Bridging Africa's Digital Divide:

The Role of Trade Unions in English-speaking Africa

Report compiled and edited by

Mohammed Mwamadzingo

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International Labour Organization

Bureau for Workers' Activities (ILO/ACTRAV)

Training Workshop on "Bridging Africa's Digital Divide: The Role of Trade Unions in Africa"

Tom Mboya Labour College, Kisumu, Kenya, 7th-11th July 2003

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Foreword

The idea to hold the training workshop on Bridging the Digital Divide in Africa: The Role of Trade Unions, on which this report is based, was first conceived in June 2001, while attending a course at the ILO Turin Centre. The purpose of the activity was to assist workers' organisations in the selected countries in Africa to strengthen the institutional and human capacities to utilise information and communication technology in all trade union activities. The activity was also intended to enhance the dissemination of workers' education programmes between the ILO's Bureau for Workers' Activities (ILO/ACTRAV), the Programme for Workers' Activities of the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin, Italy, and the labour colleges in selected countries.

The workshop was organised under the backdrop that it is the role of the ILO/ACTRAV to devise and establish training policies and programmes and strengthen well-functioning workers' organisations to bridge the digital divide between and within the collaborating institutions. ILO/ACTRAV believes that trade unions must be the "architects" and "engineers" constructing this bridge - for the benefit of their membership and their larger communities. Trade unions, as frequent users of cyber cafes, are constantly amazed by the versatility of Information and Communications Technology. Consequently, trade unions as a significant interest group in their communities must develop strategies for regional and national representation at the global information society. As in many other social and economic issues affecting the modern society, trade unions must play the roles of advisor, teacher and advocates to a mix of citizenry with varying levels of tech-ignorance. In their position as the last line of defence to their membership and the general populace, workers through their organisations must be better positioned to sell the benefits of the digital age than probably most self-proclaimed and undemocratic civil society institutions.

One important outcome of the workshop was that, the bridge of the digital divide will only be shortened if trade unions design and co-ordinate the ICT agenda at the workplaces. The conventional wisdom must be that information technology must be seen to be important for all trade union operations, ranging from membership recruitment and organising, delivery of services, collective bargaining, research, training and education, to political campaigns and maintenance of democratic principles. Trade unions must also take information technology as a critical force in shaping their relevance in the future.

I wish to express my gratitude to the administration of the Tom Mboya Labour College and the leadership of the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya) for hosting the training workshop. The technical and logistical support from Mr Michael Sebastian (Acting Director, ILO/ACTRAV), Mr Ditiro Saleshando (Regional Desk Officer, ILO/ACTRAV), and Mr Enrico Cairola (Manager of the Programme for Workers' Activities of the ILO Turin Centre) is highly appreciated. Last, but of course not least, I wish to pay special tribute to the workshop participants and the very able resource persons, including my colleagues from the Turin Centre (Mr Marc Bélanger and Insa Ben Said Dia), for providing so much wealth of information on the subject matter.

Mohammed Mwamadzingo
Regional Specialist on Workers' Education
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Table of Contents

Some useful Internet-related terms and acronyms

E-Commerce	Electronic Commerce
FTP	File Transfer Protocol - a method of moving files between two Internet Sites. FTP was invented and in use long before the advent of the World Wide Web
HTML	Hyper Text Markup Language - the coding used to create Hypertext documents for use on the World Wide Web
HTTP	Hyper Text Transfer Protocol - the protocol (set of rules) for moving hyperfiles across the Internet. HTTP is the most important protocol used by the World Wide Web. All Internet addresses begin with 'http:\\'
Hypertext	Generally, any text that contains links to other documents, i.e. word(s) or phrases in the document that can be chosen by a reader and cause another document to be displayed
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
Website	A collection of linked pages (files) that are posted on the web

Part One:
Report on the Training Workshop

Chapter One

Report on the Training Workshop

by
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Marc Bélanger, ILO International Training Centre, Turin
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Target Countries: Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia
Venue: Tom Mboya Labour College, Kisumu, Kenya
Dates: 7-11 July, 2003

I.1 Background and Objectives of the Training Workshop

The Bureau for Workers' Activities of the International Labour Organisation (ILO/ACTRAV), with the support from the Workers' Activities Programme of the International Training Centre in Turin (ILO/ ACTRAV Turin), sponsored this special workers' education training workshop. The workshop was organised in order to help trade unions in English-speaking African countries bridge what has been described as the 'Digital Divide', i.e. the gap between developed and developing countries in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The workshop also provided an opportunity to update the skills of those who participated in the Turin programme and determine the state of the workplans they had developed there.

The workshop included sessions on Managing the Information Society in Africa, Needs Assessment on Institutional Capacity in ICT, and the use of the newly introduced OpenOffice software, which can be downloaded from the internet or obtained from the ILO Turin and field offices. This software is available without charge and may be freely distributed. All participants were provided with OpenOffice programs for word-processing, calculations, computer presentations, designing web pages, and so on. In addition, workshop participants were trained in the use of a computer communications network in order that they might maintain contact and share experiences, with each other and with the course instructors, as their respective organisations develop their information technology capacities.

The training workshop brought together 23 participants from seven African countries (Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zanzibar), resource persons from Kenya and Mauritius, and specialists from the ILO (Harare and Turin). In addition, there were representatives from regional trade union organisations, namely the African Regional Organisation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU-AFRO), which has its headquarters in Nairobi, and the African Regional Organisation of the Union Network International (UNI-Africa), which is based in Ndola, Zambia.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

(i) Assess the infrastructural capacity of the trade union movement to communicate with affiliates, the rank and file, and the international community.

(ii) Identify major problems within trade union operations (administration, communication, and provision of services) that might be addressed by introducing new technologies.

(iii) Master computer operations as a prerequisite to understanding IT.

(iv) Describe the major applications of IT and the strategic implications for national and international trade union development.

(v) Establish long-term objectives designed to meet identified priorities in IT at national, regional, and international level.

(vi) Develop and adapt training materials on IT for implementing workers' education programmes at local level.

(vii) Design an IT workplan to be applied in national centres and affiliated trade unions.

I.2 Activities and Proceedings of the Seminar

(a) Official Opening Ceremony

The Guest of Honour at the official opening was the Honourable Peter Odoyo, Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources Development. Odoyo was representing the Honourable Ambassador Chirau Ali Mwakere, Minister for Labour and Human Resources Development of the Republic of Kenya.

The Guest of Honour paid tribute to the ILO and the ILO Turin Centre for organising the training workshop, and deemed the initiative as not only timely but very critical to helping the labour movement in the sub-region keep pace with the rest of the world. Odoyo emphasised that the adoption of information and communication technologies has had tremendous impact on the world of work. For example, although the adoption of ICT has made work more efficient and created new employment opportunities, it has also destroyed certain occupations. Telephone switchboard operators, messengers, and secretaries, etc. are gradually being replaced by computers, e-mail, the Internet, and telephones (both mobile and fixed line) that can take and pass on messages.

Although ICT is doing away with some occupations, it is simultaneously creating new job opportunities; software programmers, Web page designers, call-centre workers, and a variety of new intermediaries are in increasing demand. The general consensus is that the highest rates of job creation are occurring among the most technologically innovative firms, where routine tasks have been automated as part of the labour-saving increases in productivity. Given the fact that technological advancement cannot be stopped so that jobs might be saved, the only option is for governments and trade unions to help such workers to escape these jobs by upgrading their IT skills.

This can be done by encouraging both the proficiency of the workforce in the area of ITC and each employee's ability to switch jobs should they find their work prospects threatened. In addition, trade unionists must invest in capacity-building and the provision of ICT equipment so that the majority of workers can operate effectively in a digital economy. To start, labour centres must lead the way by acquiring the necessary ICT infrastructure and engaging properly-skilled manpower to administer it.

The opening ceremony was also graced by the presence of Mr Francis Atwoli, the Secretary General of the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya). Atwoli paid tribute to trade unions and supported their efforts to bridge the digital divide. He described trade unions as soldiers at the frontline of the war, fighting for the benefit of their membership and their larger communities. Only by using modern Information Technology (IT) will trade unions remain up to date and provide valuable services to their members. By obtaining current information and adopting IT, trade unions can negotiate better Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), and reach out and communicate with the rank and file to keep them informed on current issues.

Atwoli expressed his appreciation of ILO/ACTRAV and ILO Turin seeing fit to launch the first training in the sub-region in Kenya. He termed this as a formative stage in the setting up of the Tom Mboya Labour College as the focal IT training point in the sub-region. He also paid tribute to the participants for their commitment to bridging the digital divide in Africa and was optimistic about the participants being able to subsequently ensure that their national centres and affiliated unions are engaged in activities to popularise the use of IT in their day-to-day activities.

In his introduction remarks, the ILO/ACTRAV representative, Mr Mohammed Mwamadzingo, outlined the role of the Bureau as that of devising and establishing training policies and programmes and strengthening the ability of well-functioning institutions to bridge the digital divide between itself and workers' organisations. Mwamadzingo stated that ILO/ACTRAV believes that for trade union members and their larger communities to benefit, the trade unions themselves must be the architects and engineers of this bridge. Trade unions were termed as a significant interest group that must develop strategies for regional and national representation. As with the many other social and economic issues affecting modern society, trade unions must play the roles of advisor, teacher, and advocate to a mix of citizens of varying levels of tech-ignorance.

The message from ILO/ACTRAV was that the time needed to bridge the digital divide will only be shortened if trade unions design and co-ordinate an ICT agenda at the workplace. The conventional wisdom is that information technology must be seen to be important for all trade union operations, ranging from organising membership, delivering services, collective bargaining, research, and training and education, to political campaigns and the maintenance of democratic principles. IT must be seen as a critical force in shaping the future relevance of trade unions.

(b) Technical Contributions

The technical presentations opened by introducing the training workshop's aide memoire (see Chapter Two). This entailed illustrating the meaning of 'digital divide' in the context of trade unions in a developing country. Mwamadzingo did this by using an anecdote that compared best friends newly located at two extreme locations: Machakos, a small dusty town on the fringes of the semi arid Eastern Province of Kenya, and Michigan in the USA. As soon as these two friends are settled in their respective workplaces they must face the realities of their digital divide. The IT infrastructure in Machakos, coupled with the national deficiencies, cannot effectively support electronic interaction.

All is not lost, however, as for a continent used to sharing everything from copies of newspapers to communal television sets, developments such as cybercafés and other shared public Internet access points should contribute towards bridging this divide. Although it is unlikely that the rate of domestic computer penetration will change drastically any time soon, the battle has to be fought and won at the public accessibility level. It is in this regard that more attention needs to be given to the role of trade unions in bridging the digital divide. Thus, trade unions must seen as soldiers fighting at the frontline of this war for the benefit of their membership and their larger communities.

In Chapter Three, Mr Marc Bélanger discusses the challenges and opportunities faced by African labour organisations in adopting computer-based technologies. The chapter outlines the problems African countries face in developing their IT infrastructure as well as the specific conditions experienced by trade unions in Africa.

This chapter is the result of a study conducted by the Workers' Activities Programme (ACTRAV) unit at the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, Italy. Its aim is to provoke a number of initiatives that could be used by unionists to produce African-made solutions to African IT problems. It outlines in some detail the issues facing African countries, and shows that trade unions must not only work at digitally development but must also be involved in the political and economic questions of digital development in their countries.

Mr Sylvester Kisonzo (see Chapter Four), one of the guest speakers at the workshop, stated that the winds of change are currently sweeping through Africa. Businesses are experiencing the obsolescence of the old modes of working, the eruption of information technology, globalisation, new and intense competition, and changing societal and customer expectations. Technological developments, financial constraints, restructuring and mergers, new philosophies, and government intervention are also affecting businesses.

Kisonzo suggests that social, technical, and business architecture should be made to realign themselves to meet the demands of change. Innovation in production, increased competitiveness, and technology- and knowledge-based change are imperative. Chapter Four concludes by stressing that it is of strategic

importance for organisations to anticipate the need to review their workplace environment models in order to proactively create the desired directions of change. These changes and efforts will in turn have the effect of positively influencing the collaborative leadership, intellectual capital and knowledge management baselines. In addition, fundamental transformations that tightly integrate all interested parties, and an e-commerce revolution coupled with paradigmatic process re-engineering, will become inevitable.

In Chapter Five, Dr Eustace Mwarania presents some of the initiatives the 20-country block Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is undertaking in the attempt to bridge the digital divide. It begins with a review of the main factors that limit usage of information and communications within this region. This is then followed by a description of the regional initiatives that attempt to counter the effects of these limitations.

This same chapter reviews the barriers to the penetration of information and communication technologies within the COMESA region, and describes ongoing initiatives to alleviate this undesirable situation. It has been observed that creation of a unified market, liberalisation, harmonisation, and infrastructure development are key components of these initiatives. In addition, nurturing institutions so that they produce relevant skills and ability to develop competitive content will further enhance ICT usage.

In Chapter Six, the National Project Co-ordinator of the ILO's Strengthening Labour Relations in East Africa, Mr Isaiah Kirigua, presents the experience of how information technology can be used to enhance relations in Kenya. The chapter recounts the results of the 2001 Kenya-based project that provided computer and Internet training to senior officials drawn from employers' and workers' organisations, as well as those from the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development in Kenya. The end result of the training served to enhance the adoption of information technology, and one of the management strategies that went a long way towards providing more and better quality services to trade union members.

(c) Country Presentations

Participants from seven countries presented their national reports to the workshop. These reports included descriptions of the major features of the national and sectoral contexts; the trade union structure; the use and application of information technology within the trade union; major operational problems; and major problems concerning the introduction and use of IT by trade unions.

(d) Conclusions and Recommendations

The workshop recommended the establishment of an African Solidarity Network, which would be an important tool with which to bridge the 'digital divide'. This network shall be referred to as hekimanet. All participants at the workshop shall be considered as the founding members of the network.

Some of the current and/or anticipated difficulties that could affect the functions of hekimanet include:

- Lack of equipment
- Lack of Internet connection
- Lack of commitment by leaders
- Computer illiteracy
- Inadequately trained personnel
- Poor infrastructure
- High telephone bills
- Lack of finance
- Low level of IT awareness among trade unionists
- Resistance to the use of OpenOffice software

The workshop resolved that communication between trade unions must occur weekly. The workshop also resolved that the contents for communication would include, among others, the following topics:

- ✦ Progress in usage of Open Office software
- ✦ Collective bargaining
- ✦ Gender issues
- ✦ Child labour
- ✦ Globalisation
- ✦ ILO Declarations and Conventions
- ✦ Labour laws
- ✦ Trade union research and economics
- ✦ Occupation, health and safety
- ✦ HIV/AIDS
- ✦ Youth

The workshop also identified the collaborative partners and their respective roles. These are as follows:

(a) Trade union trainers

- ◗ Installation of OpenOffice software in trade unions
- ◗ Marketing OpenOffice software to trade union leaders
- ◗ Train workers in using OpenOffice software
- ◗ Networking

(b) Trade unions

- ◗ Trade union leaders should allocate funds for buying IT equipment
- ◗ Trade unions should budget for computer training
- ◗ Trade unions should come up with an IT policy
- ◗ Trade unions should assist in follow-up and evaluation of IT usage

(c) ILO/ACTRAV (Turin, Geneva, and Field Specialists)

- ◗ Support trade unions with training equipment
- ◗ Support evaluating and monitoring of IT usage and application of OpenOffice Software

(d) ICFTU-AFRO

- ◗ Assist affiliates in coming up with an IT policy
- ◗ Establish a mechanism for monitoring IT usage
- ◗ Solicit for funds for training and the purchase of equipment
- ◗ Lobby the World Trade Organisation on trade-related intellectual property rights so that IT can be accessible and affordable to workers

(e) Governments

- Governments should come up with IT policies that make computer usage accessible to and affordable for workers

(e) Proposed Follow-up to the Training Workshop

(i) E-mail list

Workshop participants will want to keep in contact, both individually and as a group. Further consideration is required on how to promote the technical arrangements. The quickest approach is to have a verified list of e-mail addresses and send a message to all the addresses. Participants can then e-mail a reply. Or, they can set up an e-mail address group in their e-mail program (which they probably won't do). The problem with this is that the participants are responsible for updating their own e-mail lists, which can be harder than it sounds.

A possible solution to this problem is to use an e-mail list server. Essentially, this is a central e-mail address box containing all the updated addresses of everybody in the network. Participants send their messages to one address (such as 'african_unions@mail.net') and the messages are passed on to all the addresses on the list. One person is appointed to act as the updater of the list. In this way people are not responsible for updating e-mail addresses in their own programmes or using potentially out-of-date lists.

There are two list servers available: the ICFTU List server and the Turin Centre List server. A person at ICFTU/AFRO could be trained how to administer the list server, and the e-mail box address would be something like: african_unions@icftu.org. In the case of the Turin centre, the address would be something like: african_unions@itcilo.it.

(ii) E-mail communication content

Regardless of the technology chosen (e-mail address lists or a list server), users will still have to concern themselves with the content. E-mail networks that do not have a constant flow of relevant content soon die.

