

# RESEARCH ON INFORMAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE

**RWANDA CASE STUDY**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report encompasses an in-depth analysis of the political engagement of construction workers in Rwanda in order to gain understanding of the social dialogue mechanisms in the construction sector. Construction workers in Rwanda are organised under a trade union known as *Syndicat des Travailleurs de Entreprises de Construction, Menuiserie et Artisanat* (STECOMA). The Union signed a collective bargaining agreement with the City of Kigali authorities to improve the construction industry for the benefit of workers. The researcher undertook fieldwork in the Kigali business district and the nearby districts of Kichukiro and Gasabo. The researcher adopted qualitative methods to collect both secondary and primary data for analysis. The study also employed stakeholder observations as a method to gather and analyse information.

Rwanda is a country with a high level of informality with around 94 percent of the people working in the informal sector. The country is experiencing a rapidly growing and highly informal sector fuelled by a rapid and an on-going population shift from rural to urban locations. A number of trade unions have emerged to promote the interests and rights of workers. These include; the *Centrale des Syndicats des Travailleurs au Rwanda* (CESTRAR) and the *Congress of Labour and Fraternity in Rwanda* (COTRAF) among others. However, *Syndicat des Travailleurs des Entreprises de Construction* (STECOMA) is the main trade union focused on promoting the rights and interests of workers in the construction industry.

The organisation of construction work among associations and trade unions is provided for by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) Constitution of 2003. The 2009 law regulating labour in Rwanda brings together all the legal instruments used by government to manage labour relations. These include: the National Policy on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in 2012, the National Employment Policy, 2007, the National Housing Policy, 2015 and the National Urbanisation Policy, 2015. These frameworks are actualised by the Urbanisation and Rural Sector Strategic Plan 2013-18.

Social dialogue in Rwanda, just like in other countries, is realised on two fronts i.e. the tripartite mechanism and the bipartite relationships. These are usually actualised by signing Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). The National

Labour Council (NLC) is the main mechanism for actualising the social dialogue agenda in Rwanda.

STECOMA has been at the forefront of social dialogue in Rwanda with regard to engaging government to involve informal sector workers in the construction sector. This engagement resulted in the signing of a CBA with the City of Kigali in 2015 to empower the informal workers

and build their capacity in the construction sector. STECOMA also signed an MoU with The Workforce Development Authority (WDA) on the implementation of a partnership that leads to skills development, certification and categorisation of informal workers in the construction sector, carpentry and art crafts.

Very much in the same way as STECOMA, the City of Kigali and WDA are the three parties in the CBA, a number of social partners are involved in the social dialogue process. These include: other government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) like Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) and Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA). Other trade unions and employers/private sector players have also been instrumental in the process. These partners have different levels of bargaining power stemming from their mandates, leadership and the constituency they represent. The political capital for the engagement of trade unions in the social dialogue is basically increased popularity of the government among the citizens, seen as a government that cares and is committed to improving the livelihoods of the common man. Economic empowerment on the other hand motivates all parties to the social dialogue to engage in the process.

Efforts by trade unions, donors and government to promote tripartite arrangements have been the biggest enabling factor for social dialogue in Rwanda. Trade unions are led by CESTRAR in the NLC and it is this mechanism that motivated STECOMA to approach the City of Kigali and WDA to sign the above-mentioned MoUs. The major obstructing condition for social dialogue is that the process is still in its infancy in Rwanda. Other conditions include: lack of awareness on the social dialogue framework, government bureaucracy and lack of adequate resources among new and upcoming trade unions to upscale their operations and activities. To overcome these obstacles, social partners have worked on strengthening the tripartite mechanism and engaging

other stakeholders in the process. Trade unions and partners have offered training and capacity development to their constituencies and officials over the years and have embarked on registration of new members. Donor support has also been instrumental in supporting trade unions to promote social dialogue.

The social dialogue has impacted on the livelihood of construction workers in a number of ways. The working environment in the construction sites has changed for the better and the salary of informal workers has increased. There has also been increased access to social security among informal workers and government has integrated informal workers into its flagship projects to promote

social development in Rwanda. Finally, women economic empowerment is being realised from engagement in the construction sector as cases of reported sexual harassment have reduced and more women have been employed in the sector.

The main lesson learnt from the social dialogue process in Rwanda is the need for trade unions to remain focused in pursuing their objectives of promoting and defending workers interests through social dialogue. The agenda for government and its support for social dialogue, coupled with the rule of law and accountability is an important component for the success of any social dialogue as well as support from donors.

# FOREWORD

This research was commissioned by Mondiaal FNV within the scope of their Social Dialogue programme as part of the Trade Union Cooperation Programme 2017-2020. The research project aims to take stock and investigate in which ways issues of informal workers are addressed in social dialogue mechanisms and to what extent informal workers are or can be included. To be able to distil this macro-perspective, a micro-approach was adopted by zooming in on eight case studies across the world. Each case study pursued the same research objectives and investigated the related research questions as mentioned in the introduction.

Each case study adopted a qualitative research approach looking into successful cases of “inclusive” social dialogue processes. Primary data was collected during 5 to 8 days of fieldwork and included semi-structured interviews, focus groups discussions, participant observation and in some cases participatory workshops. The primary data was contextualised via literature review as well as media and document analysis adopting a historical, political economy perspective.

Following the Terms of Reference (TOR) developed by Mondiaal FNV, social dialogue and collective bargaining were defined as followed in all eight case studies:

*“Social dialogue can be characterised by bipartite or tripartite bargaining and negotiation processes between government institutions, employer organisations/ employers and trade unions at four levels: internationally, nationally and at sector and company level. So, collective bargaining is seen as a part of social dialogue as well.”*

Although specific attention was given to less-institutionalised forms of social dialogue by including the wide range of informal negotiation processes found in both the formal and informal economy.

The following report represents the research results of one of the eight case studies: Construction workers in **Rwanda** and the creation of various Memorandums of Understanding by tapping into the political priorities of the government.

The other 7 case studies are about:

- Street-vendors in **India** and their adaptations to Town-Vending Councils as new social dialogue arenas
- Indirect workers (or *tercerizados*) in **Colombia's** palm oil industry and their struggle for formalisation
- Boda boda (motor taxi) drivers in **Uganda** and the political tango they are in to protect their livelihoods
- Domestic workers in **Peru** and their collective action towards the ratification of ILO Convention 189 (on Domestic work).
- Market- and street-vendors in **Ghana** and the initial steps made by UNIWA towards local informal workers' forums'
- Guides and porters in **Nepal's** tourism sector and the sector-wide agreements that have been accomplished
- Informal construction workers and outsourced workers in the electricity sector in **Indonesia** making slow but steady gains in an uncondusive environment

These 8 cases show us that there is not one-size-fits all when it comes to social dialogue practices of informal workers. Nevertheless, another Mondiaal FNV's research SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND INFORMAL WORKERS: WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM 8 SUCCESS CASES summarises the overarching insights based on the comparative analysis of the eight case studies.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This research encompasses an in-depth analysis of the political engagement of construction workers in Rwanda as a case study in order to gain an understanding of the social dialogue mechanisms, the bargaining strategies adopted and their impact on the livelihoods of informal workers in the construction sector. Construction workers in Rwanda are organised under a trade union known as Syndicat des Travailleurs de Entreprises de Construction, Menuiserie et Artisanat (STECOMA). The Union signed a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the City of Kigali authorities to improve the construction industry for the benefit of workers. The analysis is based on how construction workers relate to other players in the social dialogue mechanism, particularly on the CBA. The construction workers are interested in safe working environments and more earnings. The government on the other hand, is interested in compliance to the laws regulating the construction sector and formalisation of the sector in order to bring in more revenues as well as to promote rural and urban development.

Against this background, Mondiaal FNV contracted the services of the consultant to undertake a study for the Trade Union Cooperation Programme (TUCP) in Rwanda. The research was commissioned to take stock and investigate in which ways issues of informal workers are addressed in social dialogue mechanisms and whether labour organisations have made progress in obtaining a common floor in the labour market and more redistributive policies. The research outcome will be used as a basis for a plan for the coming 2.5 years to exchange experiences amongst partners of Mondiaal FNV in order to improve the capability of unions and informal workers organisations (IWOs) to defend the rights of informal workers through social dialogue. Between August and October 2018 the first two phases of the research were completed. The third and last stage of the research, which commenced in 30th November 2018, encompass an in-depth analysis of the selected case study in order to gain an understanding of the Social Dialogue (SD) mechanisms, the bargaining strategies adopted and their impact on the livelihoods of informal workers.

## 1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1) Deepen our understanding of the SD processes of the selected case studies:
  - a. Which social partners (SP) are involved:
    - What are their goals/interests they hope to achieve through SD
    - Where does their bargaining power stem from
  - b. Which bargaining strategies are adopted by each social partner
  - c. Which issues are on the SD agenda
    - Who sets the agenda
    - Are all SP equally committed to the agenda?
    - Who is the driving force?
  - d. What are the main obstacles to SD in the selected cases and how were they overcome?
  - e. What were the key enabling conditions that allowed SD to be effective (e.g. respect for the rule of law/institutionalisation, respect for TUs rights, well-organised labour organisations)
- 2) Develop a list of key lessons learned that can be used as a basis for exchange activities

## 1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the political & economic reasons behind the SD-process? (contextual background)
- 2) How has the SD process evolved? (timeline of steps taken by involved SP)
- 3) Which social partners were involved in the SD?
  - a. What are their stakes in the SD process? Which goals do they aim to achieve?
  - b. How has their agenda been set?
  - c. Where does their bargaining power stem from? (mapping the structural and associational power of the respective IWOs)
- 4) What are the enabling conditions for the SD-process?
- 5) Which obstructing conditions for the SD-process can be identified?
  - a. How have the social partners been able to overcome the obstacles?
- 6) What has been the impact of the SD in terms of livelihoods of the respective IWOs?
- 7) Which lessons can be learned from the SD-process in terms of effectively including IWOs in the SD process and or its outcome?

