



1. Preamble to the Trade Union Principles and Guidelines

Background

Development effectiveness is nowadays one of the major themes to be addressed by Trade Unions. This is true in the light of current developments related to both internal agenda setting of the trade union movement and to external international debates.

Development effectiveness is linked to the strategy of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)¹ itself which, since its Founding Congress in 2006, ranks development cooperation and capacity building among the political priorities², calling for “new trade union internationalism”.

This concept has been enunciated since the adoption of the ITUC Programme in 2006, where the “Congress recognizes that trade union education is a vital instrument for building the capacity of trade unions and their members to enable them to improve and strengthen their organisations, and to play a constructive, purposeful and creative role in their workplaces and societies (...) In this context, trade union development cooperation is crucial. Congress therefore calls on the ITUC to mobilise increased resources for development cooperation, and to ensure that they are managed efficiently and transparently in the framework of an agreed global strategy”³.

These statements were aimed at promoting an improved approach on development cooperation within the trade union movement, from the perspective of both political strategy and operational management. As it has been further addressed in the following General Council Reports⁴, the ITUC progressed towards the strengthening of a coherent global framework and shared ownership of development cooperation initiatives amongst the trade union players at bilateral and multilateral levels. This means that development cooperation initiatives should emanate from a

¹ The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 156 countries and territories and has 311 national affiliates

² The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), the predecessors of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), also consistently kept development cooperation as a key item on their agendas. However, the creation of the ITUC and the adoption of the Decent Work Agenda by the ILO as an essential contribution to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals gave a new impetus and momentum to the work of trade unions on development cooperation.

³ Programme of the ITUC, Adopted by the Founding Congress of the ITUC. Vienna, 1-3 November 2006.

⁴ See report to ITUC General Council, Berlin, October 2009; Brussels, December 2008; Washington, December 2007.



wider programming process, involving national affiliates, ITUC Regional Organisations and Solidarity Support Organisations (SSOs)⁵, allowing strategic priorities' compliance.

In 2006, the Congress also called on “the ITUC to adopt working methods and practices which will put it in the best position to confront the challenges facing trade unions worldwide and to implement this programme of work”⁶. This objective has been followed up with the establishment of the “Trade Union Development Cooperation Network, TUDCN” in 2008. The network is an open and inclusive structure, based on voluntary commitment of the cooperating organisations. It is composed of organisations active in development cooperation both in the North and in the South such as: national Trade Union Centres, SSOs, Regional Organisations of the ITUC and Global Union Federations, GUFs⁷. Indeed, the mandate of the TUDCN is based on two interlinked dimensions: support the trade unions positions and views in development cooperation policies and, secondly, enhancing trade union development cooperation effectiveness, bringing greater “coordination of trade union development cooperation”⁸.

Therefore, in the light of these developments, it seemed necessary to tackle the challenge to define and strengthen the coordination mechanisms and methodologies, which have indeed direct implications and consequences on the effectiveness of trade union development cooperation initiatives.

Over the last decade the main international development actors have been working to improve practices to deliver international aid. Throughout a series of International Summits and High Level Forums, Donors, Governments and Civil Society Organisations -CSOs are attempting to reach agreements on common principles and objectives in order to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation. The main point of reference in this respect is the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, signed by donor/beneficiary governments and multilateral agencies, in 2005. The Paris Declaration outlines specific principles⁹ to improve aid effectiveness. In this respect, the Declaration can certainly be considered a positive achievement, highlighting the political will of governments in improving cooperation. However, CSOs were not involved in this process, and

⁵ SSOs is referred to those structures/institutes of Trade Union organisations that are in charge of development cooperation

⁶ Programme of the ITUC, Adopted by the Funding Congress of the ITUC, Vienna, 1-3 November 2006.

⁷ Sector Union Federations structures at International level

⁸ Resolution on Sustainable and Just Development Model for the 21st Century, ITUC II World Congress, Vancouver, June 2010.

⁹ http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html



they were not included as signatories of the Declaration. Only on the occasion of the 3rd High Level Forum (HLF)¹⁰ in Accra in 2008, CSOs have been fully recognized as development actors ‘in their own right’, whose efforts complement those of governments and the private sector. The Accra Agenda for Action also embraces the concept of ‘development effectiveness’ (as opposed to ‘aid effectiveness’) proposed by CSOs, more holistically oriented at assessing the impact of development initiatives on people’s social conditions and based on downward accountability towards citizens. Following the Accra HLF, CSOs committed to provide their own development effectiveness criteria and principles. The “CSOs Open Forum”¹¹ is part of this process, as it is oriented at formulating an actual Framework for CSOs development effectiveness.

