

-Canada – CTF-

In May, the EI Development Cooperation Unit visited CTF/FCE in Canada to update the approach to various cooperation projects for development. CTF/FCE, together with other EI cooperating member organisations, implements cooperation programmes in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. The John Thompson scholarship programme will usher in a new training stage for trade union leaders in Asia and is in the midst of the evaluation process in Africa. More information on its implementation in the Caribbean can be found under the Caribbean section of this bulletin.

-Georgia-

A qualification seminar workshop was held for national and regional leaders on May 17, 18 and 19 in Tbilisi, Georgia. The EI Development Cooperation Coordinator, Nicolas Richards, coordinated the activities of this seminar workshop, which were geared to promoting the activities of ETWUG for the schools and school districts of Georgia. This activity is being carried out thanks to cooperation by educators from the British/Irish cooperation group (ASTI and INTO in Ireland and EIS in Scotland).

-Argentina-

Läraryrbundet of Sweden and the EI Development Cooperation Unit held meetings in Buenos Aires with CTERA officials. The purpose of these meetings was to define the continuation of cooperation plans for trade union leaders that include the teaching confederation.

-Iraq and Kurdistan-

With a view to deepening relations with the educators' trade unions of Iraq (ITU) and Kurdistan (KTU), the American Federation of Teachers and EI held a planning meeting in Amman, Jordan in June. These trade unions today represent some 352 000 teachers throughout the country, and are making progress on the organisation and representation of workers in education in this afflicted country. The purpose of these meetings is to analyse the needs for cooperation and to get to know the objectives of both trade unions. The trade union in Kurdistan (northern Iraq) is an organisation that has been operating autonomously for some twelve years. The Iraqi trade union (central and southern Iraq) was in a reorganisation phase, having held its first congress in May 2003.



-Ukraine-

VPONU, the educators' trade union of the federation of free trade unions in the Ukraine, a new Education International member, invited the EI Development Cooperation Unit to hold

planning meetings in the cities of Kirovograd and Kiev in June. As a result, and from meetings held with leaders of educators' trade unions in various Ukrainian cities, it was decided to pursue the work in greater detail in October 2004 during qualification seminars – workshops for sixty education trade-union leaders throughout the country.

-John Thompson Program (Caribbean)-

The John Thompson Program was held in Canada where six participants from the Caribbean were engaged in advance training for two weeks, the last week of April and the first week in May 2004.

These trade union leaders will be part of the trainers' bank which is being created in the Caribbean. They are expected to conduct training in their national unions and in the region in their areas of expertise. This group is the third set of trade union leaders who have received advance training in the six areas identified, including professional development.

-Caribbean Women's Network Programme-

During the period under review, the women's committees in many of the teachers' unions in the Caribbean submitted project proposals for the training of women and men in gender related topics.

The women's committees are engaged in national training as a follow up to higher level training given to women leaders in the Caribbean. During the month of April 2004, three additional women in the Caribbean were elected as President in their unions: Ms. Vernest Mark (Antigua & Barbuda), Ms. Avril Crawford (Guyana) and Ms. Karen Best (Barbados). They have joined Ms. Celia Nicholas (Dominica) and Ms. Celestine John (Anguilla).

-HIV/AIDS Programme in the Caribbean-

After the Seminar in Guyana in January 2004 many teacher unions in the Caribbean have started activities in HIV/AIDS education.

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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Strategies, communication and development of the cooperation in Education International

Strengthening the trade union action to defend the right to education and the rights of educators

-Strategies-

This mandate contains, in particular, the policy to pursue the development cooperation of Education International (EI). The projects, programmes and actions of cooperation are being attuned to the national and regional realities, promoting above all the strengthening of educators' unions. This action has long been focused on the members of the trade unions: on their rights and strategies to access and strengthen those rights and to expend them to more and more educators. Significant advances have thus been achieved in various countries, whilst at the same time situations have emerged in which educational matters fell outside the remit of trade union work. In this way, urgent matters were not included as priority matters: very often, the educational policies were not included in the discussion, planning or qualification by trade unions because it was seen as a task for which no sufficient resources were available. Involuntarily, in most cases, this task was left in the hands of the governments.

Development cooperation should comprise, today more than ever before, as an integrated vision: if the citizens of one country cannot access quality public education, the teachers of those same countries cannot have the rights that help them as workers. Quality public education requires qualified educators, with the right to qualification and constant updating of knowledge, so that they can concentrate on their profession whilst been assured that at least their basic needs are covered. This vision of education drives EI.