In the beginning, users may wish to concentrate on communication about the digital divide and the adoption of IT by African unions. This would achieve two things:

(a) It would legitimise the network because it could be argued that it was a project flowing out of the training workshop (and therefore not subject to the long, torturous process of getting national trade union centres to approve participation in the network).

(b) It would allow the network to be slowly and naturally accepted as a method of communications because it discussed a well-accepted 'neutral' topic: the digital development of African trade unions.

Users could start by using the network to help people install OpenOffice and Hekima (the Internet CourseReader). Later on, once users are accustomed to the network's existence, the range of topics could be expanded. This expansion would need careful thought and consideration, which could be effected using the network itself.

(iii) Hekima - the Internet CourseReader

E-mail lists are helpful for keeping a group of people in touch. Unfortunately, they are not very effective for conducting educational activities. For this you need a programme that groups the messages into conferences according to time (weeks and months) or topics. This is because the educational process needs to be managed in order to develop group cohesiveness and synergy. This is very difficult to do when the messages are scattered throughout somebody's e-mail inbox. This is why Hekima exists.

However, we need to see if Hekima can be installed and used in the participants' computers. To do this we need to communicate via e-mail to provide initial instructions and technical support. Thus our first step is to resolve the e-mail question posed above.

(iv) OpenOffice

As noted during the workshop, Open Source software (such as OpenOffice) is the way to go, especially for trade unions in poorer regions. We need to start a programme of installing and experimenting with OpenOffice so that trade unions in Africa can see that they can move over to OpenOffice and reduce their dependency on Microsoft.

This activity requires both an established e-mail system and Hekima. E-mail would be used to support the installation and initial use of OpenOffice. Hekima would be used to conduct courses on particular OpenOffice topics (such as 'How to produce a Union Newsletter').

An added advantage of using Hekima to teach a course on using OpenOffice would be the slow introduction of using Hekima for educational purposes on other topics.

Part Two:
Main Presentations at the Workshop

Chapter Two

Bridging Africa's Digital Divide: The Role of Trade Unions in English-speaking African Countries

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'There are benefits as well as risks of inclusion in the information society; wise policies and well-functioning institutions will be essential. But there are no benefits of exclusion, only risks.'

ILO, World Employment Report 2001, page 16.

II.1 Background

The concept of a digital divide is too abstract for many. However, there are many analogies that very neatly throw light on the problem. The digital divide, so the anecdote goes, can be best compared to having your best friend emigrate from Machakos, a small dusty town on the fringes of the semi arid Eastern province of Kenya, to Michigan in the USA.

'I will write to you every week,' is the typical promise, and initially you actually do. However, as time goes by, he develops an annoying habit of talking about call waiting, streaming video, e-fax, e-chat, and sending you e-cards. The words are in English but you have absolutely no idea what the your friend is going on about. He's crossed the digital divide and you're the poor relative that time forgot.

This 'situation' is not that different from the exchanges we have to face every time as professionals dealing with workers' organisations. This is more evident and challenging whenever we work with participants who taken the 'Information Technology and Trade Unions' course at the ILO Turin Centre.

What normally happens when the 'students' graduate from the Turin course and return to their national centres is that they are full of enthusiasm about the wonders of the information and communication technology world and can't wait to show their colleagues the 'light', perhaps through instant communication through e-mailing and Internet chat with the resource person in charge of the course they took.

The irony of the similarity between the two village relatives communicating between Machakos and Michigan is also visible in our situation. As soon as the Turin Centre graduates have settled down in their respective workplaces, they immediately have to face the realities of the digital divide that exists between their national trade union centres and the ILO offices, including the Turin Centre. The infrastructure of their trade union, coupled with national technological deficiencies, does not effectively support the electronic interaction.

As stated in the opening quotation, it is the role of the ILO - the Bureau for Workers' Activities in particular - to devise and establish training policies and programmes and strengthen well-functioning institutions to bridge the digital divide between our organisation and those that we have a mandate to serve.

II.2 Justification

Africa continues to be the world's poor relative. According to a well-researched article in the Spring 2001 edition of the Carnegie Reporter (www.carnegie.org), the continent is in the throes of a digital famine.

Poverty, poor infrastructure, and unfriendly regulations have resulted in a situation where computer penetration is less than 0.3 %.

However, all is not lost. According to telecommunications consultant Mike Jensen (www3.sn.apc.org/africa), over the past five years the number of countries with Internet access has grown from 11 to all 54 (Somalia finally went online at the end of 2000). At the same time, the number of dial-up Internet accounts stands at just over one million with an estimated usage of three people per account. Of these projected three million users, approximately two thirds are based in South Africa and about 600,000 in North Africa, with the rest of the continent sharing half a million users among 50 countries.

For a continent used to sharing everything from copies of newspapers to communal television sets, cybercafés and other shared public Internet access points are now a godsend. Programs like Africa Online's e-touch public access points and musician Youssou N'Dour's Joko project in Senegal provide the previously excluded masses with an opportunity to get in on the digital action.

Given the income levels on the continent, it is unlikely that the rate of computer penetration will change drastically any time soon. The battle to provide access will therefore have to be fought and won at the public accessibility level, with more investments channelled towards ensuring the ubiquity of access centres.

At the same time, we would be well advised to pay more attention to the role of trade unions in bridging the digital divide. Trade unions could be soldiers at the frontline of this war - as cybercafé providers and assistants - for the benefit of their members and their larger communities. As frequent users of cybercafés, we are constantly amazed by their versatility. The assistants must play the roles of advisor, teacher, and typist to a mix of customers who have varying levels of IT-ignorance. In their position as the last line of defence in the struggle to bridge the IT divide, these assistants are probably better positioned to sell the benefits of the digital age than any number of government bureaucrats. In addition, the income generated from such a venture would be more than handy in augmenting the endowment funds of trade unions.

II.3 Development Objectives

This workshop was aimed at assisting workers' organisations in English-speaking African countries to strengthen institutional and human capacities to utilise information and communication technology in all trade union activities. The workshop was also aimed at enhancing the dissemination of workers' education programmes between ILO/ACTRAV (Geneva, Turin Centre and Field Specialists) and the labour colleges in the participating countries.

II.4 Immediate Objectives

Upon completion of the workshop, it was anticipated that the national centres and participants would be able to:

a. Assess the infrastructural capacity of the trade union movement to communicate with affiliates, the rank and file, and the international community.

b. Identify major problems within trade union operations (administration, communication, and provision of services) that might be addressed by the introduction of new technologies.

c. Master computer operations as a prerequisite to the understanding of IT.

d. Describe the major applications of IT and their strategic implications for national and international trade union development.

e. Establish long-term objectives designed to meet identified priorities in IT at national, regional, and international level.

f. Develop and adapt training materials on IT for the implementation of workers' education programmes at local level.

g. Design an IT workplan to be applied in national centres and affiliated unions.

II.5 Workshop Activities

The workshop comprised the following five modules:

a) An Assessment of Institutional Capacity-Building on Information and Communication Technology

This module was built within the workshop, since most national centres in Africa are not only more or less detached from the rank and file membership, but from the international community as well. Enhancing the infrastructure of national centres was also envisaged as being the starting point in the capacity-building that would facilitate effective tripartite arrangements and wider arrangements that reached out to civil society. It is believed that many of the other activities could be implemented more smoothly with the restoration of capacity to communicate and understand trade union membership in particular, and larger society in general.

b) The Main Features of Computer Training and IT for Trade Unions

Participants were introduced to major concepts of computer technology and were given hands-on exercises throughout the course. The main features of the course included introduction to development of databases; computer networks (from LAN to INTERNET); multimedia systems and their applications; email, bulletin boards, electronic conferencing, Internet (WEB), news groups, etc.

This module encouraged participants to develop, for trade unions, strategic plans that aimed at identifying priorities in the field of IT; the use of IT in research, training, education, and information management for trade union activities (administration, special services provided to members, and collective bargaining); and the development and implementation of new technologies at national union level.

c) Field-testing ILO/ACTRAV's Internet Course Reader: Hekima

It is a commonly understood that a major reason for the growing technological gap is that the new information and communication technologies are being developed for richer countries that have dependable and affordable access to the Internet. The infrastructure in developing countries is neither affordable nor secure in relation to access to communication networks.

With this observation in mind, ILO/ACTRAV has been designing communication technologies suited to the conditions trade unions experience in developing countries. The purpose is to create technologies that provide trade unionists in developing countries with the same capabilities as software used in economically advanced countries, but that are suited to the infrastructures of poorer countries. The result of this process has been the prototype The Internet Course Reader. Now popularly known as Hekima (Kiswahili word for wisdom and knowledge), it is an educational computer communications programme designed for use by trade unions in developing countries.

d) Project Work and the Development of an Action Plan within the Trade Union

Each country represented at the workshop was required to prepare a country project that specified what they intended to do as a result of the course once they had returned home. Participants designed specific development plans in the area of new technologies that would be implemented, and with a specific target group. These plans are to be used for long-term evaluation purposes.

II.6 Workshop Prerequisites

Before the workshop started, participants were required to prepare and bring with them a country report. Where possible, copies of the report were sent in advance (by email) to the workshop organisers. The report was to include the following:

i. A description of the major features of the national/sectoral context: political structure; economic structure (agriculture, industry, services, informal sector); economic policy; trade, social, and labour structure (e.g. welfare, labour market, etc.).

ii. A description of the structure of the national centre/trade union and how it works (major functions).

iii. A description of the use/application of IT within the trade union.

iv. Major operational problems within trade unions in the areas of administration, communication, and the provision of services.

v. Major problems concerning the introduction/use of IT in the trade union, i.e. problems related to the equipment, local network, infrastructures, and human resources.

Participants were also encouraged to collect documents and other sources of information concerning their countries and their trade unions. It was a requirement that participants were full-time officers in charge of IT or who will, in the future, shoulder the responsibility for the development of IT for education within national centres. It was important that trade unions, when nominating the candidates, ensured that the officials selected had the qualifications and the aptitude to act as focal points in the national centre for the planning/introduction of new technologies. After the course, participants were to organise workshops/ training actions in order to transfer their knowledge and experiences for the benefit of the trade union.

The workshop lasted for five days: Monday 7 July to Friday 11 July 2003, at the Tom Mboya Labour College, Kisumu, Kenya.

Chapter Three

The Digital Development of Labour Organisations in Africa

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III.1 The Digital Divide

'Digital divide' is the popular phrase for describing the IT availability and usage gap that exists between countries and regions. Often the divide is described as being between countries in the North and those in the South. This, however, over-simplifies matters and masks a number of complexities. For example, Korea, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, all in the South, have very advanced IT infrastructures. Meanwhile, regions in North America (such as Indian reservations, migrant worker areas and economically disadvantaged provinces and states) can still be described as being digitally deprived. Europe also has regions of IT poverty, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Even in the economically advanced areas of Europe, many people are denied the use of IT because of their income levels, or the high costs of dialling up the Internet.

What is more, there is more than one type of digital divide. There are divides created by income levels, gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities, education, literacy, age and other factors. Each of these can contribute to digital deprivation in any country, whether developed or undeveloped, or North or South.

The phrase 'digital divide' also hides as much as it describes. It may have been useful when initially publicising those issues related to technological deprivation, but as awareness about the complexity and global scale of the problem has developed it has become less and less useful. We should be promoting 'digital development' as our goal. We should be working to digitally develop countries and regions, and governments and institutions so that more people can benefit from the educational and economic advantages that IT offers.

No matter what the headline phrase used, it is undoubtedly true that the vast majority of digitally deprived countries and regions (which of course means people) are in the South. For example, Africa, the subject of this report, may account for 13% of the world's population but it is also has:

- less than one percent of the world's Internet users (0.6%)
- one telephone for every 52 Africans
- one out of 60 of the world's mobile cellular subscriptions
- one out of 70 of the world's personal computers[1]

Then it could be said that it is just crazy to talk about access to the Web when there are people going hungry every day. What does the Internet matter to a worker who earns barely enough to feed the family? This is why it matters: If the region that worker lives in, or the enterprise she is employed by, does not expand its productive capabilities then their children and their children's children will also spend their lives working for starvation wages. IT may not be the solution to the problems faced by the people of Africa, but it is an important part of the solution.

[1] ILO, Geneva, World Employment Report 2001, *Life at Work in the Information Economy*, pg. 59.

III.2 Information Technology in African Countries

Trade unions cannot be thought of as being somehow disconnected from the economic, political, and technological infrastructure of the countries in which they operate. On the contrary, they are engaged in political action, economic bargaining, and technological activities on a daily basis. Trade unions are concerned with the technological infrastructure of the workplaces they represent because, to a large extent these workplaces determine the working conditions of their members. Furthermore, they use technology in their own activities: telephoning, faxing, photocopying, typing, and (possibly) computing.

Of course there are dangers in generalising about a continent made up of 52 countries and 739 million people[2]. South Africa is technologically very different to Côte d'Ivoire. Eritrea is not Egypt. Yet there are common factors that can enrich discussions about how organisations can develop policies and programmes aimed at supporting African initiatives.

(a) Internet Use

When people talk about the digital divide or digital development they are usually talking about the Internet and its sub-entity, the World Wide Web. This is understandable, given the recent advent of the Internet. It is relatively new. It also provides new potential for developing economic productivity, education, and North/South dialogue.

In 2001 there were 1,300,000 Internet subscriptions in Africa. South Africa alone accounted for 57% of those subscriptions (750,000). North Africa had 250,000 subscriptions (19%). The remainder - only 300,000 subscriptions - was scattered among Africa's other countries.[3]

Many people may share one subscription. A recent estimate suggests that there are three to five users per subscription, which would mean that there are about 5 million Internet users in Africa.[4] However, given the problems of gathering data in Africa, this figure may seriously underestimate the actual number of users. However, it does provide a commonly accepted benchmark that can be used for these sorts of discussions.

What is significant is that this benchmark figure has dramatically increased in the past few years. In 2000 the estimate was 2.5 million users.[5] Greater awareness of the Internet, some government initiatives, and small business developments (Internet Service Providers and cybercafés) have all contributed to the increase.

(b) Internet Adoption Problems

Despite this remarkable growth, the fact is that only 0.9% of Africans - compared to 44% of Americans and Canadians - use the Internet.[6] There are a number of factors inhibiting Internet use in the African continent, including:

(i) Lack of awareness

Ninety-nine percent of Africans have never been on (surfed) the Internet. What this means is that they have little idea of what it is or what it can do. More importantly, they have no opportunity to think about how the Internet could be used for African purposes. To them, the Internet remains an alien, other-worldly phenomenon. They have no reason to push for Internet access, computer equipment, or even awareness-training because they see no need.

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2 Ibid., pg. 59

3 Jensen, Mike, *The African Internet – A Status Report*, May 2001, http://demiurge.wn.apc.org/africa/afstat.htm, 2001, pg. 1

4 Ibid., pg. 1

5 AllAfrica.com, '*Digital Divide Widest in Africa*, July 2001, pg. 1.

6 ILO, Geneva, op. cit., pg. 48.

A large part of the awareness problem is related to the fact that 75% of the content on the Internet is in English.[7] There are few websites written in African languages. This poses the problem of increasing awareness, for if Africans do not see themselves or their languages reflected on the Internet they may see little reason to use the Internet more or to develop their own websites. Trade unions, for example, do not see the need for using scarce resources to build websites if their members do not use the web. In turn, their members do not see why they should consult the Web for trade union information if their unions do not have websites. The result is a 'what came first: the chicken or the egg?' problem.

(ii) Government inactivity

This lack of awareness extends to governments. As most government officials have little experience (if any) of the Internet, they do not consider the economic policies and legislative initiatives that are needed to push the country towards greater Internet use.

For example, all of the countries and regions in the world that have successfully adopted the Internet have done so with the help of a national or regional IT strategy. Most African countries do not have an IT development plan. This means, amongst other things, that there are no strategies for essential legislation (such as laws which legalise digital signatures) and that counterproductive policies, (such as taxing the importation of computers) are allowed to continue.[8]

A lack of a comprehensive IT strategy also means that there is no investment in IT. Because of their high debt loads, African countries do not have much money to invest in anything, never mind computers.

(iii) Commercial inactivity

The lack of IT awareness and government inactivity also extends into the commercial sphere. One of the most important commercial activities enabled by the Internet is e-commerce.[9] Most of this activity is business-to-business (B2B) for inventory flow control, ordering, and invoicing. The productivity improvements of e-commerce can be quite dramatic, but it demands that businesses harmonise their computer systems so they can communicate with each other. There is little evidence that African firms are even investigating this. What is more, e-commerce also demands high-quality computer communication lines, something that is not always available in African cities.

E-commerce also involves individuals. However, B2C (Business to Consumer) depends on the use of credit cards for purchasing products online (via computer communication). Millions of Africans do not even have bank accounts, never mind credit cards.

