

Centralised Bargaining in Namibia's Road Transport Industry:

Options and Challenges



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Table of Contents

Abbreviations	3
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Current bargaining arrangement in the road transport sector	7
The ideas behind centralised bargaining	8
Centralised bargaining in Namibia	9
International experiences – South Africa and Zimbabwe	15
Perception among stakeholders	19
Conclusion and recommendations: Assessment of possibilities	22
Sources	24

Abbreviations

CIF	Construction Industries Federation of Namibia
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
LaRRI	Labour Resource and Research Institute
MANWU	Metal and Allied Namibian Workers Union
NAFWU	Namibia Farmworkers Union
NALF	Namibia Agricultural Labour Forum
NAMROAD	Namibia Roads Association
NASGWU	Namibia Security Guard and Watchmen Union
NATAU	Namibia Transport and Allied Workers Union
NAU	Namibia Agricultural Union
NNFU	Namibia National Farmers Union
RFEA	Road Freight Employers Association
SAN	Security Association of Namibia
SATAWU	South Africa Transport and Allied Workers Union

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Introduction

The Namibia Transport and Allied Workers Union (NATAU) represents the majority of workers in Namibia's transport industry. The union's total membership stands at about 12 000 of whom more than half are employed in road transport sector. Overall there are about 30 medium-size to large transport companies in the sector, most of whom are members of the Namibia Road Association (NAMROAD).

NATAU has individual recognition agreements with 13 of these companies and thus negotiates wages and conditions of employment separately with each of them. This is not only a drain on the union's time and resources but also makes the achievement of more uniform conditions of employment difficult. It is against this background that NATAU asked the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) to carry out a feasibility study to explore the possibility of establishing a bargaining council for Namibia's road transport industry. NATAU then approached the Namibia Office of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), which agreed to render financial support for this study.

Thus far, industry-wide bargaining in Namibia takes place in three industrial sectors, namely agriculture, building & construction and security. All other industries are still engaged in negotiations at the level of individual companies.

The key questions that were addressed by this study are the following:

- Is the establishment of a national bargaining council for Namibia's road transport industry a viable option?
- What are the relevant experiences in the region, i.e. South Africa?
- What are the views of stakeholders in Namibia, i.e. government and employers?

The research process entailed a study of relevant documents as well as interviews with transport workers unions in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, interviews were conducted with several road transport companies, covering both South African and local companies operating in Namibia. Interviews were also conducted with representatives of unions that are engaged in industry-wide negotiations to assess their experiences to date. Finally, representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare were interviewed to establish their views of and support for centralised collective bargaining.

Despite many attempts to secure an interview with a competent representative of NAMROAD, the organisation was unable to grant us an interview between June and September 2007. We thus had to prepare this report without covering the views of this important stakeholder.

Current bargaining arrangement in the road transport sector

NATAU currently has 13 recognition agreements with companies in the road transport industry. Most of these agreements provide for annual negotiations on wages and other substantive issues. As a result, shop stewards and union officials spend a substantial amount of time and resources on these negotiations. In the words of NATAU's general secretary:

"The whole year we deal with wages and substantive negotiations. It leaves you with no time to deal with other issues like recruitment and training".

The regional co-ordinator added:

"Normally the negotiations with companies last from January to April. It has become difficult for us to do other jobs because every day, every month I am involved in negotiations... This is the difficulty I am experiencing negotiating with individual companies".

Although NATAU is one of the most successful unions when it comes to wage negotiations, obtaining average annual increases of around 10% in 2004 and 2005 - well above the country's inflation rate - the union found it difficult to establish uniform conditions of employment in the industry. NATAU members engaged in similar work at different companies, receive different wages and conditions of employment. An example in this regard is the practice of 3 road transport companies, which do not pay fixed salaries to their drivers but instead pay a commission per kilometre travelled. As a result, these drivers do not receive any salary during times when they are not on the road.

The ideas behind centralised bargaining

NATAU believes that the establishment of a centralised bargaining council would help to unify conditions of employment and to improve benefits in the road transport industry. Union members want a uniform arrangement that will cover salaries and conditions of employment for the whole industry and thus mandated their union accordingly.