The essential, inherent premise of improving the quality of education is the substantial improvement of the quality of teaching and the capacity of trade unions to contribute to improving the quality of education in a given country. We

could continue qualifying educators forever, but it would be difficult to make progress if there is no linkage between them and an inclusive and democratic educational project. This is the criteria that is being applied in various bilateral and multilateral projects led by the cooperative community of EI. Such projects can be found in Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America. Certain projects that were focused solely on improving the management of the trade unions (in terms of services to members) are now incorporating this embracing, more ample vision. The aim is to generate educational policies geared to improving the quality of education, full access to, and regular attendance by all children and better working and wage conditions for educators.

The strategic plan of the Education for All Programme is based on these criteria. Beyond the eleven countries participating in the specific programme carried out by EI (with the support of the Dutch trade union confederation FNV), all the member trade unions of EI should avail themselves of this Action Framework to define their medium and long-term strategic plans. In this way, the labour and wage claims are being included in a much broader plan: that of educational quality and bringing knowledge to everyone.

-Communication-

For this strategy to be effective in the EI cooperative community, communication in particular must improve substantially. Up to now, communication has been understood in terms of what, where, and with whom we implement cooperation projects and programmes. However, it is far from being common practice among those of us who are promoting cooperation in EI. In order for the service that we provide to the members of our own trade unions and for the coordination of development cooperation to function more efficiently, we must conduct periodic analyses on the implementation of our projects.

The tendency in our activity is to do, evaluate, and go back and do again. We are running between projects, at times through the same project and without any strategic framework to make it perceptible in the time and social space in which it is being (...)

Evaluation of cooperation in Latin America

In the course of this year, an evaluation process will be undertaken in Latin America for the purpose of systematically analysing the impact of the cooperation aid granted by Utdanningsforbundet (Norway) to education unions affiliated to Education International in Paraguay, Peru, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The aim is to evaluate the management of cooperation by all the various actors involved in the process. Thus, the evaluation will cover the performance of recipient organisations, as well as the management of cooperation efforts by Education International in its capacity as the organisation promoting cooperation and by Utdanningsforbundet as the provider of cooperation aid.

It has been agreed with the participating organisations to assess whether the cooperation resources received have had, overall, a positive impact in terms of strengthening the structure of the organisations. The basic premise is the following: If organisations have received international cooperation aid to build their capacities and self-reliance, it is to be expected that, after a certain period of time, these organisations have indeed become stronger.

While the evaluation seeks to draw up a qualitative balance sheet of the impact of cooperation on education organisations in the above-mentioned countries, it is also hoped that it will provide an opportunity to launch a process of reflection, analysis and decision-making with a view to redefining the approach and objectives of international cooperation, at least for the above-mentioned organisations.



One key question that should be addressed as part of the proposed analytic strategy used for the evaluation is the following: what has been the actual political and organisational impact of the international cooperation aid received by organisations, and has this aid helped them to strengthen their structures?

Another important question for evaluation purposes concerns the underlying political and organisational approach adopted by organisations as the basis for defining how cooperation aid is to be used. We also plan to address this question in relation to the international organisations involved in the above-mentioned process.

A third issue that needs to be tackled is the duplication of projects. It is important to establish, together with recipient organisations, whether the duplication of certain projects that are approved – be it by the organisations providing international cooperation aid or at the request of recipient organisations – is a strategy that has led to beneficial results, particularly in terms of strengthening the organisations concerned.

We wish to address this problem – examining the cases where it has occurred – in order to assess whether this situation has led some organisations to focus their efforts on complying with formal requirements for projects, neglecting the positive political and organisational impact that cooperation aid should have.

Are we effectively strengthening the political-organisational strategies of unions, or are we merely supporting initiatives that are often proposed only to maintain international links with cooperating organisations, or to promote cooperation projects which in some cases have become “a routine affair” and are therefore ineffectual? These are some of the key concerns that will be addressed by the proposed evaluation.

Development cooperation in Africa

Issues and challenges

Being affiliated to Education International is to be part of a huge family - the educational community - with offshoots in all five continents, from micro-unions like Djibouti's 121-member SYNESED to mega-unions like America's NEA with over two million members.

All these differently sized and culturally diverse organisations are united in a common cause: standing up for human and trade union rights, improved living and working conditions for teachers and education workers, and promoting quality public education for all.

There is no question that the African continent has benefitted from this solidarity in a big way. Through the years, national teaching unions in Africa have forged links of cooperation, solidarity and partnership with their Northern counterparts. This multi-faceted cooperation ranges from institution building (headquarters construction, facilities, operating costs) via technology transfer to capacity building.

Development cooperation has helped some teaching unions in Africa become strong, well-structured professional organisations with credibility and a national and international constituency. Unfortunately, they are outnumbered by other fairly rough and ready unions run by their executives on a voluntary “muddling through” basis.

