



ACTRAV-TUDCN Seminar

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development follow-up and implementation: role for Trade Unions

12-13 December 2015

Hotel Campanile Paris Est, Room Auteuil-Vincennes

Meeting Report

Overview

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the TUDCN together with ACTRAV convened network members to reflect on the agreement and prepare a strategy for short and medium term efforts towards the agenda's implementation. With the Agenda 2030 now adopted the seminar aimed to assert trade union priorities and efforts towards the implementation and monitoring of commitments therein.

The process to finalize a monitoring framework is still underway and an expected agreement on the indicators package to be reached at the next Statistics Commission in March/April 2016, meaning trade unions still have a capacity to shape and further influence the Agenda 2030. The importance of the indicator framework cannot be understated, as the saying goes, *what gets measured gets done*. Very concrete efforts, especially through national trade union centres with their government counterparts, should go a long way in ensuring an indicators package which upholds the ambition in the agreed set of goals and targets.

The Agenda 2030 also made a valuable recognition that governments alone will not be able to implement such an ambitious agenda and that all actors in society, from global to regional to national to local, will need to contribute. It is therefore critical to crystalize trade union efforts towards the implementation of the Agenda 2030. The seminar looked at outreach and awareness-raising to and through national trade union centres, to familiarize the agenda and highlight particular priorities for the world of work. The seminar initiated efforts on how to animate regional and national level work on the Agenda 2030, notably through concrete strategies for engagement.

Highlights and outcomes from the discussions on SDGs Indicators

The discussions on indicators were kicked off by presentations from the ITUC and the ILO. These presentations emphasized the current state of play in the UN Statistical Commission/Inter Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators process, which aims to develop a package of indicators which will support the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs. The presentations focused primarily on those indicators most relevant to the union movement and the world of work. Among the 230 or so indicators which will support the Agenda 2030 framework roughly 25 are relevant to the world of work and 15-20 will fall directly into the scope of the ILO's work. A number of indicators related to the goal on education are directly relevant to Education International.

At the time of the seminar a handful of relevant indicators were still under discussion in the intergovernmental process.



Per the feedback from the ILO the UN Statistical commission is sceptical about measuring ratification of ILO conventions only with several member states suggesting that it is more important to measure level of compliance. The ILO was in the process of trying to articulate alternative indicators, as was the international union movement.

One major concern was that very recently Member States asked **to eliminate collective bargaining rates from the indicator under target 8b**. While countries apparently do not have a problem with measuring CB coverage, they claim it is getting too burdensome to mix it with other indicators. The ILO will suggest adding it as part of 8.8 and believe it should survive in the negotiations.

Another problem area concerns the **monitoring of the fundamental freedoms under target 16.10**. The originally proposed indicator suggests to measure violence against different actors in society, including trade unions. The indicator is rather contentious across all member states and remains highly uncertain. The ITUC planned to support proposals from the IAEG member states and the task team on CSO Development Effectiveness.

In the weeks to follow the ITUC would provide direct input and work through ILO ACTRAV to influence the final stage of indicators development focusing in particular on priority targets: 8.b.1 CB; 8.8.1 occupational diseases; 8.8.2 ILO Conventions; 16.10 trade unions and fundamental freedoms. Further to efforts at the global level it was suggested that national organisations should advocate directly with their national governments' focal points where possible.

In the open discussion and the group work which followed meeting participants were asked to highlight priority areas across the goals and targets. Participants reaffirmed the need to insist upon the inclusion of social dialogue and collective bargaining in the indicators, especially since they are not explicitly included in the targets, and in order to ensure that the four dimensions of the decent work agenda are present.

Many diverse priorities and areas of future focus at national, regional and global level emerged following the group discussions, though all primarily focused on the world of work. A good deal of emphasis was placed on human and workers' rights, public services, gender equality, inequality, climate change, privatisation and industrial transformation. Contextualizing these priorities through national level processes and in national level policies will be key. Pushing for tripartite dialogue (Decent Work Country Programmes will be renewed and can support this), building alliances with other interest groups, and working as watchdogs will be crucial to the achievement of SDGs. To accomplish this however there is a need to integrate SDGs in the trade union agendas at all levels, but in particular at national level.

Highlights and outcomes from the discussions on Strategies for Trade Union Engagement with monitoring and implementation

The second half of the seminar focused on trade union engagement strategies for the monitoring and implementation of the Agenda 2030. The discussions were again kicked off by representatives from the ACTRAV and the ITUC.



ILO ACTRAV informed that they would organize a SDGs workers' academy which would look at where union objectives should be and where possible partnerships might exist. Within ACTRAV regional focal points on SDGs will be identified to participate in the trainings in order to support national actions. In this sense, the training would serve as a training of trainers, though some emphasis could also be on media, campaigns and lobbying governments. **Coordinating the work of the TUDCN and regional organisations and networks, with the approach of ACTRAV to the training, would be essential for reaching the national organisations.**

ILO ACTRAV also highlighted the importance of the SDGs agenda throughout the ILO, detailing some of the work that would take place in the coming years, and suggesting that **Goal 8 would be among the main priorities for ACTRAVs work-plan for 2016-2017.** A particularly important area for trade unions to focus in the years to come will be in the Decent Work Country programs, especially when it comes to budgets for trade union activities.

The ITUC presented an idea to develop toolkits that could support advocacy efforts by trade unions at the national and regional levels. The toolkits would have both an internal and external purpose. Internally it would serve to familiarize national trade union centres and their membership of the SDGs and why it is relevant to the world of work. The external element would serve to support efforts with external actors including governments and business. The idea would be to create a modular toolkit which groups similar goals together relating objectives and targets with the trade union priorities.

