

## TRADE UNION PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES ON DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS



*Development  
Cooperation  
Network*

The TUDCN – Trade Union Development Network was set up in 2008 by the ITUC. The network is an open and inclusive structure, based on voluntary commitment of the trade union organisations active in development cooperation both in the North and in the South. The “TUDCN Development Papers” are meant to present and disseminate trade unions positions and views on international development cooperation policies.

# Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. CSO Development Effectiveness in an international perspective	7
3. Preamble to the Trade Union Principles and Guidelines	11
4. Eight Principles and Guidelines	15
Democratic ownership	15
Autonomy	16
Partnership	17
Transparency	18
Accountability	19
Coherence	20
Inclusiveness and Equality	21
Sustainability	23
5. Evaluation and Conclusions	25
6. Glossary	31
Colophon	33



# 1. Introduction

This policy paper presents the vision and values of trade union organisations on Development Effectiveness.

These are expressed by the articulation of Principles and Guidelines, elaborated on a consultative basis by trade union organisation representatives both in the North and the South. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) coordinated this process, with the support of its regional structures, affiliated organisations, Solidarity Support Organisations, and Global Union Federations.

The Principles and Guidelines are designed to serve as a common reference for development cooperation initiatives, strengthening working methodologies and ultimately contributing to enhancing the impact of trade union cooperation programmes.

The Operational Guidelines identify possible actions, tools and mechanisms to translate the Principles into practice. They will also pave the way for more effective monitoring and evaluation practices.

Finally, the Principles and Guidelines will also serve as a tool to raise awareness amongst external players about the identity, dynamics and role of trade unions as actors in development.

This paper also provides introductory sections on the overall debate on Aid/Development effectiveness and trade union institutional background, including an evaluation section at the end of the document highlighting the main conclusions of this important process.



## 2. CSO Development Effectiveness in an international perspective

Although the last decade shows remarkable development successes in certain areas, overall inequality is still increasing globally and within countries (UNDP Human Development Report, 2010). These findings have brought a wide and shared consensus amongst many development actors that development cooperation should become more effective. At the same time, as for many debates in the sector, the agreement on the paradigm level hides more than it reveals. Different actors in the aid chain advocate for different approaches, all under the banner of aid/development effectiveness. This results in different views as to why development effectiveness is needed, what it should look like, and how it should be organised. Important dividing lines have been around boundary setting (aid versus development), the type of change envisaged (technical improvements versus structural/democratic change), the division of roles (state versus civil society), and the role of various actors within civil society (development NGOs versus other CSOs). Within this process of political change, CSOs have been careful to maintain their autonomy and have asked for recognition of their status as development actors in their own right.

CSO development effectiveness principles are defined here as 'statements of values and qualities that should inform CSO socio-economic, political, and organisational relationships' (Open Forum<sup>1</sup>). The principles are often part of or go hand in hand with specific self regulation initiatives. The content and shape of these initiatives is highly context dependent. It covers the wide range of activities that have been developed by two or more organisations in order to achieve greater accountability and more effective programming of the organisations that sign-up and adhere to them (One World Trust)<sup>2</sup>. These are, for example, codes of conduct or ethics, certification schemes, information services, working groups involved in self-assessments/application of tools and awards.

While this chapter will focus mainly on the dynamics of the last decade, it would be wrong to conclude that development effectiveness has only appeared recently on the agenda of CSOs. There are well documented examples of earlier influential ideas and theories related to development effectiveness that arose from within civil society and that influenced their work in significant ways. Some examples are the extensive writing on the often perceived lack of organisational learning from evaluations (Davies)<sup>3</sup>, the broad introduction of participatory development methodologies in the 80s and 90s (Chambers)<sup>4</sup>, and the growing number of self-regulatory frameworks for CSOs to address downward accountability concerns in the mid-90s (McGee)<sup>5</sup>. Depending on the context, some of these initiatives have been re-enforced, re-packaged or replaced by other initiatives under the recent 'effectiveness' wave.

1 Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness: A Draft International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, November 2010.

2 One World Trust, Responding to Development Effectiveness in the Global South, World Vision Briefing Paper Number 126, June 2010

3 Davies, R., Order and Diversity: Representing and Assisting Organisational Learning in Non-Government Aid Organisations. CDS Swansea. University of Wales - Swansea.