NATAU wants all workers in the industry covered, including contract workers – at least all those who are employed for more than 6 months. The union is inspired by South Africa's centralised bargaining council agreement, which covers even Zimbabwean and Mozambican drivers once they enter South Africa. Thus, NATAU regards centralised bargaining as an opportunity for regional co-operation between trade unions. The idea of a joint bargaining council was even discussed at a regional meeting of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).

In 2004 - 2005, the idea of establishing a centralised bargaining council was discussed within NATAU. However, progress towards implementation was slow and although NATAU had submitted a proposal to Namroad, no substantive discussion took place. The Namroad executive indicated that they had no principal objection to the idea of centralised bargaining but follow-up meetings were continuously postponed.

Overall, NATAU's desire to establish centralised collective bargaining in the roads transportation sector is driven by 3 key objectives, namely:

1. To reduce the time spent on wage negotiations with individual companies in the industry
2. To establish uniform minimum wages and basic conditions of employment across the industry
3. To cover even those companies with which NATAU does not have a recognition agreement at present

Centralised bargaining in Namibia

Despite the provisions for the establishment of wage commissions in the Labour Act of 1992, the Namibian government has not yet set up any such commission to determine minimum wages and working conditions in particular sectors. Instead, the Namibian government left it to trade unions and employers to negotiate wages and working conditions, usually on a company-by-company basis. Only three industries have agreed to establish industry-wide minimum conditions, namely the building and construction industry, agriculture and the security industry. Their experiences will be briefly discussed to draw some lessons for NATAU.

The Building and Construction Industry

The most significant and successful centralised bargaining arrangement is that entered into between the Metal and Allied Namibia Workers Union (MANWU) and the Construction Industries Federation (CIF) of Namibia. The agreement was established at the request of the Metal and Allied Namibia Workers Union (MANWU), which experienced large disparities in the remuneration of workers doing the same kind of work at different companies. The union then approached the CIF and a recognition agreement was signed in 1993, which paved the way for annual industry-wide bargaining between the two parties. The agreement covers the whole building and construction industry and includes minimum wages as well as minimum conditions of employment, including leave, transport, uniforms etc. Furthermore, the agreement stipulates minimum productivity levels (per job category), the “living-away allowance” (currently 12% of hourly wage), safety requirements, the service allowance (bonus) etc. The agreement is gazetted and thus legally enforceable. It is valid until replaced by a new one. A two-year agreement was concluded in 2006 to save some of the time spent on wage negotiations.

The CIF predicts that the new round of negotiations will be difficult as employers already have to carry additional costs due to the provisions of the

new Labour Bill 2007. The CIF believes that increases in wages on top of these additional costs would drive building costs to very high levels. Currently workers in the industry have 18 days annual leave, which will increase to at least 20 for those working 5 days a week and to 24 for those working 6 days per week. In addition, all workers will be entitled to 5 days compassionate leave.

The CIF regards the experiences with centralised bargaining as “mixed”. Many companies follow the CIF-MANWU agreements, especially at the lowest level (labourers). At higher skills levels, companies usually pay above the minimum wage, which is relatively low. Companies often implement the percentage increase set by the centralised negotiations and there were only few industrial conflicts since the introduction of centralised bargaining. This is a clear testimony that the arrangement led to improved labour relations in the industry.

The largest threat to the centralised agreement was the non-adherence by some construction companies, particularly those from China. They did not adhere to minimum wages and minimum conditions of employment and neither the government nor the union, nor the CIF were able to enforce compliance. The CIF stated that it cannot police all companies and the industry and believes that the Labour Commissioner or the trade union should ensure compliance. The Labour commissioner is aware of the violations but the current labour inspectorate is not equipped to deal adequately with workplace inspections. Only about 27 labour inspectors are deployed country-wide and many of them are office bound as they have to deal with labour disputes in the form of “rule 6 conferences”. The Commissioner expects the situation to improve once the new Labour Bill 2007 is implemented. Labour inspectors will then no longer be involved in labour disputes and the Ministry also plans to recruit more inspectors.

