



MIGRANT WORKERS DOMESTIC WORKERS MOBILISING

**Voices of organisations
supporting migrant domestic
workers in the SADC region**

ANGOLA BOTSWANA COMOROS
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
CONGO ESWATINI LESOTHO
MALAWI MAURITIUS MOZAMBIQUE
NAMIBIA SEYCHELLES SOUTH
AFRICA TANZANIA ZIMBABWE
ZAMBIA

A NOTE...

Following pages are profiles of seventeen trade unions, worker associations and migrant networks that are supporting migrant domestic workers in the SADC region.

The information included here was collected in a survey completed by representatives of domestic and migrant worker organisations who participated in the 15-16 June 2022 Launch of the the SAMM research report "Migrant Domestic Workers in the SADC Region: Intersecting decent work with safe, orderly and regular migration".

Not all organisations participated in the survey. Those included in the following pages are not an exhaustive list of relevant organisations, but exemplify the work being done.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES

The top three critical challenges to successfully supporting migrant domestic workers in the region are, as prioritised by survey respondents:

- ☐ We do not have enough funding.
- ☐ Workers are hesitant or afraid to stand up for their rights.
- ☐ We need more skills in our organisation.



BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES

When asked to select from a list of possible support mechanisms or activities, participants chose the following as most potentially useful:

- ☐ Creation of a formal network of organisations supporting migrant domestic workers in the SADC region.
- ☐ Collaboration across organisations and countries on advocacy
- ☐ Opportunities for joint fundraising.

NAMIBIA DOMESTIC & ALLIED WORKERS UNION



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Discrimination, low pay, sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

Educating local and migrant domestic workers about their basic rights so that they feel safe, and motivating them to be members of the union. They can feel free to come to our office to be represented by union leaders and they can also be elected in union structures.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

Ratification on Convention 189.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

It is difficult to identify and recruit migrant workers, We do not have enough funding, and need more skills within our organisation. The system for reporting labour violations is difficult to use, takes too long, or does not work. There are not enough laws protecting domestic workers. Workers are afraid to stand up for their rights.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

How to be financially sustainable.



WOTESAWA YOUNG DOMESTIC WORKERS ASSOCIATION (Tanzania)



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Informality.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

Young domestic workers working in place based coalitions are able to engage with governance systems and work under contract arrangements. We also provide basic skills and entrepreneurial support to former young domestic workers.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

Co-operation with some employers, who are not readily available for consistent engagement.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

How to conduct participatory research with domestic workers and migrants.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Methodological support for strengthening Communities of Practice and access to strategic funding.



COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, & ALLIED WORKERS UNION (Malawi)



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

They are vulnerable, and don't belong to any organisation or trade union.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

Assistance in dispute settlement -- specifically engage employers to pay terminal benefits.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

- Recruitment and organising: Initially we trained DWs as interns for 3 months, then later sent them out to recruit
- Assisted a domestic worker to get her dues from an employer who was on the run. Our union collaborated with the police who stopped him from boarding a flight.
- Sensitisation on sexual harassment

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

It is difficult to identify and recruit migrant workers, and they are hesitant to stand up for their rights, We do not have enough funding, We need more skills within our organisation, There are not enough laws protecting domestic workers.



SWAZILAND DOMESTIC WORKERS UNION



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

They have no working permits Their rights are violated and their services are terminated easily without following any legal route.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

That of being legally registered with ministry of labour and sitting in the wages council board to negotiate terms and conditions of employment for Domestic Workers.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

We need office space, office equipment and a full time officer to run the day to day operations for the union.