Also trade union organisations have been actively engaged: starting from Accra, when advocating for Decent Work and Democratic Ownership as crucial elements for effectiveness, until the present, when working on a specific Trade Union development effectiveness frame. Indeed, trade union development effectiveness is one of the priority theme addressed in the context of the TUDCN¹², directly contributing also to the Open Forum strategy and activities¹³ towards the next HLF in 2011 in Busan¹⁴.

Trade Union Principles and Guidelines on Development Effectiveness

In this sub-section we highlight the process of arriving at the Trade Union Principles and Guidelines on Development Effectiveness, and indicate how they will be used inside and outside the Trade Union movement.

The Principles and Guidelines are in fact the result of an extensive joint work and consultation process, which started in the second half of 2009. It was coordinated by the ITUC/TUDCN secretariat and completed by the end of 2010. An “ad hoc” working group was created within the network bringing together members of the ITUC from the industrialised countries; the regional organisations of the ITUC (Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Americas, and Eastern Europe); the SSOs, and GUFs representatives. Throughout a series of meetings and seminars the working group

¹⁰ The Accra HLF was aimed at reviewing progress of Paris Declaration implementation: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ACCRAEXT/Resources/4700790-1217425866038/AAA-4-SEPTEMBER-FINAL-16h00.pdf>

¹¹ The OF website is : <http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/?lang=en>

¹² The TUDCN activities are currently co-financed by the European Commission, under objective III of the Non State Actor and Local Authorities program of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI).

¹³ The Open Forum supported the organisation costs of the regional consultations of the ITUC.

¹⁴ The Paris Declaration will expire in 2011. Therefore, IV HLF in Busan will be aimed at revising it and, possibly, at taking new global commitments.



drafted the first version of the TU Principles on Development Effectiveness. This document was consequently brought at the level of ITUC regional structures which, in coordination with ITUC Brussels, organised consultations¹⁵ with their national trade unions centres¹⁶. Consultations were mainly aimed at raising awareness within Southern trade union organisations on the contents of the Principles, capturing Southern perspectives and views on the Principles, and gathering additional inputs for their final formulation. Participants were also asked to suggest elements to elaborate operational guidelines to each Principle. The outcomes of the consultations were then evaluated and used by the working group members to finalize the text.

The contents of the Principles refer to and articulate the values and vision on trade union development partnerships, North-South and South-South relations, as well as, on cooperation/coordination features. They are meant to apply in all situations, whether trade unions are using internal resources or external donor support from national governments/development agencies or multilateral institutions.

These Principles together with the Guidelines are designed to serve as a common reference for development cooperation initiatives, strengthening working methodologies that ultimately contribute to enhance the impact of trade union development programmes. Indeed, according to the definition elaborated during this process, development effectiveness is understood by trade unions as follows: “sustainable trade unions improve the working and living conditions of male and female workers and advance respect for human and trade union rights, thereby contributing to decent work, social justice and democratic processes. Trade unions are both a social partner in the tripartite relations with employers, governments and workers and also part of the civil society”.

In particular, the Operational Guidelines are meant to identify actions, tools and mechanisms for the implementation of the Principles, supporting their compliance during the actual execution of development initiatives. In so doing, the Guidelines will also contribute to further develop possible common approaches amongst trade unions for monitoring and evaluating development programs, in a more shared and effective way.

¹⁵ Three regional consultations have been implemented: Lomé, Togo for Africa; Asuncion, Paraguay for Latin America; Brussels and New Delhi for Asia/Pacific.

¹⁶ The selected participants were mostly from development cooperation departments and/or in charge of external relations within their organisations, and/or in charge of education departments.



Finally, the Principles and Guidelines will also serve as a tool to raise awareness amongst external players such as CSOs, governments and donor agencies about the identity, dynamics and roles of trade unions as actors in development. Trade Unions have highlighted ‘democratic ownership’ and ‘coherence’ as the most important objectives to be addressed in development effectiveness. The guidelines elaborated in this respect, reflect the need to adopt a more strategic thinking in development cooperation, based on the actual needs and plans at national, regional and global levels. In this sense, support to capacity development of trade union regional organisations in the South is crucial, as well as, support for the coordination between the trade union actors themselves. The Principles will also serve as a reference for external donors who will be encouraged to apply financial and other management instruments that are compatible with the Principles. This includes the importance of following an actor-based support, in order to preserve the independence and autonomy of trade unions mandate and strategies in development.