The current differences between construction companies in terms of payment are stark: The CIF minimum wage stands at N\$ 8,44 per hour for labourers while some companies continue paying N\$ 2,75 – N\$ 3,- per hour, according

to the CIF. Such practices undermine sectoral minimum wages and effectively punish companies that comply. The CIF has raised this problem several times with the Minister of Labour and the result was the inclusion of an “adherence requirement” in government tenders. Tendering companies now have to prove that they adhere to minimum conditions. As a result, many companies now want to join the CIF and in addition to the current membership of 80 companies there are about 50 new applications. Some of the new applicants believe that being a member of CIF would be proof that they adhere to the minimum conditions. However, the government must still verify their adherence, otherwise the current problems will remain and thus are likely to destroy the centralised bargaining arrangement in the industry.

MANWU regards the centralised bargaining arrangement as beneficial for workers as it improved their living standards in the industry. However, the union also experienced disadvantages, for example the distance that emerged between the union and its members during centralised bargaining. In the words of MANWU's former general secretary Moses Shiikwa:

“The union at times has been accused of distancing itself from the members. When trying to recruit new members, some feel there is no need to join the union while they are already benefiting from the (industry-wide) agreement by not being members”.

The Agricultural Sector

The Namibia Farmworkers Union (NAFWU) was facing the impossible task of recruiting farm workers who are scattered across the country. The union could only engage in collective bargaining at those farming ventures where a relatively large number of workers were employed, such as the Aussenkehr grape farm. Other farm workers, however, remained outside the reach of collective bargaining and the union thus approached the Ministry of Labour and the farmers unions to discuss the concerns of the industry and how it could be regulated. The union proposed an industry-wide agreement covering minimum wages, hours of work, conditions of employment, standardised contracts etc.

The negotiations were difficult but in 2003 an agreement was reached with the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU) and the Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU). It provided for a national minimum wage of N\$ 429 per month for full-time workers. In addition, workers were entitled to receive accommodation and food rations. A study conducted by the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) in 2006 revealed that only about half of all farmers had implemented the minimum wage. Most commercial farmers adhered to the minimum wage agreement and often paid above the stipulated wage. On communal farms, however, the situation was different as wages there were often significantly below the minimum level. Enforcing the minimum conditions in the agricultural sector was even more difficult than in the construction industry and thus the minimum wage agreement had a very limited impact on workers in the sector.

NAFWU experienced a huge challenge when trying to improve the basic conditions of employment. Negotiations are convened under the umbrella of the Namibia Agricultural Labour Forum (NALF), which is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. For the past three years, agricultural employers refused to adjust the minimum wage. Agricultural employers claimed that there was no comprehensive study done on the impact of the minimum wage and thus they refused to adjust it. As NAFWU was unable to mobilise farm workers across the country, the union was left with no other option but to declare a dispute in 2006. It had no effect and was largely ignored by the farmers. Thus NAFWU is now in a very difficult position and seemingly unable to utilise centralised bargaining effectively to improve its members living and working conditions.

NAFWU's general secretary Alfred Angula highlighted another challenge the union was facing regarding the implementation of the minimum wage:

"Some farmers interpreted the minimum wage as a maximum wage. Some have reduced the hours of work or restructured their hourly rate. They are now only paying for the hours worked according to the clock system".

NAFWU now wants to propose differentiated minimum wages for commercial and communal farmers. The current minimum wage should be applicable to

communal farmers while commercial farmers could pay more. This proposal is likely to be resisted by commercial farmers and the union will have to consider strategies how to convince agricultural employers of the merits of annual adjustments to minimum wages and conditions of employment.

The Security Industry

Jointly with the Namibia Security Guard and Watchmen Union (NASGWU), NATAU reached an agreement with the Security Association of Namibia (SAN) in 2005. This was the result of 7 years of negotiations. The agreement sets the minimum wage at entry level at N\$ 25 per shift, or N\$ 2,09 per hour. The agreement also compels the employer to provide a set of uniforms but no other benefits are mentioned.

NATAU experienced 3 main advantages that resulted from the agreement:

1. The agreement covers all security companies whether they are members of SAN or not.
2. A certain uniformity of wages was achieved in the industry.
3. Security guards appreciated the unions' efforts and joined them.

After identifying several loopholes in the current agreement (such as companies deducting money for uniforms from workers' pay), NATAU and NASGWU were trying to improve the minimum wages. After 2 failed attempts they declared a dispute and after a failed mediation attempt, they gave notice of a strike on 4 September 2007. The unions demanded a minimum hourly rate of N\$ 3,50 while SAN was not prepared to move beyond N\$ 2,50 per hour. After a final round of hastily convened negotiations, facilitated by the Minister of Labour and Social Services, both parties agreed to a minimum wage of N\$ 3 per hour. This agreement was reached on 6 August and the strike was called off.

