

Development Cooperation project in cooperation with FECCOO, EI's regional office in Latin America and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI)

This project was developed by FECCOO and EI's regional office in Latin America five years ago and is mainly subsidised by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI).

The project is divided into two phases of three years each. It consists of a series of seminars and workshops that are carried out in the three regions Latin America has been divided into; namely the Cono Sur, the Andes and Central America. The seminars and workshops aim at analysing relevant issues concerning trade unions such as the recent regional free trade agreements and their impact on the production and service sector with special emphasis on education.

Teacher trade unions affiliated to EI and other fraternal trade unions participate in these seminars primarily to get to know how the other organisations work and develop their activities. Secondly these seminars provide the opportunity to exchange experiences and to disarm negative stereotypes that are rooted in incomprehension or false impressions that the organisations have of each other.

The issues discussed in the seminars are diverse. They are agreed upon by consensus between EI, FECCOO and the participants in order to meet the needs of the participating organisations, and meet the fundamental objective to provoke adequate political responses to the reality of each region.

These possible responses shall be achieved through a process of various phases: informing, analysing and discussing the proposals. Once the

organisations reached an agreement on the proposals that are to be elaborated, the foundation is laid for their implementation/realisation. This approach differs from previous projects. It is also the reason why realistic results were achieved throughout the years and why it was possible to give joint political answers towards, for example, the Free Trade Agreements.

In these seminars other issues are discussed as well: independence of trade unions, the establishment of proper structures for each organisation, participation of women and minorities as well as health conditions in the workplace or human and trade union rights.

As an outcome of the seminars conducted in 2005, two publications have been produced with the following content:

- The impact of Free Trade Agreements on education and employment
- Trade Agreements and Development

At the moment the project activities for 2006 are being organized. The good results of the previous projects stimulated FECCOO to maintain and intensify its policy based on regional cooperation rather than on bilateral cooperation. Thanks to the accumulated experience FECCOO, in cooperation with EI's regional office in Latin America and the Ministry for Education in Spain, is trying to develop a new method of development cooperation.



Agenda

April

- 2 - 3 EI/AFT - Preparation Meeting for the Lebanon Unions Workshop - Beirut, Lebanon
- 2 - 4 EI Latin American Regional Office - EI Latin American Regional Committee meeting - Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 4 - 5 ICFTU - Global Union Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS - Geneva, Switzerland
- 5 - 6 ICFTU - Trade Union meetings on European Union-Latin America & Caribbean (EU-LAC) - Vienna, Austria
- 20 - 21 EI - Pan-European Equal Opportunities Committee meeting - Brussels
- 24 - 30 GLOBAL ACTION WEEK
- 25 - 26 Meeting with Nordic/Dutch Unions, FES and EI - Stockholm, Sweden

May

- 8 - 10 Education International - Training of EFA/HIV project coordinators in Eastern Africa (ETA Ethiopia, TTU Tanzania, KNUT Kenya, UNATU Uganda, TUM Malawi, ZIMTA Zimbabwe) - Nairobi, Kenya
- 11 - 13 Education International - Training of EFA/HIV project coordinators in Southern Africa (ZNUT Zambia, BTU Botswana, SATU South Africa, LAT Lesotho, SNAT Swaziland, NANTU Namibia) - Johannesburg, South Africa
- 29 - 31 AFT Workshop - Lebanon
- 31 ILO - 95th Session of the International Conference on Work - Geneva, Switzerland



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It is very important for the development cooperation team to be in permanent contact with members of Education International. If you wish to share with us news, projects and programmes or give us your opinion, please feel free to contact us.

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EI Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme: first fully refurbished school completed in Indonesia

As part of EI's Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme in partnership with NOVIB (Oxfam Netherlands) to restore education back in the areas affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami in Dec 2004, the first school has been reconstructed and refurbished.

The "National Elementary School 70" of the Kampong Jawa village, located in the Banda Aceh district of Aceh province on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia, was completed on 10 Apr 2006. It not only contains all the furnitures necessary, but also equipment such as computers. However, the gradual completion of schools is only the first step towards bringing education back to the area. Pupils who survived the disaster are already relocated to other schools, and reconstruction of the surrounding houses has been very slow. The cost of transport between the current temporary dwellings and the new schools, 4000 rupiahs (0.36 euros or 0.45 US dollars), is unaffordable for the displaced families.

The EI-NOVIB Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme began in Jan 2005 to help local teacher organisations rebuild education for teachers and children affected by the disaster, in both Sri Lanka and Indonesia. In Indonesia, the main disaster area is located in the Aceh province. As part of the programme, the operation entitled "Rebuilding Aceh through Education For All" will rebuild 28 elementary schools that had



been completely destroyed. It will also:

- supply the necessary furniture and other requirement for the reconstructed schools
- identify, select and provide teacher training, especially in the new curricula
- implement short-term courses to overcome shortage of teachers in specific subjects
- provide scholarships to about 4000 pupils over a period of 2 years
- provide counseling and specialised training for returning teachers to help themselves and their pupils

The EI Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme is being implemented in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Building Workers International (BWI) and is part of EI's Solidarity Programmes. EI has a Solidarity Fund to which member organisations and the public contribute. The fund is then deployed to aid teachers when their lives are under threat. So far, half of the funds collected for the tsunami contributed to the immediate humanitarian assistance after the disaster. The rest of the funds is being deployed to carry out projects under the Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme. On behalf of its member organisations in the countries affected by the tsunami, EI thanks all donors who have so generously contributed to the Solidarity Fund.

