Social Protection for Migrants in the SADC:
Prospects, Vulnerability and Benefits across Borders

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SOCIAL PROTECTION,

- Social protection consists of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability.
- Social protection meant reducing social risks, such as unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability and old age.
- Typically, Social protection defines Labor intervention to protect the workers; Social Insurance for risks of unemployment, health issues and age; and Social Assistance for vulnerable individuals.
Two parallel avenues facing the poor;
In 1867 diamonds were discovered in Kimberly, South Africa and rumours traveled among the surrounding countries;
Men from various neighbouring countries flocked to South Africa to work in the mines, most by foot;
Migration started changing the lives of the families and produced remittances to the governments.
My father was born in 1906 and took his first venture to the mines by foot in 1927, one year before the signing of the controlled hiring labour force agreement between Portugal and Transvaal in 1928;

He married in 1930 and had 12 children, among them, ten men and two women. I am the youngest, born in 1960;

Among the ten sons, six worked as miners in South Africa to fill these jobs, due to the short supply of local labour force within this industry.
In 1990, I joined the SA mining industry and, like others, followed the recruitment procedures and medical observations under very difficult conditions.

We lived in the “Hostels”, shared culture and exchanged information with miners from all the countries that supplied labour in the mining industry, and I learnt that migrant miners are not entitled to pension fund;
The Scenario Cont.

- Mining (gold, platinum, uranium, coal etc.) is dug in underground, where the geothermal gradient rises every time the mine goes deep.

- The breathing is supported by machinery that produces air on surface and transported by pipes to underground.

- Despite several galleries, the mine only has a single shaft for in and out.
In drilling and blasting operations, the mineworkers inhale the silica’s powder that keeps on flying, which then can develop into tuberculosis and silicosis.
In the mines we used a uniform underground language for communication, which was taught during induction and training;

On the surface we lived by nationalities and there was a great language barrier to communicate with locals, including outside hostels, hence we used “Fanagaló” in town;

I decided to learn English to break the barrier;
Then the need to defend the miners rights grew, and, together with other friends, we decided to form a Association.

- Mozambican miners are not entitled to pension fund after work abroad;
- The Trade Unions Assistance to migrant miners does not cross the boarders;
- The migrant miners health and social benefit issues are not fully addressed.
In 1996, the dream to form an Association became true and AMIMO was registered in Mozambique in 1998.

The mission is to restore hope to migrant mineworkers and families.
The Services

- Assisting
- Counselling
- Supporting
- Lobbying
- Advocacy.
The Association’s Impact

- AMIMO gains credibility among miners
- AMIMO maps ex-miners;
- Selfish experience shows no success;
- In 2006, a dream to form regional organization comes true;
- In 2010 we convened 1st Regional Miners Association meeting.
Need for Regional Body
Regional Mineworkers Association - Why?

- Problems are similar across the Southern Africa Region;
- Issues needing to be addressed:
  - Social Welfare, Health and Social Benefits;
- Limited support;
  - Mines CSR
  - Governments
  - CSOs in the region;
- There has been little or no involvement in the forums GDP
Two years later

- 2nd Regional Meeting approves SAMA Constitution in 2010
CHALLENGES

- Lack of information on migration rights;
- Illiteracy & language barriers affect migrant miners;
- Xenophobia;
- Lack of information regarding miners rights;
- Low attention paid to migrant miners by local governments.
Strengthening miners’ voice through SAMA;

Influencing policies through strong advocacy;
Local governments start to realize miners voices and sign Regional TB Declaration in the Mining Sector 2012;
Developments

- SAMA in partnership with World Bank advocate the harmonization of TB treatment among miners in the selected four countries (Lesotho, Mozambique, S.Africa & Swaziland) and the Declaration comes to signing on the 25th of March, 2014;

- In the same countries, SAMA / SAT are facilitating regional dialogue on miners access to social security benefits and the mapping of ex-miners is ongoing.
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