NATAU noticed that some security companies abused the minimum wage agreement to reduce their wage levels. Workers at higher wage levels were retrenched and then re-employed at the minimum wage for entry levels. As

with minimum wages in other industries, NATAU experienced violations of the agreement. Some sergeant or even captains at security companies continued to receive N\$ 12 per shift – less than half of the minimum wage at entry level! Although the unions report violations to labour inspectors, little action seems to be taken. In the words of John Kwedhi:

“There is a fine of N\$ 3000 but since independence I have not seen any employer being punished by law for contravening the Labour Act or any other agreement”.

The three case studies of centralised bargaining in Namibia to date show that centralised bargaining cannot be a solution to all labour problems. Besides the struggle to reach agreements with employers on an industry-wide basis, unions face the challenge of ensuring an efficient implementation and enforcement of agreements. This has not been achieved yet and requires urgent intervention, particularly from government.

International experiences: South Africa and Zimbabwe

South Africa established its National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight Industry in 1996, following a “wild cat strike” in 1995. The strike paralysed the industry and forced government to intervene by bringing employers and the union together in an attempt to reach an understanding between the two parties and to harmonise their relationship. This led to the establishment of the bargaining council.

The council consists of 5 trade unions (of whom the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union – SATAWU - is the biggest) and the employers who are represented by the Road Freight Employers Association (RFEA). The South African government is the regulator of the council and monitors development. Employers and unions have to represent more than 50% of members in the industry as set out in South Africa’s Labour relations Act.

Negotiations take place on an annual basis but in 2007 both parties concluded a two-year agreement. Agreements reached at the bargaining council are forwarded to the Ministry of Labour, which then promulgates the agreement into law. The agreement covers a wide range of issues, including the following:

- Hours of work (maximum of 45 per week)
- Meal and rest intervals
- Provisions for a “compressed working week” with up to 15hours of work per day
- Minimum wages according to categories (for example: general workers R 470,59 per week; heavy vehicle drivers R 718,19 per week)
- Across the board increases
- Various allowances
- Overtime work, including limitations and calculations
- Payments for work on Sundays and public holidays
- Part-time employees, seasonal employment and temporary employment services

- Annual leave, bonus fund, sick leave and sick fund, family responsibility leave, maternity leave
- Termination of employment contracts and severance pay
- Agency shop agreement and union subscriptions
- Subcontracting
- Retrenchment procedures.

The agreement is binding for all companies in the industry even if they are not members of the employers association. After several years of negotiations the unions finally managed to reach agreement on the agency shop agreement, which forces non-union members in the bargaining unit to contribute financially to the unions.

In preparation of the negotiations at the bargaining council, SATAWU utilises its shop steward councils and local union structures to obtain a mandate from its members. Proposals are circulated and discussed and then consolidated at regional meetings. Finally, the national shop steward council is convened to finalise the demands and to present a mandate to the unions' executive. This is then presented to the other unions in the bargaining council so that a consolidated union position can be developed.

During negotiations, the unions stay in touch with their members through union structures to brief them about developments and to obtain fresh mandates if the need arises. Agreements are enforced in collaboration with the Department of Labour, which ensures compliance. Companies which feel that they cannot afford to pay the agreed wages, may apply for exemption.

Advantages

The establishment of the bargaining council has helped South African workers to move beyond the very low wages that they had to endure in the past. The agreement has set benchmarks for the industry and led to a process of harmonisation. However, SATAWU feels that the current wages still do not constitute a living wage. It plans a campaign in this regard, jointly with its

federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Another achievement was the establishment of job grades and job titles with a uniform salary scale.

Overall, centralised bargaining has given the unions more time to concentrate on issues other than bargaining, such as recruitment of members, training of organisers and shop stewards etc.

Challenges

The five unions that are party to the bargaining council sometimes have different demands and expectations and thus they have to reach an understanding with each other before facing the employers. Also, workers know that some specific companies have made huge profits and thus they expect large increases as well. Industry-wide bargain forces them to compromise as the agreement has to cover all companies. Workers at some companies thus feel that they would have achieved much higher increase if they had negotiated with their company alone. SATAWU also expressed concern about the composition of the industry, which is dominated by white males while there are "no blacks or women".

