative did not participate effectively in the sector working committee as very little information was given to him before the meeting. Secondly the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning took the role of drafting and little of what was attributed to trade unions was considered....The whole exercise was rushed and very little time was left for trade unions to consult its constituency, the affiliates and the members to an extent that the majority of trade union members know very little about the PRSP process and contents.

Also cited as contributing to minimal trade union participation in the PRSP process were (i) lack of capacity within unions; (ii) lack of trust for unions by the government; and (iii) concern by unions that PRSPs would be a repeat of the “bitter experiences of the structural adjustment programs.”

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

[Kenya’s Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) has five basic components and policy objectives:- (i) to facilitate sustained and rapid economic growth; (ii) to improve governance and security; (iii) to increase the ability of the poor to raise their incomes; (iv) to improve the quality of life of the poor; and (v) to improve equity and participation. A major priority areas for government is the maintenance of adequate protection for workers, society and the environment; promotion of rural non-farm employment; and implementing widespread labor-intensive roads schemes.

On labor and employment, the IPRSP pledges the “ promotion of a productive and freely chosen employment as a priority and fundamental base for national economic and social policy, there will be a shift towards jobs creation and improvement in the productivity of labor . This will call for improvement in the provision of skills and knowledge for the workforce, the stimulation of economic growth, and the maximization of the utilization of labor and human resources in income generating opportunities. Basic rights of all segments of society to work irrespective of sex, age and geographic location will be respected.”

Main strategic interventions that Kenyan trade unions are seeking

- Strengthening institutions of social dialogue
- To put in place machinery to help trade union movement in HIV prevention and AIDS management
- Ratification and implementation of the ILO
- Conventions
- Review of labor laws
- To engage in monitoring the implementation of the PRS process

Excerpts from COTU’s Plan of Action – presented at the ICFTU-AFRO Sub-regional Seminar on PRSPs in East Africa. Nairobi, May 26-28, 2003.

With regard to social protection, the I-PRSP intends to put in place safety nets for the aged, retrenched, unemployed, disabled and displaced persons and victims of other calamities. This will involve reforming the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), which currently caters only for those employed.

An answer the perennial lack of access to micro-finance by micro and informal business enterprises could be through the promised development of “new, innovative and poor friendly modes of financing informal and small-scale enterprises.” A full-fledged micro

finance unit was to have been established in 2000/01 in the [Central Bank of Kenya](#) to regulate micro finance organizations.

MALAWI

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Workers' rights are protected by the [national constitution](#) and the international ILO core conventions, all of which have been ratified by the Republic of Malawi. Article 31 of the constitution states:- "All persons shall have the right to form and join trade unions or not to form or join trade unions." Civil servants are unionizable. Unions however must formally register with the Registrar of Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations in the Ministry of Labor and Manpower Development before they are allowed to operate. The Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM) represents employers' interests.

According the [US Department of State Human Right Reports \(2002\)](#) less than 5 per cent of the workforce is unionized due mainly to ignorance about workers' rights, a small formal sector and employer resistance to unions. Collective bargaining is recognized in law, provided the union represents at least 20 percent of employees at enterprise level. Twenty two national unions are in operation in Malawi - the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU), with 19 affiliates; and the Congress of Malawi Trade Unions (COMATU), with 3 affiliates. The MCTU, with a membership of 45,000, is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) while COMATU is an affiliate of the World Confederation of Labor (WCL).

Labor laws apply in Malawi's EPZs; twenty of which have been in operation since August 1995, when parliament approved legislation establishing them.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The overall PRSP process is managed by three committees at different levels. Firstly, the Technical Committee consisting of officials from the [National Economic Council](#) (which chairs the committee), [Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning](#), and the [Reserve Bank of Malawi](#). This committee is responsible for the [PRSP Issues Paper](#) and designing the PRSP process. It is also responsible for managing the process and coordinating and providing support to the Working Groups. The Technical Committee reports to the National Steering Committee of Principal Secretaries, chaired by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Finally, the National Steering Committee reports to the Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning.

In August 2000 Malawi published its [I-PRSP](#) which was to serve as a road map for the production of the full PRSP. The IPRSP was submitted to the Boards of the Bank and the Fund in December 2002; thereafter the preparation of the full PRSP was officially launched on January 11, 2001. In February, workshops in each of the 27 districts provided opportunities for discussion of local poverty reduction priorities and for awareness-raising about the PRSP. 19

Malawian CSO asks government to spend according to priority areas

The Malawi Economic Justice Network (Mejn) a civil society organisation that monitors expenditure in the budget has said government is not spending according to priority areas outlined in the budget although expenditure is within the available resources. Mejn National Coordinator Collins Magalasi said in an interview, most of the funds in the budget are diverted to other areas instead of spending on priorities agreed by parliament. Magalasi said both the Treasury and the line ministries divert funds to other areas, saying his organisation will soon come up with clear examples once they are through monitoring the 2002-2003 budget. He said reallocation or diversion of funds affects the quality of service delivery within the line ministries and government departments especially in key sectors of the economy like health, education and agriculture, among others.

“The Nation” Online dated April 16, 2003

Thematic Working Groups (TWG) were constituted. Chairpersons of these working groups were drawn from government (ministries, parliament and National AIDS Secretariat). Members included government officials, donors, and representatives from the private sector and civil society. A representative of the MCTU was on the Governance TWG. The Teachers’ Union of Malawi sat on the Education TWG; while the Nurses and Midwives Association on the Health and Population TWG. From May 4-15, 2001, a meeting was organized at Salima to comment on the draft papers from the TWGs. Representatives of the MCTU and the Nurses and Midwives Association took part in the deliberations. COMATU however felt slighted in the PRSP process. In a message to the WCL, dated October 16, 2002, the General Secretary, Mr. P. Chilambu, asserts that “sometimes organizers for such activities/studies deliberately ignore other stakeholders including COMATU and the reasons are best known to themselves.” Nevertheless the federation would like to see social rights and pro-worker enterprise restructuring policies in place.

The Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN) provided another vehicle for civil society, including trade unions, to engage in the PRSP process. MEJN conducts research, organizes workshops, and publishes a newsletter called “Civil society PRSP Briefing” which gives recommendations on the substance and process of the PRSP.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The [Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper](#) (MPRSP), finalized in August 2002, has four pillars - (i) Sustainable Pro-Poor Economic Growth; (ii) Human Capital Development; (iii) Improving the Quality of Life for the Most Vulnerable; and (iv) Good Governance. The following are crosscutting issues: HIV/AIDS, Gender, Environment, and Science and Technology.

The MPRSP identifies technical, entrepreneurial vocational education and training (TEVET) as a solution to the lack of or limited off-farm employment²⁷. The following are planned for:- (i) promoting self employment through skills development initiatives; (ii) improving the quality and relevance of TEVET; (iii) rehabilitating the existing infrastructure and equipment; and (iv) strengthening management and financing of TEVET. Other measures to be implemented include the expansion of the public works programs. Micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) are to play a central role in ensuring pro-poor growth.

The need to increase access to and improve the quality of education at all levels is taken cognizance of in the MPRSP. Of particular relevance is the stated objective to improve quality and relevance of education. Reforms in the higher education system “to respond to new realities and opportunities within the context of poverty reduction” are envisaged.

MONGOLIA

STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Mongolia has not ratified two of the eight ILO core Conventions – both of which are on forced labor. The [Constitution](#) provides for freedom of association for voluntary organizations on the basis of social and personal interests and opinion. Unionization is generally high, with some 60.25 percent of the workforce belonging to unions (RAMA 1994). The Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions (CMTU), affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), represents about 450,000 workers. The Association of Free Trades Unions has less following. The Ministry for Social Welfare and Labor enforces labor laws, while the Mongolian Employers’ Federation (MEF) represents employers’ interests.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS.

The CMTU has participated in various PRSP consultations at the invitation of the government. Its officials also acknowledge meeting IMF and World Bank officials²⁸. In April 2003, in Ulaanbaatar the CMTU in collaboration with the ICFTU Asia and Pacific Regional Organization held a National Workshop on “IFIs, Poverty Reduction and Trade Unions” at which an action plan was adopted.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

[The I-PSRP](#), completed in June 2001, recognizes unemployment as one major cause of income poverty. Through the “National Program on Reduction of Unemployment’ approved in 1995 government had hoped to create new jobs, enhance skills for people, promote SME and cooperatives, especially in rural areas, organize public works, and strengthen employment

²⁷ According to the labor market survey of 1998, about 300,000 people leave the formal education system every year. However, only 30,000 enter formal employment annually, leaving a balance of 270,000 people who enter the labor market annually and seek some other source of income other than formal wage employment.

²⁸ E-mail from Z. Sukhbaatar, Assistant President for International Relations of the CMTU, dated May 8, 2003.

services. The real unemployment rate however remained high. The Technical Assistance for Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) program has also made contribution in employment promotion in Mongolia through enhancement of capabilities of Labor Regulation Office through providing equipment, conducting training, creation of labor market information network²⁹.

According to the I-PRSP, “intensive labor promotion policy” will be pursued to tackle unemployment by implementing the following strategies:- (i) improving the legal base for labor market operation; (ii) passing the Law on employment, Law on export and import of labor; (iii) revise the law on Labor and the law on Unemployment Insurance; (iv) undertaking training programs for those not receiving unemployment insurance or are longtime unemployed; (v) arranging public works in infrastructure development, environment protection and restoration as well as local needs activities; (vi) developing and implementing projects for increased employment of disabled people; and (vii) improving job opportunities through expanding micro-finance.

Parliament already passed the “Law on Employment Promotion” effective June 1, 2001, with the view toward providing technical orientation, consultation and information; providing professional training and re-training; supporting private entrepreneur-ship and cooperatives; supporting employers; and carrying out public works. By so doing a conducive legal environment and appropriate conditions for employment is supposed to have been created. Another law - the Law on Exportation and Importation of Labor (effective June 1, 2001) – seeks to improve job security and social security of employees in foreign countries and at the same time on reducing unemployment domestically. An informal sector survey to be done by the NSO, MOFE and the UNDP is also planned.

Developing alternative forms of education for children who dropped out from school is another potential way out of inaccessibility to education.

