INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE
OF THE ILO

PROGRAMME FOR WORKERS’ ACTIVITIES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A9-02569
Interregional Trade Union Training on Social Security
12 - 23 July 2010
1. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME FOR WORKERS’ ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE OF THE ILO (ACTRAV-TURIN)

The Workers' Education Programme of the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) of the ILO is aimed to assist trade unions in promoting their training programmes so as to expand their activities and membership and to improve their capacity to represent and defend the interests of their members. The Programme for Workers’ Activities of the International Training Centre of the ILO (ACTRAV-Turin) is an integral part of this ILO/ACTRAV Workers’ Education Programme, with the specific task of assisting trade unions in empowering their organizations and strengthening their training capacity through a series of trade union training programmes provided at the Turin Centre, in the field and through distance/online education.

For more information on the ACTRAV-Turin Programme, please refer to Section 12 of this document.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE TRAINING COURSE

One of the priorities in the Decent Work Agenda is “extending the effectiveness and coverage of social protection for all, including all the workers and all the citizens”.

Once focused the theme “social security”, first of all it has to be formulated as a human right (recognized by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, arts. 22, 25) and from the conception of the ILO, which incorporates the definition of SS and OSH.

For trade unions, organization and collective action are one of the major means to promote decent work conditions, including social protection; however, the lack of respect for workers’ right to organize increasingly hinders the implementation of such means. Unions consider that social security should be seen as investments in national productivity, necessary for social and economic development, as well as an essential element of social justice, as defined in the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and in the 2009 ILO Global Jobs Pact.

Most countries need reforms of their social protection systems to meet the challenges of ageing populations, globalization and changing employment and social conditions.

Extending social protection coverage to uncovered population is one of the priorities of the ILO in the framework of its global strategy aimed to ensure that all people - both men and women - have a decent work. ILO seeks to promote government action and constant social dialogue for universal, pluralistic and nationally designed social security systems that should combine a range of protective mechanisms in an effective way, to provide adequate levels of protection to all groups of society.

In such process, Trade Unions’ proposals and effective participation are absolutely necessary.

The course, “A9-02569: Trade Union Training on Social Security”, aims to develop trade union representatives’ technical skills to work on “social security union organization” in its three components: training, proposal, and participation to play an effective role in tripartite dialogue, collective bargaining and other decision-making processes in the field of social security policies and workers’ rights.

Therefore, this course is conceived as a course of "organization" on social security, with a core training component, and like following of previous courses: Interregional - A901143 (2008), and Regionals - A101273 (Africa), A301274 (Asia), and from the ACTRAV Latin American Regional Project SSOS (2007-2009).
Both Trade Unions and ACTRAV need to work on training processes on social security; in fact, training is a teaching-learning process that needs to be planned and ordered and this course is an opportunity to get it.

According to the ACTRAV perspective, training ought to be organized according to:

- profiles and roles of the target participants (level of responsibility in the union, members of social dialogue contexts, focal points of networks, etc.)
- priorities (the routes should provide sufficient options for the priorities of each group or organization - curriculum flexibility), and
- time available (always limited in the case of trade unionists).

Moreover, all the above mentioned should be ordered by deepening levels, and each level should contain: objectives, contents, methodological guidance and materials, documents and reference resources.

Our desire is to build with the group an ACTRAV-Turin training Action Plan worldwide on social security, to be adapted to national realities.

The course will provide an opportunity for trade unions to get in touch and share knowledge and experiences on different training processes, current debates on reforms of social security laws and schemes, as well as on the implementation of ILO instruments for decent work promotion, with important Regional experiences.

This is expected to strengthen trade unions’ capacity to influence reforms of social protection and social security systems, in order to improve the quality of social dialogue and to promote social protection for workers and citizens; the aim is to look for answers in the short term on the role of social security in the current crisis context, in the long term on the development model for a fairer world, always considering the gender perspective as well as the specific needs of migrant workers in terms of labour rights and social security rights.

3. DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The course aims to develop trade union representatives’ technical skills to work on “social security union organization” in its three components: training, proposal, and participation to play an effective role in tripartite dialogue, collective bargaining and other decision-making processes in the field of social security policies and workers’ rights.