The following section will present the eight principles and guidelines that underpin the agreed consensus reached among TUDCN members on trade union development effectiveness.

2. Eight Principles and Guidelines

Throughout the following text the terms ‘*supporting partners*’ and ‘*receiving partners*’ respectively refer to trade union organisations providing and receiving development cooperation financial support. When the term ‘partners’ is used, the reference to both categories is implicit.

Democratic ownership

Principle

Trade unions define democratic ownership as *respect for and responsiveness to the objectives and priorities of trade union partners, with a view to building their self-reliance within the context of the mission of the international trade union movement*. Democratic ownership in the trade union movement is a dynamic concept that takes account of local and global challenges facing trade unions as international actors. This means that receiving partners, based on the challenges they face in their operating environment at country and regional levels, define and determine their own needs within their democratic structures and elected leadership. These are in turn a reflection of the plans, choices and orientations of their affiliated members.

Supporting partner organisations hold up the priorities of receiving partners, and they use appropriate experience, expertise and influence to accompany them in the design and effective implementation of development cooperation initiatives, recognising and respecting the receiving partner’s primary responsibility in these tasks.

All Partners should

- Ground their intervention within a shared strategic planning document, agreed by the respective leaderships;
- Jointly carry out needs analyses considering the national operating environments and capturing the needs of the workers; finalise agreements in full respect of each organisation’s role and prerogative in determining their own objectives and internal task division.

Receiving Partners should

- Within the needs analysis process, enable consultation with and involve all relevant levels of membership and potential beneficiaries before formalising the agreement with the supporting partners;



- Commit to participatory approaches that allow the inclusion of their internal structures and beneficiaries in the monitoring and evaluation of programme progress.

Supporting Partners should

- With the mandate of their relevant trade union structures, use their own experience, expertise and influence, to provide financial, technical and political added value to further the aims of the joint programme.

Autonomy

Principle

Trade union partner organisations make their own decisions and priorities and respect each other's strategic choices, without political interference. Autonomous unions that are able to develop politically, intellectually, organisationally and financially without external interference are a sign of strong unions. Trade Union partners strive to maintain independence from political strategies of governments/employers, and/or international donors, safeguarding the needs, the interests, and the priorities of their organisations, which have emerged from a democratic membership driven process.

All Partners should

- Respect the needs and realities in which the programme has been agreed.

Receiving Partners should

- Formulate their development cooperation requests to their existing or potential supporting partner based on the motions, policy and strategic planning document approved by their internal formal structures.

Supporting Partners should

- Focus their support on financing 'capacity development' activities that improve the ability of trade unions to meet the needs of their constituencies and that strengthen their autonomy, ;
- Aim to create effective financial systems and procedures that ensure the financial autonomy of the receiving partner organisations, preserving their independence from the influence of external support;
- Carefully select the circumstances under which they provide core-funding to their receiving partners. In such cases extra attention should be paid to the development of an agreed 'exit strategy' between supporting and receiving partners.

Partnership

Principle

A partnership aspires to be *a relationship of equals, based on mutual respect, trust and understanding, where diversity and differences are recognized and respected.* Partnerships, based upon solidarity and mutual learning are at the centre of trade union inter-organisational cooperation. They are founded upon long-term shared values and principles relating to the rights of working people and their democratic, representative organisations. In these terms, a partnership represents a participatory form of cooperation designed to strengthen trade unions' capacity, through utilizing respective strengths and responsibilities within a shared international framework. In line with this dynamic, initiatives should be managed, whenever possible, in a decentralised manner that recognises the receiving partner organisations' primary responsibility for their own development.

All Partners should

- Develop a common operational partnership agreement, spelling out the values, principles, objectives, strategies, activities, and organisational and financial procedures to be followed during the programme;
- Based on the agreement, set up representative joint steering and management structures for the implementation of the programme.

Receiving Partners should

- Have a primary role and responsibility in the implementation and coordination of activities, according to their experience, expertise and possibilities (in terms of human resources, financial resources, etc.).

Supporting Partners should

- Enhance the receiving partner's primary responsibility in project implementation and the achievement of the objectives;
- Support the management capacity of the receiving organisations, valuing existing human resources and expertise;
- Commit to information sharing and knowledge exchange on various trade union models and structures.