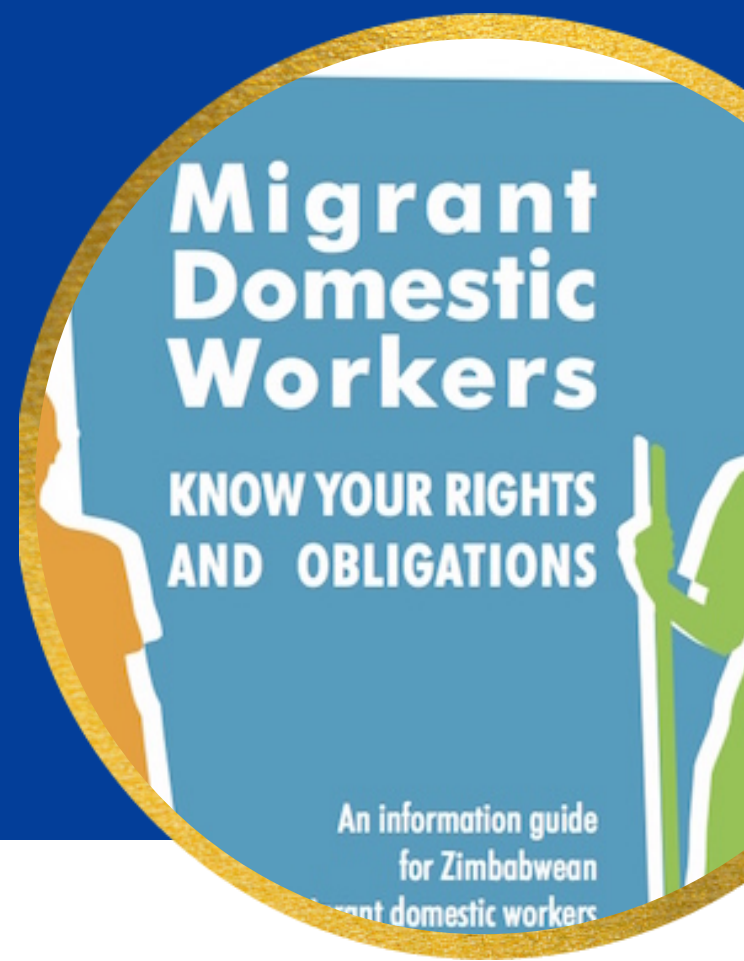
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

How to sustain the organization, including how to apply for funding to support the employees fully.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

- Develop a Regional Structure for Domestic Workers where all SADC domestic workers will affiliate
- Encourage countries to have tripartite plus forums where civil society organizations can be represented to discuss issues of domestic workers

ZIMBABWE DOMESTIC & ALLIED WORKERS UNION



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

1. Low levels of accurate information on their rights
2. Workers rights enforcement is tedious and bureaucratic
3. Lack of freedom, excessive hours of work, low wages, extra work, lack holidays, physical and sexual harassment, abuse and poor treatment
4. Absence of Social security measures
5. Covid 19 pandemic and the extra burden it causes on domestic workers who are care givers
6. Live-in Domestic workers thrown into the street or locked in rooms during Covid-19
7. Both local and migrant domestic workers work without written contracts and are employed on unspecified terms
8. Most of our citizens travel without travel documents to neighbouring countries in the region

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IS YOUR ORGANISATION MOST PROUD OF?

- Promulgation of a set of regulations on conditions of employment for domestic work
- Development and publication of a multilingual guide on for migrant domestic workers in South Africa

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

For those countries that have ratified C189, what improvements or changes has happened in the lives of domestic workers?

DITSHWANELO – THE BOTSWANA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Low wages, unfair treatment by employers, domestic violence, unfair labour practices.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

We empower domestic & migrant workers on their employment rights and responsibilities, and also share information with employment agencies. We lobby and advocate for change of laws that are violating their rights.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

Being able to mobilise domestic workers in 15 district in the country, and register an Association of Domestic workers which we continue to mentor.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

Advocated for the introduction of minimum wage for domestic workers in Botswana.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

Skills on lobbying and advocacy, ways to mobilise migrant domestic workers to stand up for their rights, best practices.

ASSOCIATION OF RIGHTS, INFORMATION & DEMOCRACY (Seychelles)



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Most of them stay in the same house as the employer and are in full control by employer. They are overworked. They are asked to perform other duties which do not form part of their contract. They fear that if they report they will be sent back home.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

Through various adverts and distributing brochures in their languages, ARID helps them to know their rights. We do random field visits and accompany them to Ministry of Employment for mediation to either give them support or defend them.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

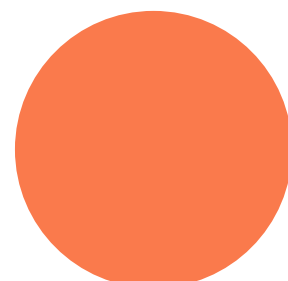
Denounced human trafficking and through our discovery the Employment Department saw it fitting to put up a task force for the Government.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

We do random checks at work sites of workers and inform them of their rights. We did a workshop on protection of migrant workers with staff of Ministry of Employment, Immigration and Civil Status, and police officers.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Get the government to adhere to the conventions they have signed in dealing with migrant workers.