In **Zimbabwe**, the Transport and Allied Workers Union was formed in 1980 and immediately applied to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to register a national employment council. Such a tripartite council was established in most Zimbabwean industries after independence to facilitate centralised bargaining. Employees contribute 0,6% of their monthly salary towards the council.

The agreement in Zimbabwe covers transport operators, urban buses, rural buses, taxis and porting. Negotiations initially took place on an annual basis but due to the high levels of inflation during the past 2 years, negotiations now take place on a quarterly basis, i.e. every 3 months. Workers committees at the different workplaces formulate their demands, which are then consolidated and presented by the union to the employment council.

An interesting aspect of the Zimbabwean arrangement is the legal stipulation that individual companies can not dismiss a workers without the approval of the national employment council. Thus the council has a committee that deals with grievances and complaints.

Minimum wages are agreed upon by the Council and then enforced by an independent “employment agency” that is employed by the union to ensure implementation at company level. It is the agency’s task to supervise the implementation of the minimum wage across the country. In addition, university graduates are employed to assist with this task.

Centralised bargaining in Zimbabwe has helped the union to establish better minimum wages and better benefits such as transport allowances, rental allowances and “out-of-town” allowances. The union receives 2% of workers’ basic wages as its membership fees from the employers who have to make the deductions free of charge.

Like in South Africa, Zimbabwean trade unions experienced several advantages of centralised bargaining such as having more time for non-bargaining activities and achieving more uniform standards of employment across the industry. On the other hand, the need to establish industry-wide standards forced workers at wealthier companies to compromise on their demands, which they might have realised in company-based negotiations.

Perception among stakeholders

Government view

Namibia's Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare firmly supports the idea of centralised bargaining. In the words of the Labour Commissioner:

“Government welcomes centralised bargaining and encourages industries to regulate themselves. This will result in a holistic approach towards regulating the industry. We support the construction industry's approach although one might always find some violators. Centralised bargaining helps to create stability in the industry and we did not have serious disputes in construction. The centralised agreement seems to be working”.

Government is also well aware of the past problems with enforcing minimum wages and conditions of employment:

“There are several weaknesses that prevent an efficient enforcement of minimum conditions, for example in the construction industry. There is an insufficient number of labour inspectors as we have been operating with 27 or less labour inspectors country-wide.

Also, the current Labour Act of 1992 forces labour inspectors to conduct rule 6 conferences with a view of resolving labour disputes. This binds them to the office instead of carrying out workplace inspections. I am not sure what the industry itself (CIF) has done to sensitise companies who are not their members about the rules.

This will change when the new Labour Bill comes into effect. Labour inspectors will no longer have to deal with disputes and be able to spend their time on proper inspections and investigations. Labour inspectors will no longer be involved in rule 6 conferences but merely with some informal conciliation. Furthermore, the Ministry of Labour will recruit more labour inspectors so that we can reach more workplaces.

With the assistance of the ILO we will also develop inspection forms to look at issues like occupational health and safety. The inspector will also be able to attend to minor labour issues and to give advice. These forms could also be used by companies to carry out self-inspection. This should help to address some of the shortcomings we have experienced in the past”.

Regarding the centralised bargaining in the transport industry, the Labour Commissioner believes that such an arrangement could easily be implemented in the goods transport sector. However, he regards the passenger transport sector as tricky due to the lack of a unified body

representing all operators and due to the many disagreements between operators.

Although Namibia discussed the idea of establishing industrial bargaining councils, government regards the “MANWU-CIF model” as the preferred approach to sectoral bargaining. The parties to the agreement are the architects and outside interference is minimal. Government believes that the stakeholders within a sector are best suited to find their own solutions. However, in cases where such an approach is not working, government will consider the establishment of wage commissions, for example for domestic workers and petrol station attendants.

Companies’ views

Most companies in the road transport sector described their relationship with NATAU as good. Some pointed out that negotiations were sometimes difficult due to the individual personalities who represented the union. At times, negotiations took some time to be concluded but overall the companies seemed satisfied with the current arrangement and with NATAU as their counterpart. In the words of one managing director:

“I have been negotiating with NATAU for the past 7-8 years now. Negotiations went well and smooth; they are professional people”.