### 1.3 DESCRIPTION OF STUDY LOCATION

The implementation of this study commenced in December 2018, covering Kigali City and its surrounding areas. Being a city with a high level of informality in the construction sector, Kigali and its surrounding areas provides a representative sample that is sufficient to draw conclusions. Specifically, the researcher undertook fieldwork in the Kigali business district. To gain a better representation of semi-urban areas, the researcher also conducted fieldwork in the nearby districts of Kichukiro and Gasabo. These were identified based on availability of vibrant labour associations for the construction sector and mining sector, included based on the direct linkages with construction, particularly sand mining and quarry, engagement in social dialogue, proximity to Kigali city and the need to balance between urban and semi-urban/rural construction workers.

### 1.4 METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted qualitative methods to collect data from different stakeholders in Rwanda's construction sector. In the application of this method, both secondary and primary data were utilised for analysis. Under secondary data, we comprehensively reviewed the different research papers on the informal workers' participation in the economy, balance of power between the social partners i.e. employers and employees as well as structural power and the political context of informal workers' relationship with the owners of capital and clients on the one side and the state on the other. In all these, specific focus is on the construction sector in Rwanda. Other literatures reviewed include: survey findings, media reports, government policies and legislations regarding building and construction works as well as their implementation. The study also employed stakeholder observations as a method to gather and analysis information. The behaviours of construction workers in associations and those not in associations as well as other social dialogue partners over the years were observed regarding consultation, negotiations, and regulations on quality and safety at the workplace as well as compliance and enforcement.

### 1.5 STUDY DESIGN

The study reviews and undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the social dialogue framework in Rwanda's construction sector. Document analysis examines the laws and legislations governing the construction sector, including the ones that resulted from the social dialogue processes, reports of trade unions, media outputs concerning the SD and its impact on workers in the construction sector among others. Interviews with

key stakeholders gathered information on perceptions regarding the construction sector, the dialogue framework and its effectiveness, including implementation of agreements/positions taken during the dialogue process and recommendations on how to improve the dialogue framework, make it more representative especially for the informal sector and efficient in terms of implementation.

Interviews targeted government officials, representatives of all Social Partners (SPs) involved in the Social Dialogue (SD) process and local experts to obtain an "outside" perspective on the social dialogue process in the construction sector. Finally, focus group discussions obtained information on construction workers' perceptions and position regarding the social dialogue framework, the peculiar issues regarding negotiations, structure and power dynamics. In addition, it gathered information on implementation and proposals for improving engagement of stakeholders in the construction sector, negotiations and efficiency of the SD mechanisms in place. It targeted informal construction workers and trade union members. Based on the initial literature review and document analysis, the social dialogue mechanism between construction workers as an informal sector player and government regarding certification of construction workers, remuneration, and adherence to quality and safety measures as a specific SD case for Rwanda was identified as the issue for study and analysis. This was made the focus of the primary data collection.

### 1.6 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The survey design identifies different stakeholders in the social dialogue framework for interviews and analysis. Table 1 provides the sampled social partners for interviews and FGDs. For each case study, we purposely sampled relevant Government Departments and Agencies. These include; The Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA), Ministry of Infrastructure (MINIFRA), Kicukiro and Gasabo districts. Trade Unions (TU)/associations and employers were also sampled. These include: STECOMA, Congress of Labour and Brotherhood of Rwanda (COTRAF-RWANDA), Rwanda Workers Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR), Trade Union of Independent Workers of Informal Economy (SYTRIECI), Private Sector Federation - Rwanda (PSF) and Association of Building and Public Works Contractors. Each of these involved interviews of 1 key person. 5 to 8 informal sector workers (i.e. building and construction workers) were interviewed and engaged in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Table 1: List of stakeholders consulted

AREAS	GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES	INFORMAL WORKERS ORGANISATIONS	EMPLOYERS
Kigali City	The Ministry of Public Service and Labour Ministry of Infrastructure	STECOMA Congress of Labour and Brotherhood of Rwanda (COTRAF-RWANDA) Rwanda Workers Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR)	The Private Sector Federation - Rwanda (PSF) Association of Building and Public Works Contractors
Kicukiro district		Trade Union of Independent Workers of Informal Economy (SYTRIECI) Construction workers (both formal and informal/outsourced workers as well as both members and non-members of TUs)	
Gasabo district		Construction workers (both formal and informal/outsourced workers as well as both members and non-members of TUs)	

Source: author's computation from fieldwork

## 1.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Different instruments/tools were designed to collect data. Data was collected using actor-specific questionnaires and interview guides. Six different forms of questionnaires specific to government departments and agencies, trade unions/associations, employers and construction workers were designed and used for collecting data from each social dialogue actor.

## 1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis took into consideration the fact that qualitative data has been obtained from a wide range of stakeholders in the social dialogue framework, with different interests. Data was therefore analysed along themes that explain the research question and objectives. In addition, data analysis took into consideration the observations of stakeholder behaviours and perceptions over the years.



## 2. SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Rwanda is a country with a high level of informality. According to the Rwandan household survey, undertaken by the Government of Rwanda (GoR), 94 percent of the people in Rwanda are working in the informal sector since there is lack of job opportunities in the formal sector. Around 53 percent of the Rwandan population has no schooling at all which brings with it a lack of appropriate skills as a major hindrance for employment (GoR, 2011). This is supported by Rukundo (2015) who analyses the informal sector employment with a special focus on Rwanda, demonstrating empirically that if the level of education is increased, informality would decrease slightly.

Rwanda is experiencing a rapidly growing informal sector fuelled by a rapid and an on-going population shift from rural to urban locations. The building and construction sector is a booming business, forming the largest part of Rwanda's industrial economy on an annual basis and is outpacing the country's already exceptional economic growth (ILO, 2018). The building and construction sector covers both public construction works, including roads and bridges, housing as well as private construction works.

Many of the informal sector workers are engaged in the construction sector, a sector in which there are a number of deficits with regard to decent work.

The most recent Labour survey indicates that there are 302,902 workers employed in the construction sector. This is dominated by men (270,129) with women only 32,773 (GoR, 2017) and it includes both formal and informal workers. The construction industry in Rwanda plays a significant role in the socio-economic development of the country. This is because it provides direct employment opportunities to many people both in the formal and informal sectors. For instance, through employment provided by new infrastructure projects, rehabilitation and maintenance, more than 50 percent of the employment created is in the unskilled labour market (GoR, 2009). However, Bizimungu (2018) observes that the high numbers of people in the informal economy particularly in the construction sector as well as garments and tailoring are still associated with decent work deficits, including high levels of poverty, long working hours, absence of proper contracts, and lack of stability and security. This is even more the case because the construction

workers are, moreover, largely employed temporarily in an informal manner.

The government of Rwanda has over the last few years focused on formalising the economy, which is seen as an important measure to promote decent work. However, many companies are still operating with informal workers, mainly as a result of financial constraints to maintaining formal workers. For instance, according to Rukundo (2015), even though government is discouraging informality, which now stands at 94 percent, insufficient capital (82 percent) remains the main challenge forcing firms to operate informally.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) most of the informal workers in Rwanda, having low skills, are poorly paid and have limited contract security. In the construction sector this results in workers who are constantly in search of the next temporary contract to support their families, moving from one construction site to another. Along the way, they are exposed to considerable safety risks, have limited social protection and lack opportunities to upgrade their skills, which would translate into a higher demand for their services in more secure and better paid positions (ILO, 2018).

In terms of gender, women and young women have a disproportionate set of challenges within the construction sector. They compose 19 percent of sector workers and are almost exclusively found in the lowest-skilled jobs, with the lowest wages. Moreover, the work they do is physically demanding and their exposure to occupational safety risks is high. Most women employed on building construction sites are single mothers, often having no other option but to leave their children in the care of friends, family or neighbours so that they can earn Rwanda Franc 2,000 (USD 2.35) per day (ILO, 2018).

A number of trade unions have emerged in Rwanda to promote the interests and rights of workers. The *Centrale des Syndicats des Travailleurs au Rwanda* (CESTRAR) and The Congress of Labour and Fraternity in Rwanda (COTRAF) are the main trade unions, bringing together different workers to engage with social dialogue partners in order to improve the rights of workers and promote safety in the working

environment.<sup>1</sup> However, *Syndicat des Travailleurs des Entreprises de Construction* (STECOMA), a CESTRAR affiliate is the main trade union focused on promoting the rights and interests of workers in the construction sector. The mission of STECOMA is to ensure and promote the dignity and well-being of construction, carpentry and craft workers in Rwanda while its vision is to build a strong frame for advocacy and capacity building of construction, carpentry and craft workers in Rwanda<sup>2</sup>. STECOMA has engaged with other trade unions, private sector and government to execute their mandate over the last few years.

In view of the literature reviewed, it can be concluded that not much research on the trade union movement with regard to the construction sector is available in the public domain. The Danish Trade Union Council for

International Development Cooperation (LO/FTF Council) undertook the Rwanda Labour Market Profile in 2014 and this provides the most comprehensive report on the trade union engagement in Rwanda. However, it does not specifically interrogate the STECOMA-City of Kigali dialogue framework on the construction sector and neither does it tackle the political economy issue of regulation and engagement of informal sector workers in the construction industry. This study seeks to fill this gap by making an attempt to have a deeper understanding of the dialogue framework between the trade unions, government as well as their employers especially with regard to the CBA being urged by STECOMA. This is through exploring a political economy dimension of this engagement and the impacts on the livelihood of construction workers.

