



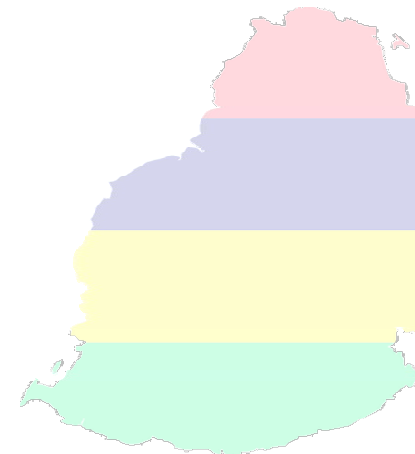
ilera AFRICA
8th Regional Congress
7-9 May 2018, Mauritius

Impact of Female Private Security Guards Trade Unions on Africa labour Relations: The Case of Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa

Theophilus Tshukudu
School of Military Science
University of Namibia
theophil700@mail.com

Presentation Layout

- Introduction
- Definition of private security
- History of the Private Security Sector in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa
- Challenges faced by females in the security sector
- Discussion
- Implications
- Limitation of the research study
- Recommendations
- Conclusion



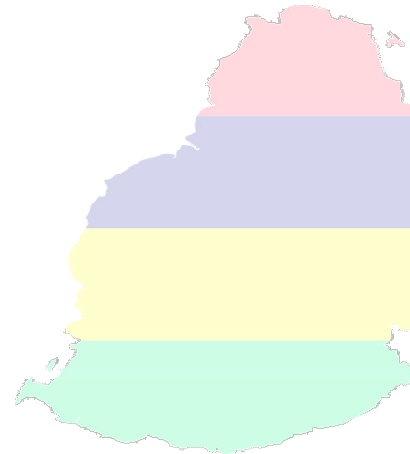
Introduction

- Is there any female private security sector trade union in Africa?
- If no, why not?
- Does it mean women in the private security sector can not be heard or not?
- In general, how is women presentation in most African trade unions



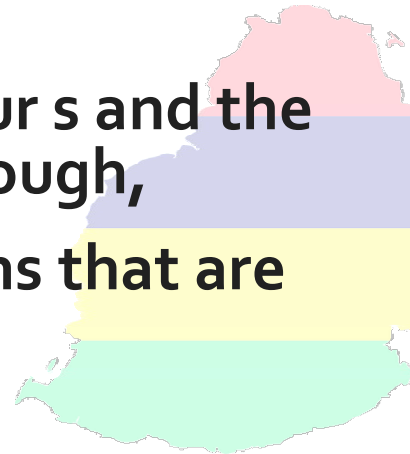
Definition

- Berger (1992) state that private security provides protection against not only crime but also four additional threats:
 - waste,
 - accident,
 - error, and
 - unethical practice.



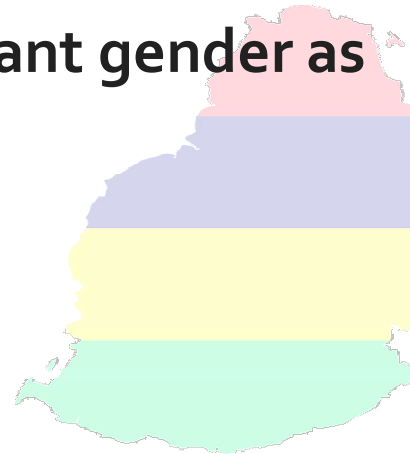
Introduction

- Expectations are one would find a trade union specifically for women in any sector
- Yet there are gaps that include women representative in the various
 - trade unions,
 - federations and
 - associations across all sectors of the economy.
 - Given the magnitude and the robustness of the labour s and the historical political struggle that the country went through,
 - Is not yet time to female trade unions and associations that are solely advocating for women in the various sectors?.



Introduction

- Trade unionism is a masculine affair, hence many women shy away from active participation.
- According to the existing literature, there is no trade union that represents women in any sector in Africa.
- Yet women are the majority in a number of federations and trade unions
- except in the private security sector where men are dominant gender as demonstrated in the next section.



Historical background

- Starting in the twentieth century, women began to become more active as industrial labourers in the South African economy
- They began to take issue with their unacceptable working conditions and decided to take action against them by means of unionisation.
- Sexual abuse, minimal pay, unfair demands, and societal perception of female inferiority could no longer be tolerated, and motivated the victimized women to fight for rights and respect in the work place
- The leaders of the movement, quickly found that the most effective way to fight for their rights was through unionisation.
- Female leaders also had to fight gender discrimination within the unions.



Background...

- Most working women in Africa (e.g in Botswana and Namibia) are sobbing under the suffocating pressure of: extreme exploitation,
 - force,
 - harassment,
 - ignorance of the rights and
 - poverty.