Another manager added:

“We have been negotiating with NATAU since 1999. We never had any disputes or industrial strikes. We had a few cases that had to go to conciliation and mediation but up to now we had a very good relationship”.

On the other hand, a few companies stated that their experiences were mixed: *“Sometimes I think they (the unionists) are just being stubborn”.*

The companies’ views regarding centralised bargaining and industry-wide minimum wages differ significantly. Some are willing to embrace and implement the idea as shown in the following quotes:

“I have no problem with a minimum wage. That will put all companies on par in the industry. The companies that pay a poor basic wage won’t be able to undercut our transport prices because everybody will at least have to pay the same wages.”

“We would not be against a minimum wage. We are paying our employees above the market wages currently and would therefore not feel any impact. It will be useful in the sense that we would know that our competitors are also paying the same wages”.

Other companies, however, are more sceptical:

“My biggest concern with centralised bargaining is that it is not so easy to accommodate everyone and there will be certain aspects that will not be covered or will be neglected”.

The minimum wage is a difficult thing. In a country like Namibia there are very small businesses and the owner of one vehicle also does transport business and has to compete with a big company. The small business cannot necessarily pay the same salaries. In a certain way it can be a good thing but on the other hand our market is too diverse to have a minimum wage... I think it will be difficult to get a minimum wage that suits everybody”.

“The minimum wages will give some companies a nice departure point not to pay higher wages to the employees and that can also be to the disadvantage of the employees... we have built an in-house system where I can remunerate my personnel according to our norms and specific demands”.

These quotations show that several transport operators are sceptical about centralised bargaining for various reasons. Some are content with the current arrangement of negotiating with NATAU at company level, which allows them to take the specific circumstances of their company into account. The larger companies seem quite content offering better salaries and conditions of employment than their competitors. Some of the smaller companies on the other hand fear that that they will not be able to pay an industry-wide minimum wage and thus are reluctant to agree to centralised bargaining.

However, several transport companies are supporting the principle of centralised bargaining and see the benefits of a uniform minimum wage.

Even Namport agrees with the idea:

“Namport fully supports the idea of a minimum wage for the industry. It will have apposite effect because most of the companies are also linked to the operations of Namport. Sometimes if there is a problem at those companies, it negatively affects Namport. If the employees at those companies are well looked after in terms of a minimum wage... it will have a positive impact for Namport and for Namibia”.

Conclusion and recommendations: Assessment of possibilities

Centralised bargaining in the road transport sector would certainly hold benefits for NATAU. The union's expectations of saving time and resources, of unifying conditions of employment in the industry and of reaching companies that NATAU currently does not have recognition agreements with, are likely to be realised.

However, there are also certain shortcomings and challenges that the union is likely to face. Centralised bargaining carries the risk of excluding the membership during the negotiation process. The only safeguard is to ensure functioning and active shop steward structures, which are in daily contact with members, formulate the initial mandate for negotiations, receive constant feed-back and approve agreements before they are signed. SATAWU attempts to implement this approach in South Africa.

Secondly, centralised bargaining might disadvantage workers at companies that are performing well in the industry. Industry-wide minimum wages have to cater for all companies and thus tend to be set at a level that is affordable for the smaller operators. Although the economically stronger companies are free to set higher wages and better working conditions, there might be a trend towards adjustment towards the minimum wage. This was experienced in South Africa and Zimbabwe and NATAU has to be aware of that danger.

The Namibian government, particularly the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, will support NATAU's proposal for a centralised bargaining arrangement in the road transport sector, particularly regarding companies involved in the transport goods. The sub-sector involved in passenger transportation might be more difficult to organise but could be considered as a future project – after establishing centralised bargaining in the goods transport sector.

An immediate challenge for NATAU is to convince the various transport companies of the benefits of centralised bargaining. Many are pleased with the current individual bargaining arrangement and thus see few benefits in centralise bargaining. NATAU needs to clarify (particularly with the larger companies) that they are encouraged to continue paying above the minimum wage. NATAU also needs to point out that a more unified wage and benefit structure across the industry will increase predictability and stability. Once the individual companies and NAMROAD are convinced of the benefits of centralised bargaining, NATAU will be able to set up centralised bargaining structures similar to those in the construction industry.

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