DOMESTIC WORKERS ASSOCIATION OF ZIMBABWE



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Access to information.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

We provide networking opportunities as we bring together Zimbabwean domestic workers. We also provide skills training for domestic workers and socio psycho support opportunities.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

Setting up a Training Center for domestic workers and also developing a Domestic Worker Curriculum with the government. We run Stockvels, Netball Teams, free trainings, and we encourage personal development. For the migrant workers, we are encouraging them to build back home.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

We would prefer better involvement from employers.

WHAT SUPPORT DID YOU PROVIDE FOR WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

We ran a radio show during covid educating the country on domestic work and Covid, and we ran training and awareness campaigns.

CONFÉDÉRATION DES TRAVAILLEURS DES SECTEURS PUBLIC ET PRIVÉ (Mauritius)



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

There are no specific labour laws for migrant workers. Local domestic workers do have a Domestic Workers Remuneration Order, but as they are working alone in household or in villas, for fear of losing their job they do not join the union and thus are not aware of how they are protected.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

The CTSP organises, lobbies and advocates for change so that workers rights are respected for both migrant and local domestic workers.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

The setting up of a Migrant Resource Centre where migrant workers can come, socialise, report their cases and get support to resolve their issues.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

The National Human Rights Commission is not allowed to look into or investigate in cases of the private sector.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

We definitely need to have a good data collection system. Help our government with a central system connecting the Passport Immigration Office, the Min. of Labour, & the Min. of Employment.

MIGRANT WORKERS ASSOCIATION OF LESOTHO



WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

Formation of migrant workers forum where they discuss issues affecting them while at work.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

We conducted anti trafficking and migrants smuggling campaign to create awareness to migrants and their families of the alarming rate of trafficking in persons. We managed to create protection committees that work towards protection of their rights.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

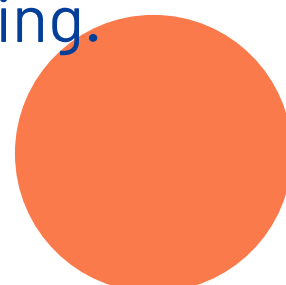
Legal instruments supporting migrants regionally.

WHAT SUPPORT DID YOU PROVIDE FOR WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

Mapping migrants where they were getting food parcels, medical support and supporting those who were willing to return home.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Advocacy, quarterly meetings, fundraising and networking.



MOVEMENT FOR ADVOCACY GROUP IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (S. Africa)



WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

MAGSA supports migrant workers through CCMA legal representation if there's a employer/employee dispute. We also assist Migrants workers' children who're denied access to education due to not having birth certificates by filing such cases through South African Human Rights Commission and Legal Resource Centres.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

We provide members an ID card as a form of recognition by employers, police, & others. It includes a list of their rights if they are stopped by police and are undocumented. We are also doing data capturing to enable us to know who's is who in the country.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

We lack funding; we've got pending training activities which we are unable to continue. Also, there are too few organizations that fights for domestic workers rights

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Formalise the industry in order for governments and employers to respect it. Secondly, we need more engagements with like minded organisations and domestic workers themselves.

ASSOCIATION FOR EMPLOYERS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN ZAMBIA



WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

AEDWZ ensures local domestic and migrant workers are respected, abide to workers rights in accordance with the law and ILO Conventions, social security, health and safety, including lobbying for ratification of Convention 189 through the Tripartite Consultative Labour Council.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

- Networking with national social security organisations to provide pension and health insurance to domestic workers, including mobile registration campaign.
- Developed the code of conduct for employers of domestic workers and standard contract for domestic workers.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

Labour laws and migration policies need to be amended to support migrant domestic workers.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Lobby with governments and regional bodies to review their migrant policies particularly for domestic workers



MIGRANT WORKERS NETWORK (Botswana)



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

1. Constricted access to work and residence permits
2. Unpaid or delayed wages
3. Workplace harassment, especially GBV
4. Unregulated (very long) working hours
5. Denial of the right to assemble or free speech

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

We provide information related to access to health, and do referrals to HIV+ migrants. We also carry out capacity building workshops on labor rights, and collect data regarding challenges that migrants face, and engage policy makers.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

HIV+ migrants now have access to free ART within their localities.