4 Chambers, R., Rural Development: Putting the Last First Harlow, Essex, Prentice Hall, 1983.

5 McGee, Review of Impact and Effectiveness of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives, Institute of Development Studies, Annex 5: Aid transparency, October 2010

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 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 principles<sup>6</sup> to improve aid effectiveness. In this respect, the Declaration can certainly be considered a positive achievement, highlighting the political will of governments to improve cooperation. However, CSOs were not involved in this process and they were not included as signatories of the Declaration. Only on the occasion of the 3rd High Level Forum (HLF)<sup>7</sup> in Accra in 2008, were CSOs fully recognised as development actors ‘in their own right’, whose efforts complement those of governments and the private sector. The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) also embraces the concept of ‘development effectiveness’ (as opposed to ‘aid effectiveness’) proposed by CSOs, which is more holistically oriented at assessing the impact of development initiatives on people’s social conditions and based on downward accountability towards citizens.

## **International frameworks on CSO development effectiveness**

Following the Accra HLF, CSOs committed to providing their own development effectiveness guidelines and principles. This translated into various new initiatives facilitated by multilateral or regional structures (OECD-DAC, EU), or by groups of CSO actors in specific sectors (humanitarian NGOs, trade unions, large international development NGOs, ..). The following section focuses on initiatives with a global scope.

## **Global initiatives**

The CSO Open Forum for Development Effectiveness<sup>8</sup> is the most comprehensive CSO-driven initiative aimed at reaching agreements on common principles and objectives of CSO development effectiveness. Its origins can be traced back to the work of the Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness that was established in 2007 by OECD-DAC in response to criticism about the lack of genuine CSO involvement in the Paris Declaration. As a follow-up to the Accra HLF in 2008 and through interactions between OECD-DAC and CSO representatives, the Global Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness was established with the financial support of bilateral donors. The initiative is coordinated by a Global Facilitation Group which groups together both development NGOs and other CSOs from North and South.

The Open Forum process set in motion a wide range of regional seminars, summits and meetings over the period from November 2009 to September 2010. In total more than 2000 CSOs participated in these events.

---

6 [http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_35401554\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html)

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

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



## **Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles, 2010**

1. Respect and promote human rights and social justice
2. Embody gender equality and equity while promoting women's and girl's rights
3. Focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation
4. Promote environmental sustainability
5. Practice transparency and accountability
6. Pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity
7. Create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning
8. Commit to realising positive sustainable change

In the first global assembly in September 2010, a set of eight development effectiveness principles (the so called 'Istanbul Principles') were approved. In addition, essential elements were identified for the enabling environment that CSOs require to be effective in the North and the South. These outputs will represent the main contribution from CSOs to the next HLF in 2011 in Busan<sup>9</sup>. While there have been critical comments (Pratt and Myhrman, 2009) about the over-representation of northern development NGOs in the Open Forum process, some other CSO actors, such as trade unions, played an active role in the various stages of the process.

The Better Aid Platform was a second structure that was established by development NGOs and other CSOs as a follow-up to the Paris Declaration. It plays more of a watchdog and advocacy role regarding the aid effectiveness initiatives of official governmental aid and therefore falls beyond the scope of this policy document.

The European Union (EU) launched its own framework for dialogue about civil society's involvement in EU development cooperation. The Structured Dialogue runs three parallel working groups on this topic between March 2010 and May 2011 with the participation of ten different CSO platforms. The 2<sup>nd</sup> working group reviewed the main principles of the Paris Declaration and its implications for CSO actors. This process ended-up emphasising the distinct role and character of CSOs and the Right of Initiative of CSOs. In this way, the Structured Dialogue re-enforced the relevance of the Open Forum and suggests applying caution when transferring the rationale of the Paris Aid Effectiveness Agenda to civil society.

Two other important global initiatives on the accountability and the transparency of CSOs are coordinated by One World Trust and CIVICUS. Both work from a broad definition of accountability (downward, upward, inward, and outward), which includes issues around transparency, participation, complaint mechanisms, and evaluation. These initiatives perform multiple functions, for example, that of a global observatory on CSO accountability, the development of tools and approaches, the sharing of experiences, and the development of an Accountability Index.

<sup>9</sup> The Paris Declaration will expire in 2011. Therefore, IV HLF in Busan will be aimed at revising it and, possibly, at the making of new global commitments.

The development effectiveness initiative by trade unions is presented in sections 3 and 4.