Given the foregoing scenario who then advocates for these women in the absence of trade unions?



Botswana

- Government in contravenes ILO ratified conventions
- Dissolved Public Sector Bargaining Council
- Autocratic tendencies towards labour
- Trade union leadership is male dominated even in sectors where women predominate as workers such as health, education, hospitality etc.
- There are 3000 private security companies and over 60% are not registered with Ministry of Defence.
- There no Private security sector trade unions let alone women trade union in this sector

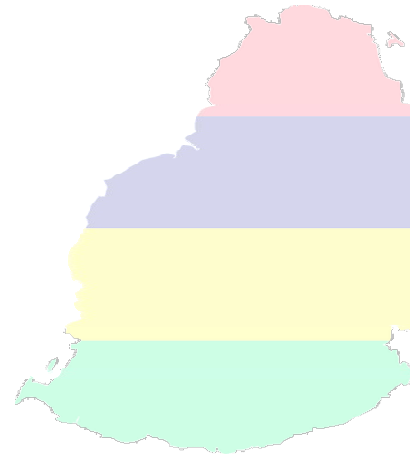




Botswana Nurses decry lack of security at work PIC: KENNEDY RAMOKONE

Namibia

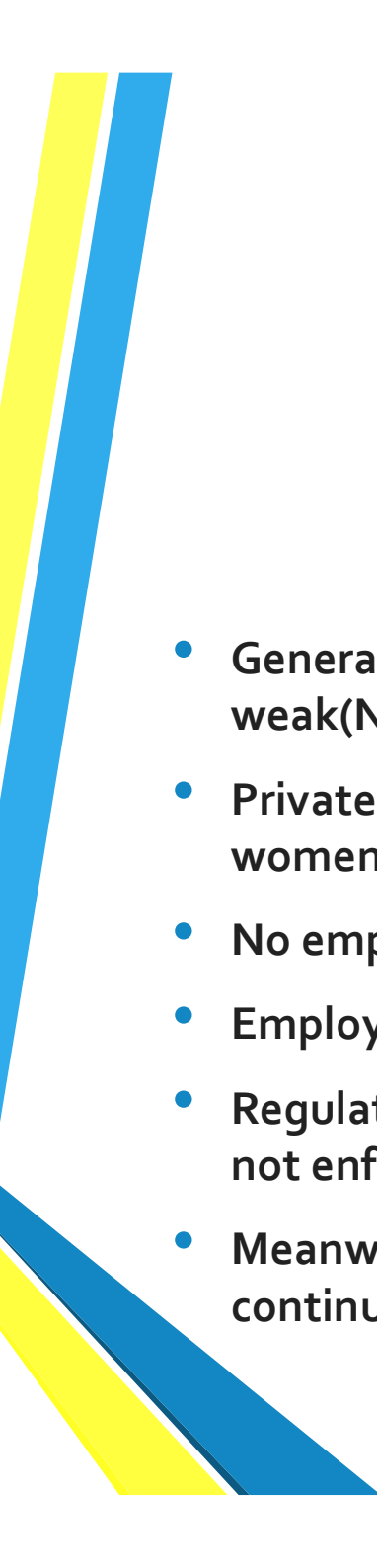
- In Namibia trade unionism is still weak
- Gender representation and women's empowerment within the trade unions in Namibia remains a challenge.
- The trade unions structures are still male dominated, although the numbers of paid up members are estimated to be more women".
- There is no trade union in the PSS



Structure of the PSS in BW & Nam

- Majority private security companies are not registered/operate illegally
- Owners of these companies are mostly former members of the security agencies such as Police, Military, Prisons & other keen individuals who saw an opening in this sector
- The majority of these owners have minimum or no knowledge on HR & labour relations issues
- PSS Management violate EE rights and are not held accountable by any law
- Get tenders from government(s) through other means





Ee rep in Bw & Nam PSS

Botswana

- General trade unionism very weak(Nationally)
- Private security sector-No trade union for women
- No employer organisation
- Employee/women rights are non-existent
- Regulation of this private security sector is not enforced
- Meanwhile abuse of women in the workplace continues unabated

Namibia

- General trade unions very weak(Nationally)
- Private security sector –No trade unions for women
- No employer organisation
- Employee/women rights are non-existent
- Regulation of this private security sector is not enforced
- Meanwhile abuse of women in the workplace continues unabated

A comparison between BW/Nam & RSA

PSS BW/Nam

- General trade unionism very weak(Nationally)
- Private security sector-No trade union for women
- No employer organisation
- Employee/women rights are non-existent
- Regulation of this private security sector is not enforced

Meanwhile abuse of women in the workplace continues unabated

RSA PSS

- There are a number federations in the sector
- Significant number trade unions (14) representing PSS employees across sector
- Employer organisations (4)
- Labour Relations Act is very clear on issues of Ee rep & collective bargaining
- But then How is women representative in the T/U leadership?

