TUDCN Working Group on TU Partnerships

Brussels, 23 September 2015

**Session 1: Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA)**

Following a round of presentations and the adoption of the agenda, **Diego López (ITUC/TUDCN)** introduced the work on OCA and the timeline that has been followed so far. He then summarised the outputs of the [OCA seminar](http://www.ituc-csi.org/documents-from-the-meeting-15909) that took place in March and put an emphasis on the [survey](https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-WSBBRNL2/) that has been made to gather experiences from trade unions on OCA. The need to complete this survey is highlighted, as there have been few responses from organisations.

Following this, a discussion on how to proceed with the work on OCA took place in which the following issues were raised:

* There is a need to continue work towards a shared approach and to elaborate a trade union tool on OCA.
* In this process we have to involve the trade union leadership.
* More relevance has to be given to the process for greater ownership and the regions have to be involved.
* Things have to be kept simple and practical, approaches to OCA have to be flexible and adaptive.
* There is a need to have more spaces in the trade union partnerships pillar of the network for sharing information on trade union development cooperation projects and experiences.

A new approach to the work on OCA was proposed. This would consist on thematic seminars to exchange experiences on a specific theme and to gather inputs on how work on the specific issue has contributed to the organizational capacity of partner unions. This idea was discussed, emphasising the need to continue working towards and OCA tool and how this tool could be shaped.

**Conclusions**

The work on OCA will continue along two lines:

1. **Work on a specific tool based on the key capacities that came out of the OCA seminar.**

The tool could have two layers:

* Three clusters to analyse through a simple tool (SWOT analysis?). The clusters could be: how an organisation is advancing with respect to internal issues, to external issues and how it relates to other stakeholders.
* Use the [key capacities](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/docx/oca_seminar_report.docx) that came out of the OCA seminar as a basis for this analysis expanding the subcomponents of these capacities.

1. **Organisation of thematic seminars to share experiences of organisations on a specific area of work and relate it to OCA.**

These seminars would contribute to:

* discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the work done on the specific issue and how and what organisational capacities this work has contributed to strengthen. Gather information on how thematic work impacts the capacity of organisations.
* Contribute to the OCA guidelines through discussions based on real experiences, keeping things close to the real work of organisations, keeping everyone on board and making it useful for everybody.
* Increase ownership and involve the political level.

The themes will have to be defined. Examples could include: informal economy, organising, social protection, global value chains…

**Session 2: The Trade Union Development Effectiveness Principles and the TUDEP tool**

The afternoon session started with presentations by **Dominik Roland from CGSLB** and **Veerle Lens from CSC** on their experiences on working with TUDEP. This was followed by a presentation by **Huib Huyse from the HIVA institute** on the experiences of using TUDEP in evaluations. A revision has been made of the TUDEP tools while using them with different organisations. The new documents will be uploaded on the [TUDEP webpage](http://www.ituc-csi.org/tu-development-effectiness-profile).

Some suggestions on what works well and what doesn’t when using TUDEP were made by **Huib Huyse**.

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| *What works* | *What doesn’t work:* |
| * + External facilitation.   + Presence of SSO representatives.   + A pre-session with a self-assessment programme.   + A detailed discussion of the Principles (with concrete examples).   + Translation of the questionnaire into the local language.   + Interaction with other evaluation exercises.   + Collecting additional feedback from other stakeholders.   + Working with sub-groups to discuss the 8 statements (from the questionnaire) for each Principle.   + Documenting the arguments in the questionnaire.   + Taking the time to discuss certain concerns, looking further into low scores (which are self-evaluations). | * + Limited time (leads to superficial replies).   + No external facilitation.   + Insecurity about the partnership.   + Dividing participants in groups if leadership is dominant.   + Having participants that are not familiar with the project.   + Lengthy questionnaire.   + Certain phrasings of the questionnaire. |

After this, **Diego López (ITUC/TUDCN)** presented the coming activities related to TUDEP, consisting of a partnerships seminar in Sao Paolo in October 2015 and a partnerships seminar in Africa during the first quarter of 2016.

Following these presentations a discussion took place on how to increase the use of TUDEP.

**Conclusions**

The following conclusions emerged to increase the use of TUDEP:

* Vulgarising the principles and tools: illustrated leaflet, review the language and booklet.
* Making a manual for facilitators for TUDEP workshops.
* Putting the Principles and the tool forward in other fora (e.g. GUF-TUSSO meetings)
* Studying the idea of reducing the number of questions in the questionnaire.
* Reflecting upon the use of TUDEP in South-South and triangular Cooperation.

**Session 3: Other priorities for partnerships work**

After the deliberations on TUDEP the floor was opened to inputs on other priorities that the trade union Partnerships working group should take on. The issue of exit strategies is raised given that a number of (southern) partners will be removed from the DAC-list (since their economic situation is improving). Linked to that there is the issue of financial sustainability/autonomy, i.e. what happens after a project or cooperation is concluded.

On a finishing note, it is emphasised to all participants that the Working Group has a mailing list which was set up as a particular means to facilitate exchanges on this kind of issues, in which everyone is encouraged to participate.

The conclusions of this working group meeting will be part of the conclusions of the [Open Coordination Meeting of the TUDCN](http://www.ituc-csi.org/open-coordination-meeting-24-25).