### **International agenda on development effectiveness: convergence or divergence?**

The introduction made reference to the different agendas, values and approaches that governmental and civil society actors follow regarding development effectiveness. The aid effectiveness agenda of the Paris Declaration is often seen as dominantly technical and geared exclusively towards the 'aid' dimension of development and mainly from a state perspective. On the other side of the spectrum are the more 'normative', 'values' or 'rights'-based approaches to development effectiveness that focus on democratic impacts and empowering citizens (McGee<sup>10</sup>, Reality Check<sup>11</sup>). This divide has to be seen as a continuum rather than binary, with several initiatives, although often with a dominant orientation, having elements of both.

The question can be raised as to whether the various initiatives within civil society also differ significantly. Importantly, in addition to the global and sector-specific initiatives described above, the number of initiatives on CSO development effectiveness is increasing fast. A first inventory by the One World Trust (2009, 2010)<sup>12</sup> counted more than 130 self-regulatory initiatives by NGOs and other CSOs in the North and South. The intrinsic and extrinsic drivers for the initiation or participation of CSOs in these initiatives differ widely (Pratt and Myhrman<sup>13</sup>, One World Trust, 2010), ranging from a need to restore public trust in CSOs, self-regulation as an alternative to government control, providing a signal of quality to back donors, matching efforts on aid effectiveness by official governmental aid, to addressing criticisms about the lack of downward and inward accountability in northern dominated INGOs.

However, research by One World Trust (2009, 2010) finds that the underlying principles of most of the initiatives are very similar, whether large or small, national or international, or Northern- or Southern-based. The convergence between these initiatives translates into six overarching principles as to what constitutes CSO effectiveness, accountability and quality and how it can be enhanced:

- Downward and inward accountability: accountability to the people that the NGOs/CSOs serve as well as to staff and volunteers
- Ownership and sustainability, including commitment to participation, collaboration and relationships
- Transparency and good governance
- Learning, evaluation and managing for results
- Financial and political independence
- Respect for gender, diversity, human rights and the environment

---

<sup>10</sup> See earlier

<sup>11</sup> The Reality of Aid, Civil Society and Development Effectiveness: Another View, Reality Check, August 2008

<sup>12</sup> One World Trust, Responding to NGO Development Effectiveness Initiatives, World Vision Briefing Paper Number 122, November 2009

<sup>13</sup> Pratt and Myhrman Improving Aid Effectiveness: A Review of Recent Initiatives for Civil Society Organisations, Intrac 2009

# 3. 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 (see section 2).

Development effectiveness is linked to the strategy of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)<sup>14</sup> itself which, since its Founding Congress in 2006, ranks development cooperation and capacity building among the political priorities<sup>15</sup>, 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”<sup>16</sup>.

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 Reports<sup>17</sup>, 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 wider programming process, involving national affiliates, ITUC Regional Organisations and Solidarity Support Organisations (SSOs)<sup>18</sup>, 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”<sup>19</sup>. 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.

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

15 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.

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

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

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

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

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, GUFs<sup>20</sup>. 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”<sup>21</sup>.

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.

As described in section 2, CSOs have been engaging within the aid and development effectiveness debate through the processes around the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. 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 TUDCN<sup>22</sup>, directly contributing also to the Open Forum strategy and activities<sup>23</sup> towards the next HLF in 2011 in Busan<sup>24</sup>.

## **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 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 consultations<sup>25</sup> with their national trade unions centres<sup>26</sup>. Consultations were

<sup>20</sup> Sector Union Federations structures at International level

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

<sup>22</sup> 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).

<sup>23</sup> The Open Forum supported the organisation costs of the regional consultations of the ITUC.

<sup>24</sup> 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.

<sup>25</sup> Three regional consultations have been implemented: Lomé, Togo for Africa; Asuncion, Paraguay for Latin America; Brussels and New Delhi for Asia/Pacific.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

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 Principles and Guidelines were first approved by the TUDCN members (general meeting, November 2010), and subsequently they were endorsed in unanimity by the ITUC General Council (GC) in February 2011. Thanks to this endorsement, the Principles & Guidelines will constitute core shared criteria for the ITUC itself and for its member organizations within multilateral and bilateral development cooperation programs.

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.

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.