(iv) Problems with access

Access to the Internet is a major problem impeding digital development in Africa. Getting on to the Internet usually means placing a phone call to an Internet Service Provider (ISP). But most Africans do not have a telephone or even access to one. In all of Africa there are only 14 million fixed telephone lines - less than Tokyo or Manhattan.[10] Even for many of those with telephones, dialling up the Internet can be prohibitively expensive. For example, most people outside major centres have to make a long-distance call, which pushes the price up even further. Furthermore, the Internet transmission capacity of a country can be quite low, which means that the rate of web page display can be extremely slow.

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7 ILO Communication, *Digital Divide is wider and getting wider*, October, 2001, pg. 1, www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pkits/wer2001/wer01ch2.htm/.

8 Senegal is a good example of a country that has designed and adopted a successful IT strategy. The country's telecom operator, Sonotel, created 10,000 jobs within the country by fostering the creation of community telecentres that offer public access to e-mail and photocopying services. (Jensen, op. cit. pg 4.)

9 E-commerce involves messaging and other electronic traffic that allows the ordering of and paying for products and services via computer communications.

10 ILO, Geneva, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

The average cost of a dial-up (to an ISP) connection in Africa is $68 a month for 20 hours, although the rates do vary widely from country to country: from $10/ month to $100/ month.[11] If there is also slow Web service and/or expensive telephoning, cost could prove a serious barrier to unions or other organisations that want to access the Internet.

Nonetheless, things are improving. With the deregulation of the telephone services, many more ISPs are appearing. Countries such as Nigeria (which in 1998 had very few access points) have dramatically increased the number of ISPs and the speed of access to the international Internet lines.[12]

Some countries are establishing special long-distance Internet calling numbers. This allows people to phone a local number, from wherever they are in the country, and connect to the Internet.[13] At the same time, a number of major Internet-supplying companies are developing. AfricaOnline is the largest operation, with offices in Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Free access services are also starting to appear. In South Africa, for example, a major commercial is providing free access to the web.[14]

In most African countries - admittedly still in the major centres - cybercafés have appeared. These are small businesses - sometimes even micro businesses - that rent time on the Internet. The average cost is the local equivalent of about $1.00 an hour. (There are of course exceptions: in Mali, for example, a cybercafé hour costs as much as $3.00 an hour). Some cybercafés are reducing costs even further by offering e-mail-only services.

Yet, even cybercafés can pose problems for users. For example, most cybercafés do not allow files to be downloaded from the Internet. And, for fear of viruses, they do not allow users to bring in their own diskettes. This means most people could not go to a cybercafé to download a file on International Labour Standards from the ILO website, for example. At the same time, Internet access in the cybercafés may be quite slow, so much so that even people using free e-mail services such as Microsoft's Hotmail have to spend more time (and therefore money) on the computer.

A less widespread, but still significant initiative, is the installing of public terminals in clinics, community phone-shops, police stations, and schools.[15]

(c) Education

If there is any consensus on how IT problems in Africa can be confronted it is that education is the key to success. Only by expanding educational opportunities for their young people will African countries be able to take advantage of the employment and productivity potential of computer communications. Everybody agrees on this; there is no argument. However, there is very little agreement on how the necessary educational opportunities can be generated.

Ever since the 1960s, IT of one kind or another has been deployed in attempts to increase educational activity in Africa. Most of these initiatives have been abject failures. Take, satellite technology, for example. Televisions in villages were supposed to be the instruments through which people could receive high quality educational programs. All people had to do was turn on the TV. This experiment very quickly dwindled because of the lack of planning for staff salaries (for the people who turned on the TVs and guided the local discussions) and geographic/cultural insensitivities.

A recent project by the World Bank to install educational videoconferencing centres across Africa wasted millions of dollars. Students had to travel for hours in order to get to the centres. Programmes were mainly American in content and thus more or less irrelevant. The centres, which were loaned money and expected to be self-sufficient, were set up but left with no feasible business plans.

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11 Jensen, op. cit., pg. 1.

12 Ibid., pg 3.

13 Ibid., pg. 2.

14 Ibid., pg. 2.

15 Ibid., pg. 2.

Another recent project is the African Virtual University (AVU). Millions of dollars have been granted to the AVU by the World Bank and other donors.[16] It is hoped that the university will be successful. However, the track record for these sorts of grand projects sponsored by outside agencies is not very good.

The key to success in Africa is not an idealistic commitment to some vague concept of 'education' or grandiose technological projects. Rather, it is the hiring of more African teachers and providing them with the training they need to be excellent educators who work within specific geographical, cultural, and linguistic environments. An Ethiopian professor has argued that the cost of such projects could have been employed many African professors.[17] Presumably, many more primary and secondary teachers could also have been engaged.

There is a role for technology though, one that specifically involves the Internet. It should be used to interconnect and train local teachers and provide them with the relevant technical skills. Simple text-oriented computer communication networks should be more effective than a hundred videoconferencing centres.

(d) Women and the Internet

Although the use of the Internet by women has expanded dramatically since its early technically-oriented days they are still minority users. This is not because the Internet is inherently of less interest to women. On the contrary, the women's movement and women trade unionists in industrialised countries use it extensively for building networks and conducting research. In fact, in those countries where the Internet is widely available and used, the percentage of women users is about 50%.[18]

In Africa, a much smaller percentage of women use the Internet. In Ethiopia, for example, the percentage of women users is 13.9%, and in South Africa it is 19%. The percentage is higher in other countries: Uganda is 31.5% and Zambia is 37.5%.[19]

What these figures mean is that if women are given access to the Internet then they will use it as much as do men. Today, women are the prime agents for improving education in a society. Give them more access to the educational opportunities of the Internet and African countries could see their educational initiatives increase dramatically.

(e) IT and Development Agenda in Africa

Africa enters the 21st century as a continent plagued by three diseases: HIV/AIDS, unemployment, and poverty. These issues are so complex and intertwined with so many political, economic, legislative, and labour market questions that they cannot be adequately addressed in this report. However, it can be pointed out that IT development can be a positive factor in the overall development of Africa. An extensive ILO study (World Employment Report 2001) concluded that 'the positive potential of the technologies for employment growth, a better quality of life and as a tool for reinforcing the development agenda is beyond doubt.' However, it did go on to point out that:

'Not beyond doubt is whether this potential can be translated into reality for the majority of the world's people anytime soon - or whether the risks of change can be avoided. A passive policy stance that leaves to markets alone the direction of change will reinforce divides. It is also the case that the quality of life and work for women and men will be exposed as much to the potential for negative outcomes as positive ones. For all these reasons, social choices and the social institutions through which those choices are moulded are essential to the digital era.'

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16 The World Bank Group, World Development Report, 1998/99: Background paper, *Knowledge for Africa: The African Virtual University*, pg. 1, www.worldbank.org/wdr/wdr98/africa/bpafr9.htm/.

17 Panos, *The Internet and Poverty*, Briefing No. 28, April 1998, www.oneworld.org/panos/briefing/interpv.htm/.

18 CCC.com, 2000, www.cnn.com/2000/TECH/computing/03/24/women.internet.idg/.

19 The World Bank Group, *Gender and the Digital Divide*, Seminar Series #6, March 2001, www.worldbank.org/gender/digitaldivide/digitaldivide6.htm/.

Trade unions are one such social institution. In considering digital development, trade unions need to not only consider their own technological conditions but also simultaneously develop the awareness, political will, and expertise to be fully engaged in the issues that will determine the IT futures of their countries and members. They should be demanding IT training for their members and national IT strategies for their countries. However, they can only do this effectively if they have first grappled with digital awareness and development issues within their own organisations.

III.3 Unions and the Internet

All the trade unionists interviewed for this report had access - or at least potential access - to the Internet, either in their offices or via cybercafés. About 30% had used the Internet before attending the IT workshops in Turin or within the region. This means there is a natural interest in using the Internet amongst trade union activists.

(a) The Advantages of Internet Use

There are many substantial and important reasons why Internet use by trade unions in Africa should be encouraged. These include:

(i) Confronting globalisation

We are living through a period of rapid economic globalisation, i.e. the integration of world economies on a scale previously unknown. One of the prime factors promoting this integration is the use of computer communications that allow corporations, governments, unions, and individuals to interact around the globe, and around the clock.

Globalisation is having a dramatic effect on Africa. Since 1980 - the year the microcomputer was introduced - the continent has fallen behind in its share of global production.[20] This may be a coincidence. Or it may be an indication that global production is becoming increasingly centred on activities and countries that are compatible with computer communications. Africa may be being negatively affected by globalisation because it does not have the legislative and technological infrastructure required to participate in the new global markets.

At the same time, multinationals operating in Africa are taking advantage of the fact that computer communications allow them to quickly move work from one country to another in order to avoid unionisation or bargaining pressures. For example, they may threaten to move if they are bothered by health and safety regulations or pestered by unions.

Globalisation is a serious issue that must be tackled by African trade unions for not only is the continent is falling further behind economically but it is also unable to take advantage of IT to create new jobs and improve existing ones. Though the phenomenon may be titled 'global'-isation, the effect is quite local, i.e. at the workplace where trade union members are employed. Trade unions need to adopt policy positions on the negative and positive effects of globalisation. They can only do this if they are engaged in understanding the issues, both for their own operations and the operations of the employers with whom they bargain.

Trade unions can use the Internet to research employers, especially multinationals. The Internet can allow labour organisations to co-operate internationally via computer networks for global lobbying and bargaining campaigns. It can also help them communicate with global trade unions and labour centres.

[20] UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *From Rhetoric to Reality of African Development*, September 2001, www.unctad.org/en/press/pr0120en.htm/.

(ii) Developing educational materials

The Internet is a huge information storage depot. Trade unions could use it to find information on health and safety issues; comparative wage schedules; company profits; HIV/AIDS; employment legislation; the environment; gender equality; organising membership, and much more. With such information they could develop educational and training material for their members.

(iii) Distance education

The Internet can be used very effectively for distance education and learning. It may, however, be a few years before trade union members have access to online (via computer communication) educational courses. Nonetheless, it is quite feasible to provide online courses for trade union staff members who have access to communicating computers in their offices or at cybercafés. In fact, many trade unions and labour-oriented organisations around the world conduct online courses.

(iv) Creating websites

African trade union members may not yet be searching for labour-oriented websites. This is partly because there are few websites relevant to their interests or written in their language. By creating simple websites, trade unions could begin the process of attracting more trade union members to the Internet. And, over time, these trade union websites could grow in size and sophistication.

Websites are not only potentially useful for communicating with members. They can also be very useful for sharing information between different trade unions. Staff members with access to the Internet could consult the websites of other trade unions to retrieve educational material, examples of bargaining campaigns, employer information, and computer-training material.

(v) An organising tool

Young people are more likely to use the Internet simply because they have been exposed to it at school, have visited cybercafés to play computer games, or just because they are willing to try new things. By having labour websites available, trade unions could teach young people about the labour movement and conduct membership-organising campaigns amongst young workers.

(vi) Building greater IT awareness

By learning how to use the Internet for e-mail, website production, and research, trade unions could become more sensitive to IT issues in their countries. This could encourage them to lobby for national IT employment policies, research projects, and African-produced technologies. Again, it must be emphasised that digital development means more than just equipping trade unions. It also means enabling and encouraging them to be involved in the IT development of their countries and regions.

(b) Internet Adoption Problems

Most of these problems are the same as those faced by the general population: lack of awareness; expensive Internet services; slow Web speeds, etc. Nevertheless, trade unions have specific problems associated with the adoption of the Internet. These include:

(i) The lack of computer equipment and software

The lack of computer equipment is of course crucial, since not only is a computer needed in order to link up to the Internet, but it must include a modem and be fast enough to handle the communication traffic. One solution that has been promoted to address this lack of adequate equipment has been to provide trade unions in underdeveloped countries with renovated computers. Unfortunately, this usually results in the

donation of near-obsolete computer equipment that is unable to operate common software programs or have severe maintenance problems. In addition, the equipment, once supplied, is not updated. A study prepared by the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers has argued that renovated computers are not a solution to the computer needs of African unions.[21]

There is also the problem of illegal software. Computer programs are easy to copy, but putting copies on other computers without paying for the right to do so is illegal. As African countries develop their national IT strategies, they will have to pay closer attention to the problem of pirated software. This could jeopardise many trade unions because a government looking for any excuse for attack could charge a trade union that operates illegal software with criminal activity.

The lack of legal software also has a negative effect on training. User manuals are only provided to registered users. If trade unions do not have access to a program's manual then their ability to train their staff and members in the use of the software is severely limited.

Another software-related concern is the fact that most African trade unions do not use anti-virus software. Or, if they do, it is often illegal and therefore not updated to be able to handle the latest viruses.[22] As a result, African trade unions often pass on computer viruses to each other. They need to use legal, updated virus programs to protect themselves and not jeopardise the infrastructure of the organisations with which they are communicating.

Another point that is that the trade union's one good computer (i.e. the one that is connectable to the Internet) is often found in the office of the Secretary-General or another top official. While this may enhance the prestige of the official, it doesn't help build awareness or increase the use of the Internet amongst other staff and members.

(ii) Lack of Internet-facilities

There are three major methods of connecting to the Internet: dial-up, local area network, and cybercafés. 'Dial-up' service means the organisation has a computer that has a modem (a piece of equipment that allows the computer to place telephone calls). Via a telephone line, the computer dials up an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and is then connected to the Internet. Once that connection is established, the user can start a computer program that works with the Internet, such as a Web browser (to read web pages) or an e-mail program.

The problems associated with a dial-up connection include the cost of subscribing to an ISP and the need for a telephone line. If the organisation has only one telephone line, then it becomes engaged when the computer is connected to the Internet. As a result, no one else in the office is able to make or receive telephone calls at this time. It may also be that there are simply no telephone lines available. For example, while the Ghana Labour College (GLC) has a very modern computer-training lab of six computers, there is no telephone line into the lab and thus no connection to the Internet available.

One way of sharing a telephone line and a modem is by using of a Local Area Network (LAN). The GLC, for example, uses a LAN so that the six computers can share a central printer. However, LAN equipment can be expensive to purchase and maintain.

The other alternative is to use local cybercafés. These small businesses can be found in almost every major city in Africa. They are often the only way trade union officials can access the Internet. But, as has been noted, they have disadvantages too. They may be expensive (though most are priced for general-public use). They do not allow users to install their own programs on the computer. They also prohibit the downloading of files to a diskette - which means that users cannot transport the information they find back to their office computers.

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[21] Ibid.

[22] A virus is a computer program that can destroy the data on a computer's hard disk. It is transmitted via diskettes or inter-computer communication.

(iii) Lack of financial resources

Dues collection by African trade unions is often a process of voluntary payment by members. The typical result? Poor cash-flow situations. Moreover, the dues are also inadequate and thus cannot provide the level of service that is needed.

All this means that unions often have trouble funding core activities such as collective bargaining, grievance handling, educational activities, and health and safety campaigns. In such environments, IT is often relegated to the bottom of the priority list.

Many African unions cannot afford to hire staff, part-time or full-time. Those that can afford staffs are often forced to pay low wages. This has IT implications because when staff members are asked to use the Internet via cybercafés they hesitate because their expenses will not be met. If they pay for the service themselves they are likely to minimise their time on the Internet and therefore not develop their awareness of what the Internet can do for trade unions. Then there is the question of available work time. Trade union staff anywhere, but especially in resource-starved unions, are extremely busy and simply do not have the time to visit a cybercafé if their trade union does not have an Internet-connected computer at the office.

III.4 Possible Initiatives for the Digital Development of Unions in Africa

(a) Open Source Free Software

One of the most important advances in the development of computer technology in the past few years has been the Open Source Free software movement. This could contribute significantly to the digital development of organisations in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

OpenSource Free Software is computer software that is being developed by the democratic technological community. It includes operating systems such as Linux, which will most probably replace Windows (but is not yet at that stage). It also includes word processing, spreadsheet, computer presentation and web page design programmes that are, right now, as good as any other on the proprietary market, including the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Entourage, Outlook Express).

Using OpenSource Free Software, organisations in Africa and elsewhere could save thousands of dollars in software costs and allow maintenance via a software up-grade path.

Another characteristic of OpenSource Free Software might prove to be even more important than the fact that it can be legally distributed free of charge. The programming of the products (the 'source' code) is also freely available. This means that programmers in developing countries would be able to adapt the programs to suit their particular needs. In turn, this could lead to the creation of software designed specifically for the needs and conditions of developing countries. Trade unions should be part of this technological design movement.

(b) Regional Awareness-Building Sessions

A programme of one- or two-day awareness-building seminars in major African centres could be organised. These seminars would be aimed at introducing trade unions to the basic concepts of computers, computer project management, and the uses of the Internet for e-mail, international co-operation, and research.

While conducting these seminars, volunteer instructors from around the region could be trained in how to conduct similar seminars in their own countries. In this way, a network of regional computer trainers could be developed. These trainers could be supplied with training manuals and access to computer communications.

The budgetary implications of building a network of trainers include: the cost of travel for the facilitator of the initial awareness-building seminars; the production of training material; and the reimbursement of communication expenses to regional instructors should they have to use cybercafés. The cost of this programme would depend on the number of awareness seminars that were planned, as well as the number of regional instructors recruited.

