

**Draft report on the discussions concerning
the Future of the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network.**

TUDCN meeting in Helsinki 10-12 May 2010

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The meeting gathered participants (see list attached) from the following organisations:

SASK, SAK, STTK (Finland)

LO-TCO (Sweden)

TUC (GB)

CFDT (France)

CCOO, UGT-ISCOD, USO (Spain)

CISL-ISCOS, CGIL (Italia)

TUCA-CSA (Americas-Sao Paola)

ITUC Africa (Lomé-Togo)

CLC-CTC (Canada)

Solidarity Center (USA)

Building Workers International (BWI –Global Union Federation Geneva)

TUAC/BetterAid (Paris)

ITUC (Global Union - Brussels)

The aim of the discussion was to examine and set out the main lines for the future work of the Trade Union Development Cooperation as summarized in the issue paper that was send to the network related organisations and that was presented to the meeting.

The discussion was organised in 3 sequences:

1. Evaluation and composition/status of the network
2. Vision, mission, objectives, and functions of the network
3. Priorities and plan of action (activities) for the network

A plenary discussion concluded each of the points and a global discussion on the overall synthesis took place at the end.

This report presents the overall synthesis and highlights the issues for further discussion. It also includes elements of the evaluation that took place on the first day. Finally, it proposed a way forward as suggested by the participants.

The Future of the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network

“Caminando estamos haciendo camino” (Evaluation elements)

POSITIVE ELEMENTS

- The networks' existence and interest for TU organisations (it is **relevant** to TU actions in development and its **inclusive** nature allows to bring together all relevant parts of the TU family)
- Potential of our consolidated experiences (The TU worldwide and in its broad composition has a **tremendous potential** both in terms of advocacy for development and of development cooperation practices)
- Visibility on political front: the Network had allowed, through the Conferences and through the contacts established and advocacy work that was carried out, to gain **recognition from governments and international institutions**.
- Promotion of policy debate inside TU: the TUDCN has triggered discussion also in the South, where development was enlarged from a mere “TU aid-recipient” approach (centered on TU projects and TU project management) towards a **broader interest in the overall policy debate on development cooperation** (including other dimension of development such as Trade, Investments, and other international geopolitical and economic development issues, ...)
- **Interaction with others** (governments, international institutions, NGO/CSO): working relationships were established within platforms, conferences, working groups and policy meetings at international and European level (OECD/DAC and its Working Party on Aid Effectiveness ; UN; EU; BetterAid; Open Forum; Donor-governments coordination group; ...)
- Trust and “language”: the network has allowed to **create trust** amongst the different TU actors in development cooperation and to develop **common ways of addressing challenges**.
- Potential of newsletter and information flow: the newsletter has allowed a **constant flow of information on international development cooperation** that was of interest of the TU family.

ELEMENTS OF CONCERN

- Too European/northern agenda's: the regions need better/robust representation. It was generally observed that the regions were underrepresented in terms of participants (including lack/absence of southern representation from GUF's). However it was also stated that the agenda setting was very much oriented on the northern driven agenda's (Aid Effectiveness, ...) and that concerns on more just international relations through trade and other southern driven demands were only marginally dealt with in the Network.
- “ITUC-logo”: the network is very much “identified” with as an ITUC network, including in its symbols and logo. The much-appreciated inclusiveness should also be “visible” in the network image.