## 4. 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 challenges;



## 5. Evaluation and Conclusions

### Background of the evaluation

The Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA) of the University of Leuven was requested to do an independent review of the process and the outcome of the Trade Union Development Effectiveness Principles Initiative. In this way, the TUDCN and its partners want to document the process, promote transparency, and at the same time draw lessons from this experience. The evaluation was based on the review of secondary material, including workshop reports, newsletters, policy documents and other background material. This was complemented by the participation at the preparatory meeting and the closing seminar of the TU Development Effectiveness process on 15 and 16 November 2010.

In the coming sub-sections a division is made between the evaluation of the process that the TUDCN has set-up to reach an agreement on the Development Effectiveness Principles and the actual outcomes. In the final section, a number of emerging opportunities and challenges are raised for the further implementation of the Principles.

### The process

The establishment of the TUDCN in 2008 brought an impetus to the methodological and political positioning of development cooperation in the trade union movement. Working on development effectiveness was from the start of the TUDCN one of the four work streams that it was managing. It received the mandate to facilitate the process of coming up with a shared understanding and agreement on the future Effectiveness Principles in the first ITUC-TUDCN meeting in Brussels in February 2009. The opening of one of the EU development funding channels towards CSO channels (beyond the conventional development NGOs), made it possible to fund the expanding work of the TUDCN in this area. In less than a year, the TUDCN managed to work towards a shared agreement on the Development Effectiveness Principles.

An internal expert group was established in January 2010 with representatives of the ITUC and Northern and Southern regional and national affiliates. By March 2010, a first draft of the Effectiveness Principles had been developed. Three regional consultations (Africa, Latin America and Asia) were planned between May and October 2010 to raise awareness about the TU Development Effectiveness process, to discuss and analyse the content of the draft Principles, capture inputs for the operational guidelines and the 'enabling environment' (see chapter 3). Each event was documented and highlights were shared in the monthly digital newsletters 'Trade Union Focus on Development'. The final draft was reviewed by the expert group, with assistance from the Belgian research institute HIVA and presented to the TUDCN network in the Network meeting from 16-18 November 2010. In February 2011 the final document was presented at the meeting of the ITUC General Council.

### ***Internal TU support, participation and transparency***

Self-regulatory initiatives tend to be more successful when they have a broad support base within the organisations that adopt these initiatives. This is something that cannot be assumed to happen automatically but needs to be nurtured from the beginning. The TUDCN was set-up as an open and voluntary network on development cooperation, working on the basis of consensus. These values were also incorporated in the development process of the Principles. This is, for example, visible in the fact that the expert group and the TUDCN network members consisted of representatives of Northern and Southern Affiliates. A wider range of TU members could participate and contribute during the regional consultations, in particular regarding the development of the operational guidelines. The wide sharing of draft documents increased the transparency of the overall process.

Similarly, throughout the process, the expert group has worked within their organisational mandate and has made sure that TU management at various levels was aware of the steps that were taken. The endorsement of the Principles and Guidelines during the February 2011 General Council meeting is important in this regard.

While it is difficult to assess from outside the overall momentum that has been generated for this important process and the levels that it has penetrated the TU movement, the building blocks are emerging as to what good TU development cooperation should look like and how it can be sustained.

### ***Coherence and timing***

There is an interesting interplay between the various working streams of the TUDCN which increases the coherence of its overall strategy and approach. For example, the momentum around the activities within the OECD-DAC working party on aid effectiveness was actively used to trigger discussions within the TUDCN and its work on the TU Principles. On the other hand, the growing insights into the added value and uniqueness of trade unions as development actors emerging from the work on the Principles, has been feeding into the advocacy work towards the EU Structured Dialogue initiative. The convergence increases the likelihood for mutual reinforcement of the various work streams and strengthens the support base within the movement.

The decision to work on TU Principles for Development Effectiveness in parallel with the Open Forum was also strategic. In this way, the preparatory activities of the Open Forum could contribute to the work of the TUDCN in this area and build momentum. But also conversely, as a member of the Global Facilitation Group of the Open Forum the reflections of the TUDCN on its own identity as a CSO development actor could be used to strengthen the Open Forum process.

## The outcome

The eight Principles and the operational guidelines presented in chapter 4 are the direct output from this TUDCN initiative. They are clustered around the principles of democratic ownership, autonomy, partnership, transparency, accountability, coherence, inclusiveness and equality and sustainability. In this section we assess these principles and the corresponding guidelines in view of their relevance and quality, their sustainability, the compliance mechanisms and the issues around monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

### *Relevance and quality*

The overall focus of the TU Principles is clearly oriented towards the TU development programmes themselves and the partnerships between trade union partners, rather than external actors. That clarity brings in relevant dimensions of introspection and self-regulation instead of the externalisation of all effectiveness problems, which has sometimes been witnessed in other similar processes. The Principles cover both North-South and South-South partnerships, although the latter is less pronounced and could be further strengthened in follow-up activities.

