

# REWU MAGAZINE

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The Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU) commends the various stakeholders for their continued contribution to the establishment of Early Childhood Development centres at working place in mining and quarry companies across the country. **READ THE STORY ON PAGE No 4**

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**REWU, WORLD VISION RWANDA CONTINUE TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD LABOUR AND SEXUAL ABUSE**



# REWU trained PIRAN Rwanda union and staff representatives on their role in promoting social dialogue at working place



*REWU trained PIRAN Rwanda union and staff representatives on their role in promoting social dialogue at working place*

The Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU) in close collaboration with the management of PIRAN Rwanda Ltd have organized a training that brought together the REWU Trade Union Committee in PIRAN Rwanda, staff representatives, and the Management of PIRAN Rwanda. The training took place on Thursday, May 5, 2022.

The trainees were taken through, labor law and its ministerial orders, responsibilities of staff and trade union representatives in advocating, collective bargains for employees rights and benefits as well as their role to increase the

production as the main duties of representatives of workers at company level.

At the beginning of the workshop, the Director General of Piran Rwanda, Mr. Sematuro Lionel, thanked REWU union for its contribution to the promote social dialogue in PIRAN as well as train its staff for better understanding labor standards and its implementation at working place, and urged the participants to share the acquired information to all employees.

The Deputy Secretary General and Lawyer of REWU Mr. Bwanakweli Jean Jean Marie explained the legal provisions in labor law, functioning of the Trade Unions and staff representatives in the company. Speaking at the training, the Secretary General Eng. Andre Mutsindashyaka trained participants on how to conduct negotiations until to the collective bargaining. He

shows special duties of staff representatives and trade union representatives, their complementarity in order to promote better working conditions in the company.

He called on the participants to work closely for the common interests of the workers they are representing.

He added that there are a lot that the union does for the welfare of the workers and promised that the trade union will continue to do its best to fully arrive at the level where workers will enjoy their full rights at the workplace and even at their family levels. REWU is nowadays advocating for having a mining sectorial collective bargaining agreement for minimum remuneration.





# REWU joined DUMAC Mining workers to observe International Workers Memorial Day



The Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU) joined Mining Workers at DUMAC Mine in Rwamagana District to observe the International Workers Memorial Day celebrated annually on April 28th. The annual Occupational Health and Safety Day event brought together more than 400 employees. The event was organized by REWU in partnership with Building and

Wood Workers' International Employees were briefed on the origins of the day and explained the role of the REWU Trade Union in the promotion of decent work in Mining companies. During the event, Workers were reminded that they are entitled to Occupational Health and Safety rights. They were

also reminded to do better in order to increase the productivity of the company in which they work for. The event was attended by the Deputy Secretary General and Lawyer of REWU, Mr. Bwanakweli Jean Marie accompanied by REWU Coordinator in the Eastern Province.

## Campaign against Child labour and Child Sexual abuse continues

As part of the Campaign Against Child Labor and child sexual abuse, the Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU) in partnership with World Vision Rwanda continued to conduct campaigns in various districts starting 26th April 2022. The campaigns were organized as part of celebrating the International Labour Day observed on 1st May 2022.