Both the regional orientation seminars and the development of an IT instructor programme could have a significant impact on developing the awareness of information technology questions amongst African trade unionists. A labour education computer system that African trade unions could use to conduct educational courses via computer communications should also be developed.

(c) Building the Technological Infrastructure: The Internet CourseReader

The technological infrastructure that African trade unions and labour colleges need to be able to conduct their own online courses and seminars should be established. This requires both a central computer system and the technical expertise to operate the system.

The key to the successful development of a labour education computer system would be the further development of Hekima - the Internet CourseReader. The CourseReader is a computer programme that allows users to participate in educational courses via computer communications without requiring them to spend a lot of time on the Internet. This helps to lower Internet costs and resolve problems related to undependable electrical supplies or expensive telephone services. The Turin Centre and its ACTRAV unit have developed it as a free-of-charge programme. To be able to act as the communications program for an African labour education system, the CourseReader needs further development. As the CourseReader is currently only available in English, the primary focus of this development would be to add a facility that would allow the CourseReader to be easily translated into other languages such as French, Kiswahili, Ouolof, Portuguese, and Spanish.

(d) Provide Web Hosting Services

Organisations could help solve the two major problems trade unions in Africa face when they consider the creation of websites: where the sites are hosted and how they will be created. A central computer could be configured to act as a web server. (A web server is a computer that stocks web pages.) It could be the same computer as the one used for hosting the educational computer communications network mentioned above.

Once the web server has been installed, it could be stocked with an easy-to-use template for producing a simple website. Templates are web pages that can be easily modified by users in order to add content. Online tutorials or printed manuals could be produced in order to teach people how to use the templates.[23]

Of course, African trade unions that wanted to use the web page server would have to have a computer and a telephone line so their staff members could create and update the website. A cybercafé could not be used for this because content would have to be stored on the local computer while creating and maintaining the site. Cybercafés do not allow clients to store information on a long-term basis or to use diskettes they bring with them.

Therefore, during the first phase of the project, only African trade unions with computer equipment and telecommunication capabilities would be able to use the web hosting service. But still, this would be an important start towards the digital development of African unions. What is more, the project could be started quickly and on a small budget.

[23] The same web server, by the way, could also be used by labour organizations in other regions, such as the Asia-Pacific, for little additional cost.

(e) An African Labour Communications Network: TALKnet

The single most important factor for enhancing the digital development of labour organisations in Africa is to improve their communication capabilities. If they have access to the Internet they can research information and develop international contacts that can help them build their digital development plans on a long-term basis. Communication is power.

All of this is easily said, but is not so easily acted upon. However, there are initiatives that can be taken. For example, a Digital Partnership program involving trade unions in the developed and the developing world could be developed. In Africa, the goal of this digital partnership program would be to create The African Labour Knowledge network (TALKnet). The two main components of TALKnet would be: the equipment to enable computer communications and the knowledge needed to sustain educational activities online.

Here is how TALKnet could work:

(i) Providing the technology for TALKnet

A development programme could be started that provides the technological necessities African trade unions would need in order to use the World Wide Web and communicate amongst themselves. The funds for this programme would be come from the creation of Digital Partnerships between trade unions in the developed and developing world.

For approximately $3,000, a labour organisation in Africa could be connected to the Internet for e-mail, World Wide Web communications, and online education for three years. This $3,000 would also provide a trade union with a communications terminal, a printer, a telephone line, and a connection to the Internet.

(ii) Finding the Funds: An African Digital Partnership Programme

Of course, multiplying that $3,000 by hundreds of installations adds up to a substantial amount of money - money that is not available to any single labour organisation. Connecting 500 unions would cost one and a half million dollars in the first three years alone. In addition, the history of grandiose, centralised projects in Africa is not good. The solution? To decentralise the project right down to the individual trade unions involved.

Here is how it could work:

An African Digital Partnership programme would promote direct ties between individual trade unions in developed countries and trade unions in Africa. Trade unions in developed countries could be asked to include a $3,000 Digital Partnership item in their computer budget every three years (or alternately: $1,000 per year).

The secret to the success of this project would be very clear targeting of the trade unions in the partnership. A hospital trade union in England, for example, could be digitally partnered with a hospital trade union in Zimbabwe. Personal contacts between people in the two trade unions via e-mail would not only encourage North/South dialogue but also ongoing support and monitoring of the project during its lifetime.

The Digital Partners programme could be started with only five trade unions in the developed world being willing to partner with unions in Africa. Thereafter, the example set by these five unions could be used to encourage others to also participate as digital partners. The building of a communications network for African trade unions is not a question of money, it is a question of appropriate technological design and political will.

(iii) Knowledge-Building in a Communications Network

Even if many African trade unions were paired up with trade unions in developed countries to create TALKnet, the network would fail unless the African unionists were trained how to use it. Creating a network and just telling people to use it is like renting a hall and telling people to go and have a meeting. People need to know how to book a meeting hall, devise goals, set an agenda, stimulate discussion, and draw conclusions. The principles are them same with electronic networks. The people using them need training in how to operate them, how to create online seminars, how to promote discussion, and - most importantly - build new knowledge collaboratively.

New knowledge is built when people come together (in this case, online) to collaboratively analyse a problem, suggest solutions from the different perspectives and experiences of the participants, and, most importantly, produce new ideas. Knowledge-building amongst Africans themselves is the key to digitally developing the continent and its labour organizations. The IT solutions discovered in developed countries relate specifically to the IT problems in those countries. They do not necessarily translate into the African experience. The best thing that people in developed countries can do is to supply the technological infrastructure that would enable Africans to communicate amongst themselves and build new, African-specific knowledge. This is not to suggest that ideas, experiences, and practices from developed countries are to be ignored. On the contrary, they can be essential seeds. Yet they cannot be the final answers. They should only be considered as the fodder for collaborative work by Africans working on African solutions. TALKnet could be the technological infrastructure that allows this to happen with African trade unionists.

Chapter Four

Applications of Information Technology and their Strategic Implications for Africa

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IV.1 Introduction

IT has been proven to offer competitive advantages, including efficiency, accuracy, and improved customer service. While there are negative applications of IT (such as the infringement of Intellectual Property Rights, uncontrolled information access for the under-age, as well as a channel for propagating industrial espionage and conduit for money laundering), the benefits that IT brings to society greatly outweigh such disadvantages.

The continent of Africa is way behind the rest of the world, and for it to compete in today's global economy it has neither the time nor luxury to re-invent the wheel. In other words, Africa has no option but to play leapfrog in order to be able to utilise the IT resources that are available today.

IV.2 Applications of Information Technology in Africa

(a) ICT for Tomorrow's Science

Poverty is one of Africa's heaviest burdens, and one of the main ways out of the poverty trap is research to establish solutions to nagging problems. IT offers a way of conducting high-level scientific research that could lift Africa out of this situation.

(b) Satellite Technology and Education

The availability of satellite technology has made it possible to establish schools, data centres, and phone shops in some of the remotest parts of Africa. As a result, it is now possible for indigenous inhabitants to access high quality education through virtual schools. With the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector in an increasing number of countries in Africa, children in remote areas will be able to receive an education comparable to that offered in urban areas. Satellite phones, and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephones are becoming available, something that also brings with it access to the Internet, which makes the much-valued information available to rural peoples.

(c) Knowledge Sharing

IT allows different kinds of people to share knowledge. These can be groups of people with similar interests (such as workers' organisations) or groups of people where some members need while others have the knowledge. Through IT, it is possible to get access to scarce knowledge from experts on the other side of the globe.

(d) Workgroup Computing

IT enables project collaborators to initiate virtual teams or groups. Using computer networks or communication systems, project members can work on different parts of the project until completion.

(e) Video Conferencing

This is an evolving technology where people who have the equipment available can hold electronic meetings and be able to see images of one another even though they are all in different locations. Working in virtual teams feels more like real-life once those involved know each other better.

(f) Tele-working, Tele-commuting and Tele-services

This means that one can work for a company based in the UK while being physically based in, for example, a remote part of Chad if Internet access and other necessary resources are available. This is an opportunity for the world of work since one does not need to go through the visa and work-permit acquisition processes, which are often lengthy and discouraging. The principle prerequisites are the necessary education and skills to be able to perform as well as those in the advanced world.

(g) Electronic Commerce (e-commerce)

This is, by far, one area where individuals and corporations have to participate actively or perish. IT opens up the world, hence providing a borderless marketplace, where any one is free to market and sell their merchandise regardless of location or origin. The keyword here is competitiveness, as one has to able to compete in terms of quality, price, service delivery, and customer service. Africa has no choice but to adopt technologies and methods that make their presence in the global marketplace felt.

Corporations have to adopt business-to-business e-commerce, business-to-consumer e-commerce, and e-government. Marketing various products, EDI, advertising, buying, and selling are all possible on the Internet. The first step is to identify what one can offer to the world that has a competitive edge. Then the next step is to create or have a Website for the product/company created by a professional and then have it hosted in high-hit rate site.

(h) Job Opportunities in IT

The ILO's World Employment Report 2001 examined the impact of the new information and communication technologies on life at work at a time when the global employment situation is of considerable concern. It also looked at the new job creation opportunities that have been brought about by IT. The report is optimistic on the chances for employment growth where ICT is most in use, which advances the argument that productivity growth is greatest in the core ICT sector itself.

The report relies on evidence that shows that the countries that had the greatest growth in 'total factor productivity' in the 1990s were those where ICT was used most widely in the economy. These same countries also experienced the biggest growth in employment.

Further evidence indicates that employment ratios are highest in those countries where the use of ICT is most widespread. In addition, research also shows that unemployment has declined most in the small number of countries where Internet use is most widespread, such as Denmark, Finland, and Ireland. From the perspective of developing countries, India is now exporting software development jobs to USA and Europe; and Kenya has exported a few software jobs to UK. In this regard, there is no reason why Africa should not utilise its comparative advantages and create more job opportunities in this area.

(i) Workflow Computing

Workflow computing is the automation of manual processes so that approvals and acknowledgements are done electronically, thus eliminating non value-adding processes, increasing efficiency, and saving costs in business processes.

IV.3 Global Drivers of Change

The 1990s have been described as the decade of change and turbulence. However, whatever the exact parameters of this period were, a common set of forces drove the changes. These changes have not only affected the functional areas of businesses and government, but also the labour force, which has experienced the obsolescence of the old modes of working and the emergence of a brand new working landscape. The issues that have been driving these changes include the changing nature of the market place; the globalisation of the economy and markets; the upsurge of technology, including IT; the changes in government policy, including privatisation and liberalisation; and strategic changes in supply chains.

(a) The Changing Nature of the Market Place

Essentially, these changes have had and are still having fundamental implications on the way companies conduct business. Privatised companies have become increasingly more knowledgeable about technological changes and much more demanding about price and quality. Quality and delivery are, and will remain, the most critical factors in the marketplace. Moreover, companies now have a free market in which to choose their business partners.

(b) Globalisation of the Economy and Markets

As the winds of change sweep through Africa, no stone is left unturned. African economies are experiencing the full effects of globalisation. International players have entered the local African markets and are a serious threat to local companies. The number of international firms winning multimillion projects, especially donor-funded projects or those attracting international financial investment, is on the increase. Suddenly, local businesses require an international credibility that is quite beyond the profile and reputation that they used to enjoy in their various African countries. Moreover, they are finding that they need to adapt to meet the requirements of clients from different cultures and with disparate values.

Unfortunately, the African financial market is still at its infancy stages, making it difficult for most countries to raise capital and attract private sector investment. Government bonds and treasury bills, for example, have dominated the financial markets even though they have a negative effect on African economies. As observed above, there are both serious threats and great opportunities in the globalised African economy, thus requiring paradigm shifts in business alignment and operations.

(c) Technological Developments Including IT

A key driver in the transformation of the African economy is technological change. Global telephony, satellite communications, and video links are now widely available. Information and communication technology (ICT) is significantly influencing technological change. ICT has already had a pronounced effect on the way the businesses communicate and their ability to access information. Improvements in communication capabilities have released the potential for construction professionals (engineers) to have greater access to data, knowledge, and other support both nationally and internationally. Developments in IT are facilitating information flow through all aspects of the African economy, including design, construction, deployment, decommissioning, finance, marketing, and sales as a single and wholly integrated package. There is an argument for potentially using the Internet as a tool to raise efficiency of the economy.

Nowhere in day to day business operations is the force of technological change more apparent than in data processing and information systems. The impact of changing computer technology on African economies has been far reaching. Complex tasks such as scheduling are much more routine due to the use of desktop computers. Simulations of entire IT and electronic construction processes and systems can now be developed to determine the optimal approach to achieving desired performance. A range of IT services to support the complete range of business activities and help revolutionise ways of working has also been developing rapidly.

Unfortunately, the uptake of changing technologies by African economies has been slow, despite the documented benefits of this resource. Industry operations have largely remained traditional, with low technology applications being used to run businesses.

(d) Changes in Government Policy Including Privatisation and Liberalisation

Another driver of change has been the shift in government policy. Economic regulation has been drastically reduced in favour of privatisation and liberalisation. This reform agenda has extended beyond issues of stabilisation and prudent economic management to regarding the private sector activity as the main engine for growth. Allowing private sector participation in telecommunications will result in healthy competition, which will drive prices down and so make ICT services more affordable for the masses.

(e) Strategic Changes in Supply Chains

Supply chain management is the management of activities that transform raw materials into intermediate goods and final products as well as those that deliver those final products to customers (Dornier et al., 1998). As globalisation takes root, agile supply systems have become essential. There is now customer emphasis upon time compression, which has resulted in improved cycle time. Concurrent with the pressure for reduced lead time has been the significant trend to emphasise quality in the production of products. Environmental concerns for efficiency in the supply chain have led to legislation towards improved 'cradle to grave' responsibilities.

IV.4 Strategic Responses to Meet the Demands of Change

The general ability of most businesses to manage change has been the subject of controversy and debate for many years. Traditional ways have been shown not to work from the standpoints of efficiency, quality, and profitability, while the forms of contract between businesses have been viewed as adversarial and dominated by confrontation and conflict.

Several attempts have been made to deal with businesses that have such an image. There have also been attempts to address the issue of culture change and customer service within organisations. New and progressive ways of managing complex work requires innovation in management methods.

There is an urgent need for Africa to respond to change, and in a systematic fashion. Business, technical, and social infrastructure will all need to realign themselves to proactively meet the demands of change. The critical management areas on which they will need to focus are strategy; knowledge management; staff, skills training and development; sustainability (ecological, economic and social or cultural); innovation; and customer satisfaction.

(a) Strategy

There is a need to build core competencies and avoid core rigidities. The emphasis should be on building competency-based platforms. It is necessary to invest in knowledge-based competencies that aim at satisfying the customer needs. Core competencies comprise a set of skills and expertise that should enable a company to deliver exceptional value to customers. Strategies such as Supply Chain Management, re-engineering, and business operations could be used individually or in tandem to meet the challenges of change.

(b) Knowledge Management

Companies should be encouraged to use knowledge for competitive advantage by solving problems using special knowledge-based diagnostic systems. A knowledge-based organisation is able to monitor the performance of its value-adding business units and teams.

Economic success is driven by improvements in private sector productivity. Crucial to this is world-class managerial performance that knows how to leverage knowledge to its competitive advantage. Moreover, in globalised competition, the highest standards of efficiency are necessary. Engineering design needs to be efficient, cost-effective, and waste-sensitive. It is also necessary that construction and procurement methods eliminate any wastage. Improved production methods that pay attention to constructability and lean production should drive out any inefficiencies and fulfil the best interests of the customer.

Benchmarking could be used as an instrument for strategic and operative improvement. It helps achieve superior performance through the careful selection and manipulation of alternatives and comparison measures, and the calibration of key delivery best practices. Through audits, non-conformity can be identified. In this manner, a climate where active learning towards best practices can take place is created. Moreover, sharing this knowledge would benefit the whole industry.

(c) Staff, Skills Training and Development

Intellectual capital is an important factor in the success of a company. Having appropriately skilled staff is vital to the success of any changing organisation. The pace of change in many industries today, particularly in terms of skills needed, makes it more important for organisations to identify their requirements and to have in place the appropriate mechanisms to deliver them. Much of the challenge of providing these skills rests with the private sector and the universities.

(d) Innovation

Innovation is a key driver for transforming the business industry in Africa into one that is competitive. Innovation can be identified as technological, organisational, or process- or product-related. Technological innovation utilises new knowledge or techniques to provide higher quality. Technological change is creating new possibilities for the design, production, delivery, marketing, and ancillary service of products.

Organisational innovation could foster changes in the relationship between behaviour, attitude, and value. New types of organisation, new forms of contract, and procurement could become evident.

Process innovations could increase efficiency while product innovations could enhance quality and so result in superior products. Innovation in the supply chain can help improve site productivity through improved material flow and materials management (Bowersox and Closs, 1996). The improvement of processes should not only concentrate on the final product but all the stages - human and technological - involved and leading up to its making.

