



ITUC-Africa – Strengthening Economic and Social Policy Interventions

Workshop for developing and upgrading the skills of researchers from affiliated trade unions

Module 1 : Importance of trade union research in Africa

Nairobi, KENYA, Sarova Panafric, 12-16 April 2010

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ITUC-Africa's Development Challenges

- Numerically, the 16 million members of the ITUC-Africa represent less than four per cent of Africa's labour force.
- Organisationally, most affiliates of the ITUC-Africa are small and weak. This problem is further compounded by the proliferation and fragmentation of the trade union movement, especially at the national level.
- In terms of finances and logistics, both the ITUC-Africa and its affiliates are under-resourced.

ITUC-Africa's Development Challenges

- The raging conflicts and political upheavals in some parts of Africa;
- corruption and human rights violations;
- widespread poverty;
- un- and under-employment which heavily weighs on the youth;
- migrant labour (brain-drain), child labour and human trafficking;
- gender inequality;

ITUC-Africa's Development Challenges

- informalisation of the economy occasioned by liberalisation and privatisation;
 - unfavourable labour legislation;
 - weak investment in public services;
 - neo-liberalism and hike in the prices of food and fuel;
 - HIV/AIDS pandemic and other diseases; poor infrastructure; and natural calamities
- are obvious challenges for the ITUC-Africa and its affiliates.

ITUC-Africa's Development Challenges

- The challenge posed by global trade policies and the emergence of China, India and Brazil and others as another generation of economic and political powers in the world is considered both as a threat and an opportunity for Africa's industrialization policy and growth strategy.
- The implications of the Global crisis
- Weakness for social dialogue and the institutions for assuring this, as well as the lip service in getting trade unions involve in effective decision-making process.

In Search of a Development Strategy for ITUC-Africa

Vision, Mission and First Priority of ITUC-Africa

Vision

- ITUC-Africa's vision is to achieve a united, democratic and independent regional trade union organisation that works for the welfare of all African workers, in a world where everyone can realise their full potentials under conditions of freedom, equality and social justice.

In Search of a Development Strategy for ITUC-Africa

Mission

- To attain this vision, ITUC-Africa has set itself a mission to strengthen the trade unions in Africa and provide a common voice for all African workers to realise a healthy and safe working environment and a decent life for all by fighting all forms of exploitation and discrimination, defending human and trade union rights, promoting social justice, peace, democracy and pursue the preservation of the environment

In Search of a Development Strategy for ITUC-Africa

First Priority

- The first task that the new organisation has taken is to harmonise and strengthen its Secretariat with a view to achieving the full benefits of a unified organisation.
- An important part of this activity is embodied in the collective effort to develop a Strategic Plan for the ITUC-Africa from the Programme of Action that was adopted at its Founding Congress

Programme of Action of ITUC-Africa

- The Programme of Action covers four strategic areas:
 - 1)Defending and promoting human and workers' rights;
 - 2)Promoting equality and social protection;
 - 3)Strengthening organisation;
 - 4)Strengthening economic and social policy intervention
 - 5)A fifth priority area comprises the instruments or tools for building general and support services to a standard that provide for the realisation of effective and full potential of ITUC-Africa's work

Strategic Direction

- The strategic direction provides a guide to ITUC-Africa's future in the critical priority areas outlined above:
- **Defending and promoting human and workers' rights.** *By the end of the plan period, the ITUC-Africa will have secured the integration of human and workers' rights into the agenda and processes of the AU's institutions and raised the activism of affiliates and their members on human and workers' rights in selected African countries.*

Strategic Direction

- **Promoting equality and social protection.** *By the end of the plan period, the ITUC-Africa will have promoted OHS&E to become a priority of its affiliated unions in a selected African countries with a view to achieving substantial improvements in the workplace; developed HIV/AIDS policies at regional level and with a selected number of affiliates and to ensure that these policies are incorporated in CBAs. It will have also assisted workers in the formal and informal economy in a selected number of countries through its affiliates to set up social security schemes and functional health mutual organisations; and mainstreamed gender equality in its structures, policies and activities and in a selected number₁₂ of countries.*

