



Background Note on Regional Consultations on ‘Principles on Trade Union Development Effectiveness’

1. Background

Development effectiveness is nowadays one of the major themes to be addressed by Trade Unions. It is linked to the strategy of the ITUC itself which, since its Congress in 2006, ranks development cooperation and capacity building among the political priorities, calling for ‘new trade union internationalism’. This approach aims at promoting a coherent global framework and shared ownership¹ of development cooperation initiatives, both at bilateral and multilateral level within the trade union players.

This objective has been subsequently strengthened with the establishment of the ‘Trade Union Development Cooperation Network’ – TUDCN in 2008, grouping relevant organisations active in development both in the North and in the South such as, national TU centres, Solidarity Support Organisations, Regional Organisations of the ITUC and Global Union Federations. The aim of the Network is indeed to improve coordination of TU actors in development and to support empowerment of TU organisations in the South.

On the light of these settings, it seems therefore necessary to tackle the challenge to define and to strengthen our working mechanisms and methodologies, which have indeed direct implications and consequences on the effectiveness of our development cooperation initiatives.

Furthermore, over the last decade the main international Stakeholders of Development Cooperation have been working to re-shape the global architecture and improve practices to deliver international aid. Throughout a series of International Summits, High Level Forums and meetings, Donors, Governments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are currently attempting to reach agreements on common principles and objectives in order to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation.

The main points of reference in this respect are the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (signed by donor/beneficiary governments and multilateral agencies) and the *Accra Agenda for Action (AAA)*, where CSOs finally have been recognized as development actors in their own right. The AAA endorses also the objective of shifting from ‘aid effectiveness’ to ‘DEVELOPMENT effectiveness’. Also Trade

¹ See report to ITUC General Council, Berlin, October 2009.

union Organizations took part in this process, highlighting Decent Work and Democratic Ownership as vital element to reach development effectiveness. Following the Accra High Level Forum, CSOs committed to provide their own criteria and principles to define development effectiveness, to be finalized before the next HLF in 2011 in Seoul. The *CSOs Open Forum for Development effectiveness* is part of this process, and it is oriented at formulating principles and guidelines for CSOs effectiveness². ITUC currently takes part in the activities of the Open Forum (OF), and it is supposed to provide contributions from the trade union movement perspective on development effectiveness.

Following the planning of the OF, a series of consultations are foreseen in the South with relevant development actors. Consultations are based both on geographical and thematic/sector criteria. These latter are supposed to make a special contribution to the CSOs development effectiveness agenda. Thematic consultations are foreseen on: Trade Unions; Gender and women's rights; CSOs in situation of conflict; Social movements of the most marginalised people in rural and urban context.

2. Trade Union Principles on Development Effectiveness & Regional Consultations

The ITUC together with its member organizations has already started developing research and coordination activities aimed at exploring their own criteria for development effectiveness. Currently a working document on *Trade Union Principles for Development Effectiveness* is being drafted. This document has been elaborated thanks to the cooperation and consultation amongst trade union organizations both in the North and in the South.

However, it seems crucial that the basis of consensus on the Principles described in the document could be as wide as possible. Therefore, in line with the programming of the OF described above, the ITUC is planning to organize 3 *Regional Consultations* in the South, with the support of the regional trade union organizations in Latin America, Asia and Africa, including national affiliated trade union organizations.

The contents of the *Principles* refer to and articulate the values and vision on trade union development partnerships, as well as, on cooperation/coordination features. Therefore, they are focused on the INTERNAL DIMENSION of trade union development effectiveness.

The consultation process in the 3 regions is primarily aimed at raising awareness within southern trade union organizations on the contents of the Principles, capturing their perception and point of views, so that to gather additional inputs for their formulation. Indeed, the Principles will eventually need to be accompanied by *Operational Guidelines*, which are meant to identify possible tools/mechanisms facilitating adequate practical compliance of the Principles' contents³. Therefore, Regional consultations can be useful also to provide inputs in this respect.

² The OF website is : <http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/?lang=en>

³ An Experts Group, composed of a number of ITUC affiliate organizations' experts has been created in January 2010, with the task of elaborating Operational Guidelines to the Principles. The work on the Operational Guidelines and the consultations will be run in parallel, being two interconnected processes, feeding into each other.

Finally, the work will be completed in December 2010, with the finalization of the document on *Principles and Operational Guidelines of Trade Union Development Effectiveness*. This document could be used by the trade union movement as a common point of reference when working in development cooperation field, as well as, a tool facilitating monitoring and evaluation of our working methods.

3. Objectives of Regional Consultations

Therefore consultations are aimed at:

- 1) Discussing and analysing the contents of the Principles from the Southern organisations perspective;
- 2) Strengthening common approaches/visions to development cooperation criteria among trade union organisations (i.e. partnership/coordination...);
- 3) Supporting national, regional and global level effectiveness;
- 4) Gathering contributions for the elaboration of operational guidelines (putting Principles in practice and monitoring our working methods);
- 5) Contributing to the overall consultation process of the OF on the basis of experience of the trade union movement.

4. Activities and Target Groups

Three Regional consultations are foreseen in 2010:

- Africa, Lomé: May 24-28 (training on PCM 24-26 and consultation 27-28)
- Americas: September
- Asia Pacific: October

Consultations will be carried out on the document's Principles and they will last 2 days each, targeting 30 people.

Besides regional organizations and national affiliates in the region, also Global Union Federations - GUFs representatives from the region will be invited.

In general, consultations participants will come from:

- National Trade union organisations in the region
- Regional Trade union representatives
- GUFs regional representatives
- Northern organisations representatives
- Relevant CSOs representatives (national/regional)
- ITUC Headquarters representatives

Participants from those organisations should be in charge of development cooperation projects management of and/or in charge of external relations within their organisations, and/or in charge of monitoring and evaluation departments.

Year 2010: ACTION PLAN												
	Semester 1						Semester 2					
Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Expert Group meetings	■		■		■				■	■		■
Regional consultation on Principles Africa					■							
Regional Consultation on Principles Americas									■			
Regional Consultation on Principles Asia Pacific										■		
Publication on Principles and guidelines												■

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