CMTU Action Plan on trade union participation in IFI’s Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper and Other Programs

1. To establish a CMTU Working Group for the trade union involvement in IFI’s Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper and Other Programs
2. Working Group will provide guidance and recommendation for study of the PRSP, and other related documents prepared by IFI’s and Government as well as actions to be taken at regional, industrial and national level.
3. To ensure trade union involvement for preparation of PRSP and other programs in consultation with IFI’s and Government
4. To organize joints meetings with NGO-s on effective participation of civil society for monitoring of implementation of IFI’s PRSP
5. To include poverty reduction issue tripartite negotiation at the national industrial and aiming/provincial / level
6. To implement some projects basing on contracts with Government
7. To organize awareness, advertisement and training activities on poverty reduction issues by trade unions
8. To learn from the experience of other national trade union centers of the Asia Pacific region on how they work with IFIs
9. To monitor the projects implements by the Government
10. To establish the Institute for Labor Studies in Mongolia, which will conduct research and study on social policy and labor related issues including the PRSP of IFI’s with technical assistance of international organizations
11. To organize international or national seminars/workshops in cooperation with ICFTU, ICFTU-APRO and ILO
12. To effectively cooperate with ICFTU, ICFTU-APRO and ILO and other respective organizations on issues concerned with rights of migrant workers

²⁹ See IPRSP, page 24.

Because vocational and technical schools are not able to meet labor market needs determined by the private sector, the IPRSP seeks to renew their curricula and to train and re-train their teachers as well as ensure that obsolete equipment is replaced.

NICARAGUA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

All eight ILO core conventions have been ratified by the Republic of Nicaragua. The right to organize is guaranteed for all workers, except the police and the armed forces in both the new [national constitution](#) as well as the 1996 labor code. Twenty workers can petition the Ministry of Labor to form a union and to engage in collective bargaining. There are two major labor confederations in - the *Front Nacional de Trabajadores* or the National Workers Front (FNT) umbrella group of eight labor unions and the *Central Permanente de*

Percentage of labor force in unions	23.4% (1994)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	38.3% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	Yes
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes
Source: * RAMA; ** ILO	

Trabajadores or the Permanent Congress of Workers (CPT) four union umbrella. The *Central Sandinista de Trabajadores* (CST) and the *Confederación de Unificación Sindical* (CUS) are affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The *Central de Trabajadores Nicaraguenses* or Nicaraguan Workers Central (CTN) is not a member of any of the above and affiliated to the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). The *Consejo Superior de la Empresa Privada* or the Superior Council for Private Enterprise (COSEP) is the main confederation of business groups.

Despite the application of labor laws in free trade zones (FTZ), unionization is very low, due mainly to administrative hurdles that union organizers go through. Working conditions in the FTZs have been a cause of various grievances between unions on the one hand and the employers and authorities on the other.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The preparation of the *Estrategia Reforzada de Crecimiento Económico y Reducción de Pobreza* or [A Strengthened Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) (SGPRS) benefited from previous consultation processes³⁰. The call for a more formal consultative structure led to the formulation in August 1999 of the [Consejo Nacional de Planificación Económica Social](#) or the National Council for Social and Economic Planning (CONPES)³¹ by Presidential Decree

³⁰ The August 27, 2001 JSA variously describes the PRSP consultation process as “extensive” and “intensive.”

³¹ CONPES’ membership represents a wide array of institutions and groups within and outside government, including leaders of private sector associations, NGOs, labor unions, political parties, academic groups, regional governments of the Atlantic coast and community organizations. Three nominees from the CPT and FNT represented labor in CONPES.

No. 295-99. CONPES has a legal base in the national constitution, with the mandate to advise the President of Nicaragua on the formulation and evaluation of social and economic programs and policies, oversee these programs, make recommendations on the composition of the annual public budget, and facilitate consultations of national interest. CONPES' working commissions are production; social; foreign debt and cooperation; labor; budget; and environment and natural resources. From 2000 to 2001 CONPES organized a number meetings/seminars on various issues including pension law in which labor unions took part³².

Under the auspices of ILO/PRODIAC (Strengthening the Processes of Consolidating Democracy), the tripartite constituents circulated to CONPES working commissions, the "Framework for a National Policy to Promote Employment and Decent Work in Nicaragua." The paper underscored the need to have the Nicaraguan economy upgrade and make maximum use of the country's human resources, offering its men and women

The ILO roots for a National Employment Policy in Nicaragua

"In order to achieve the objectives of the National Employment Policy, policies must be defined to stimulate the creation of high-quality jobs (demand), to improve the employability of the labor force (supply) and to foster an appropriate institutional and legal framework for the labor market. Because underemployment and poverty are structural problems of development, policies must be designed for the short, medium and long term, and they must have the consistency and coherence needed to achieve the objectives and the goals proposed."

ILO/PRODIAC

decent work so that they can achieve the national aspiration of living in dignity. It argues for policies that stimulate the creation of high-quality jobs, to improve the employability of the labor force and to foster an appropriate institutional and legal framework for the labor market. It calls for, *inter alia*, (i) assistance for the creation of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including credit for small entrepreneurs; (ii) training in the skills needed by the businesses in the clusters and by SMEs, ensuring equal opportunity for women; (iii) technical assistance and advisory services for improving the quality of various processes; (iv) investment in economic infrastructure in favor of the informal sector and the *campesino* and indigenous economy; (v) investment in social infrastructure; investment in technological restructuring and worker retraining; (vi) encouraging private investment; (vii) improving the employability of the workforce; (viii) provision of literacy and education programs for workers; (ix) provision of free basic education; and (x) improving the institutional and legal framework of the labor market.

³² Labor unions targeted included CUS, CST and CPT. However both CUS and CST assert that they never took part in the PRSP process. While acknowledging that they learned about the PRSP process by virtue of its membership of CONPES labor commission, CUS leadership is categorical that "we have not been invited to any sessions or meetings dealing with the concept of poverty reduction." Likewise the CST denies any involvement: "our organization has not been considered by our government in order to participate in the PRSP process."

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

Unemployment is one root cause of poverty in Nicaragua. On the first pillar of the SGPRS - broad-based economic growth with an emphasis on productive employment generation and rural development - the strategy relies on the private sector to deliver the much needed jobs through the promotion of labor-intensive, broad-based economic growth. The second pillar - on greater and better investment in the human capital of the poor - addresses investment in basic and vocational education, *inter alia*. With regard to education, “a series of studies will be conducted to analyze its responsiveness to the needs of the students and the demands of the private sector. The end product will be a new model of technical education. With support from the Inter American Development Bank (IDB), a project to reform tertiary education has already begun. Accreditation and relevancy are some of the issues that will be stressed.” The third pillar focuses on ensuring better protection for vulnerable groups while the fourth pillar on good governance and institutional development. Other cross-cutting themes are (i) reduction in environmental degradation and ecological vulnerability; (ii) an increase in equity; and (iii) further decentralization.

PAKISTAN

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Article 17 of the [Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#) states:- “Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality.” Of the eight ILO core conventions, only C.138 on the Minimum Age has not been ratified by Pakistan. However various laws for instance the Industrial Relations Ordinance of 2002, the Banking Companies Ordinance of 1962, the Civil Servants Act (CSA) of 1973 and the Essential Services Maintenance Act of 1952, have provisions that place certain restrictions on the independent functioning of labor unions. The government’s authority to ban strikes deemed to be potentially harmful to the economy; restrictions on union activity in sectors determined to be "essential" such as government services and public utilities, as well as the compulsory arbitration of labor disputes by the authorities have been variously criticized by the ILO and the international trade union movement. In its Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights (various issues), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) has documented a number of cases in which the authorities and employers have consistently violated workers’ rights. These violations have included union busting, denial of the right to form or belong to unions, curtailment of the right to strike, victimization of union leaders, denial of collective bargaining, arrests and torture of union leaders, suspension or banning of union activities and rejection of negotiations. Despite assurances that Legislation concerning export processing zones (EPZs), such as the Export Processing Zones Authority Ordinance (EPZAO) of 1980, and the Export Processing Zone Rules (EPZR) of 1982 would be repealed, this has yet to happen – in effect barring workers in EPZs from forming a trade union or bargaining collectively.

Due to union pluralism, thousands of small unions compete for membership in the major urban and industrial cities of Karachi and Lahore. Trade unions are plagued mainly by internal leadership squabbles, inter-union competition as well as political interference – maligning the effectiveness of the workers’ voice. Pakistan's union landscape features trade unions that are affiliated to political parties as well as traditional, autonomous, centrist union organizations. The most prominent of the former class is the right-wing National Labor Federation (NLF) which is allied with the conservative [Jamaat-e-Islami \(JI\) political party](#). The NLF’s power base is the steel and railroad industries, [Pakistan International Airlines \(PIA\)](#) and the [Karachi port](#). The other politically connected trade unions are the NWFP-based Democratic Labor Federation (DLF) affiliated to the Awami National Party (ANP), the [Pakistan Peoples Party \(PPP\)](#)'s People's Labor Bureau (PLB), and the labor wing of the [Mohajir Quami Movement](#)³³. The three International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) affiliates comprise the so-called ICFTU- Pakistan Council; and recently formed the Pakistan Workers Confederation (PWC). The complete list of major federations is in the below.

Major Trade Union Federations in Pakistan

Trade Union Federation	Number of Members	International Affiliation
All Pakistan Trade Union Congress (APTUC)		WCL
All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (APFTU)	582,320 (Jan. 2002)	ICFTU
Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions (PNFTU)	250,000 (Dec. 1995)	ICFTU
All Pakistan Federation of Labor (APFOL)	291,575 (May 2001)	ICFTU
The Pakistan Trade Union Federation (PTUF)		WFTU
Balochistan Workers’ Federation (BWF)		WFTU
Sind Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU)		WFTU
Pakistan Trade Union Confederation (PTUC)		
Pakistan Workers’ Federation (PWF)		
National Labor Federation (NLF)		
Democratic Labor Federation (DLF)		

Source : ILO, World Bank; union membership is provided by the ICFTU

³³ Information from World Bank website
<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/HDNet/HDdocs.nsf/labormarkets/607351D317122435852567A800770C4C?OpenDocument>

The Employers' Federation of Pakistan represents business interests while the recently formed Workers Employers Bilateral Council of Pakistan (WEBCOP) is a bilateral structure aimed at promoting harmony between workers and unions.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

A two year consultation period, from October 1999 to October 2001, culminated in the production of the 89-page [I-PRSP](#) in November 2001. The document was jointly prepared by Policy Wing of the Finance Division and the Poverty Reduction Cell of the Planning Commission, after what the authorities describe as a “through and consultative process and discussions...that included the federal and provisional ministries/departments, academia, NGOs and the general public³⁴.” A target date of April 15, 2003 for the production of the full PRSP has now been rescheduled to late 2003. In May 2003 [a summarized version of the draft PRSP](#) was prepared and posted for comment on the [Ministry of Finance](#) website.

