



BRAZIL

A TRADE UNION FOCUS ON THE SDGs

#HLPF2024

**WORKERS
DEMAND A
NEW SOCIAL
CONTRACT**

WORKERS NEED SUSTAINABLE RESPONSES TO MULTIPLE CRISES

The Brazilian government has launched several programmes to address multiple ongoing crises. These include policies to fight hunger by increasing production and supply, an ecological transformation programme for energy transition and reducing carbon emissions, and climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes.

Trade unions also report that the Brazilian government is actively working towards achieving the objectives of SDG 8. To this end, it has put in place a re-industrialisation policy; policies to promote productive organisation, technical advice, formalisation and access to credit to small and medium enterprises as well as an environmental transformation policy combined with efforts to create decent jobs. Furthermore, the government has approved an equal pay law; strengthened the apprenticeships programme as well as policies encouraging youth training and reformulated the quota programme at universities; it is further combatting the abuse of workers by strengthening labour inspection capacities.

ARE TRADE UNIONS AT THE TABLE?

Trade unions note that the previous two Brazilian governments (Tenmer 2016-2018, and Bolsonaro 2019-2022) abandoned efforts to implement the SDGs. However, President Lula's government is committed to restarting the process and plans to present an updated VNR.

As a result, all ministries are required to integrate the SDGs into their work, coordinated by an executive secretariat under the presidency's general secretariat. The Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), the Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), and the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (FIOCRUZ) handle data collection and monitoring. Budget resources are allocated to achieve SDG goals and support civil society participation.

The current government has decided to reinstate the National Commission for Sustainable Development Objectives (CNODS). As the commission has only recently been relaunched, its format is still to be defined and it is thus difficult to assess its transparency. However, the format of the commission and its future work programme has been consulted with civil society, including trade unions, on the one side, and relevant ministries on the other. One of the commission's objectives will be to provide transparency to actions related to the SDGs, such as consulting on the implementation of related actions and consolidating public reporting on the topic. Trade unions have been invited to be active participants in the forthcoming discussions of the commission, which will focus on delivering on all SDGs, not just SDG 8.

TRANSPARENCY



Complete access to information

CONSULTATION



There is a structured consultation/
multi-stakeholder platform

SOCIAL DIALOGUE



There are tripartite instances to implement
and monitor the SDGs involving social partners
and governments

IS THE (DECENT) WORK GETTING DONE?

For **SDG 1**, indicators for **target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty)** show that more efforts are needed, as 5.8 per cent of the population was still living below the extreme poverty line in 2021. Additionally, 2.5 per cent of the country's workers and their families lived on less than USD 1.90 per person per day in 2023. This is extremely worrying, considering that with an HDI of 0.754, Brazil is considered an upper-middle-income country. However, with regards to **target 1.3 (nationally appropriate social protection systems)**, in 2021, 72.7 per cent of the population benefitted from some type of social security benefit, and all of those in poverty were covered by the social protection system. On target 1.a.2 (essential services) in 2017, spending on social protection (excluding health) stood at 15.7 per cent.

For **SDG 5**, more efforts are needed to achieve **target 5.4 (recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work)**, as women spent nearly twice as much time (21.4 hours a week) on unpaid domestic and care work as men (11 hours a week) in 2019. With regards to **target 5.5 (women's full and effective participation)**, while the proportion of seats held by women in parliament increased from 5.7 per cent in 2000 to 17.7 per cent in 2023, it remains exceedingly low.

Further efforts need to be made on **SDG 8**. Progress on **target 8.3 (support decent job creation)** is needed, as informal employment outside of agriculture remains high – standing at 56.3 per cent (57.4 per cent among men and 47.9 per cent among women) in 2020. Additionally, the rate of vulnerable employment stood at 53.6 per cent in 2021. On **target 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent work for all)**, the unemployment rate stood at 7.7 per cent in 2023, affecting more women (9.3 per cent) than men (6.4 per cent). At 20.4 per cent, the gender pay gap is also worrying. In this context, the approval in July 2023 of a law requiring private legal entities with 100 or more employees to guarantee equal salary and compensation criteria for women and men exercising the same position and undertaking work of equal value is highly welcome. NEET indicators for **target 8.6 (reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training)** stood at 21 per cent in 2022 – the majority of this group comes from the country's poor (61.2 per cent) and extremely poor (14.8 per cent) populations. Indicators for **target 8.7 (eradicate forced labour and the worst forms of child labour)** suggest that 4.6 per cent of children aged 5-17 engaged in child labour in 2019. With regards to **target 8.8 (protect labour rights**

and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers), trade unions report an insufficient number of trained labour inspectors. In 2020, 27 violations of labour rights were noted – 15 in law and 12 in practice.

With regards to **SDG 10, target 10.4 (progressively achieve greater equality)** reveals startling levels of inequality. In 2023, 10 per cent of the highest income earners controlled 42.7 per cent of GDP, while the lowest 20 per cent controlled 2.8 per cent of GDP. The labour share of GDP stood at 63.1 per cent in 2023. On **target 10.7 (migration and mobility)**, trade unions participate in a national commission evaluating policies for migrant workers.

On **SDG 13 and target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into policies)**, trade unions report that the government has launched an Ecological Transformation Plan, which aims to promote a new model of sustainable development, just transition as well as combat climate change and its effects. The Plan aims to do so through measures such as a regulated carbon market, the issuing of sustainable sovereign bonds and a national taxonomy focused on sustainability.

On **SDG 16**, Brazil is far off reaching **target 16.10 (protect fundamental freedoms)**, as there is no guarantee of workers' rights. Although Brazil has ratified Convention No. 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining in 1952, it has not ratified Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (1948).

TRADE UNIONS ASK THAT NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

Trade unions call on the Brazilian government to:

- Focus on the creation of quality jobs.
- Ensure that labour rights are respected.
- Open a debate on the employment targets set by the re-industrialisation programme.
- Expand social protection for workers in all sectors.
- Implement the law on equal pay between men and women and the equal pay plan.
- Resume the operations of the National Labour Council, tripartite and other spaces for social dialogue in different sectors.
- Create a social participation system that facilitates coherent and effective monitoring of the SDGs across the various bodies involved in implementing the 2030 Agenda.
- Support the Brazilian government's initiative to include racial equality as the eighteenth SDG.



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