This training course will contribute to strengthen trade unions’ capacity in the area of social security organization, optimizing their teams, methodology, training processes and proposals, in order to promote:

a) Strengthening of a structure (technical-union team or department) in the union, responsible for training and education on social security.

b) Strengthening union capacity to develop policies and proposals on social security.

c) Effective communication among workers’ organizations, to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise among union leaders and members directly involved in social security issues.

d) Developing union policies and strategies to promote social protection for workers, especially in the informal economy.

c) Strengthening unions’ capacity to promote fundamental workers’ rights by enhancing knowledge and use of ILO International Labour Standards, including notions on the ILOs supervisory machinery.
4. IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Identify main challenges and difficulties faced by trade unions in organising and protecting workers’ rights, and explain how to face such difficulties;
- Demonstrate understanding of process and driving forces of the crisis and its social and economic impact on both workers’ protection and rights;
- Understand and use the ILO standards for social protection as well as Freedom of Association & Collective Bargaining, including supervisory mechanisms, to promote an “enabling environment” for trade unions’ action on social protection;
- Understand ILO core notions and practices, such as international labour standards, decent work, freedom of association and issues on the agenda of the annual ILO Conference, especially the importance of the Declaration on Social Justice for a fair Globalization (2008), the Global Jobs Pact (2009) and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998);
- Understand the key issues in the area of social security schemes including targeting, coverage, benefits and financing;
- Get knowledge about organization and social protection initiatives undertaken by trade unions in other countries;
- Develop understanding of gender concerns in the area of social protection policies;
- Propose (to their unions) improved strategies for social protection of workers, with a special focus on migrant and informal workers;
- Set up union training systems within the organization, to plan, facilitate and evaluate training activities about social security, always integrating the gender perspective and developing programs that recognize the prior experience of participants;
- Organize distance education processes through online services;
- Develop a project proposal (work plan) aimed to improve the general or specific unions’ skills in the field of social protection.

5. COURSE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

Even though this is not a “course content for technical training”, the following issues should be addressed:

- SS in crisis, in response to the crisis of the current development model, and therefore as a tool to implement a more equitable model; Convention 102 and social floor, like a answer to extend the coverage.
- Strong focus on gender; Reference to migrant workers and their social security rights.

The course includes the following sections:

A) Crisis, Labour Relations & Social Protection issues

This session will focus on the changes produced by the crisis and their impact on labour relations, the consequent challenges for trade unions in terms of decent work promotion and protection of workers’ rights, including social protection, looking for answers on the role of social security in the current crisis context, as well as on a more equitable development model to be implemented.

B) Introduction to International Labour Movement, the ILO and ACTRAV.
International Labour Standards (ILS), Freedom of Association and supervisory machinery

The programme will include a session on the international labour movement history and structure, on the ILO and the role of ACTRAV (Bureau for Workers’ Activities), as such understanding constitutes a useful tool to promote social dialogue and tripartism in the national contexts.

The session will focus on the role of ILS in promoting workers’ rights, included the implementation of “enabling environments” for workers’ organization and social security promotion (especially through Convention 102), and focusing on core labour standards (such as Freedom of Association and Right to Collective Bargaining), analysis of the ILO supervisory machinery, complaints procedure including special procedures for freedom of association.

C) 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and its important references to Social Security

The prospect of the four Decent Work axes is closely connected and interrelated: decent work means “quality jobs”, labour and union rights and social protection, all in the framework of social dialogue in order to achieve agreements towards such goals, so that union action operates simultaneously on all three axes independently developed, while social dialogue constitutes the basic tool to implement all the others.

D) Holistic view of Social Security

From a holistic view of Social Security (origin, purpose, principles, characteristics) and translating it into different services and benefits, any training should be developed through different levels, towards an increasingly exhaustive comprehension of all elements involved in a social security system and of the different levels of union action aimed to: disseminate and enforce recognized rights, extend coverage, participate in the construction and progress of the system, in evaluation and, ultimately, in management.

In such perspective, the opportunity of sharing different regional experiences is very important.

E) Gender perspective on Social Security

In all analysis, from the more concrete to the more complex, during all the learning process it is necessary to constantly compare the different consequences of social security services and benefits organization for women and men.

F) The challenge of extending coverage: 2009 ILO Global Jobs Pact and the “basic social protection floor”

In developing countries, social protection systems can also alleviate poverty and contribute to national economic and social development. In a crisis situation, short-term measures to assist the most vulnerable may be appropriate.