(e) Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the surest weapon of success in competitive environments. To achieve it, however, requires changes to be made to business architecture. The concept of a delivery process that never fails to meet customer requirements and operates within a minimum cycle time, cost, and inventory is essential. Furthermore, it is also important to provide higher value to customers, to develop better working relationships and, ultimately, partnerships that improve contractor performance as well as that of the industry involved. Re-engineering - the redesign of processes to make them simpler and more effective - assists in this regard.

(f) A Modern Telecommunications Network

Telecommunication services in Africa, a continent with 780 million people, are scarce, costly, and unreliable. Phone and Internet services, where available, are expensive and erratic. Outside of Nigeria and South Africa, only 1.9 million people in sub-Saharan Africa enjoy a regular phone service. While the number of main lines is growing at the rate 10% per annum across Africa, more than a million people are still on long telephone waiting lists.

The UN Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) recently found that outside of South Africa only 500,000 Africans have any access to the Internet. While one in every five or six people in North America and Europe use the Internet, only one in 1,500 people throughout most of Africa can log on.

Africans pay much more than Americans and Europeans for telephone services and for access to the Internet. International calls within Africa are generally routed via Europe, adding an estimated US$600 million to the continent's annual phone bill. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an Internet account in Africa costs an average of $60 for five hours a month compared with about $29 a month for 20 hours of Internet access in the United States.

IV.5 Conclusion

The availability of affordable infrastructure is key to the success of an economically beneficial use of IT in Africa. Education is another primary driver for the success of IT in Africa. The establishment of community learning centres could well be a step in the right direction, but Africa has to be wired in order to gain access to the vast information resources already available to industrialised countries.

In Africa, the lack of reasonably-priced telecommunications is a major obstacle to trade and investment. It hampers the development of indigenous businesses and undermines government efforts to improve and diversify their nations' economies. While the rest of the world is marching down the information highway, Africa risks technological isolation.

The many opportunities offered by IT have to be seized, and deliberately, for the cost of not doing so is very high.

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Chapter Five

Initiatives towards Bridging the Digital Divide in Africa: The Case of COMESA

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V.1 Introduction

One of the major objectives of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is to create an Information Society that efficiently generates, distributes, and utilises information.[24] For COMESA, information-based development is underpinned by Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) that support exchange of information in a network of users in the form of voice, text, photographic images, sound, and video. This network comprises of a variety of terminal devices, including telephones, receiving devices, and computers connected to an information infrastructure incorporating broadcasting and telecommunications, of which the Internet is an important component.

There are many factors that have limited access to ICTs within the COMESA region. The major contributing factors are:

- High costs of equipment. Although the cost of equipment (computers, televisions, etc.) has progressively decreased over the last decade, the prices are far beyond the reach of the majority of the population.
- Poor and inefficient infrastructure. The existing infrastructure is unable to support growth in ICT services and networking within and between the member states. Moreover, due to inefficiency, the region experiences high basic costs of services.
- Inadequate government legislation. There are limited new private sector investments within the information and communication sector, and there has been a failure to prioritise ICT programmes to drive E-governance. Governments are apparently holding back the private sector and non-governmental organisations with regard to the levels of ICT usage.
- Lack of adequate ICT skills within the bulk of the population, particularly in the rural areas. The few skills that exist are expensive, making their services unavailable to the majority.

Taken together, these factors have given the COMESA region the unenviable position of being one of the lowest global users of ICTs. Nonetheless, across the region, there exist major differences in the level of ICT usage, with Mauritius and Egypt leading and the Great Lakes sub-region substantially lagging behind.

In order to employ information and communication technology as a tool for development, COMESA governments have agreed to put in place several initiatives to facilitate the process. These initiatives are described in the following sections.

[24] COMESA, composed of 20 Member States, was established in December 1994 and replaced the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) that was set up in 1981. The Member States are Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

V.2 Initiatives Towards Bridging the Digital Divide in the COMESA Region

(a) The Liberalisation of the ICT Sector

The last decade saw the gradual reduction of state monopolies within the information and communication sector across the region, which led to an increased number of ISPs and substantial investment injection. This liberalised market has not only created more employment, but also has seen reductions in costs of services and increases in the areas covered, rural areas especially. The box on Kenya mobile networks highlights some of the benefits than can be realised by liberalisation.

Studies have shown that as markets are liberalised, efficiency is injected, which leads to sustained reductions in the costs of services. Under COMESA, there is an initiative to ensure a uniform liberalisation processes across the region so that investors in one country face similar conditions in the others. Furthermore, the initiative addresses issues such as effective competition and the removal of barriers to new market entrants.

Mobile Networks in Kenya

- 300,000 fixed up to 2002
- Mobile market opened 2000
- Currently over 1.5 million cellphones
- Mobile networks are country-wide
- Per line connection to mobile phone networks is now less than US$10

(b) The Harmonisation of Regional ICT Policies

The COMESA region needs telecommunications infrastructure, but governments will not build it; it will be built instead by the private sector. However, the only way to attract private investment is to have fair and independent regulatory bodies that support competitive markets and give investors the confidence and predictability they need to make their investments.

The harmonisation initiative seeks to create a unified body of rules that will provide clarity and certainty to stakeholders in member states and promote the creation of a liberalised and integrated market. An association of telecommunication regulators from member countries manages the harmonisation initiative. Amongst the issues stated for harmonisation are applicable registration tariffs and the uniform allocation of finite resources, such as telecommunication frequencies.

In providing a large market, it is expected that investors (equipment manufacturers, service providers, etc.) will apply economies of scale and lower the costs of various ICT items, thus making them affordable to a larger number of people.

(c) Universal Access and Service

Universal service is defined as the availability of minimal affordable telecommunication services to the maximum number of potential users. The availability of these services in rural areas poses a major problem in the COMESA region. This is due to the low density of users and, because of the long distances involved, the high costs of installations, making implementation uneconomical for private investors. The emphasis of universal access is to increase ICT services on a community-wide level. In South Africa, for example, the universal access target has been set as a phone within 30 minutes of walking distance.

Under this COMESA initiative, various obligations are being brought to bear (together with incentives) on the service providers to avail Universal Access and Services to all. In Kenya, for example, post offices across the country are being outfitted with VSATs to avail Internet/e-mail services within their locality. One of the methods being proposed is the creation of Universal Services Funds, under Ministries responsible for communications.

(d) Telecommunication Infrastructure across COMESA

The existing telecommunication links within and across COMESA member states are extremely inadequate and cannot support the envisaged ICT activities and thus spur development. To address this shortfall, an ambitious project named COMTEL has been set up. The project will utilise optical fibre and microwave technologies to link Southern Africa with countries in Northern Africa. This will form the backbone for the 'Information Superhighway' within the region and should meet the projected bandwidth requirements. Once operational, the costs of communications within COMESA should be more efficient and fairly affordable.

The COMTEL Initiative

- Communication backbone linking all COMESA countries and beyond
- Is funded by private sector and national telecom operators
- Will avail bandwidth for voice, data, and TV programmes
- Estimated cost (2000): US$ 170 million

(e) E-governance Programmes

In order for COMESA governments to push forward the use of information and communication technologies in the region, it is necessary that all sections of government become computerised. This way, the governments will provide the necessary leadership. An effective way of doing this is to create a Ministry responsible for ICT, whose responsibility it is to oversee the management of the automation process and give policy guidelines to the ICT industry. Currently, ICT policies in most countries are spread over a number of Ministries, which leads to poor policy guidelines, and a lack of prioritisation and emphasis.

A commendable example is Mauritius, where the government has established a Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications to manage ICT. The Ministry was instrumental in the creation of Cyber Crimes Bill, a judicial legislation specific to crimes perpetuated within computer systems.

The Ministry of ICT in Mauritius

- Deals with formulation and implementation of ICT policies
- Effected ICT Act 2001 for sector regulation and Cyber Crimes Bill 2003
- Has provided clear guidelines on the incubation process for new ICT firms

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(f) Nurse 'Net-parks'

'Net parks' are technology centres whose responsibility it is to continuously supply the pools of skills necessary to meet the ever-changing ICT requirements. The availability of a large skills set will reduce the costs of the provision of services. Governments should give incentives for creation of such centres, perhaps by giving tax breaks to facilitate their growth. Additionally, it will be necessary to avail ICED services to schools and develop relevant curricula.

Once the problem of reliable power supplies to rural areas has been addressed and resolved, the problem of content delivery may be solved by organizations such as World Space.

World Space Direct Media Services

- Delivers multimedia contents via satellite in Africa, Asia, and Latin America
- Users subscribe to content of interest, which is then downloaded to their PCs
- Delivers multimedia contents via satellite in Africa, Asia, and Latin America
- Initial costs from US$ 70

(g) Content Development

Currently, substantial amounts of ICT content (database searches, TV programmes, etc.) are imported from Western economies, making the COMESA region a net importer. The region needs to actively seek to develop world-class content, so that users outside the region subscribe to it in order to increase incomes arising from ICT.

Additionally, software could be developed in COMESA and exported to the rest of the world, as is currently taking place in India. This may entail partnerships between local entrepreneurs and large multinationals to ensure effective distribution of the applications developed within COMESA. Potential incomes from such ventures are enormous.

Chapter Six

Information Technology for Harmonious Industrial Relations in East Africa

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VI.1 What is Information Technology?

In simple terms, 'information' refers to facts told, heard, or discovered about somebody or something. It refers to knowledge. Knowledge can be provided, given, passed on, acquired or received. 'Technology', on the other hand, refers to scientific study or the use of applied sciences. It refers to the application of technical skills in order to perform certain tasks.

Hence, 'information technology' may be seen as the study or use of electronic equipment such as computers for storing, analysing, and distributing a wide range of information. The kind of information that may be distributed includes numbers, pictures, and words.

Information technology (popularly referred to as IT) covers a wide range of machinery and software that may be used in an organisation. Examples are shown below, in Table 1.

Table 1: Some Examples of Computer Hardware and Software

HARDWARE (Machinery)	SOFTWARE (Programmes)
Monitor (Computer)	Adobe Acrobat Reader
Keyboard (Computer)	Microsoft (Access, Binder, Excel, FrontPage,
Hard Disk (Computer)	Outlook, PowerPoint, Word)
Type-writer	CourseReader (Hekima)
Photocopier	PageMaker
Scanner	
Printer	
Fax machine	
WordPerfect	

VI.2 The ILO Project on Strengthening Labour Relations in East Africa (ILO/SLAREA)

Covering the three East African countries (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania), the ILO project on Strengthening Labour Relations in East Africa (ILO/SLAREA) emerged against the background of the 1995 United Nations Social Summit in Copenhagen. Following the adoption of the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and as part the framework of the globalisation process, the ILO committed itself to mobilising budgetary resources and its using its influence to assist member States with respecting and promoting the internationally recognised Core Labour Standards. These Conventions relate to:

(i) Freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (Conventions 87 and 98)

(ii) The elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour (Conventions 29 and 105)

(iii) The effective abolition of child labour (Conventions 138 and 182)

(iv) The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (Conventions 100 and 111)

It was in this context that the United States Government, through its Department of Labour, granted the ILO financial support for a number of ILO Declaration projects around the world, including ILO/SLAREA, which was formally launched in May 2001. The project is headed by the Chief Technical Advisor, who is assisted by three National Project Co-ordinators.

The project was started in order to address a number of anomalies concerning industrial relations in the three project countries (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Industrial relations difficulties affecting East Africa

Anomalies Identified	Target Partner
Labour legislation inconsistent with Conventions 87 and 98	All tripartite parties
Inadequate governmental, institutional, and human capacity in the prevention and settlement of labour disputes and conflicts that damage development prospects	Government
Declining trade union membership and limited institutional and human capacities in trade union organisation and collective bargaining	Trade unions
Inadequate strength of employers' organisations to handle the modernisation of human resource management, conflict resolution, and collective bargaining amongst their membership, especially amongst small- and medium-scale employers	Employers
Weak tripartite consultation machinery	All tripartite parties

Four 'Immediate Objectives' were designed in order to resolve the above anomalies, and are the basis of all ILO/SLAREA activities. These are:

Immediate Objective 1: Labour Laws in East Africa are to be brought into conformity with the principles of Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining enshrined in the ILO Convention 87 (The Freedom of Association) and in Convention 98 (The Right to Organise and Bargain Collectively).

Immediate Objective 2: East African Governments are to perform their functions of preventing and settling labour disputes more effectively.

Immediate Objective 3: Workers' organisations are to be strengthened in their mandates to organise and bargain collectively.

Immediate Objective 4: Employers' organisations are to perform their functions of human resources management, conflict resolution, and collective bargaining more effectively.

VI.3 The Role of Information Technology in the Promotion of Labour Relations

The manual management of information adversely affects an organisation's capacity to deliver essential services to clients. This is largely due to poor standards of record-keeping. Given that information occupies a very strategic role in any organisation, it is imperative that it be managed prudently. To date, there is no substitute for computer technology in the management of information.

Using computer technology in an organisation leads to cheaper, better, faster, and higher-quality management decisions, as it has the capacity to store larger amounts of information in a systematic and easily retrievable way. For example, with a well-managed information system, a trade union would be more effective in collective bargaining and membership recruitment.

Some few examples of the wide range of information that a trade union's management information system may store or have access to include the trade union's mission, the historical development of trade unions, population trends, labour market information, economic trends and indicators, employment trends, membership profiles, membership trends, collective bargaining agreements, occupational health and safety issues, labour legislation, international labour standards, information on violation of trade union rights, updates on labour issues world wide, industrial court awards, and judicial decisions on labour issues.

VI.4 ILO/SLAREA Project Outputs and Activities on Information Technology

In order to realise the above Objectives, since April 2001 many activities directed at government, workers and employers have been carried out. These activities include:

(i) The provision of equipment to Ministries of Labour, federations of employers, and national trade union centres.

(ii) The installation of web-sites, training in computer, Internet, and e-mail usage, and website development and management.

(iii) Training trade unions in recruiting membership

(iv) Sensitisation to the ILO Declaration.

(v) Courses on dispute prevention and settlement.

(vi) Assistance with the Labour Law reform process.

(vii) Performance improvement courses for labour officials.

(viii) Courses on labour relations for small business employers.

(ix) A workshop for industrial court judges.

(x) The commissioning and completion of seven (7) studies.

(xi) Workshops to validate the reports of various studies completed.

(xii) Workshops on Conciliation and Mediation.

(xiii) 'Training of Trainers' workshops.

(xiv) Training on industrial court case presentation.

Table 3 lists the major outputs and activities undertaken by the project so far.

Table 3: Some Outputs and Major Activities of the ILO/SLAREA Project on Information Technology

MAJOR OUTPUTS	MAJOR ACTIVITIES
I Government Officials in Ministries of Labour trained in: - Internet usage and websites - Website development and management	Supply of computer hardware, software, and other communication equipment to Ministries of Labour Establish websites for Ministries of Labour Training of officials on the use of computers, the Internet, and websites
II Trade union centres Trade union leadership and officials trained in: - Internet usage and websites - Website development and management	Supply computer hardware and software and other communication equipment to national trade union centres Establish websites for workers' organisations Train officials on the use of computers, Internet, and websites
III Employers Secretariats of employers' organisations trained in the use of the Internet and websites on labour issues	Supply of appropriate computer hardware and software to employers' organisations Establish websites and training of relevant officials on website development and management

In Kenya, in 2001, ILO/SLAREA provided computer and Internet training to 55 senior officials drawn from the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU-K), the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), and the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development. Altogether, over 160 officials have been trained in the three project countries. The range of courses offered included an introduction to computers, computer hardware and software, Windows, MSWord, E-mail usage, Internet usage, and Web design.

Part Three:
Country Reports

Chapter Seven

Kenya Country Report

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VII.1 Political Structure

Since Independence in 1963, Kenya has experienced a mixture of different political systems prevailing. Immediately after independence the country was a multiparty state, but it then adopted the single party format in 1969. The country reverted back to the multiparty era in 1990 following international pressure, from donors in particular. Currently, there are more than 40 registered political parties and the present parliament is made up of National Rainbow Coalition (a coalition of a number of political parties), the Kenya African National Union (the former ruling party), and the Ford People Party. Democracy is a concept that has taken root in Kenyan society, and is a trend that looks set to continue.

The Constitution of Kenya is currently under review. Many observers believe that any major improvement in the quality Kenya will greatly depend on the leadership abilities of the President, who is effectively the country's leader.

VII.2 Economic Structure

Kenya's economy is principally based on agriculture. In 2002 Kenya recorded a slight economic growth rate of 1.1%. This slow growth rate is mainly attributed to the effects of poor infrastructure, low domestic credit, low output and prices of agricultural produce, and the general uncertainty regarding the general election. The current Economic Development Plan envisages that Kenya will have become a fully-industrialised country by 2020.