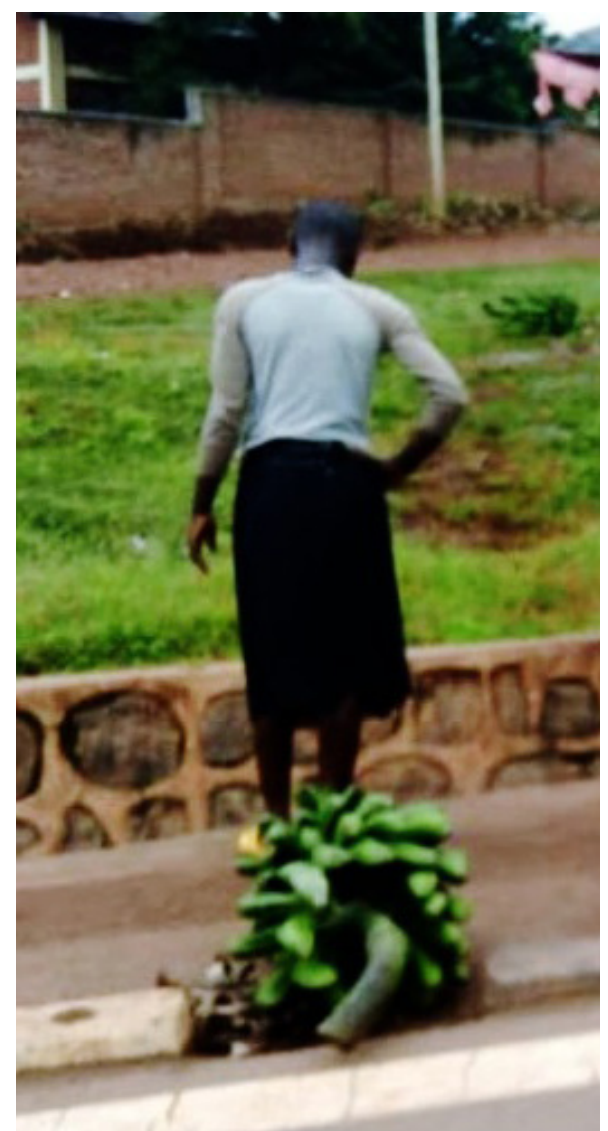
The Campaign activities have continued even after the celebration of Labour day.

In Rusizi district, Muganza sector in Shara Mini market which is located near the CIMERWA factory, the campaign targeted the banana traders where many children are involved in the transportation of these bananas

when they are going to be sold!

At the site, we found a large number of children who should be at school, unfortunately they are involved in the banana Trade. Traders have been warned against such child abuse and have agreed that no child will be employed to transport goods again and if anyone found guilty will be punished!

After the sensitization in Muganza Sector, the campaign continued in GITAMBI Sector in Rusizi district where residents were given the same message about the fight against child labor and Sexual abuse!







*Mr. Mpakaniye Jean Claude, REWU Project Manager speaking to residents*

The campaign in Muganza was carried out by REWU, World Vision Rwanda with the participation of various leaders including V/ Mayor for Economic Affairs in Rusizi District, local leaders including all sector leaders, Representative of the Rwanda Investigation Bureau, Army and Police, Cell executives, Business leaders, all village heads, Isibo Chiefs, friends of the family and health workers, religious representatives and others.

In his message, Mr. Mpakaniye Jean Claude, REWU Project Manager focused on child protection, explaining child labor cases that are common in GITAMBI sector, all forms of child abuse, and all other forms of child labor!

He also showed the effects of child abuse, including stunting, illness, school dropouts, death, and more.

He further identified the lines of communication to be contacted once they meet any case of child abuse including Toll free number 7272 of World Vision Rwanda.

The Representative of RIB in Gitambi sector took the time to explain some of the penalties for child

labour and child sexual abuse and how to handle cases when offenders are under 14 years old! Ms. Alice from World Vision Rwanda also took the time to request parents to do everything possible to protect the child from any form of abuse!

The child representative who was present appreciated the knowledge given to the parents and pointed out that they faced the challenge of hiding the crime so that the parents would not be aware of it but that now they are going to work together to ensure that all children are protected and criminal cases are reported in a due time.

In Nyamasheke district in Cyato sector, REWU volunteer spoke to the residents about child labor and reminded that child labor is punishable by law.

During the campaign, some of the children in the Child Protection club also informed that their peers have dropped out of the school and

appeared in various labour services. There was also a meeting with the community to discuss child protection.

In BISUMO cell community meeting, REWU Volunteer talked to the community and told them about child abuse, especially child labor and the effects of child abuse, the impact on the child, the family and the country in general.

In Kirimbi Sector, Nyamasheke District, as we campaign against child labor and sexual abuse in Kirimbi sector where we had planned to conduct our activities, it didn't happen as planned due to heavy rain, but we visited a family that has 11 children, including those who are involved in child labor due to the so called "Making a living".

We went with DASSO and ES of Nyarusange cell and a RYVCP volunteer! We talked to family members, and they agreed that it would never happen again and that because of the information we gave them, they will help us tell the message to



the rest of the community!