The Global Jobs Pact affirms that Countries should give consideration, as appropriate, to the following:
(i) introducing cash transfer schemes for the poor to meet its immediate needs and to alleviate poverty;
(ii) building adequate social protection for all, drawing on a basic social protection floor including: access to health care, income security for the elderly and for people with disabilities, child benefits and income security combined with public employment guarantee schemes for the unemployed and the working poor;
(iii) extending the duration and coverage of unemployment benefits (hand in hand with relevant
measures to create adequate work incentives recognizing the current realities of national labour markets);
(iv) ensuring that the long-term unemployed keeps being connected to the labour market (through, for example, skills development for employability);
(v) providing minimum benefit guarantees in countries where pension or health funds may no longer be adequately funded, in order to ensure adequate workers’ protection and considering how to better protect workers’ savings in future scheme design; and
(vi) providing adequate coverage for temporary and non regular workers.

**G) Migrant workers: labour rights and social protection: regional experiences**

As migrant workers are among the most vulnerable groups of workers, they need particular attention in organizing efforts, as well as during negotiations. For trade unions, migrant labour concerns rights, equality, equal treatment and equal opportunity; health and safety at work, jobs, vocational training, social security, and union organization.

There are often disparities in social security access and coverage for migrant workers: this is particularly true for temporary migrants, seasonal workers, workers in subcontracting and undocumented migrants. Temporary labour contracts are often used by unscrupulous employers as means to avoid social security liabilities. Many migrant workers actually pay social security contributions even though they will never receive any benefit.

**H) Social Protection Policies**

The following topics will be covered in different sessions:

- Introduction to Social Protection: what it means, ILO perspective as well as overview of programmes, links with Decent Work Agenda. The session will focus on Social Protection sector’s policies including ILO’s “Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All”
- Key issues in the area of social protection schemes including targeting, coverage, benefits and sources of financing and the role of the government and social partners in the extension of social protection.
- Regional Trade Union Experiences, especially TUCA Regional Platform
- Occupational Safety & Health: ILO standards & policies. The current HIV/AIDS situation in the world and which role unions can play in protecting workers’ rights at work and for social protection.

**I) Trade Union’s Organizing & social protection initiatives**

The session will focus on enabling conditions & organizing strategies of the unions, as well as on social protection initiatives taken by unions in different countries.

**J) Project work and action plan**

Participants will be exposed to project writing skills which they will then use to prepare individual/group project proposal – which should reflect their work plan to be implemented in their origin country as a result of the training course. In fact, they will design and develop a specific action plan incorporating some elements of the course subjects that can be implemented with a specific target group in local settings; besides, such work plans will be used for evaluation purposes for any future follow-up seminar.

**K) Evaluation**

Course activities will be reviewed weekly and through an end-of-course evaluation. There will also be a post-course evaluation which will be conducted one year after the completion of the course.

Each session will also entail group discussions and presentations by the participants to share
participants’ own knowledge and to promote the applicability of the ideas presented to the country situation.

The gender dimension of each topic above mentioned would be incorporated in the sessions, in both presentations and discussions.

6. PARTICIPANTS
This course is for 20 unionists from Latin America and Caribbean (5), Africa (5), Asia (5), Europe (3) and Arab States (2), especially related to the social security field and the design and implementation of union training programs in their countries of origin, and have participated in previous activities organized by ACTRAV-ITC.

Participants should not exceed 45 years of age. Special emphasis is given to the recruitment of women.

The organizations selected must commit to provide the necessary support to selected participants’ preparation prior to the completion of the course and in the posterior follow-up, in particular in relation to the implementation of the individual action plan drawn up at the end of the program in Turin. Organizations should ensure that the skills and knowledge acquired by participants are properly used in union activities.

7. COURSE PREREQUISITES

Country report

Each participant will be required to prepare beforehand and bring with them to the Turin Centre a country report. The report, preferably typed on A4 sheets and no longer than 3 pages, should include information on:

- Major changes in economic and labour policies in their countries in recent years by crisis effects;
- State of the trade unions – extent of unionisation, number of national centres, union structure and organisation, unions’ main challenges;
- Main social protection schemes for workers;
- Situation regarding the ratification and implementation of ILO International Labour Standards on fundamental rights and social protection - number of ILO conventions ratified, whether any tripartite committee exists to look into the ratification process of ILO conventions at the national level, reason why some of the core ILO conventions haven't been ratified (reasons according to trade unions’ understanding), what is the position of your trade union on ratification of ILO standards, in particular the core labour standards;
- Structure of the Department of Social Security and Union Training; priorities, major activities and challenges. Relation between them.
- Implementation of union policies to promote decent work, and gender equity. Experience of commissioning and development of work plans derived from activities of
previous ILO training.
- Experience in distance learning and participation in networks.