Upon writing to the Ministry of Finance as well as the Bank and Fund missions in Pakistan asking to participate in the PRSP consultations to be included, in May 2001, APFOL officials were invited to the CAS consultations where they had the opportunity to make comments. The ICFTU-PC, under the chairmanship of APFOL, formed a four-man committee to prepare a formal response to the IPRSP in March 2003³⁵. In a letter addressed to the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Finance and Economic Affairs, and the [Minister for Labor, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis](#), APFOL, despite supporting some aspects of the government’s poverty reduction measures aimed at enhancing growth rate, improving social services, extending micro credit and strengthening programs for disadvantaged groups, felt that “a number of elements of the program are not in line with its main objectives and these tend to enhance poverty, generate

Major recommendations by the Employers' Federation of Pakistan as contained in "Connecting to Growth: Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy"

- *Engaging in social dialogue with the employee representatives regarding the most appropriate mode of privatization is warranted.*
- *Consultation with those most acutely affected by structural adjustment policies is not only realistic but also necessary.*
- *From an employers perspective, the most effective strategy for the reduction of poverty is the creation of productive employment and through it access to a regular source of income for employees to sustain an acceptable standard of living.*
- *The government has to introduce adult education programs, skill re-training programs and distance learning courses as part of its strategy to not only make the workforce more employable but also to upgrade skills and to inculcate the habit of life long learning.*
- *Employers ask for flexibility to enable them to terminate unwilling workers and to reduce their workforce in situations of redundancies without having to obtain approval of any government agencies and on the payment of a compensation based on a set reasonable formula.*
- *From a culture and system of time based wages, it is important to move towards performance based flexible wage structures.*

³⁴ Government of Pakistan (2003) Preparation of Full PRSP – Progress Report.

³⁵ In May 2003, the Employers' Federation of Pakistan submitted the paper on "Connecting to Growth: Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy," which the ILO Office in Islamabad forwarded to the authorities.

unemployment and impinge upon human and labor rights.” APFOL’s response was also submitted to the World Bank and IMF in Islamabad.

Specific concerns as contained in the letter and paper titled “Poverty Reduction Programs and Labor and Employment” addressed key themes contained in the I-PRSP. On privatization the unions felt that if done indiscriminately job losses would ensue, hence worsening the unemployment situation. In any case preference should be given to making state owned enterprises efficient and productive while in government hands. The workers and community should be engaged in gainful dialogue before taking decisions in this respect, the letter argued. Moreover the workers’ federation made a case for public utilities to the effect that critical areas as power generation, telecommunications, railways, banking, education, and health ought to remain in government hands, and not be relegated to the profit-motivated private sector. Other points of view of the labor unions included (i) that in order not to penalize poor farmers, alternative arrangements (like cooperatives, agricultural extension and marketing) should be put in place to cushion the effects of a withdrawal of subsidies; (ii) that the strategy must contain specific measures to address this issues of child labor; beggary and the practice of debt bondage; (iii) that an in-built mechanism of evaluation and monitoring within the IPRSP should be in place and that the stakeholders, particularly, the workers’ representatives should be assigned due role on the role workers should play in the PRSP process; and (iv) that the existing industrial relations machinery, which are viewed as anti-union should be reviewed.

In March 2003, the ILO was requested by the Ministry of Finance (PRSP Secretariat) to assist the Government in preparing the Poverty-Employment Nexus which was identified as a major gap in I-PRSP. The ILO presented the Poverty Employment Nexus to the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission in April 2003 and a Tripartite plus workshop (Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Finance and other relevant Ministries, ILO constituents, academicians, UN system, leading NGOs) was conducted on April 15, 2003, to discuss the ILO paper for the Final Draft of PRSP document. Based on this workshop, the ILO Employment Strategy was fine tuned by an ILO Mission and submitted officially to the Ministry of Finance (PRSP Secretariat). The ILO Employment Strategy for PRSP covers major aspects of employment and labor related issues, in particular on generating decent work, human resource development, social protection, improvement of conditions of employment (deficits in rights, bonded labor and child labor) deficit in human rights, gender equality, etc. Under the PRSP Project with the Ministry of Planning, the ILO is conducting four major activities (to be completed by end October 2003): (i) An Employment strategy for Poverty Reduction in Pakistan. (An extension of the employment policy contributed by the ILO in the Ten Year Perspective Development Plan 2001-2011, Government of Pakistan); (ii) Generating Decent Work through Employment and poverty reduction for the PRSP; (iii) Review and policy recommendations for Social Protection in Pakistan for poverty reduction; and (iv) Review and Analysis of the Labor Market in Pakistan.

However there is no unanimity that the consultation process was deep enough. Writing for the Daily Dawn on April 28, 2003 on *Ownership of poverty alleviation programs*, S. M. Naseem, formerly with UN-ESCAP says, ”Although the government claims close collaboration with NGOs and civil society, a range of actors which includes non-government

organizations (NGOs), consumer rights groups, research institutes, unions, peasant and fisher-folk organizations, political parties, journalists and the Pakistan Human Rights Commission have formally rejected the structure, content and process of the PRSP.” The APTUC thinks it is the lack of government commitment to dialogue that is the blame for the federation’s noninvolvement in the PRSP process.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE I-PRSP

The I-PRSP recognizes child labor as an issue that requires state intervention. Measures at combating this practice will include (i) continued work on reviewing existing legislation concerning the rights and welfare of children by the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development; (ii) promulgation of the amended Ordinance on Juvenile Justice; (iii) establishment of Child Labor Schools by Ministry of Social Welfare, through the Pakistan Bait ul Maal, where child workers are given suitable education leading to their rehabilitation; and (iv) the preparation of a plan of action to combat child abuse and the commercial sexual exploitation of children by the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD) and Save the Children in conjunction with respective provincial committees and NGOs.

Improving access to productive assets, mainly housing, land, and credit is one way the government hopes to empower the poor. Some three million acres of state owned land will be distributed to small farmers. Micro credit mainly for women from Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan, Khushali Bank, and other institutions is planned. As a supplement the Government has now established the ‘Khushali Bank’ or ‘Micro Finance Bank’ for the provision of micro credit to poor communities. On human resource development, the I-PRSP notes that a comprehensive package of educational reforms with medium term targets

Child labor: The ugly face of poverty

Although the government is committed to eliminate child labor, it is pursuing a policy of gradual elimination of all forms of child labor and immediate elimination of the hazardous and exploitative forms of child labor under ILO’s International Program for Elimination of Child Labor...One hundred and seventy five schools have been selected by setting up workshops to impart training to needy students and working children for two years....In addition, Pakistan Baitul Mal is also setting up 50 schools for poor children to rehabilitate children working in hazardous occupation. Children are given monthly stipend of Rs.150 in addition to uniforms, shoes, other clothing and meals during school hours. On the other hand, parents are paid Rs.250 for each child they send to these schools. In collaboration with ILO, the European Union is also helping the government for setting up 18 Community Education and Action Centers for combating abusive child labor through prevention, withdrawal and rehabilitation of ex bonded child laborer. The Child Care Foundation has opened 283 non-formal education centers for imparting education to carpet weaving children from where the children are mainstreamed into the formal education. The Government has established a Fund of Rs 100 million for education of working children and rehabilitation of bonded labor. The government has implemented a comprehensive legal framework to eliminate bonded labor from Pakistan.

The Government has also set out targets and activities in the National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Child Labor (May 2000) and for abolition of Bonded Labor (2001). The objectives of the Plan are progressive elimination of child labor from all economic sectors, immediate withdrawal of children from worst form of child labor, preventing entry of under-aged children into the labor market through universal primary education and family empowerment, and rehabilitation of working children through non formal education, pre-vocational training and skill development. The Federal Bureau of Statistics will launch a follow-up of 1996 survey on child labor to assess the impact of measures taken by the Government so far.

Government of Pakistan. May 2003. Draft Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (Summarized Version), page 5

Education Sector Reforms (ESR) Action Plan 2001-04 has been finalized through a consultative process. Technical/Vocational education is envisaged to be enhanced through area specific skill programs in existing secondary schools; setting up of one dedicated polytechnic at Tehsil level; and second shift in existing polytechnics, especially for women.

The Draft Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (Summarized Version) in its Chapter Five on “Addressing IPRSP Gaps: Employment, Gender and Environment” underlines the centrality of employment generation for poverty reduction, hence government’s plan to boost growth in sectors which have a large impact on employment - boosting the construction and housing sector; labor-intensive exports especially high valued agriculture and garments; and increasing labor based content in public sector investment, especially in infrastructure like roads, irrigation and rural development.

SENEGAL

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Despite ratification of all ILO core conventions, the current labor code of the Republic of Senegal remains restrictive of trade union activities. The right of existence of trade unions is vested in the Interior Minister who can also dissolve them by administrative order. The [new constitution](#), adopted in January 2001, guarantees the freedom of association and the right to form/belong to unions but seriously undermines the right to strike by stipulating that any strike action must not infringe upon the freedom to work or jeopardize the enterprise. Unionization rates are highest in the industrial sector, although some informal and agricultural workers also belong to unions despite the non-application of the labor code in these two sectors.

The *Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Sénégal* or the National Confederation of Senegalese Workers (CNTS), representing some 80,000 workers, is the largest union organization and was largely sympathetic to the Socialist Party, particularly during the Diouf administration. The *Union Nationale des Syndicats Autonomes du Sénégal* or the National Union of Autonomous Labor Unions of Senegal (UNSAS) is the second largest, with membership mainly drawn from the public sector - electricity, telecommunications, education, water, health, and the railways. Both CNTS and UNSAS are affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), while the *Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Sénégal* or the Democratic Union of Senegalese Workers (UDTS) is to the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). Industrial relations are moderated by the [Ministry of Public Works, Labor, Employment and Professional Organizations](#). Employers are represented by the *Conseil National du Patronat* (CNP).