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<sup>1</sup>Rwanda Labour Market Information System, available at <http://www.lmis.gov.rw/index.php?id=29>

<sup>2</sup>STECOMA mission and vision, available at <https://stecoma.org.rw/V1/mission/>

### 3. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

The organisation of construction workers in associations and trade unions is provided for by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) Constitution 2003. Article 38 of the Constitution of 2003 provides for the right to form trade unions for the defence and the promotion of legitimate professional interests. Accordingly, every worker may defend his/her rights through trade union action under conditions determined by law but subject to having an employment contract. While every employer has the right to join an employers' organisation, trade unions and employers' associations have the right to enter into general or specific agreements regulating their working relations. A number of laws have been developed to effect the constitution.

The law regulating labour in Rwanda 2009 brings together all the legal instruments used by government to manage labour relations. It is a comprehensive framework to address the rights for workers and employers to freely associate and to bargain collectively (GoR, 2009). The law establishes fundamental rights at the workplace, regulates various aspects of employment, general working conditions, salaried formal sector workers, leaves, occupational safety and health, organisation of workers and employers, collective agreements and labour disputes. In addition, the law establishes the Labour Inspectorate, the Ministerial Labour Directorate and the National Labour Council. The law requires firms employing at least ten workers to have their workers elect leaders who also act as their representatives in any form of engagement with other social dialogue partners.

The Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA) together with stakeholders developed the National Policy on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in 2012. The vision Policy is to have a safe and healthy workplace for everyone; and a country where best practices in occupational safety and health are part of daily activities. The Policy seeks to provide an enabling environment for the protection and progressive prevention of occupational death, injury and ill-Health (GoR, 2012). The government established a list of dangerous professions subject to heightened safety scrutiny with construction among these sectors. The Policy, validated by the National Labour Council in 2013 gives Trade Unions and Professional Associations

the mandate to participate in awareness creation, mainstreaming OHS into policies and programmes of workers' groups, monitoring risks and accidents, and promoting enforcement of OHS laws and advocating for employees' rights on OSH.

The National Employment Policy, 2007 has been developed and is still being implemented in line with the major principles and guidelines established by the Rwandan Constitution. The main purpose for this Policy is to realise as much as possible fully productive and freely chosen employment through economic growth in accordance with the dignity and respect of fundamental human rights. The Policy identifies the construction sector as one of the key sectors which fall under non-farming jobs in urban areas. It also identifies labour Intensive works, through which younger and less qualified people can earn a living from. These works are inclusive of construction and public works enterprises (civil engineering, roadway maintenance system and drainage, allotment and development of sites, construction of township accommodations among others (GoR, 2007).

In 2015, government developed the National Housing Policy. The main objective of the Policy is to contribute towards improving the living conditions of the urban population through controlled and harmonised development of urban areas and provision of affordable housing to all sectors of the population (GoR, 2015). The policy is aimed at engaging the private sector and promoting its active participation in driving housing and real estate development in the country. A One Stop Centre has been established to serve as a reference point for all approvals for construction work. Other regulations include the Rwanda Building Control Regulations 2012 and the Rwanda National Construction Industry Policy 2009. The main thrust of these policies is to develop an effective institutional framework for sustainable infrastructure development and maintenance in the construction and civil engineering sectors for buildings and transportation. Stakeholders in the construction industry, including trade unions and construction companies, are usually engaged by the different government Ministries during the process of developing these policies. This is in line with the multi-stakeholder approach that has been adopted by government.

The Ministry for Infrastructure developed the National Urbanisation Policy in 2015. The objective of the Policy is to create the conditions for a well-managed growth, generating vibrant urban environments and sustainable economic development. This is part of the government's move to prevent unplanned growth in the support of an urban development system and an increasing quality of life (GoR, 2015b). The policy is organised in four pillars. These include; coordination which addresses the enhancement of institutional capacities to manage urban development in a coordinated way; densification which focuses on how to integrate urban development in order to achieve resource efficiency and compact growth; conviviality which addresses how to support quality of life and equity in urban settlement; and finally economic growth whose objective is to facilitate employment creation and off-farm productivity for local subsistence and regional competitiveness.

The legal and policy frameworks for the construction sector are actualised by government strategies in place. This is basically the Urbanisation and Rural Sector Strategic Plan 2013-18. The vision of the Plan is that Rwanda's human settlements and urbanisation are sustainably managed and promoted, supporting economic development and benefiting all strata of population. This is to be realised through two objectives. The first objective focuses on developing the basis for good development management cutting across all development sectors and following clear guidelines and procedures at all levels of governance. The second objective is to prioritise a hierarchical network of urban and urbanising centres providing services and attracting economic activities countrywide, and to support the development of secondary cities (GoR, 2012b).

# 4. SOCIAL DIALOGUE MECHANISM IN RWANDA

## 4.1 IN-DEPTH DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESS

Social dialogue in Rwanda, just like in many other countries, is realised on two fronts. The first front is a tripartite mechanism which involves trade unions engaging with employers and government to agree on common interests in the labour relations with regard to regulation and enforcement. The other front is a bipartite relationship where employers and workers deliberate and agree on issues of mutual benefit in the workplace. These are usually actualised by signing CBAs and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). The National Labour Council (NLC) is the main mechanism for actualising the social dialogue agenda in Rwanda. The NLC is composed of fifteen members with five representatives each from government, workers, currently represented by CESTRAR and employers. The council comments and gives advice on labour law, minimum wage and other labour related matters. In addition, the Council puts in place Committees for arbitration and settlement of labour disputes in cases where the parties are unable to reach a settlement.

CESTRAR is the main trade union in terms of membership and influence focusing on the overall labour issues in Rwanda. STECOMA on the other hand specifically focuses on construction workers. This is important because there are some gaps in the law such as a requirement for construction workers to be given employment contracts, which supports the construction workers especially those in the informal sector. This requires more mobilisation and engagement of government together with employers. STECOMA has therefore been at the forefront of social dialogue in Rwanda with regard to engaging government to involve informal sector workers in the construction sector. Their engagement has basically focused on improving the working conditions of workers as well as increasing their employment opportunities and skills building. This engagement resulted in the signing of a CBA with the City of Kigali in 2015 to empower the informal workers and build their capacity in the construction sector. The agreement is for a five year period but is renewable by mutual agreement between the two parties.

The purpose of the agreement between STECOMA and Kigali city is to organise and promote the professionalism of informal workers in the construction sector, carpentry and art crafts. The CBA also seeks to address the problems facing workers in the city by providing a platform for social dialogue whereby Kigali City agrees to engage social dialogue partners together with STECOMA to jointly address the challenges facing informal sector workers. STECOMA was the initiator of the CBA, with the agenda led by its Secretary General upon consultation with members. The Secretary General of STECOMA, together with other STECOMA officials/negotiators approached Kigali City to initiate negotiations. This was followed by a series of negotiations with government officials from Kigali City and it was during those negotiations that the purpose of the agreement and responsibilities of both parties were agreed.

The responsibilities of STECOMA under this agreement are to: support development works in the city as per the approved plans, collect information for facilitating the development of the construction, carpentry and art crafts sector, promote order among members of the syndicate, continue to market the union to workers in construction, carpentry and arts in order to increase membership and make known to authorities areas where construction is being done unlawfully or without permission from the authorities. The responsibilities of the leadership of the City of Kigali on the other hand are to receive and follow up and take decisions about the work of constructions, carpentry and artisans, categorise in different levels workers related to construction work, carpentry and artisans based on the workers in the syndicate, organise social dialogue forums under the different categories of workers in order to promote workers' interests, work with STECOMA in mobilising the employers to register their workers for social security, particularly life insurance, and supporting the certification of workers who are not formally qualified. These measures contribute towards formalisation of informal workers in the country, which is a key government objective. The CBA has resulted in recognition of competent informal workers in the construction sector whereby they are now given certificates. Moreover, some employers have now started to give employment contracts to informal workers in their respective building and construction works.

STECOMA also has an MoU with the Workforce Development Authority (WDA) on implementation of partnerships that lead to skills development, certification and categorisation of informal workers in the construction, carpentry and art crafts sector. The main objective of the MoU is to improve technical skills and certify technicians and workers in construction, carpentry and art crafts that did not necessarily follow formal training programmes. This is irrespective of a construction worker being a member of STECOMA and it is competence based. The MoU, signed in 2014, commits the two parties to collaborate on activities concerning identification, training and certification of all informal workers in the construction, carpentry and art crafts, monitoring the performance and follow up the workers certified for refresher trainings in the case of new technology and equipment and industrial attachment.

The responsibilities of STECOMA under this MoU are the following: create and continuously update and share with WDA a database of registered members in their respective clusters, organise into categories based on skills and competences all works in construction, carpentry and art crafts, develop and implement in partnership with WDA a certification system for all experienced workers, advocate for technical training development, advocate and monitor health and safety of workers, advocate, monitor and improve gender awareness within Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) schools and workplaces, and advocate and support access to finance and cooperative clusters for all workers and infrastructure facilities. The responsibilities of WDA on the other hand are: offer further training to STECOMA trainers and assessors, provide technical support towards skills development of STECOMA members, certify and accompany STECOMA towards certification process and work together with STECOMA to mobilise resources for promoting technical skills development.

STECOMA continues to advocate for the better working conditions in the construction sector and has achieved this milestone as a result of advocacy for better training opportunities for construction workers, pushing government for a new labour law to support the construction workers. This basically relates to safety at the workplace, for instance the requirement for every worker on site to wear a helmet, belt and other safety regulations. STECOMA has also been able to support the training of construction workers and giving them certificates. These workers gained numerous skills in

construction and even big construction companies like China Construction International Corporation (CCIC) have employed some of these workers in their projects.

## 4.2 POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REASONS BEHIND THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESS

The political economy analysis of social dialogue in Rwanda is rather a complex issue. This is because according to most stakeholders, government is only seen as a regulator and political players are so detached from trade unions. Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), the ruling party, has since coming into power in 1994 focused on organising the country towards a development path and any move by citizens towards mobilising themselves into any form of association is highly supported by government. This is however on the condition that those associations focus only on issues of improving people's livelihoods and do not include political ambitions. The Rwandan government therefore supports the formation and engagement of trade unions as a poverty reduction strategy, separated from political issues. This partly explains why even during election periods, the political atmosphere is not so tense and the ruling party has been winning by huge margins. As such, opposition in Rwanda is not as dynamic as other countries in the region like Kenya and Uganda.

