

TRADE UNION PARTNERSHIPS SEMINAR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

23-24 JANUARY, 2018 – WINDHOEK

Meeting report

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY 2019

The meeting started with the welcoming of participants and followed with the presentation of the objectives and the agenda, after which participants introduced themselves and their expectations.

SESSION 1: THE STATE OF TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The first session started with a presentation of the work of the TUDCN and ATUDN. This was followed by a presentation of the ITUC-Africa priorities and the main initiatives that they are leading. SATUCC then introduced the work that they are undertaking in the sub-region.

The second part of the session consisted in a joint mapping of trade union development cooperation projects in Southern Africa. For this, participants broke up into two groups each composed of Solidarity Support Organisations (SSOs) and organisations from the sub-region to discuss the different trade union development cooperation projects that they are leading and their main priorities. This discussion also helped participants to identify different areas of synergies between their organisations.

SESSION 2: THE TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS PRINCIPLES AND THE TUDEP TOOL

The first part of the afternoon session consisted in a presentation and discussion on the eight [Trade Union Development Effectiveness Principles](#) and the criteria related to each of them. This was followed by a presentation of the [Trade Union Development Effectiveness Profile \(TUDEP tool\)](#) and its use.

Participants completed the questionnaire of the [TUDEP light tool](#) individually and then moved into working groups, one composed of SSOs and the other two of organisations from the sub region, to complete the form in a group, discussing their appreciation and experience of working with their partners in development cooperation projects in the sub region.

DAY 2: THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 2019

SESSION 3: ANALYSIS OF TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The first session of the second day started with a presentation of the main discussions of each of the groups the previous day. This was followed by a presentation of the results of the group work in the TUDEP tool. These showed that for the SSOs, the Principles of Sustainability and Accountability were the most challenging, whereas Partnership and Autonomy were the most satisfactory. For the organisations from the sub region, the principles of Sustainability and Autonomy were seen as more challenging and compliance with the principles of Partnership, Democratic Ownership and Transparency was more satisfactory. Comparing the results from each group, the highest differences between the views of SSOs and organisations from the sub region were seen for the principles of Autonomy and Transparency.

Participants then discussed the results to analyse the reasons for the different conclusions that came out of the use of the TUDEP tool.

SESSION 4: WAYS FORWARD FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

In the last session of the meeting participants worked in two groups, each including SSOs and organisations from the sub region, to discuss different ways to improve compliance with certain principles.

The outcomes of the discussion for each principle were:

On **Sustainability**:

- There is a need for exit or coping strategies, to cope with diminishing or disappearing funds. Maintaining solidarity is important. Partners must have a plan to sustain the partnership when there are changes in economy.
- Strengthening organisational capacities should take into account the need for adaptation, including how to change and adapt policies. Developing new ways of organising and strengthening leadership are important. Leaders need to be trained to support change and be agents of change.
- There is a need to mainstream initiatives to fight climate change within unions and not keep them as separate activities or specific projects.
- There is a need for plans for financial sustainability, opt for trade union investments and look into other forms of domestic resource mobilisation.

On **Autonomy**:

- Programmes are designed mainly by the donors but receiving partners are in the driving seat.
- Programme design should be based on receiving partners' own policies and strategic documents.
- There is a need to avoid external pressure. Avoid that partners are under the influence of their national government.
- Accepting funding should not constitute an obligation to accept another agenda.
- There is a need to work on the communication between the SSO and the receiving partner.

On **Transparency**:

- Through some receiving partners, some conditionalities have been imposed. There needs to be clarity about the implications of a partnership before getting into it. Have an MoU that will look at clear and transparent criteria for the partnership on the basis of mutually agreed principles.
- There needs to be transparency about the objectives and outcomes.
- All partners have a responsibility regarding transparency. It is important to uphold trust.

Following the presentation of the outcomes of the group work, the last session of the seminar consisted in a presentation of the Trade Union Organisational Capacity tool elaborated by the TUDCN. Participants showed appreciation for this tool and a willingness to work with it.



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