Major Trade Union Federations in Senegal

Trade Union Federation	Number of Members	International Affiliation
<i>Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (UDTS)		WCL
<i>Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (CNTS)	80,000 (Mar. 1988)	ICFTU
<i>Confédération Autonome des Travailleurs</i> (CSA)	52,360 (Mar. 2002)	ICFTU
<i>Fédération générale des travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (FGTS, Tendance A)		
<i>Fédération générale des travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (FGTS, Tendance B)		
<i>Union démocratique des Travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (UDTS)		
<i>Confédération générale des Syndicats des Cadres et du Personnel d'Encadrement</i> (COGES)		
<i>Coordination démocratique des Syndicats autonomes</i> (CDSA)		

Source : ILO; union membership is provided by the ICFTU

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The agency responsible for the PRSP is the [Ministry of Economy and Finance](#). It's assessment of the participation of labor unions in the [PRSP](#) modules was as follows: High for National Launch Seminar; High for Focus Groups; High for Validation Seminar; High for Campaign to Raise Awareness within Civil Society; Low for Validation of Perception survey; Low for Regional Consultations and Non-Applicable for Perception survey³⁶.

The CNTS was officially invited to take part in the PRSP preparation process. Despite sharing the government's will to fight poverty, the federation considered the PRSP strategies as deficient in solving the problem of poverty. It felt that issues pertaining to agriculture, gender, employment, the public sector (education and health), were not adequately addressed in the document. Moreover the CNTS could not submit a written document due to the late availability of background documents, and was only able to make verbal contributions in the plenary and workshop – having been invited to a total of five meetings. The CNTS representative participated mainly in the *Capacity building and expanded access to basic social services* thematic group, where his main contributions were the need for (i) prioritization of social sectors (education and health); (ii) decent and sustainable employment; and (iii) a transparent implementation and monitoring mechanism.

³⁶ Senegal's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, page 89.

According to Mody Guiro, CNTS General Secretary,

Although we share the government's will to fight poverty and its belief that to do so is a necessity, we consider that the PRSP lacks ambition to resolve the development issue. Next, a genuine partnership has been lacking throughout the preparation process, and the strategies are deemed deficient...There is frustration: the insufficient involvement of the unions, the failure to share partnership and strategy principles.

UNSAS totally boycotted the PRSP process for the reason that "the draft paper was lacking a social dimension and was only dealing with macroeconomics."

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

"Inasmuch as it is the main vehicle for breaking the cycle of poverty, employment will be a central concern of the economic and development policies," notes the PRSP. The employment policy focus in the document is on: (i) labor management measures that will help to increase capacities and the possibilities of access to employment for the poor; (ii) improvement of the management and employability of labor; (iii) greater efficiency and transparency of the employment market; and (iv) promotion of independent employment in rural and urban areas. A general policy of promoting highly labor-intensive (HLI) activities in the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of productive, economic and social infrastructure facilities is being encouraged. Other measures include the "re-organization of the labor market" through the creation of a national agency responsible for ensuring transparency and efficiency in the labor market. Besides, the government will take the necessary measures to improve the purchasing power of retired persons as well as the job security of older people engaged in professional activity. How this will be done is however unclear.

Child labor is another problem that Senegal's PRSP recognizes - the data from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey indicate that in 2000, 37.6 percent of all children between 5 and 15 years old were working and 15 percent were performing a paid activity. Government's agenda in this area includes combating the worst forms of child labor through the strengthening and dissemination of child welfare legislation. Pledges by the government includes putting in place provisions to (i) improve working conditions and service quality in child care facilities that are in violation of the law; (ii) design and implement measures to promote the social reinsertion of juvenile delinquents; (iii) set up appropriate strategies allowing delinquent children to resume and continue their schooling; (iv) design and implement training activities for young people; (v) create and strengthen the capacities of specialized institutions that deal with children (e.g., *talibés*, abandoned children or juvenile delinquents) ; and (vi) make the case, to political, religious, traditional authorities, development partners and the entire community, for better living conditions for *talibés*.

For vocational education for young people and adolescents, the strategies will center around: (i) in-depth review of formal and non-formal education (literacy, basic community education, etc.) offered and the establishment of a new menu; (ii) preparation/review of the training programs according to the skills-based approach; (iii) promotion of a dynamic partnership with the private sector; (iv) organization of the apprenticeship system by developing a consensus, basing apprenticeship on social solidarity values and establishing an appropriate legal framework; (v) reduction of the inequalities between the sexes, and lessening of geographic disparities by paying special attention to girls and consistent support for the underprivileged areas; (vi) training for adolescents and young people from 13 to 18 years of age without the minimum equipment for working life; (vii) extension of the field of action to include attitudes and values connected with peace, tolerance, health, preservation of the environment, vocational skills in languages, arithmetic, etc.; (viii) alternation between theory based instruction and work place training, and (ix) development of the *faire-faire* (outsourcing) approach along the lines of that applied in literacy training.

The Senegalese government prioritizes youth employment

Measures towards youth employment include (i) boosting the resources of the National Action Fund for Employment (*Fonds National d'Action pour l'Emploi-FNAE*) and the National Fund for the Promotion of Youth (*Fonds National de Promotion de la Jeunesse*); (ii) increasing the number of ADO counseling centers; and (iii) developing programs to deal with young drug addicts.

In the area of SME development, the government's strategy focuses on the following points: (i) stimulation of entrepreneurial enterprise; (ii) organization and facilitation of access to advisory services; (iii) setting up of a coordinating agency for the total support system; (iv) creation of an environment favorable to enterprise development, and (v) coordination of direct international support for enterprises. The instrument for implementing this policy will be the SME Development Agency (*Agence de Développement des PME-ADPME*), which will specifically target SMEs in the formal and informal sectors, enterprise founders, and service providers. To support and accompany SMEs in their development, stimulation of entrepreneurial initiatives; organization and facilitation of access to advisory services; establishment of a mechanism to coordinate the overall support system; establishment of a mechanism to coordinate direct international support to enterprises; development of financing programs by the Development Finance Companies for promising sectors are the priority actions earmarked.

In order to improve access to credit for enterprises, the following priority actions are identified: (i) revision of business law; (ii) development of financial markets; (iii) reform of the tax regime applicable to financial operations; (iv) encouragement of the establishment of specialized banks; (v) encouragement of the creation of SME-specific windows within banks; (vi) encouragement of the development of trading outlets for marketable securities issued by enterprises; and (vii) support for the development of BRVM, particularly through the public sale of a portion of the shares in firms to be privatized.

SRI LANKA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Sri Lanka has a strong union tradition. All eight ILO core conventions have been ratified, and [the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka](#), in Article 18 entitles every person to the freedom of association and the right to form and join a trade union in particular. About a quarter of the workforce is unionized, drawn largely from the plantation sector. The Industrial Disputes Act was amended in December 1999, making it a requirement for employers to recognize trade unions and the right to collective bargaining, effectively prohibiting any antiunion discrimination. The Termination of Employees and Workmen Act of 1971 was amended in January 2003 requiring the Labor Commissioner to apply a compensation formula for job termination cases and setting a time-bound process for the resolution of labor disputes. The implementation of these amendments, however, has been deferred until the end of 2003 to allow time to take some intermediate steps (such as increasing the number of labor tribunals, studying the precise formula for redundancy payments, or setting up an unemployment compensation system).

The Department of Labor in the [Ministry of Employment and Labor](#) provides conciliation and arbitration services to resolve labor disputes.

The National Labor Advisory Council, tasked with the responsibility of advising government on labor matters, is a tripartite body that brings together unions, the Employers' Federation of Ceylon and the Ministry of

Percentage of labor force in unions	19.83% (1999)*
Unions membership as a percentage of total paid employment	34.5% (1986)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	Yes
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes

Source: * RAMA; ** ILO

Employment and Labor. Most trade unions in Sri Lanka are not apolitical. The law is liberal, allowing as few as seven workers to form a union; a situation that has led to union pluralism and fragmentation. The two major federations are the International Confederation of Free Trade unions (ICFTU)-affiliated Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC) and the National Workers' Congress (NWC), an affiliate of the World Confederation of Labor (WCL).

Despite their being no legal restrictions to unionization in the large female dominated EPZ sector, few unions exist in the sector due mainly to administrative huddles, leading to a minimal unionization rate of only 10 percent by the Free Trade Zone Workers' Union (FTZWU).

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

In October 2001, the UNDP hosted a workshop in which more than 150 representatives of two largest NGO/CBO networks to provide inputs and advice to the PRS preparation team; in November 2001 NGOs were part of another consultative meeting; another workshop for

stakeholders was held in April 2002, followed by a workshop organized exclusively for the NGO community (May 2002) with focus also on the PRS.

Some unions were invited to the stakeholder consultation with some NGOs and other CSOs which started in May 1998. The NWC took part in “two seminars and some consultation meetings” and did submit a text entitled “Investing on People” detailing its members’ views on issues such as public health, education, nutrition, water supply, sanitation and social protection. In July 2002 trade unions, under the auspices of activities of the ILO-funded project on “Capacity Building for effective social dialogue in the PRS in selected IDA eligible countries,” were appraised about the draft PRSP. Under this project three workshops were run – for workers, employers and for the tripartite constituent. Feeling concerned about being left out of the process initially, union representatives agreed, at an ILO-organized workshop in September 2002, to submit a position paper prepared by the National Association of Trade Unions for Research and Education (NATURE), which paper was eventually submitted to a national tripartite workshop³⁷. NATURE’s paper was quite elaborate in its views highlighting trade union concerns and provided a checklist of issues that labor saw as essential elements in a progressive PRSP. Guaranteeing workers’ rights’ as an integral part of the PRSP was one area of concern to trade unions, since according to unions labor law changes would lead to a significant erosion of rights and security of employment. Skepticisms are also raised regarding the government’s commitments to social dialogue since the existing National Labor Advisory Council was increasingly being bypassed by government in its bid to force through changes in the labor laws. The paper, though supportive of the fact that the private sector has a useful role to play in the Sri Lanka economy, nevertheless called for a public sector capable of protecting the vulnerable sections of the population. Water, power, energy, and public transport are some of the public utilities that trade unions felt must remain in government hands. Besides, the public sector should be able to play a complementary role to the private sector. Privatization of the two state owned banks – the Bank of Ceylon and the People’s Bank – as well as the Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation Limited was also called to question by the unions. In any case trade union involvement at all stages of the privatization process had to be guaranteed. Rather than promoting open capital regimes, a cautious approach to be in place to protect against speculative tendencies, argued the paper.

³⁷ NATURE’s feeling was that the omission of trade unions from earlier consultations was intentional. They go further to say, ‘Whilst we thank the International Labor Organization for its timely intervention in this regard, such intervention should not be considered as a substitute for direct consultation by the political authorities with trade unions. We believe that direct consultation with and between trade unions and relevant government authorities will better serve the purpose.’ This might as well explain the initial reluctance of unions to partake of the ILO initiative.