- Policy documents: there have been no major public positions elaborated on international development challenges by the TUDCN so far. Positions were represented in presentations or through the newsletter, but more elaborated, public positions could make the trade union contributions to the policy debates more visible, better structured, and increase the impact of specific TU policy demands on decent work, jobs centred growth and development, sustainable development, gender and development, ...
- Framework-document: the need for a framework/reference document on the trade union development cooperation (including the network) was felt needed as a priority exercise for the network. This should be building on the outcomes of the Stockholm and Madrid conferences and should consolidate and articulate the current trade union approach to development.
- Services/instruments for members (database, ...): the delivery of the network in terms of service to its members was felt to be crucial for its relevance in the future. Special mention was made to a database on trade union development cooperation projects/programmes.
- Outreach to “non-believers”: some of the important players in the TU development cooperation family are for diverse reasons absent of our work. We should establish channels of communication with them and try to interest them for the work of the TUDCN (for them and for their contribution to the network).
- Too many “conferences”/heavy agenda: continuity is problem/challenge: the TUDCN has to compete with pre-existing agenda’s and forms of organising the cooperation work inside (ITUC+regions/GUF/SSO) and outside (national, regional and international CSO and governmental agenda’s) the trade union family. All these particular agenda’s should be mapped out and the network should gain better “control” over the management of its own agenda by relating and articulating it more closely to the other agenda’s. Too many “Conference” type mobilisations were felt to be a too heavy burden on the individual organisations. It does also captures main resources from the TUDCN that could be used for organising better support and services. Organisations should also be aware of the need for continuity in their presence and work as part of the Network and ensure sharing and co-responsibilities inside their own representation structures.
- Methods need updating (workstreams are outdated). The original setup of the Network with its 4 work-streams was felt non-operational by the current orientation the network is taking. Revising the working methods is one of the challenges in the “future-of-the-network” discussion.

Overall conclusions of the discussions

VISION

- Our vision should spell out the broad trade union analysis of the current development situation, its contradictions and consequences. It was generally felt that the references/analysis in the ITUC Congress documents of 2006 could serve a reference
 - ***poverty, hunger, exploitation, oppression, and inequality*** is what we want to combat and the TU development cooperation should be a contribution to that overall “ambition” of the trade union movement worldwide.

- We should also offer a view of we want to achieve as trade unions ***through the international action required by these conditions of the globalised economy.***
- Our vision focuses on ***strong unions as actors for development*** engaging for
 - ***Decent work*** (rights based development)/jobs pact
 - ***Democratic governance***

MISSION

- The founding ITUC Congress that gave the impetus to start the Network stated that sharing ownership of TU development cooperation was instrumental to and would contribute significantly to create strong trade unions as actors for development, especially in the south. This should be done through
 - Enhance effective TU development practices (*internal mission*)
 - Facilitate positions and representation on development cooperation (*external mission*)

MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK

- A long and complicated discussion took place with the following elements
 - The Network was in origin an ITUC network with the above mentioned missions as spelled out by the “mandate” of the congress and confirmed (governed by) the ITUC General Council).
 - From the start, interested SSO were invited to participate. Most of them did, some of them were represented by the ITUC affiliate; others were represented both by affiliates and the related SSO; finally some of the organisations consider themselves being both an ITUC affiliate and a SSO, hence their presence in “double” capacity.
 - The invitation for the meetings was also extended to the GUF, some of them participated occasionally. Their more permanent engagement was discussed and encouraged by the Conference in Stockholm and the subsequent Network meeting.
 - TUAC, the NY Office were also involved on a permanent basis
 - ETUC was felt to be missing in the picture as the natural “umbrella for the EU related issues”
 - Southern representation from the ITUC regions was felt to be not robust enough (and not inclusive of the GUF regions either).
 - The resource provisions through the “rules” of the EU finances project could explain some of the shortcomings (supporting southern participation) but should not be setting the agenda or limiting the participation.

There was an agreement to consider (in principle) the following organisations as potential members: ITUC affiliates and regions; Global Union Federations; SSO’s – including ITUC affiliated “donor organisations”; invited on a permanent basis as members: TUAC, ETUC and ITUC reps towards international institutions; invited as observers: ACTRAV and/or other relevant ILO departments.

STATUS OF THE NETWORK

- The discussion of the membership/composition however rebound in a discussion about the status of the network:
 - This was illustrated best by the following opposition that was made during the discussion on the Network as



“Facilitator” was meant to be the main function of an inclusive global union network that is based on autonomous parts. The network will act as facilitator but refer all policy decisions and implementation actions to the main composing parties (GUF, ITUC+regions and SSOs).

Actor was meant to be a network that has received the mandate to decide on policies and to implement activities by the constituent organisation (eg the ITUC).

However, there was clear consensus that, although contradictory at first sight, both elements were on the table:

- ***The ITUC affiliates, as demanded by its Congress and General Council, created and need the network for its their purposes (and secured the resources for that).***
- ***There is clear need and willingness to share TU development policies (internal and external) within the broader (global) union family through an inclusive network.***

WE SHOULD LOOK, AS EXPRESSED BY ALL, FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH.