In Mbazi Sector, Huye District

On April 26, 2022, during a campaign against child labour and sexual abuse organized by REWU in collaboration with World Vision Rwanda, rice farmers in NYIRAGASARI valley in Rusagara cell in Mbazi Sector, Huye District, were sensitized on child labor, the negative impact of involving children in rice farming activities and the fight against child sexual abuse.

After the event, we held a meeting with parents to discuss the issue of school dropouts and those whose children have dropped out promised that next academic year, all the children will be re-enrolled and will ensure that they do not return to the brick making business. The event was attended by the Executive Secretary of the Cell, the Cell Counselor and friends of family.



## REWU commends the establishment of ECD centres at working place in mining and quarry companies



REWU commends the various stakeholders for their continued contribution to the establishment of Early Childhood Development centres at working place in mining and quarry companies.

The Rwanda Extractive mining and quarry companies Industry Workers Union across the country. The (REWU) commends the establishment of ECD centers at Mining sites will address a number of issues including addressing the issue of child labour, eliminating the problem of children who were deprived of access to education and being placed in the care of their siblings, helping women to work safely, protecting the rights





**ECD centre opening at WMP Gifurwe was officiated by the Rwanda's Minister of Local Government, Mr. Gatabazi Jean Marie Vianney**

of the children and their health, increasing the productivity and incomes of the female worker, improving the well-being of the children and preparing them for the start of school education and thus reaching the time of going to School voluntarily among other positive effects.

The fact that ECD centers are being set up on Mining and quarry companies is a sign of the adherence to the Rights of the Children and parents who are working at Mines and Quarries.

REWU continues to make efforts to improve the livelihoods of miners and their families through advocacy programs. Achieving all this requires the efforts of everyone, both the private and public sectors, as well as social development partners.

There are currently around 3,000 Mining sites in Rwanda and two mine companies have already established ECD Centers that are well-functioning and appreciated by everyone for their contribution to Child Development.

On March 17-18, 2022, the partners in the Establishment of

ECD Centers officially launched the operationalization of ECD Centres at New Bugarama Mining Company Ltd (NBM) and at Wolfram Minerals Processing Gifurwe both located in Burera District, Northern Province.

"The idea of building this centre came up when we saw that some women would go to the mine with their kids, and the kids played in the dust," Janvier Ndabananiye, Director of Operations at Bugarama Mining Company.

"We started with a small house, which could accommodate five or six children. Now, with the support from the Unicef, RMB, NCDA and REWU we have a centre that can host 60 children," he said.

Ndabananiye said they're working with local authorities to get more children from the sector to join the centre.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Rajat Madhok the UNICEF Rwanda Chief of Communication, Advocacy and Partnerships commended REWU for the introduction of ECD Centres

and other partners who have worked hard to make ECD centres a reality at the mining sites.

Mr. Rajat said" I wish to extend my gratitude to REWU, the management of New Bugarama Mining Company, RMB and most importantly the mothers and fathers who have made this dream of setting up the ECD centre a reality."

The next day, on 18th March the ECD centre opening at WMP Gifurwe was officiated by the Rwanda's Minister of Local Government, Mr. Gatabazi Jean Marie Vianney called on the people working in the mines to avoid illegal mining and participate in government programs while at the same time urging the employers to ensure that workers do their daily activities with maximum safety.

Minister Gatabazi also urged them to make their contributions in Ejo Heza Long-term Saving Scheme as well as in Health Insurance Program.



Amb.Yamina Karitanyi, the CEO of RMB thanks the mining companies whose have already started setting up the ECD centres and call upon other mining companies to do so as their contribution into corporate social responsibilities.

There was an opportunity to celebrate the ECD Centre's operationalization as it will help parents find a safe place to leave their children while they are in the mining activities.

According to Country Representative of UNICEF Rwanda, ECD facilities at workplaces could boost efforts to tackle issues affecting children in Rwanda.

"The biggest advantage of having this ECD centre is that it benefits everyone; it's not just the children or their patents," Country Representative of UNICEF Ms. Julianna Lindsey said.