Transparency

Principle

Trade unions define transparency as *high standards of openness and access to information necessary for equitable relations between trade union partners*. Transparency relates to both the achievement of effective trade union multilateral cooperation among organisations involved in development initiatives at regional level, as well as to bilateral cooperation between partner organisations. Trade unions are committed to working toward ensuring maximum transparency in financial aspects and in terms of organisational management, as well as sharing information on development cooperation initiatives dealing with similar thematic or geographic areas.

Transparency and openness in reference to the internal management constitutes a fundamental principle for any partnership. Without it, cooperation efforts can be prone to poor targeting, duplication or even corruption.

All Partners should

- Provide a clear and comprehensive overview of the most recent and current development cooperation initiatives running at bilateral/regional level (including information on partners and sources of funding);
- Provide the maximum level of visibility on joint initiatives both towards their own members, and externally to other relevant stakeholders and the public opinion, using communication tools in a strategic way.

Receiving Partners should

- Keep open communication and accessible information on programme implementation (narrative and financial monitoring reports).

Supporting Partners should

- Inform in advance the receiving partner on requirements and obligations linked to the programme implementation and the release of finances; Provide clarity on the source of financing and their time frames.

Accountability

Principle

Trade union partner organisations are liable to a system of mutual accountability at political, operational and financial levels, which should be supported by appropriate common assessment tools and learning processes to gain increased effectiveness in future initiatives. Trade union organisations are bound to multiple forms of downward and upward accountability. First and foremost, trade union partners are responsible to their members for giving account of the actions they have taken. They should be involved and aware of the contribution of cooperation initiatives in the enhancement of their living and working conditions in general and the improvement in the quality of their trade union work in particular. Partner organisations are also bound to accountability towards external donors (governments/agencies) in terms of using resources according to agreed standards and conditions. Because solidarity projects are often supported by internal trade union funds, the partner organisations in turn are accountable to their leaders and members and must seek to ensure political coherence and sound financial management. Finally, supporting and receiving partners are mutually accountable to each other.

All Partners should

- Develop common and shared monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment tools which can be used both for internal and external reporting systems, as well as, for learning purposes to gain increased effectiveness in all areas of future initiatives;
- Seek direct feedback from relevant stakeholders during the evaluation processes;
- Make available assessment and evaluation reports to all partners and their members;
- Develop external financial audit processes. The external audit, when not required by contractual obligations, should be foreseen and agreed upon between the parties. Audited reports should be available to all partners and their members.

Receiving Partners should

- Put in place/strengthen monitoring mechanisms within the organisation and include all relevant bodies/representatives in the monitoring process (possible multi-disciplinary monitoring teams, including sector organisations when relevant).

Supporting Partners should

- Put in place necessary feedback mechanisms to their members, to program's partners and to external private/public donors (in case of co-financing);
- Where required, facilitate the provision of capacity development services for accounting officers in order to prepare accurate financial reports.

Coherence

Principle

Coherence is for trade union organisations *the achievement of maximum degree of consistency in approach at all levels among the variety of development cooperation initiatives and where everything contributes to, rather than conflicts with, everything else*. There are several elements of coherence: *policy coherence*, meaning compliance among policies elaborated and approved at national, regional and global levels; *strategic coherence*, as contributing to the achievement of the overall direction of development provided by trade union receiving partners at county level; *coordination coherence*, operating in order to avoid duplication of development initiatives and towards optimum use of resources. Coherence is the key element to ensure complementary linkages between the single programme's strategic objectives and other initiatives (past, present or future). Coherence also refers to relating local action and bilateral solidarity to the overall context of the global trade union agenda, both in terms of policies and development cooperation practices. The ITUC, its regional structures and the GUFs play a crucial role in making coherence more effective.

All Partners should

- Strive to ensure correspondence between global , regional and national policies and commitments ensuring that the trade union movement priorities, like the Decent Work Agenda, are taken into account;
- Respect the role of the ITUC and its regional/sub regional organisations as well as GUFs in facilitating information-sharing, providing oversight and coordination for increased coherence in interventions and optimal use of resources;
- Create permanent joint platforms among supporting and receiving trade union partners at regional level, including ITUC and GUFs and their regional structures, to have a dialogue on development cooperation priorities and methodologies;
- Commit to support coordination mechanisms at various levels and to exchange information on trade union development programmes to avoid duplication of initiatives;
- Commit to the measurement of progress towards the attainment of strategic goals of the Decent Work Agenda and organisational strengthening;
- Use development cooperation as a means to contribute towards wider policy and institutional development objectives.