The latter is also important with a view of both political strength (one “unisono” trade union voice is likely to be heard better than 10 different “solo” ones) and resource availability (coordinated moves towards increased support for trade union cooperation) is likely to be more effective with donors – SSO and governmental donors.

No practical, readymade conclusions were reached, however it was proposed to write the a “FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT ON TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION”

A small reference group composed of the different constituencies will take this up and build on the Stockholm “consensus” by September 2010.

The framework document should then be submitted for discussion by the different autonomous parties (each of the GU and of the SSOs). The outcome of those discussions, including the

engagements each of the parties are ready to take up, should than be the basis for further options to be discussed by the end of 2010.

In the meantime, the ITUC proceeds with trying to secure/extending the funding from the EU for the TUDCN for 2011-2012.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Three main objectives were identified and expected outcomes formulated both as elements to be consolidated from the network experiences over the last 3 years and as responses to the challenges identified for the coming years by the Network.

- 1. Sharing ownership of TU Development Cooperation by all TU actors at all levels***
- 2. Develop Capacity for TU development action in South and North***
- 3. Develop and advocate for TU views on cooperation policies and practices***

1. SHARING OWNERSHIP OF TU DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION BY ALL ACTORS AT ALL LEVELS

Following the results of the work done in the workstreams, we should be able to deepen our cooperation and share, in true spirit of solidarity, the ownership of the trade union development cooperation efforts as a basic value of our new trade union internationalism.

- Share practices, policies, tools and strategies
 - Improve TU development effectiveness by adopting shared principles, implementation guidelines and indicators for monitoring progress and change. Initiate more appropriate, trade union based, methodologies to improve effectiveness of cooperation at national and regional level in the south.
 - Improve number of activities by effectively sharing resources and reinforce cooperation and synergies
 - Inform TU policy positions in development cooperation (decent work and democratic governance, sector approach and economic development...) where appropriate together with other partners and institutions (ILO – ACTRAV, thematic programmes, ...).
- Making our impact more effective by sharing resources and implementation
 - Information (database; newsletter/portal; experiences; showcases) on trade union development cooperation programmes and policies, accessible by the members of the network and partners.
 - Research on appropriate TU methods for planning, progress monitoring and evaluation and on elements for TU DC policy positions
 - Training and capacity development for trade union actors (responsibles for dc at national, and regional level and from the sectors in south and north.
 - Solidarity Actions should be linked in with the overall cooperation efforts (Haïti, ...). This also includes a demand for a better interaction with the Solidarity Fund (ITUC).
- Enhance Participation and Voice of the South

- Facilitate participation from the South through regional networking and involvement of national organisations
- Facilitate Capacity development for national trade unions
- Ensure multicultural working methods and network governance (ENG, FR and ESP)
- More effective management and governance of the network and guarantee its sustainability
 - All partners have to engage and ensure ownership (adjust and coordinate the agenda's to the network existence).
 - Set up a Coordination Group to have oversight, follow up and evaluation of network progress and reinforce programme progress monitoring.
 - Working groups and appropriate methods to be set (see further under activities)
 - Improve the sustainability through external and internal (co)-financing and service delivery (contributions to the programme).

1. EXPECTED OUTCOMES RELATED TO OBJECTIVE 1

- a. *More coherent and effective TU DC:***
 - i. *better coordination, more synergies and more activities by TU partners***
 - ii. *improved engagement at national level of trade unions in development policies***
- b. *Effective coordination and follow-up (governance) within the network/ownership by partners***
- c. *Inclusive, more representative and (financially) sustained network***

2. DEVELOP CAPACITY FOR TU ACTION ON DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AND NORTH

- Organise networks in the South (regional/subregional)
 - Implement Capacity Development programmes with regions (ITUC) and others (SSO partners and GUF affiliates)
 - Promote TU South/South cooperation and dialogue
 - Create support and service structures for national affiliates in the regions
- Increase coordination and synergies in project/programme with partners in the South
 - Regional/national coordination meetings
 - Cooperation with GUF regional reps
 - Alignment on common programmes (national, regional, international)
- Donor meetings & strategies vis à vis donor-donors : this is a specific challenge to organise coordination efforts for the SSO's and is aimed at enhancing their relationship with donor governments/institutions.
- Track funding and new support modalities (actor-based frameworks). It is important that the trade union movement participate in the revision of support modalities for CSO. More specifically, we should engage for an actor based approach that ensures inclusive and trade union specific support allowing taking into consideration the specific roles of trade unions as member-based, internationally organised, locally rooted social movements, and social partners.