WHAT SUPPORT DID YOU PROVIDE FOR WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

Provision of food packages and sanitary ware supported by ILO, as well as provision of safe shelter to victims of GBV.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Develop capacity of unions / CSOs working in migration governance and assist them to mobilise resources for projects.

SOUTHERN AFRICA TRADE UNION COORDINATION COUNCIL



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR REGION?

Migrants are lacking documents, paid low wages, afraid to join trade unions, and not able to redeem social protection benefits when they go back to their original country.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

Awareness and other trainings of legal frameworks regarding migrants, advocacy for migrant and domestic workers rights, policy formulation, lobbying Governments to ratify conventions, and developing a training manual.

WHAT IS ONE ACCOMPLISHMENT YOUR ORGANISATION IS MOST PROUD OF?

Getting migrants associations to work with trade unions, and supporting migrant associations to collaborate with the Red Cross to assist in disaster hit areas during Cyclone Dineo.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

Most migrants who are undocumented are afraid to come out hence difficult to organise. Those documented are insecure to join unions as they are afraid to lose jobs. Agencies make migrants pay for application for job placement, or even be paid through agencies.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

Strategies and policies to assist migrant workers, esp on transfer of terminal benefits. and protection of undocumented migrants .

IZWI DOMESTIC WORKERS ALLIANCE (S. Africa)



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR REGION?

Employment is informal, and so labour rights are not enforced. This results in a wide variety of mistreatment, including illegal working hours, wages below the national minimum wage, frequent dismissals without fair reason or process, as well as physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

Labour rights education, individual case support; neighbourhood groups for networking and social support, GBV awareness programmes, research, advocacy, & access to job skills training.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

- Created a user-friendly legal and practical guide for employers of domestic workers
- Advocated for inclusion of domestic workers in the full national minimum wage, and in Covid relief funds
- Developed a line of stylish domestic worker unions for sale
- Conducted and published research on GBV amongst domestic work, treatment by labour institutions, and the rights of live-in workers

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

What are effective ways to communicate with your members at scale, esp if they do not have smart phones? How do you track your membership and efficiently collect dues?

KOPANANG DOMESTIC WORKERS ASSOCIATION OF LESOTHO



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR REGION?

- Lack of social protection, such as maternity protection
- Lack of decent working conditions
- Lack of freedom of Association and collective bargaining
- Low wages, lack of health and safety measures

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

We represent them in disputes, train and educate them on human rights, workers rights and democracy. Lobby and advocate for their rights. We also provide social assistance through fund raising.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

- We provided social assistance for migrant domestic workers who were negatively affected by COVID-19 with support from the ILO and the International Domestic Workers Federation.
- We also have a three year program with International Federation of Workers Education Association (IFWEA) which is assisting us to facilitate study circles for our members and have organized whatsapp group for our trainings.
- We are also participating in the Online Labour Academy trainings.

HOW CAN THE ILO SUPPORT YOU TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS?

We would appreciate capacity building, technical support, materials & financial assistance to promote entrepreneurship.

MIGRANT WORKERS UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES DOMESTIC WORKERS FACE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Documentation and low wages.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT MIGRANT & LOCAL DOMESTIC WORKERS?

MIWUSA recruits and organises migrant domestic workers into existing local organizations or unions specializing in domestic workers . We assist migrant domestic workers on issues such as documentation and work for social cohesion.

WHAT PROJECTS HAVE YOU DONE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

Assisted migrant domestic workers to do self sustaining projects.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN SUPPORTING MDWS?

We lack committed migrant leaders in supporting migrants as our service is done voluntary.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM OTHER WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS?

How they manage their organisations.