The political capital for the engagement of trade unions is basically increased popularity of the government among the citizens, seen as a government which cares and is committed to improving the livelihoods of the common man. There seems to be a consensus among social partners that government is working for them through this social dialogue process. This has boosted legitimacy of the Rwandan government, not only domestically but also internationally with the country's remarkable growth as well as political/economic stability fronted as Africa's success story. The government of Rwanda therefore is motivated to engage in social dialogue to promote political stability and legitimacy both at home and abroad. The turbulent history of the country requires a strong government that is legitimate and this can only be achieved when the common man, in this case the informal workers in the construction sector, is economically empowered.

Economic empowerment motivates all parties to engage in the social dialogue process. In the case of workers, STECOMA and other trade unions are interested in empowering the informal sector workers with skills and opportunities to be employed so that they

are able to earn more income to improve their livelihoods. The salary paid to informal workers has increased because STECOMA has given the construction workers who were formally unqualified the opportunity to do the work based on certificates for the skills and experience they have acquired over 10 years. This contributes to financial security of workers and also supports trade unions with more resources as a result of increased membership. In the case of employers and those in the private sector like construction companies, engagement in this social dialogue helps in increasing the productivity of workers as their skills improve. Trade unions have also negotiated and agreed with construction companies to recognise certified workers by paying them the same level of wages as their counterparts who have formally qualified to do the work. More particularly, it avoids labour disputes as workers have the opportunity to deliberate on any issues affecting them together with their employers. Government on the other hand is interested in sustainable economic growth and development since profitable companies, reduced unemployment and social security are all key aspects in promoting economic development.

### **4.3 EVOLUTION OF THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESS**

The social dialogue to promote the interests and build capacity of informal workers in the construction, carpentry and artisans industry started in 2009 when STECOMA commenced with the engagement of social dialogue partners in Rwanda. This is basically the City of Kigali, Workforce Development Authority (WDA), the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA) and the private sector, under its umbrella body Private Sector Federation (PSF) - Rwanda. The engagements focused on recognition of informal sector workers through providing certificates to experienced but unqualified workers, improving the working conditions of informal sector workers and complying with government laws and regulations in the construction sector. The Secretary General of STECOMA, flanked by a team of worker negotiators first approached the City of Kigali and later WDA to commence with negotiations

In 2012, a major milestone was reached when STECOMA started issuing certificates to its members in the construction sector who meet the requirements but are not formally trained and therefore lack formal certificates that would enable them gain access to more and better paying jobs. The STECOMA leadership, on realising that informal construction workers without

formal certificates are paid less and often struggle to get better jobs, decided to engage with the WDA to negotiate and agree on how best informal construction workers can be supported. This was welcomed by WDA since it enhances its own mandate of building the capacity of workers. In addition, the syndicate kick-started the process of negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement with the City of Kigali and WDA to promote the interests of workers in the informal sector. These negotiations culminated in the signing of an MoU between STECOMA and City of Kigali in 2014 and later a MoU between STECOMA and WDA in 2015.

As observed earlier, the MoU with the City of Kigali seeks to organise and promote the professionalism of informal workers in the construction sector with STECOMA committing to assist government by flagging illegal construction sites and maintaining order among its members while the City of Kigali commits to receive and follow up and take decisions, facilitate social dialogue forums under the different categories of workers and register their workers for social security. The MoU with WDA on the other hand commits STECOMA and WDA to work together to improve technical skills and certify technicians and workers in construction that did not necessarily follow formal training programmes but are experienced and possess the necessary skills. Currently, STECOMA is involved in negotiations with the entrepreneurs through PSF Rwanda to ensure that all workers in the construction sector are given employment contracts.

The MoUs with the City of Kigali and WDA are not legally binding and therefore no party to this agreement can take legal actions if and when any dispute arises in respect of the interpretation and implementation of the respective MoUs. The dispute settlement mechanism for each of these MoUs, however, provides for resolution of disputes through consultations, negotiations and any other amicable means as agreed upon by the parties. In terms of implementation, STECOMA membership as well as the interviewed construction workers, both trade union members and non-members, are aware of these MoUs. STECOMA has been raising awareness of these MoUs particularly with workers and construction companies. However, the WDA has also been instrumental in raising awareness of the certification process since it also directly contributes to its mandate. The government of Rwanda has strong regulatory and enforcement capabilities and this is also seen in the construction sector, the implementation of these MoUs is therefore on track. The major challenge experienced

is the high level of informality, which undermines the follow up and registration as well as effective organisation of informal construction workers.

The members of STECOMA are happy with the syndicate for taking these initiatives since they promote their interests as workers in the informal sector and it also gives them opportunities to earn more. This is especially after they receive certificates. According to an official from the Association of Building and Public Works Contractors, Government is in support of this social dialogue because it leads to a harmonious working relationship in the construction sector, increases the earnings of workers and therefore boosts economic growth. In the case of employers, a number of members of PSF Rwanda welcome social dialogue but remain sceptical as they are concerned with having to spend more on paying the workers, which they see as increasing the costs of doing business. The negotiation agenda has largely been driven by STECOMA, under the leadership of its Secretary General, as a specialised syndicate for construction workers. Government however has been willing to support STECOMA's efforts since it contributes to the overall government plan for developing Rwanda as reflected in the Urbanisation and Rural Sector Strategic Plan 2013-18.

#### **4.4 SOCIAL PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS**

Very much in the same way as STECOMA, the City of Kigali City and WDA are the three parties in the CBAs, a number of social partners are involved in the social dialogue process. These include; other government MDAs, private sector players, other trade unions, consultants, contractors, equipment and material suppliers. These partners have different levels of bargaining power stemming from their mandates, leadership and the constituency they represent.

##### **4.4.1 STECOMA**

STECOMA is a trade union for construction, carpentry and artisan workers in Rwanda. It has a membership of around 48,000 national members with representatives in all districts, 149 of which are informal workers and has been the imitator of social dialogue with the City of Kigali and WDA, which resulted in the signing of the MoUs. Once a construction worker has been certified, STECOMA considers them formal members and this explains why the numbers of informal members are low. The objective of STECOMA is to protect the interests of members (workers in construction industry), through promoting better living and working conditions. This is usually done through building their

capacities, negotiations with other social dialogue partners and provision of certificates to experienced but unqualified construction workers. The syndicate also supports members in forming cooperatives, which help members to save and access training opportunities. Currently, there are 220 cooperatives formed across the country. STECOMA has structures from national to district levels. The National Council is the top decision-making body, operating with three committees i.e. youth committee, women's committee and commissions. This is followed by the National Executive Bureau, headed by the General Secretary. The Bureau acts as the Secretariat and is charged with overseeing the day-to-day running of the Syndicate. The STECOMA Congress of the district is the lowest body, which brings together all members at the district level. The Secretary General of STECOMA takes the lead in terms of engagement and negotiation with the City of Kigali and WDA. This is in addition to ensuring that STECOMA undertakes its responsibilities as set out in the MoUs. STECOMA and other trade unions have also signed an MoU with PSF Rwanda to promote social dialogue. Although this is not specific to construction workers, it provides a framework for increased collaboration between trade unions and the private sector (construction companies inclusive), which contributes towards improving the working condition of construction workers.

##### **4.4.2 The City of Kigali**

The City of Kigali is the mandated body that oversees the administration and development of Kigali city. The vision of the City of Kigali is to make Kigali the "Centre of Urban Excellence in Africa". This is to be achieved through social inclusion, sustainable development, and economic growth. The city authority oversees the approval of construction permits, conducts inspections relative to construction quality and the completion of the project according to plan and building code. The Vice Mayor, Economic Affairs, City of Kigali has been instrumental in engaging with STECOMA to promote professionalism in the construction sector. Since 2014 the City of Kigali have been working more closely with trade unions, private sector and other government agencies to promote dialogue, compliance to regulations and formalisation of the construction sector. The Authority has set up One-Stop Centres for companies which operate at both city and district levels to provide all the assistance with regard to administration and regulation of construction sector. This includes application for plan approval, monitoring of construction projects regarding adherence to standards and approval of houses for occupation.



#### **4.4.3 Workforce Development Authority (WDA)**

WDA was formed in 2009 by the Government of Rwanda to promote, facilitate, and guide the development and upgrading of skills and competencies of the national workforce. This is with the ultimate objective of enhancing their competitiveness and employability. The Authority has over the years executed the implementation of the National Employment Programme (NEP) where skills development programmes for informal workers have been implemented. WDA after negotiations and subsequent signing of MoU with STECOMA have developed and rolled out the Recognition of Prior Learning Scheme. Under this scheme and MoU with STECOMA, they have started to provide certificates to construction workers in the informal sector after onsite assessments. More than 500,000 construction workers have already been certified. The Director General together with Specialists in construction and certification at WDA are the main officials who engage in negotiations and implementation of the MoU with STECOMA. The implementation of this MoU is also supported and publicised by WDA because it directly contributes to its mandate of building the capacity of Rwanda's workforce. WDA also implements other skills development programmes like the Rwanda Priority Skills for Growth (PSG) programme as well as apprenticeship and internship programmes for Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students and graduates.