Ms. Julianna Lindsey said that ECD centres help to tackle the problem of malnutrition and foster children's health.

Eng.AndreMutsindashyaka,the Secretary General of Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU), encouraged other mining companies to consider setting up ECD centres at their working place in order to promote women working environment in the industry.

"There are around 3,000 mine sites in Rwanda and we call upon all mine and quarry owners to establish ECD centres. These will benefit not just the families of mining workers, they will also benefit by employers through the production increment and serve the communities around the mining sites," Mutsindashyaka said



**Amb.Yamina Karitanyi, the CEO of RMB**



**Country Representative of UNICEF Ms. Julianna Lindsey**



# PICTORIAL: ECDs Launch (PHOTOS TAKEN BY UNICEF RWANDA)





# GHAI-LARISSA AWARD SPECIAL EDITION 2021



## Ending Child Labour in AFRICA: REWU receives Ghai-Larissa Award

Addis Ababa: 11th May 2022: The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) has proudly awarded the Certificate of the recognition to the Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU), in recognition of its exceptional contribution towards eradicating Child Labour in Africa.

The second Awards which is part of Ghai-Larissa Award Special Edition 2021 on Child labor was received by REWU secretary General, Eng. Andre Mutsindashyaka who is in Addis Ababa to participate in the PAN-AFRICAN SYMPOSIUM ON VIOLENCE PREVENTION.

Eng. Mutsindashyaka expressed

special gratitude to the ACPF Executive Director Dr. Joan Nyanyuki and her team for this recognition which proves the solidarity of African Civil society organizations as well as trade unions to end Child labor in Africa.

Commenting on the award, Eng. Mutsindashyaka said that "On behalf of Rwandese mine workers we have achieved this through being strongly united and staying accountable on our duties, thanks to the Good Governance of our country Rwanda which is working always to promote social protection of the citizens;"

He added that this achievement

was made also "thanks to the good collaboration with various Government's Institutions; owners of mine and quarry companies in Rwanda, the strong partnership with World Vision Rwanda in promoting social protection as well as UNICEF Rwanda whom we are working in promoting Child care at working place".

During the panel on 12th May, 2022, Eng. Mutsindashyaka shared with participants in the symposium the best practices of REWU in community mobilization for social changes, where





*Eng. Andre Mutsindashyaka Speaking at the symposium*



he recommended them to be engaged and committed actively as well as to persist in building community capacities and awareness until the changes appears.

**“Where there’s a will there’s a way.” Eng. Mutsindashyaka said.**

**“Aluta continua, the campaign continues, a child is a leader, teacher, miner, businessman, Doctor, etc.....of tomorrow. Let us continue to contribute as much as we can in order to**



**build the Rwanda and Africa we want”** He added

On the African Continent, the best performer who is the Winner of Ghai-Larissa Award special Edition 2021, is the DRC integrated programmes, the Good Shepherd International Foundation while REWU was awarded as the Second winner.

Only those two organizations were awarded for their outstanding role in campaigning against child labor.



# Ways of Eliminating Child Labour in Africa



*Joni Musabayana, Director, ILO Decent Work Team for Eastern and Southern Africa, Country Office for Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa (ILO) and His Excellency, Senator (Dr.) Chris Nwabueze Ngige, Minister of Labour and Employment of Nigeria in Durban, South Africa*

**DURBAN, South Africa, May 19, 2022/** — The campaign to #EndChildLabour was carried on at the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (ICC) in Durban, South Africa. The fourth day of the conference was jam-packed with stimulating and enlightening discussions. This hybrid event, with sessions available both in-person and online, has drawn nearly 13,000 viewers on the live stream and hundreds more in-person since its inception. Attendees can participate in-person and online discussions by submitting questions online. The day's main message was that actions needed to be reviewed in order to eliminate child labour faster and for the better. All discussions will contribute to the advancement of the Durban call to action.

## Starting from the root causes

Day four kicked off with thematic

panels, one of which sought to connect civil society organizations. Panelists came from various organizations from around the World and all say, 'We must eliminate child labour, starting from the root causes'.