The agricultural sector recorded growth of 0.7% in 2002 and inflation declined to 2.0%. International trade volume declined by 24%. The Kenyan economy can be classified under two headings, monetary and non-monetary. The monetary sector accounts for about 94% of the Kenyan economy and includes agriculture, forestry, and fishing; mining and quarrying; manufacturing; building and construction; electricity and water; trade, restaurants and hotels; transport, storage and communication; finance, insurance, and real estate; and community and business services. The non-monetary sector includes forestry and fishing; building and construction; water collection; and ownership of dwellings.

VII.3 Labour Market Structure

The labour resource is central to the production process and its efficient utilisation can make an immense contribution to the fight against poverty.

According to the Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS) that was carried out in 1998/99, persons between the ages of 15 and 29 years accounted for 52.6% of the active labour force during this period. The survey also estimated that working population was 10.5 million, with males accounting for 5.5 million.

VII.4 The Trade Union Situation in Kenya

Trade unions in Kenya exist under the Trade Unions Act (Chapter 233 of the Laws of Kenya) and operate on an industrial basis, as legalised by the Industrial Relations Charter. The Central Organisation of Trade Unions, Kenya (COTU(K)), with 30 affiliated unions, is the only umbrella body for trade unions in Kenya. There are two main unions that, by law, are not allowed to affiliate to COTU(K): the Kenya National Union of Teachers and the Union of Kenya Civil Servants.

The main functions of trade unions in Kenya include:

(i) Recruiting new members.

(ii) Negotiating collective bargaining agreements that set out the wages, and terms and conditions of employment for their members.

(iii) Handling members' grievances both at shop level and branch level.

(iv) Handling members' grievances at the Ministry of Labour and the Industrial Court.

(v) Educating and training members on all trade union activities, with special emphasis on the rights, interests, and obligations of workers.

(vi) Educating members on HIV/AIDS and its effects, and how members can avoid getting this disease.

(vii) Assisting members in the formation of income-generating projects such as co-operatives.

(viii) Promoting the participation of women and youth in trade unions.

VII.5 The Practical Use of Information Technology in Trade Unions in Kenya

As in many other countries in Africa, the advent of IT caught many trade unions in Kenya unaware. It is somewhat comforting that, after Somalia went online at the end of 2000, all 54 African countries now have access to the Internet.

For trade unions in Kenya, access to the Internet access is slowly picking up. The following table reflects the IT situation in the labour movement in Kenya, specifying the number of computers and the level of Internet access in the various trade unions.

Table 4: Status of Information Technology in Kenya Trade Unions

Name of union	Number of computers available	Access to Internet
1. KPAWU	3	Yes
2. Bakers' Union	5	Yes
3. KUPRIPUPA	1	No
4. RAWU	0	No
5. TTWU	1	No
6. KUCFAW	0	No
7. CWO	1	Yes
8. KUSPWU	1	Yes
9. BIFU	2	Yes
10. Building Union	1	No
11. Amalgamated Union	0	No
12. KEWU	0	No
13. DWU	0	No
14. Shipping Union	0	No
15. KPOWU	0	No

16.	Seamen's Union	0	No
17.	Fisheries' Union	0	No
18.	KUJ	0	No
19.	KAPA	1	Yes
20.	KUDHEIHA	0	No
21.	Scientific Union	0	No
22.	TAWU	0	No
23.	Music and Entertainment	0	No
24.	Chemical Union	0	No
25.	Game and Hunting	0	No
26.	Local Government	0	No
27.	KETAWU	1	Yes
28.	Quarry and Mines	0	No
29.	Jockey and Betting	0	No
30.	Shoe and Leather	0	No
31.	COTU (K)	6	Yes

Trade unions face several challenges when adopting IT. These include administration, communication, and the provision of services.

(i) Administration: Modern administrative techniques always result in improved productivity and/or service delivery. The proper administration of a trade union will usually stem from the ability, vision, and qualities of a democratically-elected trade union leader. Even after election, the new leader needs to critically examine the capacity and capabilities of the persons working under them. This means that the training and re-training of their centre's existing staff is critical.

(ii) Communication: Communication takes many forms today - road, air, sea, post, telephone, facsimile, and e-mail. Trade unions can communicate effectively by post; some are able to make use of telephones, and a few are in a position to make use of e-mail and fax services. It is well known that for any communication to be effective speed and efficiency must be maximised. Trade unions need to be equipped with facilities that will enable them make use of today's fax and e-mail services.

(iii) Provision of services: The provision of efficient services not only depends on the administrative and communication capabilities of the trade union concerned, but also on the human resources available. It is therefore critical that trade unions embark on building the capacity of both their staff and leadership with the intention of ultimately leading to improved provision of services.

In summary, we wish to highlight some of the problems that trade unions have encountered in introducing IT:

(i) The high cost of computers.

(ii) A lack of qualified personnel to operate the computers.

(iii) The high cost of education and training.

(iv) Poor communication/connection services for Internet users.

(v) Lack of knowledge about the quality of computers.

Chapter Eight

Lesotho Country Report

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VIII.1 Background

Lesotho is a land-locked and mountainous country that is surrounded by South Africa on all borders. With an area of 30,335 square kilometres (11,720 square miles) in size, it is roughly the same size as Belgium and Taiwan. It is the only country in the world with all of its territory lying at altitudes in excess of 1000 metres above sea level. Some 75% of this land of high mountainous, deep valleys, and cool rivers consist of the highland area known as the Maluti, with the remaining 25% on the narrow, western side considered as the lowlands. The other major geographical areas and ecological zones are the foothills and the Senqu River Valley.

VIII.2 Political Structure

Since independence in 1966, Lesotho's political history has been marred by upheavals and catastrophic events that have resulted in social tension and trauma in all spheres of life. The short-lived period of democracy was followed by a 23-year dictatorship and military rule. Civilian rule was restored in 1993 when the outgoing military junta held democratic elections. However, this return to democracy was not accompanied by stability and good governance. Certain incidents bear testimony to this, including the factional in-fighting between armed members of National Security Services (NSS), the assassination of the Deputy Prime Minister by the military, and the attempted palace coup in 1994. The latter was nipped in the bud by popular counteraction spearheaded by organised civil society that was also complemented by mounting international pressure.

The restoration of democracy following the general elections of 1998 was not automatically accompanied by political stability. The Prime Minister, Dr Ntsu Mokhehle, was faced with the formidable challenge of retaining his position as helmsman in Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). He won the through the support of the majority of national assembly members. Opposition parties came together to challenge the fairness and validity of the elections. Due to mounting pressure and general discontent, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) stepped in and the Justice Plus Langa Commission was formed to probe into the irregularities alleged to have materially distorted election results. All seven political parties, including the LCD, agreed to abide by the commission's findings and recommendations. Many people had great hopes of the outcome, but the report was substantially delayed, which caused much diplomatic shuttling. To many observers, the people's expectations were not realised because the mediators had failed to realise that it is not wise to take people to the mountaintop and show them Promised Land, overflowing with milk and honey, and thereafter deny them entry.

On 22 September 1998, people's expectations were shuttered when, in the early hours of the morning, armoured cars of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), under the cover of South African Air Force helicopters, rolled into the capital city, Maseru. This unfortunate incident, contrary to the Machiavellian intentions of its authors, let loose mayhem. The whole city went up in flames. The ensuing riots left a trail of destruction: businesses were looted and burned down in Maseru, Mafeteng, and Mohale's Hoek. This dealt a huge blow to the country's burgeoning economy, which had had the highest growth rates in the southern African sub-region.

VIII.3 Social and Labour Structure

(a) Social and Economic Background

Lesotho is in a geographically unique position as it is completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa (RSA). Its topography is rugged and its resource base is quite limited, being comprised of small deposits of diamonds, coal, rock, and clay. Its main natural resource is water, which is now being managed by the Lesotho Highland Water Project (LHWP) for export to South Africa.

Based on the population data sheet of 2000, the country's population is estimated at nearly 2.1 million, of whom 49% are male. The 15-19 year-old bracket constitutes approximately 48% of the population, with 49% also being male. Women of childbearing age (15-19 years) represent 45.6% of the total female population. The literacy rate is about 62% and is higher for females than males.

In 2002 the per capita GDP was estimated as being US$2,700. The agricultural sector is small and accounts for less than 20% of the GDP, even though it remains the main occupation for about two-thirds of the labour force working within the country's borders. A quarter of Lesotho's working population are employed domestically in the service sector, which accounts for over half of the country's GDP. The industrial sector is still modest but provides employment for about 46% of the working population. In addition to those employed within Lesotho, a significant proportion of working-age Basotho are employed in South Africa, the majority being males who work in the mines.

(b) Labour Market

The unemployment rate is currently estimated at 36% and is rising rapidly, mainly because of the joint effects of a slow job-creation rate and a rapid labour force growth rate. As a result of the high population growth rate (2.6 % per annum), some 20,000 to 25,000 people enter the labour force every year, the majority of whom are high school graduates. In addition to these new entrants into the labour market, an average of 4,000 Basotho mineworkers are annually repatriated from South African mines, and then seek jobs in the domestic economy. On average, Lesotho's economy generates only 6,000 job opportunities per annum, leaving an excess supply of labour of some 18,000-22,000 workers.

The overall level of employment in the formal sector, as based on dated data (Employment and Earnings Survey 1996/1997), displays features that are still relevant. For the purposes of this sector, the formal sector was classified under three major headings:

- ✦ Public Sector (all Ministries and Department)
- ✦ Parastatal Sector (all State-owned enterprises)
- ✦ Private Sector

It was estimated that there were 71,668 paid employees in the formal sector, of whom 31,062 (43.5%) were employed in the private sector; 9,476 (13.2%) in the parastatal; and 31,130 (43.3%) in the public sector.

The informal sector, providing around 20% of Lesotho's GNP is its most significant contributor and, after agriculture, is the second-most provider of livelihoods in Lesotho. According to the 1996 ILO/SAMAT, the informal sector comprised 196,000 persons distributed across 110,000 establishments, half of them in manufacturing and half in trade and other services.

(c) Basic Education

The education system in Lesotho aims at developing human capacity to attain sound economic development. The quality and relevance of basic education are therefore seen as critical ingredients for sustainable development. Section 28 of the Constitution of Lesotho articulates the Government's commitment to the provision of education for all and, further still, compulsory primary education for all.

Accordingly, the Government embarked on an aggressive multi-staged free primary education programme in 2001. In compliance with section 28(b) of the Lesotho Constitution, education is now compulsory for all children aged between 6 and 13. Moreover, there are about 40,000 pupils entering high school annually. These efforts will contribute to eliminating child labour as some children were forced to work because their parents could not afford to send them to school.

In the past, technical and vocational training have in the past been supply-driven. Some efforts have been made to develop policies that will relate training to the economic environment.

VIII.4 Trade Union Structure

The trade union movement in Lesotho is made up of many small unions. This can be ascribed to the country's political development since colonial times. The Lesotho labour movement thus has three national centres, namely:

1. Congress of Lesotho Trade Unions (COLETU)
2. Lesotho Federation of Democratic Unions (LFDU)
3. Lesotho Trade Union Congress (LTUC)

The three national centres notwithstanding, the federations are committed to founding one national centre that will represent the interests and rights of all workers.

All national centres in the Lesotho are represented in the statutory bodies and ad hoc committees for national policy formulation. They are committed in their efforts to promote social dialogue and a consensual approach to industrial relations through collective bargaining at all levels.

(a) The Structure and Organisation of Trade Unions

While the first decades following independence saw a proliferation and multiplicity of trade unions emerging in Lesotho, the last ten years have been a period of consolidation, with a increasing membership, and more financial strength and bargaining power.

In terms of organisational structure there has been virtually no change from the early post-independence period when most of the trade unions emerged as general or blanket unions to straddle a wide range of industrial spheres. A few unions that began life as industrial unions now cater for all kinds of worker, regardless of their sphere of employment.

Rivalry and disunity continue to be a fairly pronounced features of the Lesotho labour movement: It is not uncommon to find more than one trade union competing for membership in the same sector of economic activities. In an extreme case, one national centre has more than one affiliated trade union organising the same sector or industry.

There is a need for a strong and well-conceived trade union centre as a means of accommodating divergent views and opinions that might characterise the multiple unions. In addition, a strong central body might be in a better position to discuss and consult with government and employers on complicated issues of social and economic policy.

The Lesotho Federation of Democratic Unions (LFDU) has six affiliates:

- National Union of Retail and Allied Workers (NURAW)
- National Union of Hotels Food an Allied Workers (NUHFAW)
- Lesotho Transport and General Workers' Union (LTGWU)

- National Union of Textiles (NUTEX)
- Lesotho Highlands water and Allied Workers' Union (LEHWAWU)
- Lesotho Security and Allied Workers' Union (LESEAWU)

LFDU is committed to industrial unionism and the structure of its executive organs reflects this principle. The supreme organ of the Federation is the triennial Conference, which is composed of delegates drawn from affiliates. The Executive Board is the administrative organ, and acts as a steward at the triennial conference. The day to day running of the Federation is entrusted to the Executive Committee, which is composed of office bearers of the Federation elected at the triennial conference and three office bearers from each affiliate.

The major function of the Federation is to fight for workers' rights by:

(i) Representing workers on the statutory bodies and ad hoc committees for national policy formulation.

(ii) Helping affiliates in their efforts to promote social dialogue and consensual approach to industrial relations through collective bargaining.

(iii) Other functions for the promotion of workers' welfare.

Chapter Nine

Namibia Country Report

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IX.1 Introduction

Namibia is often described as Africa's optimist, and with good reason. Namibia not only enjoys one of the continent's most pleasant, peaceful, and political stable environments but also has an infrastructure to rival many development countries. It occupies a vast area - even by African standards - of 824,268 square kilometres and is home to around 1.8 million people; at less than two people per square kilometre, its population density is one of the lowest in the world.

Namibia is situated on the South-Western Atlantic coast of the sub-continent, and shares borders with Angola, Zambia, and, for a short distance, Zimbabwe in the north, South Africa in the south, and Botswana in the east.

IX.2 Political Structures

Namibia is ruled by a multi-party system and has a democratic constitution that is highly regarded by the international community. The President is voted in directly by the electorate for a five-year term and is supported by a Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Parliament comprises two houses, one directly elected and the other indirectly, by the country's regions. The country has an abundance of natural resources; among these is a wide range of mineral deposits, including world-class diamonds and uranium, plus copper, lead, zinc, gold, semi-precious stones, industrial minerals, salt and fluorspar, and pelagic species. The latter place the country among the top ten nations in the international fishing arena.

Namibia is one of the fourteen Members States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Namibia also has duty- and quota-free arrangements and privileges with the lucrative USA market under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

IX.3 Telecommunication Network

The modern telecommunication infrastructure in Namibia is 98% digital and provides direct dialling facilities to 98% of the world. The tele-density penetration rate is 6%, with a customer base of about 113,000. There are about six ISPs, of whom UU Net AfricaOnline Namibia, N-Web, Namib Net, and Cyberhot are dominant players.

IX.4 Labour Market

According to the 1997 Labour Force Survey, there are 833,588 people in Namibia aged 15 and above. Of these, 546,918 are economically active, with 356,849 being employed. This means that Namibia has an unemployment rate of 34.8%.

Namibian unions' membership rate in the formal sector is estimated as being 51,7% of the workforce (129,769 members). However, few trade unions have accurate membership figures.

IX.5 Trade Unions Structures

The National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) was established, in exile, in Tanzania on 24 April 1970. The NUNW history is closely linked with that of SWAPO - a result of the particular history of Namibia's liberation struggle.

The National Congress is the highest decision-making body of the Federation. Delegates are from affiliated trade unions. The Congress meets every five years, whereupon office bearers are elected and polices made. The Central Executive Committee is the second highest body and its Congress meets twice a year. In addition, there is the Executive Committee (the administrative body of the Federation) and it meets four times a year. It assists the General Secretary with administrative issues and it also implements the policies of the national centre.

IX.6 Information Technology within NUNW

Namibian trade unions have an excellent telecommunication network. The nine affiliates of the NUNW have e-mail addresses, and one has its own website. There are trained personnel within NUNW affiliated unions. Regular training is provided for staff members. Few unions are without computers at their regional offices.

Chapter Ten

Tanzania Country Report

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X.1 Introduction

The union of Tanganyika and the state of Zanzibar, comprising the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, formed the United Republic of Tanzania in April 1964. Prior to independence in 1961, Tanganyika had been successively a German colony, a British-administered League of Nations' Mandate, a United Nations' Trust Territory under British administration. Zanzibar was a British colony until 1963.

Tanzania covers a total area of 945,087 square kilometres, of which 59,050 sq. km are covered by water. The highest point is Mt Kilimanjaro, which is 5,895 metres above sea level. Natural resources include hydropower, tin, phosphates, iron ore, coal, diamonds, gemstone, gold, natural gas, and nickel.

Tanzania has a population of 33.7 million people (2000) and a population growth rate of 2.3%. The GDP, at constant 1992 prices, recorded an average real growth rate of 4.0% per annum between 1996-1999. Given the annual population growth rate of 2.8%, the per capita real growth rate was around 1.2%. The composition of GDP is such that the agricultural sector accounts for around 50.0%, with trade at around 16.0%. Financial and business services rank third at 10%, followed by the industrial sector at around 8.0%. Although the mining sector has only been contributing around 2.0%, it has a brighter future thanks to ongoing foreign investment. In the near future the sector will record a significant proportion of the country's GDP.