#### **4.4.4 Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA)**

MIFOTRA is the government body mandated to regulate public service and labour relations in Rwanda. It is therefore responsible for enforcement of the labour laws. In the construction industry, which is highly informal, the Ministry has been working with stakeholders, especially trade unions, to promote formalisation. This is basically through registration of workers into associations and trade unions as well as certification of experienced and unqualified workers in the construction industry. Although not directly a party to the STECOMA- City of Kigali as well as with STECOMA-WDA MoUs, MIFOTRA has been instrumental in providing the overall environment for social dialogue in Rwanda. This environment is basically provided through the NLC, which consolidates the tripartite mechanism. It is as a result of the NLC engagement that STECOMA built a working relationship and gained grounds for negotiations with the City of Kigali and WDA. Through their engagement and recognition of STECOMA as a legitimate trade union representing workers in the

construction sector, MIFOTRA enabled STECOMA to negotiate and make agreements with the City of Kigali and WDA. Besides, it enabled STECOMA to increase its membership thereby increasing its bargaining power. This is basically through its move to promote formalisation where construction workers are obliged by the Ministry to register with any trade union of their choice for them to access social security and ease in monitoring their working conditions. In addition, since certified workers receive higher wages than uncertified ones in the construction sites, many informal workers are incentivised to join STECOMA in order to facilitate their certification.

#### **4.4.5 Rwanda Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)**

MININFRA is the government agency mandated to develop policies and strategies concerning national infrastructure in Rwanda. The Ministry is therefore responsible for setting up of laws and regulations for the construction sector. It is these laws and strategies that provide opportunities for construction companies to win projects that STECOMA members and certified workers are employed in. A key example here is the construction of public houses for vulnerable people and those living in high-risk areas. The City of Kigali collaborates with MININFRA to monitor the implementation of its MoU with STECOMA with regard to the laws, regulations and strategies in place. STECOMA and City of Kigali engages with the Permanent Secretary MININFRA and the assigned officers in charge of construction and public works to execute the MoU. The main strategy guiding the intervention of MININFRA is the UHSHD Strategic Plan, which focuses on affordable housing, housing and rural settlement. In addition, the Ministry develops and implements projects on transport, energy, water and sanitation. MININFRA works closely with other government agencies to plan and execute government programmes.

#### **4.4.6 Rwanda Housing Authority (RHA)**

RHA is a government agency under the Ministry of Infrastructure. The Authority assesses the implementation of MININFRA's policies, with particular reference to affordable housing, government building, construction and human settlement. RHA undertakes inspection of construction sites where a contractor's works have been suspended by inspectors from the City of Kigali and district officials. RHA has engaged with STECOMA in the implementation of the latter's MoUs with Kigali City Authority and WDA. This engagement focuses on promoting a common understanding for

employment of construction workers in the construction of affordable housing, ensuring the quality of the projects through working with experienced construction workers and promoting the use of certified workers in the construction sites. Through this arrangement, WDA and the City of Kigali uses RHA to oversee the implementation and compliance with the MoUs.

#### **4.4.7 Rwanda Workers Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR)**

CESTRAR brings together trade unions in Rwanda under a national movement. It began operation in 1985 and currently has 168,338 members. The union's structure is composed of the National Congress, the National Trade Union Council, and the Executive Bureau that acts as the Secretariat and Regional Union bringing together specific districts across the country. The National Council syndicate represents the leaders of all syndicates and they set action plans, as well as help leaders implement them. The Council is composed of all trade unions and STECOMA, as an affiliate, is part of the Council. CESTRAR therefore gives more mandate and recognition to STECOMA to undertake its work of promoting the interests of workers in the construction industry. CESTRAR started receiving funding from FNV in 2014. This funding is directed to advocacy and capacity building of the Union. The support from FNV has helped the Union empower and strengthen its STECOMA negotiation committees, which comprise the selected officials to represent the Union in social dialogue processes to negotiate better with other social dialogue partners. An example in this case are negotiation committees engaging with employers to offer employment contracts to informal workers. The funding has also helped CESTRAR to improve on its services to members in terms of administration and communication between CESTRAR and affiliates.

#### **4.4.8 Congress of Labour and Brotherhood of Rwanda (COTRAF-Rwanda)**

COTRAF is a union with 13,000 members in the informal sector. These include workers in the construction sector who, although not covered by the MoU, benefit from some aspects like training and certification as reported by some members during a focus group discussion. Other members are in the garages, designers and the mining sector. The Union's structure is composed of the National Congress, the General Council, and the Executive Bureau, which is the Secretariat and National Zone bringing together district members. COTRAF uses its networks with other trade unions like STECOMA to share information, advocate and lobby for

their members' interests as well as defend their rights. The main areas of focus have been on safety at the workplace and respect of terms of employment, which is executed as and when an employee raises the issue to the Union. The approach taken is through arbitration and even litigation if the parties fail to agree. The Union also undertakes capacity building for members in areas of labour laws, cooperatives and savings groups and the different mechanisms of expressing their concerns to employers. Regarding the STECOMA, MoUs with the City of Kigali and WDA, COTRAF has been supportive as a solidarity gesture with other trade unions and was also instrumental in providing information on the construction sector and how professionalism can be promoted. The information provided by COTRAF is with regard to flagging illegal construction sites, which all stakeholders in the construction sector are under obligation to report, as well as mobilisation of construction workers for certification.

#### **4.4.9 Rwandan Extractive industry Workers Union (REWU)**

REWU is a union of workers in the mining and extractive industry, formed in 2014 to bring together workers in the extractive industry, defend their interests and promote living in good conditions. The vision is to empower workers and their families, beneficiaries of mining by improving the quality of their lives along with contributing to the attainment of social justice and sustainable development in an atmosphere of democracy and solidarity. Currently, REWU has enrolled 12,600 members across the country and is affiliated to CESTRAR and the National Commission of Human Rights (NCHR). The Union is structured in form of a Secretary General, who represents the union and coordinates all its activities, a Deputy Secretary General, who is responsible for mobilisation, recruitment and training programmes, a Secretary, who facilitates communication and Provincial Coordinators, who represent REWU in the two provinces. The Union provides services to around 120,000 workers involved in mines and quarries countrywide in a number of areas. These include; workers' rights protection, prevention of child labour, awareness raising and capacity building, and training on occupational safety and health principles. The Union also implements a volunteer's programme where volunteers of REWU are placed in the companies. REWU is represented in 125 companies and cooperatives up to now, it has 625 volunteers elected by their colleagues. REWU collaborates with STECOMA through linking employment issues from the mines and quarries to construction work. The issues include the

working condition of sand miners as well as sand miners who move to informal construction work whenever a job opportunity arises. This is because mines and quarries represent a substantial amount of raw materials used in the construction and some construction workers themselves came from the mines, particularly sand mines.

#### **4.4.10 Trade Union of Independent Workers of Informal Economy (SYTRIECI)**

SYTRIECI is a union of 5,000 members in the informal sector who are largely involved in small businesses around the city. The union mobilises and registers members into cooperatives and supports these members with capacity building for savings and labour laws. SYTRIECI has an MoU with STECOMA under which the two parties agreed on a framework for working together to promote the rights and interests of workers. Through this MoU, the two parties share information and support each other's activities in solidarity with the trade union movement in the country. This is how the union came to support STECOMA's efforts to promote professionalism and certification of construction workers in the informal sector. SYTRIECI receives funding from *Cosyl Conseil National De Syndicat Libre* and StreetNet, an international alliance of street vendors. The funds have been used to undertake capacity building initiatives for members, such as training programmes. The union also engaged with FNV Mondiaal once during an assessment exercise for trade unions in Rwanda. The report of this assessment, later shared with SYTRIECI indicated that FNV Mondiaal's priorities had changed by the time SYTRIECI was registered and was able to apply for funds.

#### **4.4.11 Private Sector Federation (PSF) - Rwanda**

PSF Rwanda is the umbrella organisation of employers in Rwanda, established in 1999. It has 10 departments for different sectors. The Federation has a membership of 6,000 with different categories. In terms of structure, PSF is composed of an Executive Committee, Board members, a Secretariat and district leaders. The leaders of each structure are elected by members and the Secretariat is in charge of day-to-day running of the Federation. The mission of PSF Rwanda is to represent and serve the interests of the entire private sector through lobbying and advocacy, while at the same time providing timely and relevant business development services that result in sustainable private sector-led economic growth and development. In terms of labour and employment relations, PSF Rwanda focuses more on the private sector interests than on employer

issues and has had limited engagement with the trade union movement, although this has changed over the last few years. A department for employment and labour relations has been set up to facilitate the Federation's engagement in the social dialogue framework. PSF Rwanda has received funding from donors like Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The funding has been used for business development activities, capacity building and promoting the health of workers through behaviour change. It is such initiatives that have brought PSF Rwanda and the trade union movement together as it promotes mutual interests. The STECOMA MoUs with the City of Kigali and WDA is strongly supported by the PSF Secretariat. This is because it promotes economic development, which is in the interest of Rwanda's private sector. Some members, however, receive social dialogue with scepticism and this is the challenge faced by the Foundation in promoting social dialogue. According to an official from PSF, the Secretariat is trying to convince members of the importance of social dialogue and the response has been encouraging, especially from bigger and more established companies. As observed, PSF Rwanda has also signed an MoU with STECOMA and other trade unions to facilitate social dialogue. This demonstrates the willingness of PSF Rwanda to cooperate with trade unions and it explains why the secretariat is engaging with its members to support social dialogue.

#### **4.4.12 Association of Building and Public Works Contractors**

The Association operates under PSF Rwanda and it has 1,200 members, whose activities are spread across the country. All entrepreneurs intending to enter the construction sector are first registered by the Association before they are permitted to undertake any construction works. The main activities for the Association include: advocacy and capacity building for members as well as networking with other stakeholders in the social dialogue mechanism. There is no direct relationship between the Association and STECOMA but indirectly, they relate closely through construction companies, which are members. The engagement between STECOMA and construction companies largely focuses on issues of safety at the workplace, employment of certified workers and issuing of employment contracts. The Association encourages members to follow the rules and regulations in accordance with the national standards set up by the government. A few donors like GIZ and ILO have supported the Association over the

years. The support has been instrumental in enhancing the capability of the Association to engage with partners, increase membership and promote professionalism as well as formalisation in the construction industry.