2. EXPECTED OUTCOMES RELATED TO OBJECTIVE 2

- a. *Increased participation of and voice for the South*
- b. *Cooperation among TU partners on common Capacity Development programmes*
- c. *Better “donor” coordination*
- d. *More and appropriate resources for TU development cooperation*

3. DEVELOP TU VIEWS ON COOPERATION POLICIES AND PRACTICES

- Promote DWA, jobs pact and democratic governance
- Strive towards development effectiveness and legitimate development architecture
- Track trends in development policies
- Make policy recommendations to network constituent partners
- Organise training, awareness raising and information about development policies
- Support TU representation towards decision-makers and institutions
- Strengthening alliances with likeminded CSO and participation in CSO platforms

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES RELATED TO OBJECTIVE 3

- a. *TU network partners agree to common positions*
- b. *TU activists are acquainted with policy challenges on development cooperation*
- c. *External development institutions policies and practices reflect TU views (decent work and democratic governance)*
- d. *CSO recognise trade unions contribution to policy agenda and promote common action*
- e. *Trade union practices are visible and confirmed as contributions to development cooperation*

ACTIVITIES AND ELEMENTS FOR THE WORKPLAN

The network will meet in its full-size capacity, involving all members, SSO, GUF and with a more substantive representation from the regions, twice a year. Conference will only be scheduled when appropriate (max 1 “major event” a year). The Network meetings would act as a kind of assembly of the TUDCN taking the organizational measures and political positions that are proposed by either the secretariat or one of the working structures¹. In-between the meeting, specific working groups or task teams or experts meetings would take the work further either on global or on specific issues. This also to facilitate the interaction based on concrete engagements at national or international level. The work groups would meet independently from each other and establish their own work schedule They would be open to all interested members, SSO, regions and GUF.

- 1 A first **working group** on **trade union development cooperation effectiveness** will work on **principles, guidelines and indicators** for TU development cooperation with a clear

¹ The “accountability” issue could be addressed by ensuring a “multi-accountability” relation with the constituency of each of the actors (ITUC General Council, individual SSO’s and individual GUF).

aim and time setting to produce (a) position paper(s) on these matters by the end of 2011 (see updated workplan on Principles²). This group should also consider the follow up with the Open Forum on CSO Effectiveness and the related activities. Beyond the immediate questions of trade union cooperation practices, the question of the **societal impact of our cooperation** should be addressed (in terms of progress made e.g. on the Decent Work Agenda and on Democratic Ownership).

- 2 A second workgroup would be a “**Policy working group**” that should ensure follow-up to the development agenda’s. That group would monitor and support the TU work at the OECD-DAC, the UN and the policy issues raised within the CSO platform BetterAid. The working group will also monitor and follow up on the interaction with policy developments at national level.
- 3 A third “**ad-hoc**” group would **monitor and follow-up the structured dialogue** with the EU as well as **all questions related to the EU instruments** (EIDHR, Development Education, ...). This will be composed by interested EU member-state based organizations, the regional organizations as enabling partners in the regions and the interested GUF and others. Close cooperation and involvement with the ETUC has to be ensured.
- 4 A **Network Coordination Group** will be formed composed of network members from the different trade union partners (ITUC affiliates, regions, GUF, SSO). This group should ensure the governance of the network and assess on a regular basis the progress of the network and its institutional strengths and weaknesses including its capacity and resources. It will organise appropriate monitoring and evaluation activities.

Way forward

- **Draft report of discussions to be made available for NDG meeting in Berlin (19/05)**
- **A framework document will be drafted by September (ITUC to compose a drafting group)**
- **ITUC to secure extension of contract (EU call for proposals by June 13)**
- **“Provisional” Coordination Group to be set up**
- **Discussion in organisations to take place during the fall 2010**
- **Formalising network operational framework for the future by December 2010**

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²see http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/doc/UPDATED_WORK_PLAN_ON_TRADE_UNION_DEVELOPMENT_EFFECTIVENESS-2.doc