Strategic Direction

- **Strengthening organisation.** *By the end of the plan period, the ITUC-Africa will have: increased the representativity; increased unity of action and assisted affiliates in post-conflict societies to rebuild and restructure their organisations, strengthen their internal democratic values and procedures as well as their capacity for social dialogue and recruitment campaigns.*
- **Strengthening economic and social policy intervention.** *By the end of the plan period, the ITUC-Africa will have: strengthened the capacity of a selected number of affiliates to analyze economic and social policies and formulate alternative proposals so as to secure their effective participation in the negotiation and dialogue structures at national, sub-regional and regional levels*

Way Forward

- Consultation meetings have been held simultaneously around each of the five strategic priority areas of the ITUC-Africa before the end of this year in order to develop realistic project proposals that will inform its intervention in the field for a four year period (2009 – 2012). These proposals will be presented to the General Council for endorsement and adoption. The approved proposals have been presented to Cooperating Partners at a special meeting that will take place in the last quarter of 2008.
- Since 2009, all the projects have started.
- **This workshop is one of activities of Project 4** “ITUC-Africa *Strengthening the interventions in the area of economic and social policy*”

The main components of Project 4

1) Development objective

- In line with the Strategic Plan, this project should contribute to human centred national economic and social policies that will ensure sustainable growth and development and lead to the effective reduction of poverty.

2) Project objective

- At the end of the project, the capacity of ITUC-Africa and her affiliates to develop effective economic and social policies and participate in social dialogue structures will be strengthened.

The main components of Project 4

3) Project Activities

- A - An inventory made of all the research carried out in the areas of concern by the affiliated organisations and trade union research centres in Africa.
- B - An evaluation undertaken of the academic world and research institutions in the areas of concern.
- C - Framework agreements developed to strengthen collaboration between trade unions, universities and research institutions.
- D - 50 researchers trained and empowered to produce quality research on social and economic priority issues related to workers and trade unions.

The main components of Project 4

3) Project Activities

- E - Documents published highlighting the trade union position and providing alternatives as regards neo-liberal policies.
- F - Policy documents produced aimed at promoting and advocating for decent work.
- G - Research reports completed on economic integration issues.
- H - Research reports published on various trade issues.
- I - The capacity enhanced of the affiliated organisations to participate in social dialogue forums.

The specific objectives of this workshop

- To inform and sensitize participants on the importance of trade union research in Africa, and on research methodology and procedures.
- To build their capacity on elementary statistics
- To inform and to sensitize them on the necessity of involving unions in the follow-up issues of States governance, economic, socioeconomic and trade plan
- To offer them a platform to reflect and discuss on priorities of trade-union research in socio-economic areas in Africa
- To offer a platform for identifying unions research areas in socio-economic policy
- To offer an opportunity to document trade union research information.

N°	Activities	2010	2011	2012
A.	Inventory of research undertaken by affiliated organisations and trade union research centres in Africa in the relevant field	X	X	
B.	Evaluation of the academic world and research institutions.	X	X	
C	A conference with other stakeholders on research priorities	X		
D.1	Production of a research manual	XX	X	X

N°	Activities	2010	2011	2012
D.2	Workshops for developing the skills of researchers from affiliated trade unions	XXX X	X	X
D.3	Publication of a bi-annual report with articles on research activities	XXX	XX	XX
E	Workshops at national level to develop alternatives to neo-liberal policies	XXXX	XX	

N°	Activities	2010	2011	2012
F	Research activities on trade issues	X	X	
G.	Research activities on issues of economic integration.	X		X
H.	Research workshops for the development of policies on decent work	X		X
I	Skills training workshops in lobbying, advocacy and participation in social fora		X	X