Each of the principles touches on essential elements of the trade union movement and its way of working. A hierarchy does exist however, with democratic ownership, coherence and autonomy clearly being core elements of trade union identity, from which some of the other principles are derived.

The TU Development Effectiveness Principles and the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles are building on similar values and views on human development. However, there are some interesting differences. Firstly, the TU Principles bring the issues of 'autonomy' and 'coherence' much more to the fore than the Istanbul Principles. This is both understandable and strategic. For trade unions the autonomy principle is often under siege and is therefore singled out. Interestingly, it is also strongly brought forward as an essential component in the relationship between the Southern trade union and their Northern funding partner. Secondly, with the explicit focus on the various dimensions of coherence within the trade union development work, there is awareness of the challenges of harmonising the work of the many TU actors. The focus on external coherence towards other development domains bridges the gap between aid initiatives and other important issues that affect development processes.

Accountability features explicitly in the TU Principles but it partly touches on different issues than the conventional development NGOs. The latter are often struggling with 'moral' or 'downward' accountability (Kaldor, 2003) because of their weaker links with their beneficiaries, constituencies and/or members. Trade unions have a long tradition of democratic ownership and member participation in agenda-setting and decision-making which makes this dimension of accountability generally less critical. Other dimensions of accountability (inward, outward and upward) are posing similar challenges for trade unions and for other CSOs.

The relevance of sector or actor-specific Principles compared to CSO-wide Principles appears when one examines how operational the actual guidelines are. The TU Guidelines are more practical in terms of the 'what', 'how' and 'when' that need to be done and spell out specific practices that TU partners are expected to adhere to or follow when implementing their programmes.

Important transversal themes across the eight Principles are monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and capacity development. Both appear as thematic areas where the TU movement wants to excel and make them part and parcel of mainstream TU development cooperation practice. In terms of M&E, it is relevant that attention is paid to the alignment of M&E procedures with those of the receiving partners and the focus on learning-oriented M&E approaches.

### ***Sustainability***

It is likely that the principles will become an important reference for TU development cooperation and will continue to be so for some time. With the planned endorsement of the Principles at the ITUC General Council, the 'political' sustainability should be guaranteed for the coming years. Whether this political support will also translate into 'institutional' sustainability within the movement is more difficult to assess. This will be determined by the extent to which the various TU structures own the Principles, which in turn is influenced by the degree of awareness raising, the establishment of internal compliance mechanisms and M&E (see next section).

### ***Compliance and M&E***

An area which is not yet developed is the way monitoring and compliance verification with the Principles will be organised. This can range from loose commitments to compliance, to self-assessments, peer reviews, or third party assessments. In case of loose commitments the assumption is that throughout the TU structures the intrinsic motivation will be strong enough to implement the principles without monitoring or verification. Experience shows that this is not realistic in the majority of large organisational structures. Therefore, introducing appropriate compliance mechanisms is an important point requiring attention for the implementation phase, one that may determine the success of the overall initiative.

### **Emerging opportunities and challenges**

Over the last few years trade unions have taken-up a more prominent role in the reform of the aid architecture and the changing roles of CSOs within this area. This advocacy role is crucial. In addition to the conventional development NGOs, trade unions represent a different face of civil society, one that has not been fairly represented in the past.

However, a stronger positioning also requires a performing, healthy, transparent, democratic and accountable trade union development arm. The internal capacity development process of the movement, through its work on the Principles and through other initiatives will be key in addressing these needs.

These are some of the opportunities and challenges that this review has identified:

- For sustainability reasons the Principles will need to be institutionalised in different ways, for example, by providing inspiration for future change strategies that target the improvement of the TU development practice, by incorporating them into the Terms of Reference of reviews and evaluations, by integrating them into job descriptions and so on.
- Developing appropriate compliance mechanisms might be essential in view of the wide diversity of actors that will make use of the principles. It is essential that the mechanisms find the right balance between compliance on the one hand and learning and improvement on the other. Peer reviews or assessments, if performed with full transparency, have the advantage of providing a rather safe learning and accountability environment. These approaches also have the advantage of contributing to in-house capacity development.
- Although it is widely assumed, we do not know as yet if these kinds of initiatives finally lead to better development cooperation (McGee, 2010). Documenting and analysing the small and bigger changes to which the Principles are contributing will not only provide useful insights into their own development effectiveness, but it should also make the changes visible and in this way contribute to maintaining the momentum of the overall change process.