The trade union paper was presented at the ILO organized a “National Tripartite Workshop on Social Dialogue and Poverty Reduction Strategy for Sri Lanka” on December 2, 2002. In the workshop, the promotion of the Decent Work agenda in the PRS was underscored. Particularly recommended were the need for an effective social insurance system through for instance the introduction of retirement funds and/or unemployment insurance;

CSOs reject Sri Lanka’s PRSP

“We categorically state that the Government of Sri Lanka has failed to carry out even this minimal consultation with the people, and that the proposals have been worked out in total isolation. It would mean that they cannot be implemented, except through a process of violent suppression of public protest. We, acting on behalf of the people, totally reject the proposals contained in the PRSP. The proposals for the privatization of state owned enterprises (banks, insurance etc) including services (postal, electricity supply, transport, health, education, water supply etc) and the proposed reforms in labor laws, land titling, land use policies, and the utilization of natural resources including forests, fisheries, minerals etc. will lead to increased incidence of poverty, not its reduction.”

Letter dated February 18, 2003 from the ANRHR to H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister, World Bank Resident Representative, Country Representative IMF, ADB Country Representative and the UNDP Director.

increase in agricultural productivity, support for micro enterprises; review of the Termination of Employment Act; promotion of labor legislation in EPZs and in the informal sector. Access to vocational training, skills development, formulation of a modern and progressive employment promotion strategy, and the elimination of the worst forms of child labor were other areas recommended. These recommendations were eventually passed on to government through the Minister of Employment and Labor.

A loose collation called the Alliance for the Protection of National Resources and Human Rights (ANRHR), a network of CSOs including 72 trade unions³⁸, plantation workers,

³⁸ Trade unions active in the alliance include the following:- Ceylon Bank Employees Union; Ceylon Merchantile Union; United Federation of Labor; United Government Nurses Union; Government Trade Union Federation; Post and Telecommunication Officers Union; Lanka Trade Union Federation; Sri Lanka Government Trade Union Federation; Ceylon Federation of Labor; Government Workers Trade Union Federation; Government United Workers Federation; Trade Union Joint Committee of the Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation; Organisation for Protection of Human Rights and Rights of Insurance Workers; Insurance Workers Union; Democratic United National Workers Union (Insurance); C.M.U. (Insurance Corporation); Stenographers and Typists Union (Insurance); Sri Lanka Independent Worker Union (Insurance Corporation); Government Office Services Union; Organization for Protection of Sri Lanka Electricity Board (SLEB); SLEB United Trade Union Front; SLEB Technicians Union; SLEB Transport Workers Union; SLEB Office Workers Union; SLEB Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Authorities Union; SLEB Local Government Workers Union; SLEB Billing Officers Union; SLEB Planning Officers Union; SLEB Stenographers and Typists Union; SLEB Security Services Union; SLEB Technical Engineers Union; SLEB Storekeepers Union; Railways United Front; Railway Workers Union; Locomotive Operating Engineers Union; Lanka Railway Workers Services Union; Railway Station Masters Union; Technicians Union of Sri Lanka Railways; Railway Workers Collective; Railway Technical Assistants Union; Sri Lanka Telecom Workers Union; All Lanka Telecom Services Union; Government Printers Clerical Services Union; Government Printers Proof Readers Union; Sri Lanka Independent Government Printing – Services Union; Printing Workers Union of the Examination Department; Sri Lanka Javaraja Health Services Union; United Telephone Operators Union of the Health Services; Trade Union Federation of Media Workers; Lake House Workers Union; Commercial and Industrial Workers Union; Corporation, Cooperatives and Trade Workers Union; Custom Officers Union; Sri Lanka Customs, Vessels General Workers Union; Trade Union Federation of Technical Services; All Lanka Samurddhi Officers Union; Kollonnawa Government Factory’s Workers Union; Sri Lanka Independent Workers Union of Kolonnawa Government Factory; Independent Workers Union; Sri Lanka Post and Telegraph Workers Union; Sri Lanka Independent Workers Union of LECO (Lanka Electrical Company); Industrial Transport and General Workers Union; All Lanka Industrial and Commercial Workers Union; Trade Union of the Free Trade Zones; Niveka (FTZ) Workers Union; United Mine Workers Union; United Fisheries and Fish workers Union; Trade Union Joint Front of Tractor Corporation; United Trade Union Front of Irrigation Department; Trade Union Front; Independent General Workers Union (Singer – Ratmalana); and United Lanka Estate Workers Union.

human rights activists, environmental activists, among others voiced its concern particularly against lack of consultations in the PRSP process. A position paper by ANRHR, titled “Privatization Is Not Regeneration It Is Great Destruction” dated October 2002 questions a development paradigm that “destroys employment, workers’ rights and labor laws, displacing people, destroying environment, selling away national assets.” In December 2002, the government formally released the PRSP codenamed [“Regaining Sri Lanka: Vision and Strategy for Accelerated Development”](#). In March 2003 the ANRHR wrote to the Bank and the Fund requesting them not to endorse the country’s PRSP; the main reason being the lack of consultations and/or rejection of “proposals by the people,” *inter alia*. The policies particularly rejected included the privatization of state owned enterprises (banks, insurance etc) including services (postal, electricity supply, transport, health, education, water supply etc) and the proposed reforms in labor laws, land titling, land use policies, and the utilization of natural resources including forests, fisheries, minerals, etc. Earlier in the year, trade unions had threatened to pull out altogether from the National Labor Advisory Council accusing the government of bypassing tripartite organ in its bid to effect changes in the labor legislation.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The Vision and Strategy for Accelerated Development has various labor-related provisions some of which are contested by unions or remain unresolved. In additions, the debate around the privatization of “vital” state assets as well as the labor law reform process were some of the thorny issues that unions felt concerned about.

The policy of government is that current regulations governing employment remain impediments to investment and growth – hence the need for changes³⁹. The pieces of legislation earmarked include the Welfare Benefit Law, EPF and ETF Amalgamation Law, the 4-2-1 Law “to limit the duration of employment disputes,” and the Youth Corps Law. By putting in place a new Employment and Industrial Relations Act; and establishing new arbitration boards government hopes to ease the labor dispute settlement process. Government intends to have a national advisory body in place to address issues of labor supply and demand and to “promoting a more flexible and productivity oriented labor market.” This is despite the existence of a tripartite National Labor Advisory Council, which the unions have accused government of bypassing in its bid to put in place more investor-friendly labor laws.

Other measures under “expansion of employment opportunities and the flexibility of the labor market” will include conducting a review of labor market legislation; setting up a working committee on labor market reforms; new involuntary separation procedures to be included in labor law and implemented by Commissioner of Labor; introducing safety net scheme, including retraining of involuntary labor; revision of the Industrial Disputes Act,

³⁹ For instance under the termination of Employment of Workmen Act of 1971, layoffs are subject to written consent by the Commissioner of Labor, who has full discretion to accept or reject an application and to determine the compensation to be paid, making the layoff process lengthy and unpredictable. Implementation of the recent amendments to the labor laws and the introduction of a system of unemployment compensation has been deferred to end-2003 to allow time to design the compensatory formula for layoffs, increase the number of labor tribunals, and set up the unemployment benefit scheme

Factories Ordinance, Termination of Employment of Workman's Act; and review and Restructuring of Wage Boards. Again, NATURE's paper is very critical of such moves, more so when unions accuse government of being high-handedness in its handling of legislative changes.

In the PRSP, productivity enhancement forms part of the solution to the four challenges highlighted, through an ambitious program aimed at attaining full employment and improving the education system. The PRSP identifies job creation as one of the four areas that needs urgent attention⁴⁰ - with a target of 2 million additional jobs to be created in order to solve the unemployment and underemployment in the country. SME development is foreseen to be an important source of employment, with government preparing an SME White Paper, and establishing an SME policy unit to monitor development, review development and coordinate donor programs. Special initiatives to support women's employment, like skills training and provision of incentives for employers to expand day care facilities are part of these plans. Youth unemployment is to be tackled through the launching of a new National Youth Corps (NYC) to provide vocational training and career guidance to unemployed youth aged 17-22. The formation of a National Human Advisory Council; undertaking special skills training programs for women; providing incentives to employers to expand child care facilities; and restoring essential vocational skills training programs in the North and East; and transforming existing district labor offices into an online data base are also made mention of.

For tertiary education, the government proposes major structural changes in the supply of education, including promoting the private sector as the main provider of pre-employment and job-entry training. The establishment of a Higher Institute of Applied Technology to lead the vocational training process and to provide a recognized system of professional certification in the vocational trades are strategies being planned for.

In the area of social protection, the *Samurdhi* poverty alleviation program is to be reformed to encourage the development of social insurance by both government and the NGO community, on a commercial and competitive basis. A Welfare Benefit Act was passed in September 2002 establishing eligibility guidelines for the *Samurdhi* welfare program to improve targeting and reduce politicization. Increased public to support new social service initiatives to improve the quality of community-based care for the disabled, conflict victims and the elderly is envisaged. Provisions of some 200,000 housing units for the plantation sector workers over the next five to seven years forms part of the government's attempts at lowering urban poverty.

Recognizing the poverty-reducing potentials of overseas employment for Sri Lankans, the government strategy is to promote foreign employment while protecting migrant workers from abuse through, among other measures, ratification of ILO convention 143 concerning abusive treatment of migrant workers and meting of punitive actions against labor agents violating standard migrant worker procedures. Entering into bilateral agreements with national

⁴⁰ Besides increasing employment, the other three are overcoming the public debt crisis; resources for reconstruction; and increasing income levels – higher productivity and increased investment.

governments in manpower importing countries, and providing private-public partnerships to provide skills training for prospective migrants are other relevant measures.

Being a country beset by years of conflict in which children have largely formed part of the armed forces, protection and rehabilitation of children involved in child labor and victims of sexual abuse has been given attention in the PRSP. Promoting child rights and an expanding child welfare centers are some of the support mechanisms planned for.

TANZANIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The United Republic of Tanzania has ratified all eight core conventions of the ILO. Article 20(1) of the 1998 edition of the [Constitution](#) entitles every person to, *inter alia*, freedom of association and more specifically to form or join interest-based associations or organizations. Together with their Kenyan and Ugandan trade union counterparts, Tanzanian labor leaders formed the East African Trade Union Consultative Council in 1988. The Trade Union Act, 1998, which came into force on July 1, 2000 dissolved the Tanzania Federation of Free Trade Unions (TFTU) and the eleven affiliated national unions that had been in existence for only five years as a successor to the government-formed Organization of Tanzanian Trade Unions (OTTU). According to government, the purpose of the new law was to ensure independence of unions, even though the TFTU had been given legitimacy by workers and had international affiliations. The dissolution led to fresh registration of national unions, which number 14 to date, all of which are affiliated to the Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA), which umbrella body was itself constituted in April 2001. TUCTA is an affiliate of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). In principle, the law permits unionization of workers, hitherto classified as essential workers, although they are not allowed to go on strike. Representing some 407,000 workers, trade union membership has gone down due mainly to privatization of state-owned enterprises and general worker apathy towards unions. Business is represented by the Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE).

While some national portfolios like defense, finance and internal affairs are Union matters, implying that they are centrally handled by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, labor is not, hence the Zanzibar government enforces legislation specific to the Zanzibar and Pemba islands while the Union government takes care of the mainland.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The Board of the IDA and IMF approved [Tanzania's PRSP](#) on December 1, 2000, which had been prepared two months earlier. Coordinated by the [Office of the Vice President](#), the preparation of the [I-PRSP](#) started in October 1999 with a committee of 12 ministers and the Governor of the [Bank of Tanzania](#) taking charge of the process. A Technical Committee comprising of officials from various ministries but coordinated by the ministry of finance eventually prepared an I-PRSP in January 2000 which was subsequently approved by cabinet

in February. Consultations took the form of zonal workshops in May; a Consultative Group meeting between government and donors in May/June; another forum in July for parliamentarians and another one for regional administrative secretaries in August. This culminated in the national workshop in Dar es Salaam on August 3-4, that sought on the targets, priorities and actions as outlined in the draft PRSP. Cabinet eventually approved the draft PRSP on August 31, 2000.

CSOs took part in the PRSP process as they did when the government prepared other previous national documents like the [Tanzania Development Vision 2025](#), the National Poverty Eradication Strategy (NPES) and the Tanzania Assistance Strategy (TAS). Much as the Bank/Fund 2000 and 2001 JSAs characterize Tanzania's PRSP as being largely participatory, [AFRODAD](#)⁴¹ is more concerned about the quality and depth of the consultations. It does recognize that there was civil society participation in the PRSP process in Tanzania but "the level and depth of their involvement as well as the seriousness with which their inputs were considered left a lot to be desired...Throughout the PRSP processes, civil society organizations demanded more active involvement and participation. But their involvement remained at a superficial level.." Major issues identified as critical were the way the process was rushed, hence not allowing for effective dialogue; leading to non-incorporation of NGO views in the final document. Moreover civil society was not invited to participate in the final drafting of the PRSP, as this task was left to a "team of experts" from key ministries.

We were left out altogether, says Tanzania trade unionist

"We actually gate crashed that national workshop in August 2000... No union was invited to any PRSP evaluation or review exercise either... We were promised by government that the plantation and teachers' unions would be incorporated in the PRSP monitoring. We are still waiting for that."

Telephone interview with Mr. Nestory Ngulla, TFTU Secretary General, March 6, 2003

The formulation of the PRSP coincided with the period when labor unions in Tanzania were in limbo following the enactment of the Trade Unions Act of 1998 which came into effect on July 1, 2000. In place of the defunct TFTU was a General Secretariat, comprising of two caretaker trade union officials. Various reasons have been put forward for government's preference to deal with local civil society groups but not unions. These range from mistrust and general misconceptions about the role of trade unions to generic problems like lack of appropriate consultation mechanisms and limited capacity amongst unions⁴². Mlawa, *et al* (2002) question the rationale by the government in organizing workshops for specific interested parties such as members of parliament and regional administrative secretaries, but none for workers and their organizations.

At the request of the trade unions in Tanzania, due to their non-involvement in the PRSP process, the ILO identified Tanzania as a pilot country under the Project on Capacity

⁴¹ The African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) is a civil society organization active in the fields of debt and development. The above quotations are from its report on "PRSP Strategic Meeting: Process and Content of the five African Countries with Full PRSPs," Harare, Zimbabwe, 29 - 30th April 2002.

⁴² See Mlawa, *et al*. 2002. Trade Unions and Poverty Alleviation Initiatives in Tanzania Revised Draft). Presented at the ILO Regional Workshop on Poverty Alleviation Through Social Dialogue: The Role of Trade Unions in English-speaking African countries," Nairobi, December 2001.

Building for Effective Social Dialogue in the PRSP. The aim of the project for Tanzania was to bring to the forefront social dialogue as a means of operationalizing the ILO's Decent Work Agenda as an integral part of the PRSP and for encouraging participation of workers and employers in the decision making process of social and economic policies. Although the ILO initiative came one year in the operation of the PRSP, between September and December 2001 the ILO organized national activities for the benefit of the [Ministry of Labor, Youth Development and Sports Development](#); TUCTA and the ATE. Among the recommendations put forward were the need for the incorporation of employment and skills training as an integral part of the PRSP progress report. The ILO also focused on encouraging the social partners to constitute a formal tripartite forum, which would take its own initiatives to consult with NGOs and donors and other stakeholders in the PRSP process.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

Labor issues do not feature prominently in the 53-page PRSP⁴³, in spite of the fact that employment was one of the specific studies that provided background information in the preparation of the draft PRSP. The IPRSP (in its matrix) mentions the establishment of baseline data on the labor market in which a pilot labor force survey was to have been conducted by December 2000. At the August 2000 national workshop specific concerns, such as unemployment, child labor, environment, development of rural financial mechanism that meet the needs of the “small” farmer, development of “micro,” small and medium enterprises, intensification of efforts aimed at developing an enabling environment for the private sector were noted.

The PRSP contains other “labor-related” issues like the facilitation of access to micro-finance/agricultural credit; ensuring an enabling environment for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and informal sector activities; the development and application of labor intensive technology for rehabilitation and maintenance and increase the use of local contractors. Some Tanzania Shillings100 million is earmarked as annual expenditure “to support demand-driven skill development over the medium term” by government.

At the national workshop in July 2001 (in the preparation of the 2000/01 progress report), unemployment and child labor, among other things, were among the issues underscored by participants as deserving special attention. Government subsequently pledged to develop supplementary programs to take care of these problems. An Integrated Labor Force Survey (ILFS) is included as an activity to be carried out. In the same report is contained a more detailed policy matrix in which elimination of child labor and increased availability of credit facilities for micro enterprises are major objectives. Other planned actions include job training programs and the strengthening of the performance of savings and credit schemes. It is also reported that the Micro-finance Policy was subsequently developed and launched in February 2001, while the National Employment Policy is under review. Direct employment generating measures include the enactment of the National Employment Promotion Services

⁴³ In its report to the 282nd Session of the Governing Body, the ILO notes that although employment and decent work concerns were contained in the IPRSP, these elements were not reflected in the final version of the full PRSP. See ILO (2001) Document No. GB.282/ESP/3, Geneva November 2001.

Act; strengthening of skills training; and HIV/AIDS seminars on guidance and counseling to youths in various work places and locations in the country (under the National AIDS Control program).

UGANDA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The supreme law, the [1995 Uganda Constitution](#) under 29(e) states that every citizen shall have the “freedom of association which shall include the freedom to form and join associations or unions, including trade unions and political and other civic organizations.” Workers have the rights to form or join a trade union of his or her choice for the promotion and protection of his or her economic and social interests; to collective bargaining and representation; and to withdraw his or her labor according to law. By law, the [National Organization of Trade Unions](#) (NOTU) is the sole federation to which all national unions affiliate. Together with their Kenyan and Tanzanian trade union counterparts, Ugandan trade unionists formed the East African Trade Union Consultative Council in 1988. NOTU is itself affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The enactment of the Trade Union Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Statute of 1993 allowed for the unionization of some grades of civil servants, medical workers and teachers, and the employees of the [Bank of Uganda](#) who were hitherto not allowed to form or belong to unions. By the same amendment three places were reserved for workers in the interim national assembly, the National Resistance Council. The number was increased to five in 2001. Two workers’ representatives were also part of the Constituent Assembly that debated and promulgated the new national constitution in 1995.

Uganda has ratified five of the eight core ILO conventions - Convention No. 98 on the right to organize and collective bargaining, Convention No. 29 and 105 on forced labor and Convention No. 138 and 182 on child labor. It has however not ratified Convention No. 87 on freedom of association and the right to organize. Under national legislation it is a requirement that only a minimum of 1,000 workers can form national union. Besides, in order to have a union

Percentage of labor force in unions	3.9% (1994)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	25% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	No
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes

Source: * RAMA; ** ILO

recognized in a workplace, it must provide proof that it represents 51 percent of the workforce. NOTU’s traditional membership base is the formal sector, which has seen a downward trend as a major employer. The privatization and/or closures of state owned enterprises, a large informal sector and retrenchments of workers from the municipal authorities have all contributed to diminishing NOTU’s membership. Labor being a department under a much larger Ministry of Gender, Labor and Community Development, it has to compete for resources from an already small basket. For instance in the 2003/2004 financial year, while 12.8 percent of the budget estimates was allocated to “Security,” 7.7 percent to was earmarked

for ‘Economic Functions and Social Services’ from which various ministries, including the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, draws resources. Organs for tripartite dialogue do meet occasionally but their views are advisory and do not necessarily become government policy. Representing slightly over 100,000 (about 5 percent of the workforce) workers in a country where the majority live and earn their living in the rural countryside, trade unions remain at the periphery in influencing policies.

In September 2001 the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Community Development banned all trade union meetings and elections due to alleged contravention of some provisions of the Trade Union Decree of 1975, which ban was only lifted in April 2003. The Trade Union Decree is among a set of labor laws – on employment, occupational health and safety and arbitration - due for revision, which process has however stalled due to objections from the [Deregulation Project](#), an advisory unit in the [Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development \(MFPED\)](#). In October 2002, NOTU published [a rejoinder to the Policy and Strategy Framework for Labor Regulation by the Deregulation Project](#) urging government to expedite the labor law review process.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

The country-led Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) was formulated in 1997 after a consultative process of preparation from November 1995. The revised [PEAP](#) was eventually accepted as the country’s PRSP in May 2000. Uganda has so far produced two annual reports - in 2001 and 2002. [The August 26, 2002 JSA](#) commends the Ugandan authorities for involving representatives from the private sector, NGOs, donors, elected officials, and other CSOs in the preparation of the 2002 report, an improvement compared to the previous period.