Emmerance Tuyishime, Acting CEO of the Pan Africa Farmers' Organization, was born and raised in a farming family in Rwanda. She is familiar with the issue of child labour. In response to a question about the distinction between Child labour and child work – a common concern throughout the conference – she said: "Some people say Child labour prepares children for the future," she said. "However, it is harmful. Period. It interrupts children's ability to learn due to heavy work, both mentally and physically." The main cause of child labour is poverty,

not culture, she said. Parents are left with no choice. "This is where farmers' organizations and development agencies come in – to make sure they have the income to support their families." And the more eyes that are looking out for child labour, the better.

Willy Buloso, the Regional Coordinator at ECPAT International, spoke about his experiences in monitoring child labour in the tourism industry. He advised that we need to establish a policy for all companies working in travel and tourism. We must train staff on the issue and add a zero-tolerance clause must be added to contracts.

In the financial sector, development banks are often known for their initiatives against child labour. Augustina Perez, Child Rights Senior Associate at



the Bank Information Centre, noted that private banks can also make a difference. “We push banks to do better,” she said through both advocacy and monitoring. We check where banks are investing, what the risks are, and whether there are measures in place to prevent child labour.

Civil society and organizations left the meeting prepared to better align their messages, strengthen collaborations, and improve engagement on the issue of Child labour.

## Making connections

The panel discussion on the central role of social protection in tackling Child Labour was driven by Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The report on Social Protection and Child Labour was launched by the ILO and UNICEF. Followed by a panel discussion with respected experts.

Mohamed Moustapha Malick Fall, UNICEF – Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa highlighted that according to the joint International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF report, Social protection is a highly effective policy. The report touches on the fact that we are at a critical crossroads the number of children living in poverty is on the rise. Some 1.5 billion children, aged 0-14, receive no family or child cash benefits. This large protection gap must be closed and closed rapidly. Addressing social protection will assist in the elimination of child labour. It needs to be an all-sector approach.

Indeed, human rights have financial implications. Social protection is not about handouts, but about the creation of wealth and sustainable and inclusive growth, as summarized by panel moderator Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa of the International Labour Organization (ILO).



Global networks like Alliance 8.7 are making a difference, but they are not simple mechanisms. And they cannot function without the support of the Global North. Anousheh Karvar, Chair of Alliance 8.7, said that we need to connect with each other. Partners, civil society, governments, NGOs – everyone. We need to connect across people and countries, through supply chains.

Innovative solutions are needed it cannot be business as usual!

## Skilling up youth

The thematic panels later in the day focused on decent jobs for youth, diving into ways we can best support 15- to 24-year-olds in their transition into decent work. This is especially important for youth who have experienced hazardous employment or occupational safety and health risks.

“Young people may have skills that are not recognized or certified,” said Jacqueline Mugo, Executive Director & CEO of the Federation of Kenya Employers, Secretary-General. It was also mentioned that youth skills need to be validated. Governments need to make sure that the youth have skills that are relevant

to the specific needs of their respected economies. Young people that work in informal jobs and small enterprises will need extra support and should not be left out of the conversation.

Tshilidzi Marwala, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg, brought up the importance of digital skills in particular. He explained, that the university recently created a computer literacy course that is also open to the wider public – anyone who wants to take it. “With a 37% unemployment rate in South Africa, due to deindustrialization, there is no middle road”, he said. “We have to increase our level of competitiveness in the so-called data economy”.

## Focus on financing

How can we mobilize financial resources to make the generational investment required to end child labour? This thematic panel explored this question and addressed topics from public spending to international trade.

Bobbi Gray, Research Director at the Grameen Foundation, said that one of the key lessons the foundation has learned is communicating better to change how financial service providers think about Child



labour. "It's such a big topic and seemed outside of the scope of their mandate," she said. "We really had to change how we talked about it. We emphasized harmful work and don't use the term child labour all the time".

The increasing limitation of democratic space, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining in times of crisis contribute to an increased risk of child labour. Children in child labour need a strong lobby. Workers' organizations, civil society organizations and media monitoring their situation are essential to alert authorities about child labour and related violations of the rights of children.