Irregularly paid salaries, the scrapping of the check-off system and the denial of the right to bargain collectively have led to a decline in dues income, which has crippled union activity, where the outputs are directly related to the inputs.

Also, economic recession, armed conflicts, and the undemocratic regimes still clinging to power in some countries are deepening the poverty and hardship that trade unions are meant to fight. For these unions, the only way out is through development cooperation, and they become dependent on it. So, instead of properly planned cooperation focused on people's real needs, we get patronage cooperation, with union leaderships ready to rubber-stamp any cash-generating scheme that will keep their organisation's head above water.

One opportunistic - often randomly selected - project or programme follows another, having no measurable impact on the target group. The hoped for outcomes do not appear; usually members and partners lose interest. This situation breeds and perpetuates a steadily widening gap between “credible” and “non viable” or “crisis ridden” organisations.

For development cooperation to help strengthen national teaching unions, bring democracy both within and without, reduce if not stamp out poverty and in short deliver social progress, the actors must pull out all the stops for a fairer and more productive partnership.

Development cooperation needs to go beyond a bilateral framework, break down the barriers of the colonial legacy, cross language divides and transcend politics. Cooperation activities must fit together within a logical framework worked out through consensus by the cooperating organisations of the North and South, and coordinated by EI. Any cooperation project in Africa must be driven by a long term vision, and the beneficiaries must ensure that it is sustainable and independently self-sustaining.



Strategies, communication and development of the cooperation in Education International

(...) developed. Pursuant to one of the main conclusions of our annual meeting in 2003, one of the actions we have to improve within our ranks is communication. We must keep ourselves informed, but at the same time we should try to process and analyse the information and fix work objectives. In like manner, it would be good for our programmes to share the evaluations we conduct periodically, not so much for the results, as for the trends that emerge from them.

It has been said countless times that at such an age when communication is instant, information is power. The EI Development Cooperation Unit thinks that is true only if this information is used to train trade union officials wanting to improve the working and wage conditions of their members, and to define and propose policies that guarantee the right of each inhabitant of our countries to quality public education.

Asia-Pacific

Gender Issues and the SAARC Women's Network Activities

One of the major concerns of the South Asian sub-region is gender equity. Not only in society in general but also in the teachers' organisations, women are less represented and hold fewer principal offices. Women are deprived of many basic rights, including the right to education. Girls' education is a priority for teachers' organisations.

In Pakistan, privileges for women at work are not on a par with that of men. Fewer women are employed and women are forced to work longer hours. In Sri Lanka, almost 10 000 girls face sexual abuse every year but only some 100 cases are reported due to the lack of awareness. In Nepal, only recently did women have rights to their parental properties and to abortion. A recent law allows women these rights, but awareness and implementation of these provisions are facing difficulties.

In India, every 42 minutes a woman at work is sexually harassed but about 75% of departments do not have complaint committees. The complaints are dealt in an insensitive and unprofessional manner. In Bangladesh, every year almost 20 000 children and women are smuggled despite continued vigilance against the trafficking.

Development cooperation activities on gender, especially through the SAARC Women's Network Activities, aim to address these issues and promote gender parity in and outside of the organisations. The increased ability of the organisations in addressing these concerns contributes to the increased capabilities in addressing teachers' problems, strengthening free trade union movement and promoting democracy.

A number of activities in cooperation with the Canadian Teachers' Federation were held in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. In India, AIFTO held seminars in November 2003 and February 2004 on legal rights and published manuals on “women's health” and “legal awareness”. A camp for women leaders was organised from 1-3 April 2004 to enhance skills in facing the challenges in and out of the workplace. AIACHE organised a public meeting in November 2003 marking 16 days of activism against gender-based violence and in collaboration with the Delhi police conducted self-defense training from 20th January to 5th February 2004. AIPTF conducted a series of surveys on maternity protection

benefits in different states of India and launched campaigns to popularise the protection. The AIPTF women's network held a number of inter-state activities on “legal rights” and “enhancing skills”. A series of year long activities are planned to mark 2004 as the “Quality Education for All” year.

A national level awareness workshop on ILO Convention 183 was held in Nepal this February to initiate campaigns to increase maternity leave to 14 weeks from 60 days. A union skills development workshop was held on 4th February 2004 to train women leaders in negotiation and collective bargaining and to promote women in leadership positions.

In Sri Lanka, the activities focused on promoting cooperation among the EI affiliates especially on the gender issues. Constitutional amendments were made to increase the number of women in leadership positions and to establish women's committees within the organisations.