

Workstream 2

TRADE UNIONS AS DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

➤ **Background and objectives:**

For several decades now trade unions have been active in the field of development cooperation. The overall strategic objective of development cooperation is to provide assistance to workers fighting to build free and democratic trade unions capable of defending human and trade union rights and contributing to a sustainable economic and social development for all. Experience shows, however, that there are considerable variations in financial resources, initiatives, the general resources available and/or the level of involvement of trade union organisations in the cooperation policies initiated by governments.

The work stream on “unions as development actors” will be tasked with:

- analysing the contribution and specific role of trade union organisations in development cooperation;
- studying the various existing channels of support for trade union projects and programmes in the North and the South;
- examining the various arrangements and procedures established by the unions to implement their development cooperation policy;
- study relations and cooperation with other development players, including NGOs, local authorities and other organisations involved in development;
- assess developments in support measures in line with changes in government policy, and in particular any integration of the decent work agenda.

➤ **Questions for discussion:**

- What national or international frameworks and systems are unions involved in?

- What scope is offered to the unions within these frameworks and systems (*status, role, tasks and responsibilities*) ?
- What are strengths and weaknesses of unions as development actors (*strengthening of organisations, achievement of objectives, construction of effective partnerships*) ?
- What types of relations exist between unions and other civil society organisations involved in development cooperation?
- What strategies should be put in place for influencing governments' policies on development cooperation (*focus on priorities, countries, regions*)?
- What lobbying programme should be applied for incorporating the decent work agenda in governments' development cooperation policies?

➤ **Anticipated results:**

The work should end up producing a paper summarising good practices and successful achievements by unions as development actors. It should also contain guidelines and suggestions for helping improve their partnerships with the institutions and agencies in charge of development cooperation. The conclusions will also provide an input into an assessment of the extent to which the decent work agenda has been incorporated in official development policies.

(see work stream 3 also)

➤ **Working methods:**

- **Working language:** French and Spanish
- **Working group participants*:** CGIL (Italy); CFDT (France); TUCA; CC.OO (Spain); CGSLB (Belgium).

**to be confirmed by 17th of APRIL*

- **Working tools:**

- Internet Forum using e-mail
- Face-to-face meetings of the group based on the project schedule (*one meeting per year in 2009 and 2010*).
- Reference documents: Compilation and use of all materials available in the partner organisations (*reports, newsletters, guides, etc.*)
- **Facilitator:** Mamadou Diallo (mamadou.diallo@ituc-csi.org)

➤ **Work Timeline (please refer to the Work Plan Agenda):**

April - May 2009	Internet discussion of the objectives, guidelines and methods
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	of the group and checking of group membership.
19-20 May 2009	Meeting of the group in Brussels to adopt the objectives, guidelines and working methods. Presentation of the 1 st draft paper.
June – Sept. 2009	Internet-based follow-up, discussions and exchanges on the draft document with a view to its finalisation. Preparation and input for the conference in Stockholm on “Trade unions as development actors”
October 2009	Stockholm Conference on “Trade unions as development actors” Meeting of the group in Stockholm and presentation of the draft paper.
Nov. 2009 – Feb. 2010	Internet-based follow-up, discussions and exchanges on the integration of the Decent Work Agenda in government policies
March 2010	Meeting of the group in Madrid and presentation of the updated report on activities.
April - Dec. 2010	Internet-based follow-up, discussions and exchanges on questions to be addressed. Presentation of the final report at the Conference in Brussels.