X.2 Political Structures

Since the mid-1980s, Tanzania has been implementing far-reaching reforms in its political system, its economic management, and its Government administration. In 1992, a multiparty democracy system was introduced, and successful multiparty elections were held in 1995 and 2000. The economic reform programmes that commenced in 1986 have converted the command-based economy into a market one. Trade, exchange rates, and interest rates are now fully liberalised. The reform of parastatals has privatised/ divested about half of the original 4001. Public service reform has cut down the workforce in Government from 355,000 (1992) to 270,000 (1997), rationalised and streamlined functions and structures and salaries, introduced new management systems (performance- and output-based), and strengthened local Government through the formulation and implementation of the Local Government Reform Programme

X.3 Economy

For a long time, the Tanzania economy suffered several shocks with severe destabilising effects. These included the oil shocks, the collapse of commodity prices, drought, the break-up of the East African Community, and the war in Uganda. Coupled with a poor policy regime, this culminated in severe economic crisis in the early 1980s. Although several adjustment measures have been implemented since 1981, fiscal instability was still severe in mid-1990. The privatisation programme is now concentrating on those large and monopolistic enterprises whose privatisation has to be preceded by formulation of a legal and regulatory framework.

Early in 1996, the Government committed itself to a shadow programme monitored by the IMF, and from September 1996 to a three-year Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) that was underpinned by a Policy Framework Paper (PFP). To date, Tanzania has made significant progress in restoring macro-economic stability. The overall fiscal balance (including grants) has been a surplus of around 0.8 to 1.2% of GDP during the past three years. Inflation was brought down from more than 30% in 1995 to 6.6% in early 2000. Foreign reserves have increased from 1.5 months of merchandise imports in 1995 to 4.5 months (2003).

The Government does recognise the need for robust high growth to fight nationwide poverty. Higher (6-8%) and sustained growth is necessary. It is also important that this growth be broad-based and centred on improving the livelihoods of the poor. The Government is committed to consolidating and intensifying the macro-economic progress achieved to date.

X.4 Agriculture Sector

Agriculture is the foundation of the Tanzanian economy. It accounts for about half of the national income and three quarters of merchandise exports; it is source of food and provides employment opportunities for about 80% of the population. It has linkages with the non-farm sector through forward linkages to agro-processing, consumption, and exports. It also provides raw materials to industries and a market for manufactured goods.

Smallholder farmers (peasants) cultivating average farm sizes of between 0.9 and 3.0 hectares dominate agriculture in Tanzania. About 70% of Tanzania's crop area is cultivated by hand hoe, 20% by ox plough, and 10% by tractor. This is rain fed agriculture. Food crop production dominates the agriculture economy, and 5.1 million hectors are cultivated annually, of which 85% are given over to food crops. Women constitute the main part of agricultural labour force. The major constraint facing the agriculture sector is falling labour and land productivity due to the use of poor technology and the dependence on unreliable and irregular weather conditions. Both crops and livestock are adversely affected by periodic droughts.

Irrigation holds the key to stabilising agricultural production in Tanzania and so improving food security, increasing farmers' productivity and incomes, and also to producing higher value crops such as vegetables and flowers.

Urban agriculture has flourished as a household-level initiative to cope with economic hardships encountered as a result of raises in the cost of living. Urban agriculture consists of the raising and growing of vegetable and food crops in towns and cities where there are ready markets for the products. Producers of vegetables, milk, broilers' meat and eggs sell to private households as well as to schools, hotels, hospitals, bars, cafeterias, and restaurants.

Agricultural GDP has grown at 3.3% per annum since 1985, main food crops at 3.5 %, and export crops at 5.4%. Considering that the overall GDP growth target for halving abject poverty by 2010 is in the range of 6-7%, such performance falls well short of the needed growth.

Macro-economic reforms have had and continue to have a significant impact on the agricultural sector. They have lead to the opening up of the sector to private investment in production and processing, input importation and distribution, and agricultural marketing. Most production, processing, and marketing functions have been assigned to the private sector. The Government has retained its regulatory and public support functions and a facilitatory role.

Farmers are free to sell their crops to co-operatives or private traders. Through competition, normal producer prices for food and export crops have increased as such farmers can now sell their produce much faster. Farmers are no longer confined to a single source for their essential inputs for crops and livestock.

The government recognises the pivotal role of the agricultural sector both in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction. The strong influence of factors outside the sector such as infrastructure, rural financial services, land ownership and good governance have also been recognised.

Priority actions include:

- The pursuit of macro-economic policies that will motivate investment in agriculture by smallholders and large-scale commercial farmers.
- Creating an enabling environment and providing proactive support to private operators, farmers organisations, and NGOs and CBOs supplying inputs and credit to small farmers, as well as ensuring a strong regulatory mechanism.
- Concentrating budgetary allocations in agriculture research and extension.
- Providing special support to investments in agricultural processing, particularly in fruits and vegetables, and according top priority to the implementation of the new Land Act.

X.5 Health Services

For a period of almost 30 years, health service delivery in Tanzania was largely a prerogative of the state; only a limited number of private-for-profit health services were provided in major towns of the country. After independence, health care facilities were re-directed towards rural areas and free medical health services were introduced.

In 1977, private health services for profit were banned under the Private Hospitals (Regulation) Act and the commercial practice of medicine and dentistry was prohibited. This Act had negative implications on health services in the country.

However, after a series of major economic and social changes, the Government adopted a different approach to the role of private sector. New policies were developed that looked favourably on the role it could play. The importance of the private sector in health care delivery was further recognised with an amendment to the Private Hospitals (Regulatory) Act, 1977, which resulted into the establishment of the Private Hospitals (Regulation) (Amendment) Act, 1991. As a result of this Act, individual qualified medical practitioners and dentists could now manage private hospitals, with the approval of the Ministry of Health.

The distribution of health facilities has a heavy rural emphasis because more than 70% of the population live in rural areas. In the past, plans for the establishment of health facilities have taken into consideration the facility/population ratio, but with time this has in some areas been seriously overtaken by the high population growth-rate.

The Ministry of Health appraised the health sector's performance with the intention of raising strategies to improve quality of health services and increase equity in health accessibility and utilisation. This was stated in the report 'Proposals for Health Reforms, Ministry of Health, 1994 (HSR)'. The reforms are in the following areas: managerial reforms or decentralisation of health services; financial reforms, such as the enhancement of user-charges in government hospitals, the introduction of health insurance and community health funds; and public/private mix reforms such as encouragement of private sector to complement public health services. Also include are organisational reforms such as the integration of vertical health programmes into the general health services; health research reforms, such as establishment of a health research users' fund; and the propagation of demand-oriented research in the health sector.

X.6 Manufacturing Industry

At the end of the 20th century, manufacturing activities in Tanzania reflected steady growth, registering average annual increases of over 4%. Nevertheless, manufacturing activities in Tanzania are relatively small and still at in their infancy. The contribution to GDP has averaged 8% over the last decade, with most activities concentrated on manufacture of simple consumer goods - food, beverages, tobacco, textiles, and furniture and wood-allied products. Most of the present industries were established in the light of the import substitution strategy

The Government's decision to liberalise trade and investment policies affected many firms, even those believed to be strong, as they could hardly withstand the competition from imported manufactured goods. A number of measures were taken in view of revamping competitiveness of the local industries and enhancing their penetration into export markets.

In the early 1990s, the Government launched a deliberate programme to restructure and privatise publicly-owned enterprises. Out of this programme some sheds of hope are now emerging. The overall utilisation of installed industrial capacities is improving, having rising from an average of 20% in 1990 to around 50% at the turn of the 21st century. Some of the recently privatised industries have undergone intensive rehabilitation, improving their capital structure, production technologies, and management and marketing systems as well as retrenching workers to match production levels, improve quality, and lower production costs.

The manufacturing sector is of significant importance to Tanzania's economy. Up to 1999, the sector employed about 140,000 people or about 48% of total monthly wage earners, making it the largest urban employer. It remains the most reliable source of government revenue in terms of import sales, and corporate and income taxes. It accounts for over half the Government's annual revenue collection. Though manufactured exports have been in decline, the sector still earns the country a fifth of the country's total foreign exchange, making it the most third important sector after agriculture and tourism. Moreover, it is this sector that provides reliable field-to-practice invention, innovation, and the nurturing of modern technologies for production and service provision.

X.7 Private Sector

Consistent with ongoing reforms, the Government has redefined the role of the state to that of policy-maker, maintainer of law and order, provider of basic social and economic infrastructure, and facilitator of economic growth. The Government recognises its role to facilitate the private sector and other economic agents to actively and effectively invest in productive and commercial activities in order to accelerate economic growth and development. This the Government can do by putting favourable policies in place, providing an environment conducive to local and foreign investment, promoting institutional changes conducive to the development of the private sector, stimulating investor confidence through transparent, effective, and efficient administrative processes in government institutions, and putting in place the appropriate legal and regulatory framework.

In recognition of this important role towards creating an enabling environment for private sector development, the Government has been implementing wide-ranging institutional and policy reforms. It has liberalised its economy, amended and enacted a number of investment related laws and policies, undertaken financial reforms, liberalised its trading regime, put in place an attractive investment package, and undertaken a number of initiatives to promote and develop the private sector. Tanzania now has one of the most liberal investment regimes in Africa.

Furthermore, most public enterprises in industry have been privatised. The most robust response has been in mining and tourism, currently the destination of the bulk of local and foreign investment.

X.8 The Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA)

The TUCTA was established in April 2001 as a result of the 1998 Trade Union Act Number 10. It is currently the only national centre for trade unions with 12 affiliated unions in mainland Tanzania. Three other unions with a combined membership of not more than 2,500 have registered but are not members of TUCTA, although one has recently applied for membership. TUCTA's combined membership of slightly above 300,000 constitutes a unionisation rate of about 26.5% of the almost 1.2 million people with paid employment in the formal sector. This indicates that the trade unions, although in general weak, do have some foothold in the modern sector of the economy.

TUCTA is governed by the General Council, which comprises five members of each union plus the chairperson, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, the Treasurer, and the heads of departments of TUCTA. The General Council elects an Executive Council of 36 members and holds quarterly meetings. A Trade Union Congress is held every five years.

The Secretary General heads the TUCTA Secretariat. The Secretariat has four departments: Education, Training and Workers' Participation; Women and Youth Development; Health and Safety; and Research and Economics. Each department has a committee made up of representatives of the unions.

The senior management of TUCTA and the affiliated unions are strongly male-dominated, although women constitute approximately one-third of the membership. Since its foundation, TUCTA has been in a process of developing appropriate structures and strategies in order to deal with the organisational, political, and economic challenges. In general, the process has been characterised by a positive commitment from its now 12 affiliates.

The membership and professional capacity of the individual trade unions vary a lot (from 150 to 120,000 people). With a number of relatively small trade unions, TUCTA plays a key role in both advocacy and providing services to its affiliated unions. Most trade unions have a traditional structure, with a number of local branches at enterprise level, districts, regions/zones, and a national centre.

Member subscription to the trade union is 2% of the salary and the trade unions pay 5% of their total collection to the federation. In its establishing phase, TUCTA received substantial financial and technical assistance (equipment for offices, temporary salaries for staff, and a technical advisor), mainly from DANIDA and, to a lesser extent, from LO Norway, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the Canadian Labour Congress and ILO/SLAREA. The German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung also provides selected programme support.

The main challenge for trade unions is to significantly increase their membership base in an economy where less then 10% of the workforce has paid employment in the formal sector. During recent years there has been an overall trend of decreasing union membership, mainly caused by retrenchments in public enterprises.

The labour law reform process is expected to lead to another complication in relation to the abolition of the current system of service charges of trade unions. Currently, trade unions with an organisation rate of at least 50% can charge service fees from all employees (including management) for collective bargaining. Overall, the economic and organisational capacities of both TUCTA and the individual unions are still very limited, while the demand, especially in relation to the implementation of the labour reform, is sharply increasing.

TUCTA is an umbrella organisation that affiliates 12 National Industrial Unions, namely:

1. Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU/CWT)
2. Tanzania Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union (TPAWU)
3. Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees (TUGHE)
4. Tanzania Seamen's Union (TASU)
5. Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO)
6. Tanzania Mines and Construction Workers' Union (TAMICO)
7. Researchers, academicians and Allied Workers' Union (RAAWU)
8. Tanzania Local Government Workers' Union (TALGWU)
9. Tanzania Railway Workers' Union (TRAWU)
10. Communications and Transport Workers' Union of Tanzania (COTWU) (T)

11. Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers' Union (CHODAWU)

12. Tanzania Union of Journalists (TUJ)

TUCTA'S objectives include the following:

(i) To inform and educate workers about their rights.

(ii) To create awareness about issues of mutual interest to members and workers at national and international levels.

(iii) To support congress members in the fight and struggles for their rights.

(iv) To liase and support international bodies in their struggles of common interest.

(v) With Government, employers and international organisations, negotiating, lobbying, and advocacy role on issues that affect workers: privatisation, EPZ, globalisation, and unemployment.

The principal activities that have to be undertaken in order to enable TUCTA aims to be met include the recruitment of new members, providing quality service to its members, creating databases, initiating processes of changing outdated laws, fund-raising and mobilisation, improving the management of TUCTA and other trade unions, modernising TUCTA, operating through acquisition and deployment of ICT, managing crises (internal and external), mainstreaming gender issues in TUCTA and affiliates, and establishing or reviving income-generating activities.

X.9 Use and Application of Information Technology within Trade Unions

Generally, there is limited capacity and application of information technology within TUCTA and its affiliates. However, as of recently, most unions have one or two computers, but these were mainly used by secretaries for the purpose of writing letters and reports (as shown in the table below). Most technical staff, except those at TPAWU, lacked both knowledge of and access to computers. At TUCTA there are about eight (8) computers, of which six (6) can connect to the Internet. Technical staff, secretaries, and the accounts department are using these computers. None of the trade union leaders are using this technology. A quick assessment of the for the TUCTA's Executive Committee Members' knowledge of IT has shown that out of 40 members only two (2) have satisfactory knowledge and the rest no knowledge at all.

Table 5: Status of Computer Usage in Trade Unions in Tanzania

Unions	Number of Computers available	Connection to Internet services
1. Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU/CWT)	1	1
2. Tanzania Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union (TPAWU)	2	1
3. Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees (TUGHE)	1	1
4. Tanzania Seamen's Union (TASU)	0	0
5. Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO)	2	0
6. Tanzania Mines and Construction Workers' Union (TAMICO)	2	0
7. Researchers, Academicians and Allied Workers' Union (RAAWU)	2	1
8. Tanzania Local Government Workers' Union (TALGWU)	1	0
9. Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers' Union (CHODAWU)	1	1
10. Tanzania Union of Journalists (TUJ)	0	0
11. Communications and Transport Workers' Union of Tanzania (COTWU) (T)	2	0
12. Tanzania Railway Workers' Union (TRAWU)	2	0
13. Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA)		
Office	8	5
Computer room	4	1

TUCTA initiated a computer-training programme for the secretaries of affiliate unions, using 4 computers. However, this training has now stopped when the trainer was relocated. It is hoped that in the near future this programme will be revived. Since April 2003, TUCTA has designed and registered a website. It is now waiting to be uploaded to the Internet.

The main constraints to TUCTA's adoption of IT include:

(i) Due to lack of facilities, equipment, and knowledge of IT, communication within trade unions and between other organisations becomes difficult, time-consuming, and costly. By and large, trade unions are still using traditional means of communication, e.g. mail delivery is entirely by hand, although to the telephone/fax are being used to some extent.

(ii) The available equipment (computers) is mainly based at the headquarters of the National Centres; this has also created a gap in communication at the Regional and District Offices.

(iii) High cost of ICT equipment, Internet services, and telephone bills.

(iv) Lack of personnel qualified in ICT.

(v) Because the majority of trade union leaders are ignorant of IT, it has been given little or no attention. More awareness on ICT on the part of the leadership is therefore required so that they can consider and give priority to this area.

Chapter Eleven

Uganda Country Report

George Balidda, Afedraru Lominda, George Waako, Harriet Mugambwa, David Baliraine, and Mable Kinungu

XI.1 Background

Uganda lies in the East African region and has a population of about 24.7 million. It is land-locked, being surrounded by Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Demographically, the country is composed of multi-ethnic groups, Bantu- speaking Nilo-hamites, and Nilotics. Uganda receives tropical rainfall. with occasional dry spells amounting to equatorial rainfall

XI.2 Political and Economic Structure

The country achieved independence on 9th October 1962 and has since undergone several changes in leadership. Currently, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni is President of Uganda, under the no-party 'movement' system. Uganda enjoys relative peace, although there has been insurgency in the Northern region for nearly two decades now.

The economic policy of the country is one of openness and liberalization. It is geared towards independence, integration, and being self-sustaining. The economic growth rate was 4.9% for the year 2002/03 and the annual average inflation rate is currently 5.9%.

