

Kenya FKE to launch study on effects of strikes

Wide spread industrial action and strikes is a recurrent phenomenon in Kenya. This is in particular the case in the public sector. Recent strikes, such as the university teachers strikes and especially the doctors and nurses strikes in the public sector, caused major upheaval in Kenya. Also because of their extreme long duration of over 3 months.

The Federation of Kenyan Employers (FKE) seeks to take the lead in the debate on a sounder industrial relations climate. With DECP support, it is implementing a study on the cost of strikes and its impact on growth, jobs, productivity and investment climate, in order to obtain full and clear data on the detrimental effects on strikes. The study will launch a number of ideas to improve the industrial relations system of Kenya, its functioning, and its capacity to prevent conflicts via a better functioning labour inspection and alternative dispute systems. Mediation and conciliation will be part of it.

In the first instance, the proposals will be used to mobilise in a constructive way the diverse stakeholders, ranging from trade unions to government officials and politicians to reflect in an open way to develop new balanced ways to improve the social climate. This will not be evident, because the issues are very sensitive. But FKE is convinced that an open forum approach may be a good start for fundamental reflection and new solutions to an important societal problem. DECP is happy to support this important initiative, which should have a first outcome by the end of the year at the latest.