#### **4.4.13 China Construction International Corporation (CCIC)**

CCIC is an international company with its headquarters based in China. CCIC follows a hierarchical structure with a General Manager, who is in charge of the overall management of the company in Rwanda. For specific projects, the General Manager is supported by a Project Manager at the site, a Site Engineer, a Human Resource Manager and a Manager for Safety Personnel. While the General Manager directly works with the City of

Kigali in the overall monitoring of construction projects, it is the managers for specific projects who are directly engaged by officials from the City of Kigali and STECOMA in the implementation of the MoU. The Company started operations in Rwanda in 2012 and currently employs more than 1,200 workers of which a majority are informal workers. CCIC works with informal workers according to the labour laws in place and usually engages more closely with PSF Rwanda and Association of Building and Public Works Contractors. CCIC is aware of the STECOMA MoUs with the City of Kigali and WDA and is in support of its implementation. This is because it provides opportunities to acquire experienced and certified workers, which will lead to efficiency at the construction sites.

## 5. STAKES AND GOALS OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS

The social dialogue partners have different stakes and goals for engaging in the MoU negotiations and implementation of the outcomes. The Rwanda government is interested in having organised rural and urban centres, which is realised through having modern and well planned housing and quality-oriented construction workers that would enable the country to have a sustainable infrastructural development, a key element for economic transformation. In addition, the government wants to reduce informality in the Rwandan construction sector as a mechanism for promoting better regulation and enforcement of laws governing the sector. This explains why the engagement of the social dialogue partners by government is structured along the areas of formalisation, certification and regulation. The government has considerable bargaining power owing to the strong state structures created by government to regulate the sector. Moreover, the Rwandan government has gained a reputation as an African success story in promoting economic development, which all government agencies are proud of and wish to associate with. ILO agenda and engagement has been the main factor that contributed to the government's agenda on formalisation, with trade unions following as key social dialogue partners. However, regarding certification, it is the trade unions that approached WDA and since it also contributes to the objectives of WDA, the proposal was highly welcomed and supported by the Authority.

The trade union movement in the construction sector, led by STECOMA, is interested in promoting the rights and interests of their members. As observed, STECOMA has both formal and informal members but all of them are treated equally and have the same voting rights, as long as they are active members. As the construction sector in Rwanda is highly informal, with most of the workers uneducated, there is an increased likelihood of workers being exploited with low and irregular pay and being given work without employment contracts. Moreover construction workers who lack academic qualifications are usually paid less in spite of having to do the same work as their qualified counterparts. The trade unions therefore engage in social dialogue to find a mechanism of improving the livelihoods of their workers. The MoU signed between STECOMA and the City of Kigali promotes professionalism in the sector as well as recognition of informal workers through formalisation.

In addition, the MoU between STECOMA and WDA enables construction workers who did not receive formal qualifications to be certified and therefore enjoy the same benefits of those who are qualified as long as they are doing the same work.

Informality of construction workers in Rwanda emanates from the engagement of workers, usually on a temporary basis and without employment contracts, by the construction companies. Since many of the workers are not certified, their bargaining power is often limited so they are obliged to accept the work under such unclear terms with less protection of their rights. Moreover in Rwanda, just like many developing countries with informal workers, workers are not registered for health care so the issue of safety in the workplace is something which is operationalised through negotiations. However, every Rwanda citizen has access to health care cover, called *Mituel de santé*.

The trade Unions have reasonably strong bargaining power, brought about by their many members and determination of the leaders. This explains why they have managed to get MoUs signed by other social partners with support from those partners in implementing the agreements. However, the bargaining powers of trade unions are still low when it comes to engaging employers and members of the private sector. Moreover, monitoring implementation of the MoUs has been challenging due to the limited capacity of the union to effectively reach out to all construction projects.

The private sector/employers in Rwanda, under the leadership of PSF Rwanda, are an important player in the social dialogue mechanism in the country although they have not been keen to engage in social dialogue. They are interested in having a productive workforce that is qualified and experienced to do the job. This leads to economic development, which has positive implications for companies. The employers hold considerable bargaining power due to the fact that government is promoting private sector development and so there has been a lot of support by the government to facilitate the development of the private sector. They hold the financial muscles that trade unions cannot rival and with the highly informal nature of the construction industry, moreover dominated by many

uneducated workers, the employers have a bigger say in determining wages. The private sector players rely more on the bipartite mechanism than the tripartite mechanism where workers have a bigger influence. That being the case, many contractors and companies deal directly with workers to negotiate for pay and improved working conditions. However, STECOMA's engagement with government agencies has improved the bargaining power of workers as many who have to negotiate with the private companies/contractors are already certified and therefore have the right to be paid the same amount of money as their qualified counterparts as long as they are doing the same work. This has increased productivity at the construction sites. PSF Rwanda Secretariat is supportive of social dialogue, which they see as improving the reputation of their members i.e. with companies that have not been keen on conducting social dialogue. The PSF Secretariat also engages workers in many aspects including promotion of health among workers.

### **5.1 AGENDA SETTING IN THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESS**

The agenda for social dialogue is largely driven by trade unions but with substantial donor support. Trade Unions in Rwanda ride on the interest of construction workers in forming and joining associations, which then facilitates their registration as members since STECOMA mobilises workers association's and groups both in and outside construction sites for their registration as members. This is more pronounced among informal workers, who see associations as protective of their interests. CESTRAR provides the overall agenda setting for the trade union movement, based on their experience and support for members. This is what motivated and also facilitated STECOMA to come up with initiatives for MoUs with the City of Kigali and WDA. Collectively, trade unions have managed to create a good working relationship with key government agencies like MIFOTRA, City of Kigali and WDA. As noted, however, the support from donors has to a substantial extent shaped the social dialogue process in Rwanda. ILO has been at the forefront, facilitating the tripartite mechanism through the NLC. ILO also provides backstopping to trade unions with technical information that is instrumental for their capacity building. Other donors like FNV Mondiaal and LO/FTF Council have been instrumental in funding trade unions while GIZ has also funded government departments to support decent work and social dialogue. It is this funding and technical support that contributes to the capacity building of trade unions, particularly for

STECOMA to engage with government in promoting the interests of informal workers in the construction sector. Moreover, formalisation has been the key agenda for ILO in promoting the rights and interest of workers, especially regarding the increased coverage of social security.

Government departments also set the agenda for social dialogue in Rwanda. The setting up of WDA has been instrumental in ensuring that the government agenda for decent work and social dialogue is initiated and implemented. Government wants to strategically use trade unions to organise and professionalise construction work. It is this agenda that they pushed during negotiations for the MoUs with STECOMA and this was reflected in the final agreement. A key example here is the mandate of WDA which focuses on building the capacity of Rwanda's workforce. When STECOMA approached WDA to push for certification of informal workers, the negotiation between the two parties progressed smoothly because the outcome (certification) was mutually beneficial. While STECOMA would achieve more recognition and improved pay for certified informal workers, WDA would achieve improved capacity of the workforce in Rwanda's construction sector. In that case, the agenda was set by STECOMA but strongly supported by government through WDA.

From observations, most social dialogue partners in Rwanda, public and private sector as well as trade unions are not keen to discuss political issues and how this impacts on their engagements. This observation is supported by Haverman (2012), who observes that the Rwandan government is hesitant to open up political space and freedom of expression, referring, inter alia, to the history of the country where the unrestricted speech led to the 1994-genocide. As such, social partners in the construction sector attribute the agenda setting for social dialogue in the construction sector more to the players rather than to the influence of political leaders under the leadership of President Paul Kagame. However, with the strong presence of government being felt in terms of regulating the economy and enforcing laws, it is likely that government has a big role in setting the agenda, which trade unions and government institutions have to follow.

### **5.2 MAPPING THE STRUCTURAL AND ASSOCIATIONAL POWER OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS**

The construction sector is an important contributor to the Rwandan economy. Currently, the sector contributes to about 7 percent of GDP and is driven by

government investments in infrastructure, increased foreign direct investment and urbanisation<sup>3</sup>. The construction industry in Rwanda is dynamic and offers opportunities in other subsectors, accounting for around half of industry contribution to GDP. In addition, the Vision 2020 which is the country's long term development goals and which seeks to transform the economy into a knowledge-based, service-oriented economy with middle-income status by 2020, is centred on six pillars with three cross-cutting issues. The Vision 2020 focuses on infrastructure development, the private sector as well as human resource development, which are all important growth drivers for the construction industry. According to Kwibuka (2018), the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) reported in a 2017 and 2018 survey that construction has the highest increase in terms of creating new jobs at 52,171, followed by manufacturing (42,409) and accommodation and food services (25,871). In that situation, workers in the construction industry gain some bargaining power with government in pushing for their agenda. This in a way contributed to the attention given by government as demonstrated by the signing of MoUs between STECOMA with the City of Kigali as well as WDA.

With government putting a lot of efforts into improve infrastructure and affordable housing, construction workers are valued as a way to actualise these infrastructure ambitions, especially with regard to affordable housing for vulnerable people and those in high risk areas. This explains why government is keen on building the capacity of construction workers and therefore supporting the certification process as proposed by STECOMA to WDA.

Construction workers in Rwanda, though dominated by informal workers, are largely unionised. The workers prefer joining associations and even those without associations express the need to join associations as it enables them access to more work opportunities as this links them to construction companies with working relationships with trade unions. At the same time, associations support workers in others areas, including saving and investment clubs, financial and literary . Structurally, the trade union movement is highly hierarchical with leadership at the top (usually General/ National Congress), a Secretariat and structures at regional or district levels. These structures have more power at national level in terms of engagement with

social partners and promoting the rights of workers. However, their outreach to members is not as strong. That being the case, some union members feel more should be done by the union leaders to reach out to and support them. The consultative nature of the structures is therefore well laid out but weak at the bottom in terms of membership engagement.