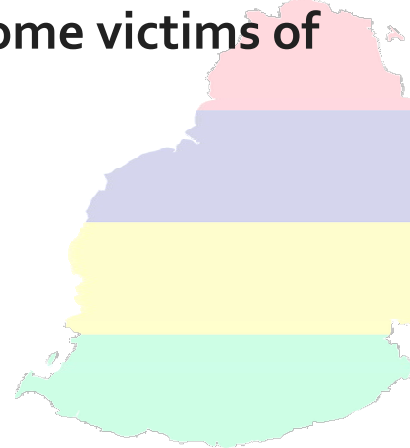
Challenges faced by women in T/Unions

- African communities are generally patriarchal in nature.
- Women's oppression occurs within the context of unequal gendered power relations.
- In Africa, most programmes and activities, such as collective bargaining, do not take account of the specific needs of women members.
- There is also an active and direct domination over women through sexual harassment and open discrimination, especially in terms of recruitment and promotions
- There is no platform where young women can interact and network with other women who are in a higher social, economic and political leadership



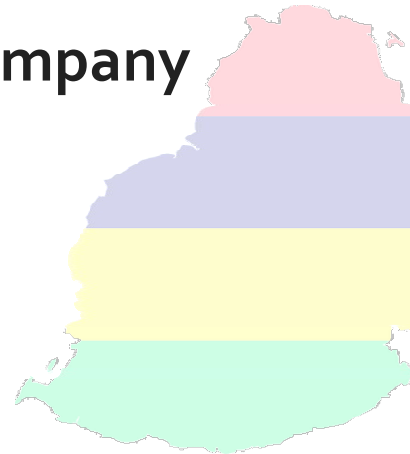
Implications

- Where there is no rule of law, there is anarchy, even in the workplace
- In the absence of African governments intervention in the are of women unionism exploration, sexual abuse, unfair labour practice will continue
- ILO interventions are needed in a majority of cases e.g Botswana and Namibia cases,
- However, the ratification of ILO Conventions does not always translate into implementation
- African women in the PSS Women will continue to live in fear and become victims of injustice until someone addresses the issue of unionisation



Limitation of the study

- Very limited literature on unionisation of women in the private security sector
- If any, most research works in the PPS are outside the African context
- Primary data is needed and the unwillingness of private company owners to be interviewed complicates the research



Conclusion

- Both Botswana and Namibia governments need to demand registration and labour audit reports from time to time.
- These countries ought review of company legislations to demand full responsibility in terms of Ee welfare such workplace democracy and equity
- Even SA is advance in terms of labour relations...does it mean women's interests and aspirations are heard...without their representation in the trade union leadership?
- Is the Botswana, Namibia and South Africa cases a representation of the Africa countries in terms of labour practice?
- Lack of women in the PPS poses a great threat to workplace democracy and labour peace in general
- Women ought to be given their constitutional rights, labour rights and the opportunity to be heard



Recommendations

- Both Botswana and Namibia PS companies must be held accountable on issues of labour
- Serious monitoring of PSS is needed
- Both men & women in positions of leadership should encourage other women to enlist and actively participate in trade union activities.
- Women in trade union leadership should include:
 - the capacity building of workers on their labour rights as an associate trainer and
 - the area of women empowerment to promote their financial inclusion..



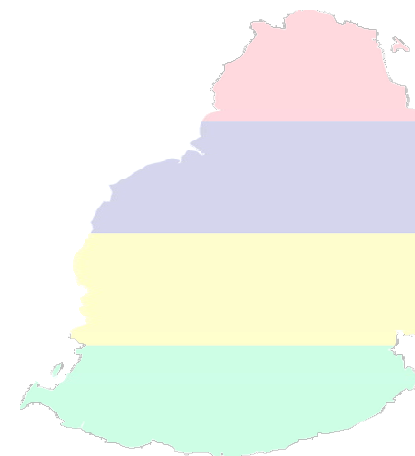


I

thank

you for

attention



References

Barrett, J. (1985). South African women on the move. London: Zed Books.

Berger, I. (1992). Threads of solidarity. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Gasa, N. (2007). Women in South African history. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Lockwood, E. (1978). The Question of African Trade Unions. Washington, D.C.: Washington Office on Africa, pp.2-3.

Mashinini, E. (1991). Strikes have followed me all my life. New York: Routledge.

Walker, C. (1982). Women and resistance in South Africa. London: Onyx Press. Last updated : 17-Nov-2017