Receiving Partners should

- Support the set up of trade union networks on development cooperation at regional level;
- Collaborate with trade unions centres and social allies to integrate the Decent Work Agenda into the national development strategy of their respective country.

Supporting Partners should

- Collaborate to identify complementary initiatives and linkages of the programmes they support;
- Strive to integrate the Decent Work Agenda into external development policies in their respective countries.

Inclusiveness and Equality

Principle

The trade union movement believes that inclusiveness and equality means that all workers have the right to equal opportunity of treatment in employment and occupation. In practice, this means that the trade union movement works to protect, promote, and defend these rights irrespective of race, sex, gender identity, religion, political opinion, nationality, social origin, age or disabilities. Discrimination is defined as any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of any of the above. Trade union development cooperation frequently targets the most marginalised, vulnerable and less represented groups of working people. Specific focus lies on gender equality and women rights. Trade unions commit to practices supporting equal opportunities and positive discrimination in order to enhance the role of less represented groups in development processes, as well as, their participation in decision making within trade union structures at national, regional and international levels.

All Partners should

- Commit to provide contextual and statistical analysis of real and potential membership and their respective needs in all development initiatives, thereby setting organisational targets that ensure genuine and proportional representation of the working population;
- Develop, strengthen, and integrate union policies and implementation strategies on gender equality and mainstreaming, as well as, participation and representation of young workers in all development initiatives;

Receiving Partners should

- Keep membership statistics and other relevant data that reflect the number of women and young members, as well as, disadvantaged groups;
- Integrate gender equality into the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of every programme and measure the impact on young workers and members;

Supporting Partners should

- Facilitate training and capacity development for programme staff and other relevant stakeholders so that they are able to monitor and assist the unions to mainstream gender and young workers into development projects or programmes;
- Carefully plan to avoid creating situations of dependency whereby Gender or Youth desks or structures only exist or truly function due to donor funding.

Sustainability

Principle

Trade unions understand sustainability as the long-term viability of development project outcomes, as well as the strengthening of cooperating trade union organisations. All the principles enunciated previously contribute to the development of sustainability. Sustainability comprises self-reliance, ownership, autonomy in political and economic terms and the preservation of the environment for future generations. It also contributes towards eventual independence from external assistance of supporting partner organisations. In this perspective, development cooperation will support empowerment and self-financing mechanisms. It will also include phase-out or exit strategies developed jointly by the partners and designed in ways that will contribute to building sustainability. Trade union dimensions for sustainability include:

- *Democratic sustainability* of an organisation is primarily assessed by the extent to which the organisation has established and complies with formal structures and procedures, which ensure that decisions and the policies have been democratically determined. Equally important is the organisation's ability to include the views of minorities and develop a culture of consensus, which ensures continued support from all members, and promotes trade union unity.
- *Political sustainability* is manifested through the organisations' ability to develop its own political strategies, which can serve to exert influence on the relevant decision makers, as well as in general public debates of the society in which they operate.
- *Organisational sustainability* is the organisation's ability to administer and prioritise its tasks and work areas that enable it to fulfil its mission and commitments. This includes membership recruitment, internal organising, capacity to provide services to workers as well as the ability to develop and manage budgets, including the collection and administration of membership fees. All development cooperation initiatives should seek to contribute towards improving organisational sustainability.
- *Financial sustainability means that* financially sound practices should be put in place and should apply to all aspects of development cooperation, including remunerations. This will contribute to the financial sustainability of the recipient trade union. They should also apply to the collection and administration of membership fees, so as to financially sustain the organisation after external funding has ended.
- *Environmental sustainability* is the ability of the organisation to formulate internal and external policies and practices that leads to the protection and respect of the environment

All Partners should

- Acknowledge and debate the importance of independence from external donors by including in project analysis and design, 'exit strategies' that assist in guaranteeing the sustainability of results post external funding;



- Promote learning processes for capacity development taking advantage of existing trade union structures at global and regional level;
- Consider how the results of their actions will impact on climate change and take into account the relevance of the trade union movement programmes in supporting green policies.

Receiving Partners should

- Dedicate own resources to provide follow up to programmes after external support has ended;
- Create effective financial systems management for a better use of resources, on the basis of dues payment.

Supporting Partners should

- Support capacity development of receiving organisations, in terms of investment in human resources and organisational/institutional challenge.