

I.N.FORMA.L

Istruire **N**ormare **F**ormare **L**avorare

Newsletter N° 1

MAY 2023

I.N.FORMA.L. - **Educate, Regulate, Train, Work.** From the informal to the formal economy for inclusive growth, peace and social dialogue in Somalia - AID 012590/03/0



The project aims to contribute to the creation of decent work for women and men, in the complex context of Somalia, a country emerging from decades of war, drought, floods and terrorism and moving towards a new period of economic and social redemption.

In this newsletter

- The project I.N.FORMA.L. - AID 012590/03/0: where we started
- FESTU, Horn of Africa and Somalia
- Meetings, dialogue and discussions between project staff between project staff
- May 1st in Somalia



The project I.N.FORMA.L. AID 012590/03/0 > Where we started

Thanks to previous actions and projects, Nexus ER and FESTU - Federation of Somali Trade Unions (established in 2010, FESTU is the first independent Somali trade union federation), in cooperation with CGIL, implement activities in Somalia to defend and strengthen human and labour rights.

Several actions have been implemented jointly since 2015, including at the international level:

- defence of freedom of the press, information, associationism and organisation of trade unions in Somalia;
- peace promotion in the Horn of Africa;
- promotion of organising and providing support to workers in the informal economy in Somalia;
- Proposals for good practices to protect children against different forms of exploitation (seminar in Mogadishu - October 2019 - in the presence of representatives of FESTU, CGIL, Nexus ER, ITUC Africa and ILO).

I.N.FORMA.L

Istruire Normare Formare Lavorare

Newsletter N° 1 | p. 2
MAY 2023



The collaboration with FESTU in 2022 allowed us to submit a project proposal 'I.N.FORMA.L. - AID 012590/03/0', co-funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), and implemented in Somalia by FESTU itself, in collaboration with MoLSA - Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Somalia), SCCI - Somali Chamber of Commerce and Industry/Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Somalia) and ITUC Africa - African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation/African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (CSI ITUC-Africa).



Our work programme in Somalia focuses on social dialogue as a mean of identifying economic formalisation policies in strategic sectors for the country, in a spirit of tripartism and strengthening labour institutions.

FESTU, Horn of Africa and Somalia

The Horn of Africa is a strategic sub-region of the African continent, where risks, opportunities and contradictions coexist: there is a significant increase in population and high rates of economic growth; however, severe poverty, especially rural poverty, deep economic inequalities, continuing tensions between populations and strong environmental vulnerability, forced migration from conflicts persist; in addition, the political situation makes democratization processes more impervious.

The sub-regional dimension is of paramount importance in achieving and maintaining peace throughout the African continent, through the consolidation of decent work and the strengthening of trade unions, which play a crucial role in preventing threats and harm from labor mismanagement, in the promotion and development of professionalism and skills, and in achieving better wage, working and living conditions.

FESTU is a constituent member of HACTU (Horn of Africa Confederation of Trade Unions)



→ founded in 2018 by the General Secretaries and/or Presidents of the Trade Union Confederations of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and South Sudan.

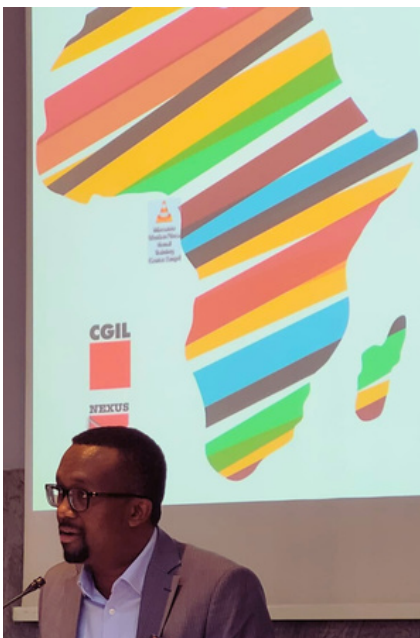
Since its establishment, HACTU has promoted actions to protect and promote human rights, labour, citizens and communities in the IGAD region (Regional Organisation of the Horn of Africa States).

I.N.FORMA.L

Istruire Normare Formare Lavorare

Newsletter N° 1 | p. 4
MAY 2023

The establishment of HACTU was driven by the conviction that a sub-regional trade union confederation is necessary to defend workers' rights in the best way possible by building synergies and solidarity. The main need is to affirm and build - where necessary - an autonomous, strong and independent trade union that can more effectively represent the voice of working men and women in the Horn of Africa.