Other experts mentioned that they strongly feel that there is a need to do more to address child labour by being more efficient in social dialogue and engagement. They also strongly believe that universal social protection is a fundamental pillar for sustainable livelihoods and to #EndChildLabour.

The increasing limitation of democratic space, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining in times of crisis contribute to an increased risk of child labour. Children in child labour need a strong lobby. Workers' organizations, civil society organizations and media monitoring their situation

are essential to alert authorities about child labour and related violations of the rights of children.

According to the ILO, more than 160 million children worldwide are involved in child labour, with South Africa accounting for less than 600,000 of those affected. The ILO applauds South Africa's progress because of the country's investment in children through its social protection system. They claim that South Africa's child protection systems are effective in comparison to other countries because children are enrolled in Early Childhood Development and Basic Education, and the investment in education and the strategy to provide children with food at school is lauded. In terms of social assistance, South Africa has the most extensive child support program (grants). When it comes to educational outcomes, especially in matriculation, the children in this programme outperform the national average.

Delegates believe that if we want to eliminate child labour, we must focus on social protection. South Africa is unique in that social protection is a right. South Africa receives the most funding in Africa, followed by Ethiopia.

The South African Constitution also provides for children to care for themselves in child-headed households. The South

African government sends child and youth care workers to these families so that children can remain children. These child and youth care workers visit these children to ensure that they have a parental figure and that they continue to be children. In the case of orphans, children can be fostered, adopted, or placed in a child and youth care center where they are cared for by the government so that they are not forced to become adults before their time.

In the fight against child labour, the government has been a leader. Child labour is a violation of children's rights. It also contributes to the perpetuation of a cycle of poverty and exclusion because poor and vulnerable children are more likely to drop out of school to work as child labourers.

It is everyone's responsibility to keep children safe. Child labour in any form is unacceptable, and this is a call to all to be vigilant and report cases of child labour at all times. It is everyone's responsibility to care for society's most vulnerable members, particularly children because more needs to be done to prevent child neglect, abuse, violence, and exploitation. To ensure that all children thrive, communities must work together to make them safer and healthier.







## **LABOR DAY 2022: REWU raises concerns on miners' livelihoods as Market price continue to go up**

As Rwanda celebrates the International Labor Day, the Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU) commends the Government for the changes it has made in the development of the mining sector but also points out that the lack of minimum wage is one of the main challenges facing the workers.

On the other hand REWU urges employers and employees to promote dialogues as they can yield solutions to the challenges that may be caused by the lack of minimum salary and low salaries compared to current situations on the market.

Minimum wage is the minimum amount of remuneration that an employer is required to pay wage earners for the work performed during a given period, which cannot be reduced by collective agreement or individual contract, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

However, Mining workers are suffering from the effects of lack of the minimum wage because they get paid based on the

mineral productivity while they are likely to work for a certain period of time and yet are not able to get the minerals despite hours spend underground searching for the minerals.

In addition, REWU mentions that "We are celebrating the International Labor Day while there are still issues related to low wages in general which will have a significant impact on workers' productivity."

Due to rising cost of living, REWU requests employers in the mining and extractive Industry to increase Workers' salaries, as well as a remuneration per kilogram (kg), so that mining workers can sustain and meet the basic needs of their families.

REWU continues to urge employers to provide their employees with a written employment contract, retirement benefits and occupational safety, and also to be paid via the bank accounts instead of paying them in hand. This right should be granted to all miners, rather than to some as it stands now;

The statement also reminds employers to comply with the provisions of the Labour Code, and in particular to promote a good work ethic in the company as the best solution rather than illegal sacking of employees.

Also employers are urged to provide job training to their employees, as it increases the ability of the employee to become more productive in the company and thus plays an important role in development of the companies they serve.

In particular, REWU welcomes the leadership of Rwanda in the development of professional mining and the prevention of occupational accidents.

REWU acknowledges the Rwanda Mining, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB), employers and partners for initiating various activities including the introduction of ECDs in mining companies where they will continuously help women in the mining profession and at the same time ensuring the protection of children's rights.