At the associational level, construction workers have solidarity with other trade unions, including those not directly involved in construction. This is more pronounced for unions bringing together workers in the informal sector like REWU and SYTRIECI. This solidarity has helped smaller unions gain more legitimacy and also enhanced their bargaining power with other social dialogue partners. CESTRAR has specifically been very supportive of STECOMA's initiatives especially through the National Council meetings where the tripartite mechanism is actualised. STECOMA has registered more members, who themselves have formed a number of associations at the district levels. Although the structures are not as strong at the district level as is the case at the national level, this associational power, built by the increased membership, has facilitated STECOMA's bargaining power in terms of engagement with social partners at the national level.

### 5.3 ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR THE SD PROCESS

Efforts by trade union, donors and government to promote tripartite arrangements have been the biggest enabling factor for social dialogue in Rwanda. This has been through the operation of NLC where CESTRAR represents all trade unions. Donor support has been instrumental in building financial and technical capacity of trade unions as well as facilitating forums for social dialogue. ILO engaged with government to focus on labour issues and domesticate relevant conventions, which provided a framework for workers to engage on with the relevant social dialogue partners.

The opportunities provided for by the bipartite mechanism have also been a building block for tripartite mechanisms. Moreover, bipartite arrangements have been made in some areas that strengthen social dialogue. As earlier noted, STECOMA and other trade unions have managed to sign an MoU with PSF Rwanda. This MoU promotes cooperation, which has been instrumental in ensuring that certificated workers are employed by the private sector/construction companies.

<sup>3</sup>Opportunities in the construction industry in Rwanda, available at [www.business-sweden-se](http://www.business-sweden-se)

The government of Rwanda has put in place policy, and legal and institutional frameworks to promote social dialogue. The general picture that emerges is that of Rwanda which has a government that builds institutions and gives these institutions tasks and responsibilities that are well defined by the law (Haverman, 2012). From the Constitution of Rwanda that promotes freedom of association and unions to policies on construction, urbanisation as well as setting up specific labour institutions like MIFOTRA and WDA, government has been able to create a condition that enables workers to form trade unions and engage with relevant institutions to promote and defend their interests. It is these frameworks that STECOMA took advantage of to initiate CBAs with Kigali City and WDA. This is because the legal and institutional frameworks are supported by a local innovation known as *Imihigo*, one of the key tools introduced by the Government in 2006 to reinforce the local government and make public agencies more effective. Through this approach, local governments articulate their own objectives that reflect priorities of the local population and develop realistic strategies to achieve these objectives. The approach has enabled government agencies to speed up the implementation of local and national development agendas and to ensure stakeholder ownership of the development agendas, promote accountability and transparency, enhance result-oriented performance, instil innovation and encourage competitiveness, engage stakeholders in policy formulation and evaluation, promote zeal and determination to achieve set goals and instil the culture of regular performance evaluation (Bugingo and Interayamahanga, 2010).

The government gender policy has provided a more facilitative environment for social dialogue. Although building and construction has traditionally been seen as a male-dominated industry, Rwanda has, through its policy of promoting gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities, given women more space to participate in construction. This is the case both with the informal and formal construction workers where skilled women have been brought on board, resulting in positive outcomes as quoted below from one of the female respondents in the construction site;

*"In construction, women can do whatever work men used to do alone, as long as they are qualified... My employment on this site as an engineer gives me opportunity to earn income and seeing women engage at the top negotiating on behalf of workers demonstrates that positive changes are taking place"*

The Association of Building and Public Works Contractors have provided STECOMA with an opportunity to build working relationship between the two bodies. This has facilitated social dialogue between the two which is very important for STECOMA in the implementation of its MoU. The Association leaders have a better appreciation and understanding of the importance of engaging trade unions than their members (individual construction companies). As such, they have been able to promote the employment of certified construction workers by the companies on better terms.

#### 5.4 OBSTRUCTING CONDITIONS FOR THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESS

The major obstructing condition for social dialogue is that the process is still in its infancy in Rwanda. Much as government has provided a facilitative environment, the process has not yet reached its potential. This explains why STECOMA has only signed the MoUs with the City of Kigali in 2014 and WDA in 2015. Since social dialogue is still in early stages, all the partners are still learning about each other and how they can capitalise on the bargaining powers to drive and reach an agreement in their specific areas of interest. The private sector, for instance, has considerable bargaining power but has not used it to constructively engage with workers in the construction industry.

Lack of awareness of the social dialogue framework is an obstructive condition for social dialogue. Few business people know about social dialogue in Rwanda and as such, many entrepreneurs have not been willing to work with trade unions, especially on the aspects of collective bargaining. For instance, CESTRAR has a plan to achieve 30 CBAs with employers across different sectors in Rwanda but employers are not willing to do this. In addition, some of the informal workers in the country are yet to know about the syndicate. This has affected efforts by the syndicate to recruit more members to further develop their bargaining power.

The government bureaucracy in some cases makes it difficult for informal workers to engage them in social dialogue. Most government departments want to work with organised groups with formal structures that informal workers, dominated by the people with low levels of education, cannot afford. Government bureaucracy focus on informal workers has largely been on the issues relating to social security where their contribution is being promoted to enhance coverage. The focus on social dialogue has been less with most of the existing MoUs a result of efforts and perseverance of trade unions.



New and upcoming trade unions lack adequate resources to upscale their operations and activities. With membership largely composed of informal sector players, there are delays in subscriptions and some members default on their payments. This affects the administration of the unions. Donors have done a good job in supporting the social dialogue but this has not solved the problem of financial capacity from internal sources, which is crucial in increasing the bargaining power of unions. A case in point is engagement with PSF, which receives more and consistent funding from its members compared with the trade unions, yet the two parties are supposed to negotiate on an equal footing. The financial capacity of PSF enables its Secretariat to recruit and retain more qualified personnel and also engage more experts in employment relations and negotiations. For trade unions on the other hand, the mere fact that they have to engage on behalf of informal workers who rely on the private sector for employment, in a country where jobs are hard to find weakens their position as companies can simply hire other people to do the work. Besides, it is more difficult for trade unions to engage the services of more skilled negotiators and experts, which is crucial for negotiations and any form of legal redress for the grievances they may face.

Lack of adequate professional negotiators among social partners is also an obstructing condition for social dialogue in Rwanda. Trade unions are the most affected by the challenge due to their limited budgets as most of their funding is directed towards running the Secretariat and capacity building for their constituents. However, companies also face the same challenge and this could potentially explain why some companies are not willing to engage in social dialogue. In the case of companies, it is more about prioritisation whereby they put more focus on making more profits than building internal or even collective capacity at PSF Rwanda to engage in negotiations with other social dialogue partners.

## **5.5 HOW SOCIAL PARTNERS OVERCAME THE OBSTACLES**

Social partners have worked on strengthening the tripartite mechanism in Rwanda to overcome the obstacles to social dialogue. MIFOTRA engaged with

stakeholders, notably trade unions, and empowers the private sector to strengthen the NLC, which brings together all the social dialogue partners in a tripartite mechanism. Trade unions are well represented in the Council, with the General Secretary of CESTRAR elected as the Vice President of NLC. This has helped to bring labour issues to the forefront of policy debates in Rwanda as seen by recent issues of minimum wage, social security and more importantly the MoUs that STECOMA signed with Kigali City and WDA. In addition, the tripartite mechanism has helped to promote labour issues among companies, with PSF Rwanda setting up a labour department.

Trade unions and partners have offered training and capacity development to their constituencies and officials over the years. The training programmes largely focused on improving the negotiating capacity of their leaders, and raising awareness on the importance of the engagement of trade unions with their members as well as other social dialogue partners. The capacity building has also targeted officials of PSF Rwanda who in turn have promoted labour issues among their members.

Registration of new members among different trade unions has been the major focus of trade unions in building their bargaining power. STECOMA and REWU particularly have been more aggressive to bring more informal construction workers and miners on board. New members increase funding to the unions through their membership contributions and this also gives them a bigger voice during negotiations as they would be representing more workers.

Donor support has been instrumental in supporting trade unions to promote social dialogue. For instance, STECOMA has received funding from donors like Mondiaal FNV and Building and Wood Workers International (BWI) and this has helped them invite various social dialogue partners for meetings and also offer training to members. This donor support was crucial in helping STECOMA to initiate dialogue with Kigali City, MIFOTRA and WDA, which resulted in the two MoUs signed. Donor support is specifically important in giving trade unions the financial resources that they lack but their partners in the private sector have more capability and legitimacy to engage government agencies.

# 6. IMPACT OF THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

The social dialogue has impacted on the livelihood of construction workers in a number of ways. Firstly, the working environment in the construction sites has changed. Since the social dialogue emphasises the need to follow government regulations in place, policies like occupational health and safety, construction companies have been required to ensure safety for their workers. According to the Association of Building and Public Works Contractors, the social dialogue empowered workers to claim this as a right and they have been given protective gear, hence promoting their safety at the workplace. This is particularly important for informal workers who used to miss out on such protective gear as their vulnerability to job losses hindered their abilities to organise and participate in strikes to push for their rights. According to CESTRAR, workers prefer to negotiate with rather than antagonise their employers due to their vulnerable positions.

The salary of informal workers has increased as a result of the social dialogue. Informal workers who are usually not formally qualified used to receive low pay due to limited bargaining power. The STECOMA MoUs with Kigali City and WDA has seen experienced workers acquire certificates, which are used to bargain for equal pay with counterparts who are qualified and are doing the same job. For instance, if a formally qualified bricklayer is being paid 30,000 RWf for his/her work, the same amount of money is paid to a certified bricklayer for doing the same work. The increased earnings have greatly improved the livelihoods of workers as they are now more financially capable of supporting their families.