Under the umbrella of the NGO Forum, CSOs took an active part in the [Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative](#) that generated recommendations for changes in adjustment policies. At the initial stages of the PEAP, their involvement was also sought by government and were involved in the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project which had collected views of the poor. At the formulation of the PRSP, national and international NGOs were part of CSOs invited to participate. The [Uganda Debt Network](#) (UDN) and [Oxfam](#) (Uganda) spearheaded the exercise by organizing civil society workshops in order to lay out the framework for CSO participation. The eventual formation of the CSO Taskforce, under the leadership of the UDN, was to prove groundbreaking in that it was through this organ that CSO inputs could be channeled to government. The CSO Taskforce carried out consultations with various groups including the disabled, women, youth elderly, religious leaders and community leaders.

Labor unions - NOTU and its affiliates - were not part of the CSO group, though invited by the CSO Taskforce⁴⁴. Much later in 2000, in a meeting with President Museveni, did NOTU protest its non-involvement in the PRSP process.

In its [2003 May Day speech](#) the NOTU leadership asked to be included. Upon writing to the MFPED requesting, NOTU was eventually invited to participate in the PRSP review. NOTU is represented on the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Community Development's four PEAP working committees – social protection, gender, employment and labor, and culture. NOTU's paper – [“Integrating Employment and Labor Productivity into Uganda's PEAP”](#) - welcomes the participatory nature of the PRSP process in Uganda, but urge for the inclusion of employment, labor standards, labor productivity, equitable income distribution and adequate social security protection. NOTU calls on the authorities to “devise ways and means of creating more jobs but at the same time consider the aspect of quality of such jobs created.” Since the PEAP's second pillar is on good governance and security, NOTU would like to have labor standards enshrined in the document in order to guarantee better terms and conditions for workers. On income distribution NOTU's concern is that “that most poor people are poor not because that they do not work, but because their labor does not offer them with adequate means to make them come out of poverty,” hence the need to have adequate equity policies in place, particularly targeted at peasant engaged in subsistence farming as well as laborers who are employed in the commercial agricultural firms. The paper also calls for the liberalization of the social security system in order to allow in many players from which workers can make a choice. Other recommendations are (i) assistance to the retrenched workers to compete for the available job opportunities and businesses in both new and privatized companies; (ii) formulation of an employment policy; (iii) facilitation of the Labor Inspectorate Department; and abolition of Graduated Tax.

How NOTU (Uganda) missed the initial boat

“Mr. Mukasa of the Ministry of Finance stated that NOTU was invited through the Ministry in charge of Labour. He said that it is expected that if the Ministry of Labour is invited, then the other social partners, FUE and NOTU are expected to be carried along. We wish to state that the Ministry in charge of Labour even has a problem in being invited for those meetings. How then could the workers be accepted andn carried along as proposed?”

Letter from Mr. L. O. Ongaba, Secretary General of NOTU, dated March 7, 2003

Government has earmarked service delivery and monitoring of the PRSP as the two main areas where civil society should play a role⁴⁵. The UDN for instance is involved in monitoring of the Poverty Action Fund by empowering communities to monitor the implementation of programs that directly benefit the poor. Other CSOs are represented on sector working groups.

⁴⁴ Gariyo, Zie. 2001. “Civil Society and Global Finance in Africa: The PRSP Process in Uganda,” prepared as a chapter for the forthcoming book on Civil Society and Global Finance, edited by Jan Scholte, *et al.*

⁴⁵ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. March 2002. Summary of Background to the Budget 2001/02: Uganda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Progress Report 2002.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

The PEAP is established on four major pillars, namely (i) Creating a framework for economic growth and transformation; (ii) Ensuring good governance and security; (iii) Directly increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes; and (iv) Directly increasing the quality of the life of the poor. The PEAP identifies unemployment as one of the dimensions of poverty. Expanding smallholder agriculture and increasing employment in industry and services are seen as ways through which the poor could participate in growth. Generating non-farm employment in rural areas is recognized in the PEAP. The credence given to the [Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture](#) is seen as playing a central role in poverty-eradication through the creation of gainful on farm and off-farm employment opportunities.

Strategies towards employment outside agriculture include provision of micro-finance, advisory services, micro- and small-scale enterprises (SME) and vocational training. So far the Micro-Finance Forum has developed an outreach program, which includes an institutional capacity-building framework for micro-finance institutions. This in turn has been endorsed by the MFPED and was submitted to Cabinet for approval in February 2002. The Micro-finance Deposit-taking Institutions Bill was also tabled in Parliament in February 2002, which bill, *inter alia*, provides for the licensing, regulation and supervision of micro-finance business in Uganda.

Under tertiary education, the PEAP puts a target of 90 percent employment rate post-qualification and 30 percent improvement in completion rates is seen as an improvement in quality of tertiary education. An annual expenditure of Uganda Shillings 40 billion is earmarked for the construction of 850 polytechnics at sub-county-level, aimed at training 100,000 by 2003. Macroeconomic incentives that involve labor-intensive investments are encouraged. The PEAP identifies labor-intensive methods of road-building as not only financially cheaper than other methods but also as significantly contributing to employment generation.

ZAMBIA

THE STATE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Article 21 of the [Zambian constitution](#) states thus:- “Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of assembly and association, that is to say, his right to assemble freely and associate with other persons and in particular to form or belong to any political party, trade union or other association for the protection of his interests.” Besides, all core ILO Conventions have been ratified by Zambia. The

Percentage of labor force in unions	12.5% (1994)*
Proportion of employees covered by CBAs	30% (1995)**
Ratified Convention 87 (Freedom of Association)	Yes
Ratified Convention 98 (Collective Bargaining)	Yes

Source: * RAMA; ** ILO

main national law governing industrial relations is the 1993 Industrial and Labor Relations Act (ILRA) which provides for the right to organize and bargain collectively. Until recently, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)-affiliated Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) was the sole national federation to which all national unions were affiliated. There are 29 registered national unions out of which 25 are affiliated with the ZCTU, 4 are affiliated to the Federation of Free Trade Unions of Zambia (FFTUZ). Representing under 250,000 workers, union membership is about 10 percent of the non-agricultural labor force. Despite ex-President Fredrick Chiluba having been President of the ZCTU in the 1980s, relations between unions and the central [Movement for Multiparty Democracy](#) (MMD) government were always strained, with the ZCTU and the international trade union organizations accusing the government of interfering in union matters. The ZCTU was part of the network that vehemently opposed to a third term for Chiluba.

Privatization has been a contentious issue for Zambia, given the dominance of the economy by state owned enterprises, a legacy of ex-President Kaunda’s African socialism. The privatization plans for the [Zambia Electricity Supply Company](#) (ZESCO), [Zambia Telecommunications Company](#) (ZAMTEL) and the [Zambia National Commercial Bank](#) (ZANACO), have been vehemently opposed by labor unions. Copper being the mainstay of the economy, the mines provided livelihood for the majority, and, for various reasons, the unions were apprehensive about the sale of the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM). Official statistics put the unemployment rate at 22 percent in 1991, up from 13 percent in 1986, a factor attributable to massive labor layoffs in both the public and private sectors.

TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN THE PRSP PROCESS

Embarking on PRSP preparation in early 2000, the government produced the [I-PRSP](#) in June 2000, which I-PRSP provided a roadmap toward the preparation of the PRSP, envisaged for August 2001⁴⁶. The process would be managed through four-tier structure comprising of a PRSP Steering Committee; the PRSP Technical Committee; the PRSP Technical Secretariat; and the PRSP Focal Points. Earlier, a draft National Poverty Reduction Action Plan (NPRAP) was prepared in November 1998 by a team of experts but with minimum consultations. The NPRAP thus became the basis on which the IPRSP was drafted. For consultation purposes in the PRSP process, eight working groups were set

The value addition of participating in the PRSP process to Zambia unions

- Why labor participated: Nobody could represent the interests of workers better than workers themselves
- While the PRSP alone will not solve the problem of poverty, the PRSP provides an opportunity for labor to inject into the development process
- This it was felt that ignoring the PRSP process entirely would be a recipe for a PRSP that undermines workers’ rights
- The PRSP has assisted in rebuilding the confidence that government can at least listen

Excerpts from a PowerPoint presentation by Grayson Koyi (ZCTU) at the World Bank/ILO/FES Capacity Building Seminar for Trade Unionists on PRSP in Selected African countries, Lusaka, December 2002.

⁴⁶ According to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development’s “Status Report on PRSP,” September 2001, the preparation of the IPRSP involved only Government officials owing to the urgency of accessing HIPC funds under the PRGF.

up, each with representation from civil society, the government and the private sector – the group themes being: macroeconomics, agriculture, tourism, industry, mining, health, education, and governance. HIV/AIDS, Gender, Water and Sanitation, Energy, Environment and Natural Resources and Roads were considered cross-cutting.

The ZCTU was officially invited to participate in the PRSP and asked to nominate representatives on various working committees. The reason ZCTU participated in the PRSP process was that it felt its non-participation would lead to a document that undermined workers' rights. The ZCTU made its concerns known at the Consultative Group (CG) meeting that took place in Lusaka in July 2000, effectively signaling its willingness to be part of the PRSP process. Under the umbrella of the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR), a network of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), ZCTU's participation was through government working groups – where ZCTU or its affiliates participated in five of the eight working groups. It was not represented on the macroeconomics, tourism and health working groups. The ZCTU was the lead organization in charge of the Civil Society Consultation Group on Industry, Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods while the Mineworkers' Union of Zambia sits on Civil Society Consultation Group. Besides labor was an active member of the CSPR's Steering Committee as well as the taskforce on PRSP monitoring and evaluation. "Civil Society Perspectives on Zambia's PRSP" was the outcome document from the CSOs. In this paper was a chapter on employment and sustainable livelihoods, in which strategies for poverty reduction were spelt out.

However, union views on a living wage policy and a number of social security issues were not included in the PRSP citing resource constraints and the need to prioritize issues. Moreover CSOs in general felt left out at the final stages as the technical committee that was responsible for producing the final draft of the PRSP did not have any civil society/labor representation. Besides modalities for their involvement in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation remain unclear.