## 6. Glossary

### Decent Work

The Decent Work concept was formulated by the ILO's constituents – governments and employers and workers – as a means of identifying the Organization's major priorities. It is based on the understanding that work is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracies that deliver for people and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development.

Decent Work reflects priorities on the social, economic and political agenda of countries and the international system. In a relatively short time this concept has forged an international consensus among governments, employers, workers and civil society that productive employment and Decent Work are key elements to achieving a fair globalization, reducing poverty and achieving equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development.

### Decent Work Agenda

Work is central to people's well-being. In addition to providing income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities. Such progress, however, hinges on work that is decent. Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives.

The ILO has developed an agenda for the community of work. It provides support through integrated Decent Work Country Programmes developed in coordination with its constituents. Putting the Decent Work Agenda into practice is achieved through the implementation of the ILO's four strategic objectives, with gender equality as a crosscutting objective:

- 1. Creating Jobs** – an economy that generates opportunities for investment, entrepreneurship, skills development, job creation and sustainable livelihoods.
- 2. Guaranteeing rights at work** – to obtain recognition and respect for the rights of workers. All workers, and in particular disadvantaged or poor workers, need representation, participation and laws that work for their interests.
- 3. Extending social protection** – to promote both inclusion and productivity by ensuring that women and men enjoy working conditions that are safe, allow adequate free time and rest, take into account family and social values, provide for adequate compensation in case of lost or reduced income and permit access to adequate healthcare.
- 4. Promoting social dialogue** – Involving strong and independent workers' and employers' organisations is central to increasing productivity, avoiding disputes at work, and building cohesive societies.

## Guideline

A context-specific recommendation indicating directions on how a principle should be implemented or what sort of action should be taken in a particular circumstance. (Open Forum, Nov 2010)

## Programme

The word programme is used in this context to refer to programme-based approaches which are engaging in development co-operation based on the principles of co-ordinated support for a locally owned programme of development, such as a national, regional or international trade union development policies and plans.

## Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

It is a document describing a bilateral or multilateral agreement between parties. It expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action.

## Capacity development

OECD-DAC (2006) defines capacity as the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to successfully manage their affairs. According to the OECD (2006), capacity development is the process in which people, organisations and society as a whole develop, strengthen, adjust and maintain capacity over time. In line with emerging insights, we see capacity development as processes that are essentially endogenous, complex, lengthy and continuous. It can therefore not be controlled from the outside. However, external factors can influence the direction of change. Capacity is not just about the ability to develop 'hard' or technical, individual or collective skills, but also involves 'soft' skills like self-confidence, legitimacy, resilience and realising a positive organisational culture.

## Core-funding

"Core-funding" refers to basic funding that covers the administrative and organisational costs apart from the traditional costs linked to the execution of projects or programmes. It is funding that allows the organisation to execute its own interventions with a considerable degree of freedom.

## Exit strategy<sup>27</sup>

A programme "exit" refers to the withdrawal of all externally provided programme resources from an entire programme area. A programme exit strategy is a plan describing how the programme intends to withdraw its resources while ensuring that the achievement of the programme goals is not jeopardised and that progress towards these goals will continue.

---

<sup>27</sup> Based on Alison Gardner, Kara Greenblott and Erika Joubert, What We Know About Exit Strategies Practical Guidance For Developing Exit Strategies in the Field, C-SAFE Regional Learning Spaces Initiative, 2005



## 7. Colophon

This paper is edited by Paola Simonetti (ITUC-DCE) and Huib Huyse (HIVA). The contents of the Principles and Guidelines are the result of the joint work of the TUDCN members. The secretariat wish to thank all the colleagues involved for their dedication and crucial contribution.







**ITUC**

5 Bld du Roi Albert II, Bte 1, 1210-Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32 2 2240211, Fax: +32 2 2015815

E-Mail: [info@ituc-csi.org](mailto:info@ituc-csi.org) • Web Site: <http://www.ituc-csi.org>