Further to this ITUC staff informed of upcoming efforts to be aware of where national and regional participation from the trade union movement would be crucial. This ranged from national activities, to institutional activities, to alliance building with other civil society stakeholders.

The group work that followed allowed participants to further define and sharpen priorities for trade union engagement strategies, based on what would be relevant to their national level work and experience.

With respect to the toolkits there was affirmation by the participants of the potential value of such an initiative. Several ideas and proposed attributes of a toolkit were suggested as ways to improve the device. These included:

- Identify which TU leadership and affiliates need to be addressed and "tapped" i.e. identifying and tailoring to target groups
- Make the link between the SDGs to the more traditional trade union initiatives and workers day to day life; within confederations there will be a need to diffuse the importance of the SDGs
- Familiarize trade unions with relevant international and regional processes
- Include a practitioners guide with easy language i.e. kill acronyms
- Support on national level from the global networks; regional and national seminars with the support of the network
- Allow for flexibility to contexts, in particular, national and regional contexts but also flexible tools that can be adapted to different structures
- Link work of the ITUC, TUDCN, ILO and ILO ACTRAV to avoid duplication of work
- Focus on capacity building including through both face to face and distance learning
- Maintain closer follow up within the network
- Aim to do broader outreach; raising awareness with public; campaign on the workers agenda through unions



With respect to trade union efforts in general as part of a broader strategy, participants provided a number of feedback:

General

- Apply a Decent Work vision to analyse all SDGs and find synergies in the goals
- Goals need to become a centrepiece of trade union activities and become part of the value system

Alliances and Targets

- Sensitize union leadership with SDGs
- Focus on working with government and civil society to incorporate them in the fight for decent work at national level
- Encourage allies to play a role in social transformation – criteria to set up alliances
- Engage with informal economy and organizations organized there
- Get an understanding what businesses plans are for SDGs
- Pursue potential alliances with employers' associations and business
- Raise awareness within the general population – go beyond just the unions
- Need to be more visible as trade unions
- At regional and sub-regional level use spaces we have – use political positions (PLADA, ITUC Africa) already created to link with SDGs

Capacity Building

- Need to identify which capacities need to be developed further and tailor ACTRAV work towards this; though not restrict ourselves to ACTRAV – make better use of overall ILO budgets and that they comply with our objectives
- Continue to work together at global level to avoid duplication of efforts (GUFs, ITUC)
- Continue our activities and organizing seminars
- Develop training proposals to support political strategies
- Recognize differences in developed and developing countries in terms of actions

Monitoring

- Conduct capacity building on monitoring
- Undertake internal monitoring to see our own contribution to SDGs
- Develop a tool for monitoring at national level, but not in ministries more in economic and social councils (which are multistakeholder)
- Conduct shadow monitoring

Overall conclusions and ways forward

The joint ACTRAV-TUDCN seminar was just a closing chapter in a series of collaborations over the past few years in relation to the SDGs. One thing the seminar concluded with certainty was that this level of **collaboration between the TUDCN and ACTRAV should continue not only because it has been very fruitful until now, but it would be a requirement to ensure the effectiveness of our efforts as the international trade union movement in the realization of the SDGs.**

On this basis, the TUDCN would continue to work on a prioritisation of the goals, targets and indicators in collaboration with ACTRAV to further focus our efforts going forward and to define and sharpen our strategies at the national level. This will be of critical importance when it comes to the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs.



Finally, in order to achieve this, the TUDCN and ACTRAV will develop operational tools which can support efforts of the national and regional trade union organizations to be used at the different levels and with different actors and partners.

Ways forward:

- 1) The TUDCN secretariat would provide direct input and work through ILO ACTRAV to influence the final stage of indicators development (UN Statistical Commission/Inter Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators process) focusing in particular on priority targets: 8.b.1 CB; 8.8.1 occupational diseases; 8.8.2 ILO Conventions; 16.10 trade unions and fundamental freedoms;
- 2) Further to efforts at the global level it was agreed that national organisations should advocate also directly with their national governments' focal points;
- 3) The TUDCN secretariat will develop toolkits in order to: familiarise TU organisations with the Agenda 2030 contents, supporting this Agenda to become a political priority for trade unions (internal purpose) and to support advocacy efforts with external actors including governments and business (external purpose). This awareness raising/advocacy tools will be elaborated in coordination with ILO/ACTRAV in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of work. The draft toolkits will be shared within the TUDCN for further inputs and feedbacks;
- 4) The TUDCN regional development networks will need to develop a work plan for engagement on Agenda 2030, taking into account sub-regional and national priorities. The TUDCN secretariat will provide support to the regional development networks in order to develop programming and will ensure coordination with ILO/ACTRAV regional initiatives on capacity building (SDGs workers' academy). The regional work-plans will be shared within the whole TUDCN network in order to grant coherence with possible bilateral initiatives of ITUC and GUFs affiliates at regional and country-level;
- 5) Following the recommendation of seminar's participants, the TUDCN secretariat will seek involvement of the ETUC on Agenda 2030 implementation in Europe.
- 6) Agenda 2030 monitoring tools: as part of regional work plans (see 4 and 5 above), the TUDCN will need to shape concrete tools to support Agenda 2030 implementation monitoring. These could take the form of national "shadow reports" (such as "TU Agenda 2030 watch"), focused on TU priorities.

Relevant documents: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/ACTRAV-TUDCN-seminar-docs>