Invited to the seminar "Decent Work, Vocational Training and Peace in the Horn of Africa", organised by Nexus ER and CGIL in Bologna on 14 March 2023, representatives of FESTU (Omar Faruk Osman, Secretary General and Sumeya Osman Abdi, FESTU Gender Policy Officer) reflected with participants on good practices of social dialogue and labour inclusion in Somalia and *Women, Work and Peace in the Horn of Africa*.

The following day, FESTU representatives participated in the session dedicated to foreign delegations at the 19th National Congress of CGIL in Rimini, introducing the project 'I.N.FORMA.L. - Educate, Regulate, Train, Work. From the informal to the formal economy for inclusive growth, peace and social dialogue in Somalia'.

During the session, the speeches of the two FESTU representatives focused on the gender pay gap and the importance of women's empowerment and campaigns against inequality, discrimination, misogyny and gender-based violence.





Sumeya Osman Abdi stated that: "Working women are devalued and excluded from economic and social equality. Gender issues need to be discussed at all levels and in all contexts. To address the obstacles that prevent the elimination of gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work, FESTU and its affiliated Federations are fighting for the effective implementation of ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, which Somalia ratified in 2021, the first country in East Africa and the Horn of Africa to ratify this convention.

We need to continue the process of dismantling barriers between gender, gender identity and class. Our position is very clear:

I.N.FORMA.L

Istruire Normare Formare Lavorare

Bollettino N° 1 | p. 6
MAGGIO 2023

«FESTU needs women if it is to increase the membership, power and influence of organised labour in all regions of the country in order to improve the working and living conditions of Somali workers and to bring about necessary and progressive political changes for the good and Peace of Somalia».

Sumeya Osman Abdi concludes his speech by reiterating how rights, labour and collective bargaining are the contemporary challenges in Somalia and the Horn of Africa to be addressed with actions in support of vocational training, labour inclusion and social dialogue also for a trade union agenda of peace based on decent work and realised through international cooperation.



Meetings, dialogue and discussions between project staff



In Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in March 2023 we organized the first in-person meeting between the Italian and Somali staff of the I.N.FORMA.L. AID project 012590/03/0/0.

They were intense days of direct knowledge where we adjusted, monitored and updated the plan of actions planned in the first year of the project and all the reference documents. A useful meeting, therefore, to coordinate and manage all activities and which demonstrated the importance of dialogue and discussion for inclusive development. Although the extremely insecure situation in the country prevents foreigners from staying there, meeting in person was important on a human level to understand the feelings of young Somalis, their fears and hopes.

I.N.FORMA.L
Istruire Normare Formare Lavorare

Newsletter N° 1 | p. 8
MAY 2023

1° maggio in Somalia > [LINK](#)



“ It is time for fundamental changes for a new social contract to address the crises of unemployment, poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment. ”

During the commemoration of May 1, 2023, FESTU mobilized and gathered workers and their representatives in Mogadishu to join millions of workers around the world. On this important occasion, Secretary General Omar Faruk Osman presented the goals of the project:

«Somali workers demanded decent work for a decent life, respect for civil liberties and dignity in the workplace. They called for the enactment of progressive laws and policies. They called for laws and policies to abolish child labor and forced labor, eradicate gender discrimination and empower women, safeguard a safe working environment, provide for living wages, and protect the environment through appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures. The combined effects of these laws and policies should serve as a benchmark for measuring changes in working conditions for socio-economic and ecologically sustainable progress».

Omar Faruk Osman adds that Somalia has an inescapable obligation to respect fundamental principles and rights at work and to ensure a tripartite social dialogue process to promote the ratification and implementation of relevant ILO conventions and protocols. FESTU and its affiliated unions pledge to continue the campaign against outdated labor laws so that authorities enact policies on social protection, child and forced labor, gender equality, women's empowerment, and living wages.

“ Decent work deficits, which plague the Somali labor market, are unacceptable and must be addressed to open the way for inclusive economic growth, environmental conservation, and resilient and sustainable development. ”

Omar Faruk Osman concludes his speech by urging the federal government and social partners to show commitment to quickly achieve the first goals of the National Decent Work Program in Somalia, adding that FESTU will leave no stone unturned to ensure that Somali workers get their inalienable rights.

We will update you soon on the actions implemented from May onward!

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SCCI - Somali Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Somalia)



ITUC Africa - African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation



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