For more information, please contact our headoffice.

Africa Ethnic conflicts and the role of teacher unions in Sierra Leone

The Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU) in conjunction with EI Africa organised a workshop on ethnic conflicts at its premises from 20 - 22 December 2005. Thirty branch leaders, comprising 17 men and 13 women drawn from all the regions, took part in the workshop, moderated by Mr. Emmanuel Fatoma, EI Regional Coordinator. The objectives were to analyse and discuss the effect of ethnic conflicts on education, and the role of teacher organisations in fostering peace and tolerance.

Sierra Leone, a country emerging from 11 years of conflict, is an appropriate choice for this workshop, even if the war in this country was not fought solely for ethnic reasons.

For the participants the absence of peace is due to the following:

- Bad governance,
- Illiteracy and ignorance,
- Poverty
- Corruption and marginalisation
- Greed for power and wealth
- Man's desire to dominate his fellow being.

- "Divide - and - rule" policy based upon religion, clan/tribe or affinities;
- Lack of transparency and accountability.

Participants concluded that unions have a key role to play in promoting a culture of peace. They should promote the principles of peace as an integral part of education and the school curriculum. Teachers should also act as ambassadors of peace, disseminating messages of tolerance in their daily interaction with pupils/students and the society at large. Fully conscious of the negative impact of the war on education and society in general, SLTU pledged to try to include peace education in its work programme. Peace should not be seen necessarily as the absence of war but rather as a state of mind. Teachers should live with peace and also acquire training in the art of mediation and reconciliation.

SLTU will be in the vanguard of efforts to promote human rights, and must champion the cause of human equality and dignity. The workshop resource persons came mostly from the Department of Peace and Conflict studies, University of Fourah Bay (Sierra Leone).

Education International together with UEN Norway and Lararförbundet Sweden are currently exploring the possibility of supporting affiliates in the "STAN countries", a sub-region in Central Asia that has not been focused on so far in our development co-operation work. In Persian, "stan" means "home of". It is a suffix that appears in the names of many countries in central Asia and the Indian sub-continent where Persian and related languages have been used historically.

This sub-region EI would like to create comprises Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Though Afghanistan and Pakistan would belong by definition to this group as well, they are considered to be part of South East Asia.

The situation of teachers and teacher unions

The region is facing various problems with regard to the situation of workers in general and of teachers in particular.

One of the main problems is the lack of awareness of basic trade unionism. Furthermore, the great majority of workers in the sub-region are not familiar with the labour and social legislations of their respective country. The teachers lack visibility and influence in their communities. At the same time the possibility of establishing networks and alliances with other stakeholders in the education sector (NGOs, mass media) hardly exist. Teachers are confronted with low salaries and benefits, oversized classrooms and a lack of professional development;

It is very common that mandatory community work has to be taken on by teachers on top of their teaching jobs, such as the picking of cotton, in order to earn a decent income. Furthermore, in some countries the government decided to withdraw subsidies on housing and basic utilities for teachers - a situation that places an additional burden on their working conditions.

Within teacher unions, collective and democratic decision-making processes do not exist. Added to this, the communication system and structures of the unions are very weak. The slow shift from an authoritarian society to a democratic one and from a centrally-planned

economy to a free market economy is also reflected in the mentality of trade union leaders and their union members. Trade union leaders do not have the skills and capacities in campaigning, lobbying and negotiating. Therefore, their participation and representation in decision-making bodies is very poor.

The automatic membership to teachers' unions has not been curtailed by the government, so organizing and recruitment is not a problem. However, the economic and professional status of the teachers was continuously neglected. In one country for example, the monthly salary is just USD 6.

A massive teacher union demonstration demanding salary increase had been successful in Kazakhstan after the government relented to the pressure.

An area of concern is the curtailment of the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly in Uzbekistan and, to a lesser degree, in Kyrgyzstan.

What kind of support do unions in this sub-region need?

Given the fact that awareness on trade unionism in the region is very low, basic trade union education and leadership trainings are necessary. Capacity-building on trade union skills would have to focus on negotiations and collective bargaining, campaigning, lobbying and advocacy, facilitation and training skills, communication, IT, networking and alliance-building.

EI's Asia-Pacific Regional Office plans to employ a full-time staff in the sub-region who is well-versed in English and local languages and has sufficient computer skills in order to co-ordinate the development co-operation work in this sub-region.

UEN's seminars on financial management for cooperating partners

Jaw Frimpong -UEN

Background

UEN currently operates 28 projects in collaboration with various other EI member organisations in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. Twenty-two of these are substantially funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, NORAD. The remaining five are fully funded by the UEN. As a rule, all projects must satisfy clear financial management and reporting requirements.