There has been increased access to social security among informal workers in Rwanda although coverage still remains low with only an estimated 1 percent of the more than 80 percent informal sector workers currently registered for pension schemes. The social dialogue process has seen more informal workers being given working opportunities and thereby becoming enrolled in social security schemes, with others opting for voluntary contributions. This is because less than 6 percent of Rwanda's workforce is covered by the

mandatory defined pension programme<sup>4</sup>, and access to jobs gives workers the money needed to opt for voluntary contributions. The negotiation and enforcement of employment contracts, which STECOMA is pushing for with partners, is also expected to improve access to social security in the informal sector, as agreed and adhered to by employers.

Government has integrated informal workers into its flagship projects to promote social development in Rwanda. The project which constructs houses for the poor living in high-risk areas is one of the human resettlement policies by the government where companies are contracted to build housing units in identified places and people occupy them once completed. This project has provided jobs for many informal workers, especially those who have been giving certificates with the implementation of STECOMA MoUs with the City of Kigali and WDA. This has increased the earnings of construction workers who in many instances move to another housing project immediately after they finish construction of a particular project.

Informal workers in the construction industry are happy with the implementation of the social dialogue. This is because as entrepreneurs profit from the projects, they become employed under better working conditions. However, an issue often raised by construction workers in both associations and individual ones is the need to focus more on skills building so that they can take on even better paying jobs within the construction sector. Such jobs are currently undertaken by more qualified construction workers who have a formal education and are certified by higher institutions of learning.

Women's economic empowerment is also being realised from engagement in the construction sector. Women employed in the construction sector reported a substantial decrease in sexual harassment at their workplace as reported by victims and this is attributed to the social dialogue. Social dialogue has exposed construction companies to the legal and policy issues

<sup>4</sup>Informal sector pension scheme, available at [www.afr.rw](http://www.afr.rw)

regarding the rights of workers in the construction sector and trade unions in particular have raised their awareness on the issue of equal opportunities and the need to protect the rights of women at the workplace. In addition, more women have been given the opportunity to join the sector as a result of awareness raising and training programmes received by trade union members. At a major construction site where STECOMA members are employed by the construction company, female workers expressed their appreciation to the social dialogue partners but call for improved pay to sustain the benefits they receive from the process.

### **6.1 OVERVIEW OF KEY LESSONS LEARNED**

The main lesson learnt from the social dialogue process in Rwanda is the need for trade unions to remain focused on pursuing their objectives. In a country where social dialogue is still in its infancy, a number of challenges still have to be met by trade unions. These include consolidation of membership, gaining recognition from other social dialogue partners, especially employers, and building the capacity of the trade unions to push for CBAs. On the side of trade unions, this requires patience, constant engagements, advocacy and awareness raising.

Respect for the rule of law is extremely important for social dialogue to succeed. In Rwanda, the government puts a lot of emphasis on public servants to perform and they are held accountable by both the local stakeholders and top government leadership. The implementation of the Imihigo from 2006 has been instrumental in ensuring that district officials set their targets and can be held accountable in the event that such targets are not met. Moreover, the President is seen by many as a strong leader who does not tolerate mediocrity among his officials. This has created an atmosphere where, if a government official agrees with stakeholders, like the case with the MoUs signed with STECOMA, they see to it that the agreement is implemented.

The agenda for government and its support for social dialogue is an important component for its success. In Rwanda, government is very much focused on private sector development and proposing policies that facilitate an increased role by the private sector in the economy. However, government is also focused on social development, notably by improving human settlement, promoting trade unions and directly playing a role in the construction sector. Consequently, government provided a good environment for a tripartite arrangement and gave recognition to trade unions. This provided an opportunity for STECOMA to initiate social dialogue with a view to improving the conditions of informal workers in the construction industry, which culminated in the MoUs.

Support from donors is an important element for the facilitation of social dialogue. As the Rwanda case shows, trade unions are supported in building their capacity in administration and negotiations. Moreover, donor projects at MIFOTRA provided a basis for increased engagement of workers in the informal sector. This facilitated the engagement of STECOMA by the Ministry while at the same time giving STECOMA the financial backing, which improves their negotiating power with the private sector.

Social dialogue needs to be executed with the intention of securing a CBA at every sector level for members to benefit from trade unions. CBAs provide a framework for improved relationship between workers and employees, which is beneficial to both parties. This is because it gives workers a mechanism with which they can raise their grievances to the employers in a constructive manner, allowing for negotiations.

## 6.2 STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS ON THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESS FOR STECOMA CBA WITH CITY OF KIGALI AND WDA

STAKEHOLDER	ASPIRED GOAL TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH SD	BARGAINING POWER	NEGOTIATION STRATEGY	LEVEL OF SATISFACTION
Syndicat des Travailleurs de Entreprises de Construction, Menuiserie et Artisanat (STECOMA)	Decent working conditions for members, capacity and training to workers, increased job opportunities and earning for informal workers through certification as well as safety at the workplace.	A huge constituency consisting of 48,000 members, spread across all the districts. An empowered Secretariat with some competent negotiators. Recognition by government a trade union with a specific focus on workers in the construction sector.	Organisation of lobby meetings, advocacy and awareness raising as well as initiation of MoU negotiations.	Happy with the outcome of negotiations since it resulted into MoUs. However, more needs to be done to increase engagement with the private sector.
China Construction International Corporation (CCIC)	Better relationship with workers which results in better performance in the construction projects.	An international corporation with a good reputation and experience in other African countries.	A bipartite arrangement involving employers and workers. Communication and engagement with other social dialogue partners to reach a common understanding. This has not yet resulted into an MoU.	The outcome has been good as more workers have been trained and they are doing a good job in the construction sites.
Congress of Labour and Brotherhood of Rwanda (COTRAF-Rwanda)	Improved condition of workers, better safety at the workplace, capacity building and better opportunities for workers.	13,000 registered members give more mandate and influence to the union.  The constitution of Rwanda which gives mandate or trade unions to operate.  Solidarity among trade unions which gives moral support.	Adapting to a specific environment with which the negotiation is ongoing.  Lobbying and advocacy with government departments to push for the interest of workers.	Not satisfied with the outcome of the negotiations as other informal workers are not benefiting from it. In addition, approaching government MDAs to push for the interest of informal workers is difficult.
Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA)	Proper implementation of the laws and regulations governing labour and employment relations in Rwanda.	Mandated by government to regulate labour and employment relations.	Facilitate the tripartite mechanism through operationalisation of the National Labour Council.	There is good progress in the social dialogue with the signing and implementation of the MoUs.
Rwanda Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)	Proper implementation of laws regulating infrastructure development. Improving the housing and living condition of the people of Rwanda.	Mandated by government to regulate infrastructure development in Rwanda.	Engagement of stakeholders in the construction industry which is inclusive of workers and employers/contractors. Working with other government agencies to execute its mandate and strategy.	Happy with the outcome of the social dialogue since it is helping in the execution of the Ministry's strategy for housing.

STAKEHOLDER	ASPIRED GOAL TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH SD	BARGAINING POWER	NEGOTIATION STRATEGY	LEVEL OF SATISFACTION
City of Kigali	Effective management of Kigali city for sustainable development. Formalisation of the construction industry in the city.	Mandated by government to administer the development of Kigali city, approve construction plans and carry out inspections.	Multi-stakeholder approach which engages all players in the construction sector. These include trade unions, contractors, government agencies and the general public.	Happy with the outcome as informal workers are increasingly forming into associations and engaging the City of Kigali as trade unions. Some level of professionalism has also been developed in the construction sector.
Workforce Development Authority (WDA)	Improved skills of construction workers through training and capacity building. Certify experienced but unqualified construction works in the informal sector.	Mandated by government to develop and upgrade skills and competencies of the national workforce.	Working with associations and trade unions to build the capacity of informal workers. Train and issue certificates to workers who gain the experience and skills to undertake construction.	The outcome has been positive because trade unions have brought more workers for training and certification, which has also boosted the Authority in executing its mandate.
Private Sector Federation (PSF) Rwanda	To build the reputation of companies with regard to accommodating the interest of workers, increased productivity of workers and ultimately promoting economic growth.	Strong presence of the private sector in Rwanda, key players in the construction industry and key members of both bipartite and tripartite mechanisms.	Developing position papers to information negotiations, attend meetings with government departments and trade unions.	Not much satisfied as the social dialogue agenda is still young with limited engagement of most companies. Besides, some companies are yet to appreciate the need for engaging with trade unions.
Trade Union of Independent Workers of Informal Economy (SYTRIECI)	Improving the living condition and defending the rights of workers in the informal economy.	A constituency of 5,000 members drawn from the informal sector.	Initiating contact with government to express the concerns of trade unions, promoting and participating in the bipartite and tripartite forums.	Satisfied with the outcome as many construction workers employed also provide opportunities for other informal sector players like street vendors to sell their products, for example food. There is however more to be done to promote the rights and interest of workers in the informal sector.
Association of Building and Public Contractors	Improved skills and productivity of workers, safety of workers in the construction sites and good working relationship with workers.	Key players in housing and construction works with 1,200 registered members.	Participation in meetings, engaging with the public and private sector players.	Not satisfied with the outcome. In spite of what has been achieved, there is more room for improvement especially with the issue of employment contracts that are not yet issued to most informal workers.

STAKEHOLDER	ASPIRED GOAL TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH SD	BARGAINING POWER	NEGOTIATION STRATEGY	LEVEL OF SATISFACTION
Rwanda Workers Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR)	Defending the rights of workers through increasing the number of CBAs, reducing conflicts between workers and employers through social dialogue.	A membership of 168,338 across Rwanda. Elected to represent trade unions representative in the Rwanda social dialogue framework and it enjoys a good working relationship with members and affiliates.	Creating a good environment between employers and employees, undertaking research to identify gaps in employment and labour relations and building capacity of negotiators.	Not satisfied with the outcome as the MoUs are still few in number. There is also a need to increase social dialogue in the construction sector.

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