In Lusaka in December 2002, the World Bank in conjunction with the ILO and the [Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung](#) (FES) organized a Capacity Building Seminar for Trade Unionists on PRSP in Selected African countries, in which the ZCTU took part. Since then the a PRSP Steering Committee composed of trade union advisors and leadership was set up by the ZCTU, which committee is responsible for the implementation of the follow-up action plan. Since the December meeting the PRSP Steering Committee has met twice during which period the action plan was refined and proposals of activities and budget prepared and submitted for the FES for funding. As part of the activities, an orientation workshop for trade unionists on PRSPs was held in Lusaka in March 2003.

LABOR CONTENT OF THE PRSP

[Zambia's PRSP](#) identifies lack of jobs was identified as one major factor that needs urgent attention. Through access to credit, the PRSP envisages the generation of incomes and employment in agriculture – with a target of 800,000 as the total number of jobs in the agricultural sector, up from 520,520 in 2000. Improvement of industrial skills and craftsmanship through reintroduction of two apprenticeship schemes is also anticipated.

Development and improvement of operations of MSMSE entrepreneurs will be undertaken to fulfill the overall goal to “promote growth of an export-led industry leading to employment creation and poverty reduction.” The number of such entrepreneurs is to increase to 500 in the 2002-04 period, increasing from 92 in 2002. The establishment of EPZs is also made mention of. In the period 2002-04, manufacturing employment is forecast to increase at an annual rate of 5 percent.

In recognition of the human resource situation, the PRSP courts the involvement of the private sector in developing in-house training programs and the upgrading of HTTI. Skills training and tertiary program are earmarked for improvement in order to increase their access, quality, access and relevance. As a measure to discourage rural-urban-migration, the creation of rural based enterprises and the revitalization of small-scale mines forms part of the plan-intended to create jobs.

LIST OF ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACILS	American Center for International Labor Solidarity
AFRO	African Regional Organization (of the ICFTU)
AFRODAD	African Forum and Network on Debt and Development
AJI	<i>Asosiasi Journalis Indonesia</i>
ALNI	Asian Labor Network on the IFIs
ANRHR	Alliance for the Protection of National Resources and Human Rights (Sri Lanka)
ANP	Awami National Party (Pakistan)
APINDO	<i>Asosiasi Pengusaha Indonesia</i>
APFOL	All Pakistan Federation of Labor
APFTU	All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions
APTUC	All Pakistan Trade Union Congress
ATE	Association of Tanzania Employers
BEPZA	Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority
BiH	Bosnia & Herzegovina
BFTUC	Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress
BJSD	Bangladesh Jatyatabadi Sramik Dal
BMSF	Bangladesh Mukto Sramik Federation
BSPSh	<i>Bashkimi I Sindikatave Te Pavarura Shiqiptare</i>
BSSF	Bangladesh Sanjunkta Sramic Federation
BWF	Balochistan Workers' Federation (Pakistan)
CAFTU	Cambodian Federation of Trade Unions
CAGI	Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CCAWDU	Coalition of Cambodia Apparel Worker Development Union
CDSA	<i>Coordination démocratique des Syndicats autonomes</i> (Senegal)
CDT	<i>Confédération Démocratique du Travail</i> (Congo)
CETU	Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions
CFITU	Cambodian Federation of Independent Trade Unions
CGT	<i>Central General de Trabajadores</i> (Honduras)
CGTB	<i>Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Bénin</i>
CLO	Cambodian Labor Organization
CMTU	Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions
CNP	<i>Conseil National du Patronat</i> (Senegal)
CNTS	<i>Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Sénégal</i>
COB	<i>Central Obrera Boliviana</i>
COGES	<i>Confédération générale des Syndicats des Cadres et du Personnel d'Encadrement</i> (Senegal)
COMATU	Congress of Malawi Trade Unions
CONPES	<i>Consejo Nacional de Planificación Económica Social</i> (Nicaragua)
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
COSEP	<i>Consejo Superior de la Empresa Privada</i>
COSI	<i>Confédération générale des travailleurs du Bénin</i>
COTU	Central Organization of Trade Unions (Kenya)
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
CPT	<i>Central Permanente de Trabajadores</i> (Nicaragua)
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Association
CRISOL	<i>Corriente de Renovación Independiente y Solidaridad Laboral</i> (Nicaragua)
CSPIB	<i>Centrale de Syndicats du Prive et de l'Informel du Bénin</i>
CSPR	Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (Zambia)
CSA	<i>Centrale des Syndicats Autonomes du Bénin</i>

CSA	Civil Servants Association (Ghana)
CSA	<i>Confédération Autonome des Travailleurs</i> (Senegal)
CSC	<i>Confédération Syndicale du Congo Démocratique</i>
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CST	<i>Central Sandinista de Trabajadores</i> (Nicaragua)
CSTB	<i>Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Bénin</i>
CSUB	<i>Centrale des Syndicats Unis du Bénin</i>
CSUTCB	<i>Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia</i>
CTH	<i>Confederación de Trabajadores de Honduras</i>
CTN	<i>Central de Trabajadores Nicaraguenses</i>
CTP	<i>Conscience des Travailleurs et des Paysans du Congo</i>
CTUCC	Cambodian Trade Union Coordination Council
CUF	Cambodian Union Federation
CUS	<i>Confederación de Unificación Sindical</i> (Nicaragua)
CUTH	<i>Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores de Honduras</i>
CWC	Ceylon Workers' Congress
DfID	Department for International Development
EBRP	<i>Estrategia Boliviana de Reducción de la Pobreza</i>
ECAM	Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi
EEA	Ethiopian Economics Association
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
ESRP	Emergency Social Relief Program
ETA	Ethiopian Teachers Association
FES	<i>Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</i>
FGTS-A	<i>Fédération générale des travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (Tendance A)
FGTS-B	<i>Fédération générale des travailleurs du Sénégal</i> (Tendance B)
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
FFTUZ	Federation of Free Trade Unions of Zambia
FNT	<i>Front Nacional de Trabajadores</i> (Nicaragua)
FSPSI	<i>Federasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia</i>
FTUTGS	Free Trade Union of Teachers of Georgia "Solidarity"
FTUWKC	Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia
GAWU	Guyana Agricultural Workers' Union
GEA	Ghana Employers' Association
GFL	Ghana Federation of Labor
GNAT	Ghana National Association of Teachers
GOBSI	<i>Gerakan Organisasi Buruh Sjarikat Islam Indonesia</i>
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GPRS	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (Albania)
GRNA	Ghana Registered Nurses Association
GTUA	Georgian Trade Union Amalgamation
GSCSD	General Secretariat of the Council for Social Development (Cambodia)
GUF	Global Union Federation
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
IDA	International Development Agency
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IFI	International Financing Institution
ILO	International Labor Organization
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
JI	<i>Jamaat-e-Islami</i>
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JSA	Joint Staff Assessment
JSL	Jatio Sramik League
JSP	Jatiya Sramik Party
JUSSAG	Judicial Services Staff Association of Ghana
KANU	Kenya African National Union

KBIM	<i>Kongres Buruh Islam Merdeka</i>
KNUT	Kenya National Union of Teachers
KOP	<i>Këshili i Organizatave të Punëdhënësve</i>
KSPI	<i>Kongres Serikat Pekerja Indonesia</i>
KSPSI	<i>Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia</i>
KSSH	<i>Konfederata e Sindikatave të Shqiperise</i>
MCTU	Malawi Congress of Trade Unions
MEF	Mongolian Employers' Federation
MEJN	Malawi Economic Justice Network
MPFED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic development (Uganda)
MMD	Movement for Multiparty Democracy (Zambia)
MOSALVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor and Youth Rehabilitation (Cambodia)
MPRSP	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition (Kenya)
NATURE	National Association of Trade Unions for Research and Education (Sri Lanka)
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission (Ghana)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIFTUC	National Independent Federation of Textile Union of Cambodia
NLF	National Labor Federation (Pakistan)
NOTU	National Organization of Trade Unions (Uganda)
NPEP	National Poverty Eradication Plan (Kenya)
NPES	National Poverty Eradication Strategy (Tanzania)
NPRAP	National Poverty Reduction Action Plan (Zambia)
NPRS	National Poverty Reduction Strategy (Cambodia)
NTU	National Trade Union (Bangladesh)
NWC	National Workers' Congress (Sri Lanka)
OTTU	Organization of Tanzanian Trade Unions
OTUC	<i>Organisation des travailleurs unis du Congo</i>
PB-	<i>Gabungan Serikat Buruh Industri Indonesia</i>
GASBIINDO	
PAF	Poverty Action Fund (Uganda)
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Uganda)
PGRI	<i>Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia</i>
PNC	People's National Congress (Guyana)
PNFTU	Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions
PPMI	<i>Persaudaraan Pekerja Muslimin Indonesia</i>
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
PPP	People's Progressive Party (Guyana)
PREGP	Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth Program of Georgia
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTUC	Pakistan Trade Union Confederation
PTUF	Pakistan Trade Union Federation
PWC	Pakistan Workers Confederation
PWF	Pakistan Worker's Federation
RS	Republika Srpska
SAPRI	Structural Adjustment Programs Review Initiative
SARBUMUSI	<i>Sarikat Buruh Muslimin Indonesia</i>
SBM	<i>Serikat Buruh Merdeka Setia Kawan</i>
SBSI	<i>Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia</i>
SFTU	Sind Federation of Trade Unions (Pakistan)
STL	<i>Syndicats des Travailleurs Libres (Congo)</i>
SSNIT	Social Security and National Insurance Trust (Ghana)
SSRS	<i>Savez Sindikata Republike Srpske</i>
SSSBiH	<i>Savez Samostalnih Sindikata Bosne i Hercegovine</i>
TAS	Tanzania Assistance Strategy

TEVET	Technical, entrepreneurial, vocational education and training
TFTU	Tanzania Federation of Free Trade Unions
TUAC	Trade Union Advisory Council (to the OECD)
TUC	Trades Union Congress
TUCTA	Trade Union Congress of Tanzania
TWG	Thematic Working Group
UDN	Uganda Debt Network
UDTS	<i>Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Sénégal</i>
UNI	Union Network international
UNSAS	<i>Union Nationale des Syndicats Autonomes du Sénégal</i>
UNSTB	<i>Union Nationale des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Bénin</i>
UNTC	<i>Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Congo</i>
WCL	World Confederation of Labor
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WUED	Worker Union for Economic Development (Cambodia)
ZAMTEL	Zambia Telecommunications Company
ZANACO	Zambia National Commercial Bank
ZCCM	Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines
ZCTU	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZESCO	Zambia Electricity Supply Company
ZNCB	Zambia National Commercial Bank