Even though all our partners and their auditors have received copies of NORAD's "reporting guidelines", we continue to experience inadequate reporting, absence of strategies in yearly plans and delays in the submission of financial statements, budgets and activity plans at the end and commencement of every period. Therefore, it was decided in 2003 that a new approach was needed to help us abate the problems and reinvigorate the relationships with our cooperating partners. The idea was to combine general management, financial management and accounting issues relating to trade unions and development cooperation in regional seminars.

Aim of the seminars

- To assist partner organisations to become more professional.
- To promote the integration of cooperation activities into the operational framework of partner organisations.
- To help our partners acquire, implement and use management information systems to enhance the processing of information for faster decision-making.
- To build a better and mutually-satisfactory partnership by ensuring a common understanding of financial reporting requirements based on NORAD's "project financial management guidelines" and UEN's "financial policies, practices and procedures".
- To encourage new approaches to financial management in partner organisations and foster organisational growth through effective information gathering and better services to internal stakeholders.
- To emphasise the managerial and administrative roles of the executive leadership in organisations with a small number of staff, and discuss the ethical aspects of financial management with particular emphasis on internal controls to safeguard the assets of the organisations and promote operational efficiency.

Focus areas of the seminars

1. The nature and role of unions
The first part of the seminars focuses on: what trade unionism

is about; reasons for belonging to a trade union; the differences between a Trade Union and a Movement; how the collective power harnessed could be used to produce desirable outcomes; obligations, expectations, and rewards for management and membership alike; financial management and ethics in unions.

2. The role of Management

The essence and duties of management; strategic long-term planning, performance measurement, control procedures - to ensure that the organisation achieves its objectives; budgeting as an integral part of planning; emphasis on financial management and how a management information system (of which an accounting system is part) can assist the leadership in performing their duties.

3. Importance of auditing to internal and external financial reporting in the organisation

The auditor is to be seen as a partner, not an adversary. His/her role is to ensure objectivity, credibility and transparency through recommendations to improve internal accounting controls and adherence to relevant accounting concepts and practices and reporting standards. The auditor's task is to ensure that financial statements submitted by the leadership to the organisation's members are 'true and fair'.

4. Overview of financial management

The General Secretary, the Finance Secretary/Treasurer and the Accountant as a financial management team involved in investment and financing decisions on behalf of the organisation should be able to obtain information from the accounting system, in order to make assumptions on the present and future external environment (strategizing, forecasting).

5. Financial management practices at UEN and in partner organisations

We look at financial management practices in our respective organisations and how they relate to development cooperation. This is done with a view to implementing new practices, correcting shortcomings, and reinforcing good administrative procedures.

Seminar participants

The main participants of the seminars are the General Secretaries, Finance Secretaries, Accountants (where applicable, since not all organisations have internal accountants) and Project Coordinators. The General Secretaries are invited as we seek to stress the important role they play as managers of their respective organisations. The auditors are asked to attend in order to provide firsthand information on the reasons for and the nature of the cooperation, as well as what to look for during the auditing process.

List of organisations that have attended the seminars	SUTEP, Peru ANDES 21 de Junio, El Salvador COLPROSUMAH, Honduras
Africa (6 - 8 December, 2004)	Follow-up seminars
FECAP, Cape Verde	SINPROF, Angola
EI Africa	ZNUT, Zambia
NANTU, Namibia	
SATO, SADTU, Southern Africa	Future seminars
SINPROF, Angola	Cote d'Ivoire
ZNUT, Zambia	Guinea Bissau
Asia (4- 6 July, 2005)	Women's Network in West Africa
Sri Lanka (joint project)	
NNTA, NTA, Nepal	If you would like to obtain further information on these seminars please contact Yaw Frimpong at yaw.frimpong@utdanningsforbundet.no
PGRI, Indonesia	
Latin America (15-17 February, 2006)	
OTEP, Paraguay	
STEG, Guatemala	
CGTEN-ANDEN, Nicaragua	

Expectations

UEN's expectations from the seminars are:

- That our partner organisations improve upon their financial management practices and increase their sources of income by accepting our offer to fund the acquisition of software for accounting information systems and membership databases, relevant hardware, and training for staff that will operate the systems. Expectations and the kind of assistance given differ from organisation to organisation.
- That the seminars will lead to major improvements in project reporting. The primary beneficiaries of the seminars are the organisations, and not the UEN.

Feedback

Feedback from organisations that have attended the seminars has been on the whole very positive. This is the first time that the UEN is organising such seminars. Our partners have now been presented with standard reporting formats. Deadlines for submitting reports and the problems that we encounter when they are delayed are now better understood. Communication within the respective organisations will improve as a result of the seminar since the UEN will assist partners that satisfy certain conditions in establishing local area networks and thus link up the various levels of their organisations. UEN has not and will not seek to impose these systems on any of our partners. We believe that the project would only succeed if the organisations themselves express a need to initiate it. We only require that the leadership is enthusiastic and actively involved in the implementation of the project; that there is some form of local 'ownership' of the project.