Under each of the above headings, participant's report is also expected to provide analysis of the situation of the women workers and union policies/strategies to address the gender dimension of the identified problems.

The country report should be sent by e-mail to the following address: Actrav_turin@itcilo.org or by fax (+39-011-693-6589)

Pre-course orientation via computer communications

There will be a pre-course orientation via computer conferencing organized for the course participants. Besides enabling participants to get to know each other, the major objectives of this pre course online conference are to get the participants acquainted with the main subjects, objectives and target outputs of the course and also discuss country situation in regard to labour relations issues.

The online orientation will take place from 28 June to 9 July 2010. In order to participate, the participants need to have access to a computer and to the Internet. Details of the online conference will be communicated to your organization as well as to the selected participants. You are requested to help your participant to participate in this online pre-course orientation.

8. METHODOLOGY

The learning methods used in the course will acknowledge the participants' level competence and experience, taking into account the proposition that they already have practical experience in the field of trade unions, organizing, negotiations and participating in the bipartite and tripartite fora. Active learning methods will be employed through the course, which will encourage the participants for group discussions and to be fully involved in all aspects of training.

9. LANGUAGE

The course will be conducted in English and Spanish

10. DURATION AND STARTING DATE

The course is scheduled for 2 weeks, from 12 to 23 July 2010.

11. THE CENTRES' TRAINING RESOURCES AND RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

The training will be conducted by staff of the Centre, external collaborators with specialized expertise and staff of the ILO/Geneva. The Centre's resources include classrooms, a learning resources centre and library, a computer training laboratory and an interactive language laboratory. Located on the banks of the river Po, the Centre's campus provides a congenial environment to study and live. The accommodation is provided in serviced bed/study rooms with private bathrooms. Other amenities on campus include a restaurant, cafeteria, bank, travel agency, post office and an infirmary.

12. BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAMME FOR WORKERS’ ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE OF THE ILO

Training is one of the major functions of trade unions. Training their members and officials is essential to strengthening the organization and improving their functions. Because of the involvement of trade unions in an increasing number of social and economic issues in recent years, it has become even more vital for unions to continue and expand their training activities for both their leaders and members.
The Workers' Education Programme of the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV/Geneva) of the ILO is dedicated to assisting trade unions in promoting their training programmes so they can expand their activities and membership and improve their capacity to represent and defend the interests of their members. The Programme for Workers' Activities of the International Training Centre of the ILO (ACTRAV/Turin) is an integral part of this Bureau. It has the specific task of assisting trade unions in empowering their organizations and strengthening their training capacity through a programme of trade union training programmes conducted at the Turin Centre, in the field and through distance/online education.

Through the delivery of advanced training courses, the production of training material for residential and online education, advisory services and specific projects, the Programme for Workers' Activities of the International Training Centre of the ILO is designed to respond to the changing training needs of workers' organizations. The structure and the content of the Programme are aimed at responding to the main challenges imposed by globalization on the international labour movement. Stronger and more cohesive international workers' actions are required to respond to the political and economic transformations produced by globalization.

The Programme's activities are organized within five categories of training activities and services:

- The first consists of specialized residential training courses at the ILO Turin Centre which are conducted using active learning methods. Curricula are developed in line with the four ILO strategic objectives, gender and women workers' rights, training methodology and custom-made courses for the Global Union Federations (GUFs). The ILO's major strategic objectives are: 1) Standards and fundamental principles and rights at work. 2) Employment 3) Social Protection and 4) Social Dialogue.
- A second category of activities includes follow-up seminars and training activities developed jointly with ACTRAV staff in the regions. In particular follow-up seminars are carried out in order to assess the contribution of the Programme for Workers' Activities in achieving its development objectives in the area of training and also provide advanced training.
- A third category involves the development of online education for workers' organizations.
- A fourth category is related to the training of ACTRAV staff.
- A fifth category concerns the delivery of services, mainly in the area of training assistance to labour organizations.

In the past few years the design and delivery of training courses by ACTRAV-Turin have been conducted with a systematic and multi-disciplinary approach to on gender mainstreaming, which is strongly endorsed by the Programme.

More information on the Programme for Workers' Activities of the International Training Centre of the ILO (ACTRAV Turin) is available at the following Internet address: 
http://actrav.itcilo.org/index_en.php