Agriculture is the most important economic activity carried out in the country. It involves subsistence farming, livestock farming, and cash crop production. In order to expand production, the Government has adopted a plan for modernising agriculture. The Government has developed also the policy with a view to eradicating mass poverty, as a good number of the Ugandans are living below the poverty line.

XI.3 Social Development and Labour Structure

Uganda has implemented a five-year Social Development Sector Investment Plan (SDIP). The key components include empowering households to access information from community development workers, supporting people in difficult circumstances (including street children and people formerly abducted by the rebels operating in the country), and a functional adult literacy programme. A comprehensive community mobilisation strategy is being developed to harmonise and co-ordinate the activities of different sectors that require mobilisation and understanding of government programmes.Policies are being drafted on issues such as HIV/AIDS at the workplace, orphans, culture, and the elimination of child labour.

However, the employment policy is still in draft form. The total labour force is estimated to be over 10 million, with 1.5 million employed in the formal sector, and 6.5 million in the informal sector, of whom over 2 million are in ungainful employment or underemployed.

XI.4 Trade Union Structure

The National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) is the only national centre to which all registered trade unions must affiliate. Currently there are 19 affiliates with a paid-up membership of 146,027. Teachers have also been granted full status of a trade union but they are not yet affiliated to NOTU.

The supreme organ of NOTU is the Quinquennial Delegates Conference, which elects the Secretariat and confirms or rejects the resolutions set by the Central Governing Council (CGC). There is also the Annual Delegates Conference (ADC), which evaluates the performance and effectiveness of the operations of the National Centre. Other organs include the Central Governing Council (CGC), which performs a supervisory role and carries out any other duty omitted by ADC, and the Finance, Administration and General Purposes Committee, which acts on behalf of the CGC on matters related to finance, administration, general purposes, and the appointment of auxiliary staff. The Secretariat is responsible for the centre's administration, and implementing decisions passed by superior organs and standing committees.

XI.5 Information Technology

Uganda as a whole is facing problems relating to ICT. However, in an effort to further enhance the competitive capacity of local ICT companies, the Government has embarked on building a one-stop facility (Incubation Centre) that can be easily accessed by emerging ICT companies, as they build their capacity to operate independently. In order to provide a transparent framework for these services, a new ICT policy has been developed. In addition, the government has exempted VAT on computer software.

Trade unions in Uganda are aspiring to embrace ICT, but there is inadequate capacity development both in institutional and human resources. Few trade unions have computers and Internet services. This is due to many factors, such as financial constraints, lack of skilled personnel, and lack of infrastructure. Some of the operational problems trade unions face include poor telephone communication infrastructure; ultra-high costs; a low rate of computer literacy; a lack of awareness; and a lack of recognition of trade unions by employers.

There are also those problems associated with introducing ICT in trade unions, but these are national in character. They include a lack of policy, high rates of telephone costs, interrupted power supplies, lack of equipment, and lack of skilled personnel.

Chapter Twelve

Zambia Country Report

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Kitwe

XII.1 Political Structure

Zambia has a population of about 10.5 million (2000) up from about 3.8 million in 1964. About 42% of the population live in urban areas, a trend that makes Zambia the second most urbanised country in the region after South Africa.

From 1964 to 1972 the country traversed a multi-party political system. In 1972 the constitution was amended to pave way for a one-party participatory democracy. The situation remained so up to 1991 when Government bowed to increasing pressure on the need to go back to plural politics. The constitution was subsequently amended to allow the re-introduction of multi-partism.

There are three arms of Government, i.e., the Executive, which includes the Republican President and Ministers, supported by civil servants; the Legislature or Parliament; and the Judiciary, made up of local courts, magistrates courts, the High Court and the Supreme Court.

To strengthen the basic constitutional framework, the constitution also provides for institutional bodies, which act to further check the actions of the three state organs to ensure that good governance is upheld. These include the Permanent Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Investigator General, the Office of the Auditor General, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Drug Enforcement Commission, the Zambia National Tender Board, and the Electoral Commission. The President appoints members of these institutions, which has been viewed as a weak point.

XII.2 Zambia's Economic Structure

The Zambian economy can be characterised by three sectors: primary, secondary and tertiary. The primary sector represents 23.4% of GDP (agriculture 17.3%, and mining 6.1%), the secondary sector represents 20.4% (manufacturing 11.4%), and the tertiary sector 56.2% (wholesale and retail trade 16.9%, and financial institutions 9.6%).

The economy is largely dependent on the agricultural sector for employment as about 80% of the labour force is employed in agriculture. Industry and services each employ less than 10% of the labour force. The main industries are mining (copper, cobalt, and zinc), construction, food, beverages, chemicals, and textiles. In 1998, copper accounted for 49.3% of total exports and cobalt 17.6%. Zambia is the world's second largest cobalt producer and the fourth biggest copper producer.

The country's main exports are copper, cobalt, electricity, and tobacco. Zambia's main export partners are Japan, Saudi Arabia, India, Thailand, South Africa, the US, and Malaysia. Non-traditional exports have risen over the last decade and now represent an increasing share of the country's merchandise exports. This will diversify the country's export market and lessen its dependence on copper and cobalt mining.

Zambia's main import commodities are machinery, transportation equipment, foodstuffs, fuels, petroleum products, electricity, and fertiliser. Imports are mainly sourced from South Africa, Saudi Arabia, the UK, and Zimbabwe. South Africa's share of Zambian imports is the largest and is still growing.

Zambia's future export and import performances are linked to the Copperbelt's recovery. Investment in the copper-mining sector will require increased imports, such as machinery. The country's export performance is also largely linked to copper, as it is significant source of foreign exchange. The recent improved performance of non-traditional exports is a positive sign that the diversification of the economy is on track, albeit from a low base.

XII.3 The Structure of Zambia Congress of Trade Unions

The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) was founded in 1966 after being registered under Section 8 of the Trade Union and Trade Disputes Ordinance of 1949 of Northern Rhodesia. Until 1993, the ZCTU was the only trade union federation in the country, with the law binding all trade unions to affiliate to it. Currently, the ZCTU represents 26 affiliated national unions operating in various sectors of the economy.

The labour movement in Zambia has been very instrumental in shaping the country's economic and political destiny. Struggles for political independence emerged from strikes over poor working conditions for native workers and dissatisfaction with inequalities in living and working conditions, in comparison to settler workers.

Through the years after independence up until 1991, the labour movement kept the government of Dr Kenneth Kaunda in check and greatly contributed to the return to multiparty democracy. Through the active participation of the ZCTU, its leader Mr Fredrick Chiluba rose to the helm of power in Zambia. Mr Chiluba's government, however, has not performed to the satisfaction of many people, specially the workers.

Various organs entrusted with different responsibilities run the affairs of the ZCTU. The highest decisionmaking body of the ZCTU is the Quadrennial Congress, which is comprised of two executive organs, the Executive Board and Committee, and delegates from affiliate unions. The number of members that each union has determines the number of delegates to the Congress. It meets once every four years.

Next in the chain is the General Council, made up of fewer delegates. The General Council meets twice a year to make decisions based on recommendations from the Executive Committee and makes follow-ups on decisions of the Quadrennial Congress.

The Executive Committee, which is comprised of all ZCTU Executive Board Members, General Secretaries from National Unions, and some representatives from the Women's Committee, is third in the ZCTU decision-making hierarchy. This organ meets quarterly and its main responsibility is to superintend Congress's administration.

The Executive Board is next in the line of command. Made up of only ten ZCTU-elected officials, the Board manages the day-to-day affairs of Congress. Below the Executive Board there is the Secretariat, which is made up of the Secretary General, his/her two deputies, and seven departments (Education and Training, Women and Child Affairs, Public and International Relations, Research and Economics, Organisation, Accounts, and Administration). The departments are run by technical personnel who are responsible for implementation of activities and provide technical support to elected officials.

The ZCTU also has a Women's Committee that takes care of women's affairs and is made up of seven elected women. Elections for positions in the Women's Committee are held every four years. Provincial and District Committees handle regional affairs of the ZCTU and comprise officials elected at grass root-level for a four-year tenure of office.

Of the seven departments, five are actively engaged in various training programmes for trade union officials. These programmes include economic literacy, research training, HIV/AIDS, organisation and recruitment techniques, occupational health and safety, industrial relations and labour legislation, collective bargaining, child labour, democracy and good governance, labour standards, and mainstreaming gender. These activities are usually conducted through seminars and training workshops and target officials from various affiliate unions. Funding for these programmes comes from the ILO, FES, American Center for International Labor Solidarity, Lo-Norway and other co-operating partner organisations.

The principle objectives of the ZCTU are:

(i) To promote and safeguard the interest of the trade unions affiliated to it and their members.

(ii) To promote and support progressive legislation in the interest of workers in connection with legal rights of trade unions, industrial, health, training, safety, welfare, and social security.

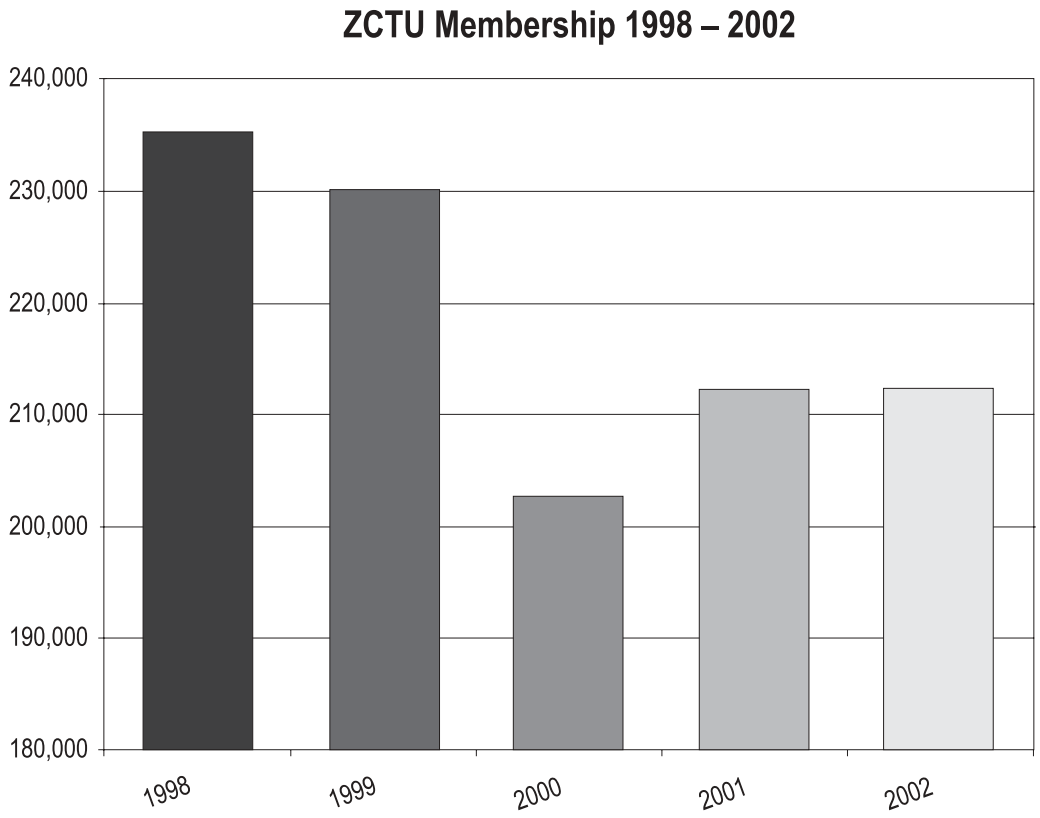
(iii) To secure the ratification and application of International Labour Conventions.

(iv) To develop and maintain mutual co-operation with the employers organisations in Zambia.

(v) To promote international friendship, co-operation, solidarity, and fraternal understanding with all workers of the world.

Current ZCTU membership stands at 212,375 compared to 235,260 in 1998 indicating a decline of 22,885 or 9% (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Trends in union membership in Zambia



XII.4 The Labour Market

The declining economy and the implementation of neo-liberal structural adjustment and privatisation has, especially in the last decade, contributed to the steady decline of the formal sector as the main source of livelihood and employment in Zambia. As a percentage of the total labour force, formal sector employment has declined over the years, falling from 75% in 1975 to 10.3% in 1999. With the decline in the formal sector, the informal sector has become the principal source of employment and livelihood for most Zambians. The number of persons engaged in formal sector activities was approximately 3.6 million in 1999, which, as a percentage of total labour force in the same year, stood at 79%. Regrettably, the returns from these activities in most cases do not suffice to warrant a significant change in terms of alleviating poverty.

Zambia boasts of having ratified 43 Conventions, inclusive of all the eight ILO Core Conventions. However, the scanty resources that are allocated to the Ministry of Labour and other labour management institutions have hampered the implementation of the ratified Conventions. Zambia has not yet ratified other Conventions, mainly because of their lack of direct relevance and the lack of resources with which to implement them.

Zambia also has various pieces of legislation that provide the legal framework necessary to regulate the labour market in its operations. The main pieces of legislation that provide the legal framework include the Employment Act CAP 268, the Industrial and Labour Relations Act CAP 269, the Employment (Special Provisions) Act CAP 270, the Workers' Compensation Act CAP 271, the Employment of Young Persons and Children's Act CAP 274, the Minimum Wages and Conditions of Employment Act CAP 276, the Factories Act CAP 441, the National Pension Scheme Act, No. 40 of 1996, and the Public Service Pensions Act.

The handling of labour matters in Zambia is vested in a number of institutions, at the core of which is the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The Ministry is responsible for advising the Government of Zambia on all matters pertaining to labour, including the promotion and maintenance of sound industrial relations, the collection and analysis of labour market data, the regulation and enforcement of labour laws and guidelines, promoting a safe working environment, and the operation of free employment services.

The Industrial Relations Court (IRC) is the main institution for the settlement of industrial disputes in Zambia. Established in 1994 under the Industrial Relations Act, the IRC serves as the second stage in the third-party dispute settlement system. Thus, where conciliation fails, both sides are required to refer the unresolved dispute to the IRC.

Established under the Industrial and Labour Relations Act of 1972, the function of the Tripartite Consultative Labour Council is to advise the Government on all issues relating to labour matters, human resource development, and the utilisation of any other matter referred to the Council by the Government. As its name suggests, it is comprised of representatives of Government, employers and workers.

Employers and workers in Zambia are organised into bodies that usually represent them in tripartite meetings and at various fora. The employers' federation is known as the Zambia Federation of Employers and there are two workers' federations: the ZCTU (the largest federation) and the Federation of Free Trade Unions of Zambia. The Industrial and Labour Relations Act provides for the existence of these organisations.

Until recently, Zambia was the Chair of the Employment and Labour Sector of SADC.

XII.5 Use of Information Technology by the Labour Movement

ZCTU has nine computers, but only three have the technology to connect to the Internet. However, currently only two can access the Internet, while the third subscription was terminated because of unsettled bills.

The common problems that ZCTU faces with Internet use include the network being too slow to complete surfing in good time; the ISP sometimes being down; the high costs involved; power failure, especially during the rain season; and that Internet cafés tend to only be accessible during working hours.

The number of ZCTU affiliates known to have access to Internet are five, namely Mineworkers Union of Zambia, Civil Servants and Allied Workers' Union of Zambia, National Union of Communication Workers, University of Zambia Lecturers' and Researchers' Union, and Zambia National Union of Teachers. The computers at the University are not union facilities.

It is perceived that no more than 20 top union leaders are computer literate in Zambia. This situation needs to be improved by:

(i) Acquiring more computers; if possible, all affiliates should have at least one computer that can connect to the Internet.

(ii) Conducting computer literacy programmes in collaboration with institutions that have computers training, such as the University of Zambia Computer Centre and other private service providers.

(iii) Deliberately encouraging communication via the Internet.

Chapter Thirteen

Zanzibar Country Report

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XIII.1 Geographical Position and Population

Zanzibar consists of two islands, Unguja and Pemba, as well as many smaller islands, the most important being Tumbatu, Uzi, Kojani, Fundo, and Kisiwa Panza. Many of the smaller islands are inhabited only on temporary basis. Unguja (sometimes also referred to as Zanzibar) is the larger of the two main islands and houses the capital, Zanzibar Town.

The total land area of Zanzibar is estimated as being 2,654 square kilometres, with Unguja having 1,666 square kilometres and Pemba 988 square kilometres. The islands are situated in the Indian Ocean, and lie about 25 miles off the East Coast of Africa between Latitudes 5° and 7° south of the Equator.

According to the 2002 census, Zanzibar has a population of 984,625 habitants, of whom 51% are female and 49% male. 57% of the population live in areas with a population density of about 400 persons per sq. km. Thus, Zanzibar is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. Unguja, with 63% of the total land area, accommodates 60% of the population, and Pemba has 40% of the population. Compared to Unguja, the Pemba population, which is relatively more rural, is much more evenly distributed. The population growth rate is high, at 3.1% per annum, and the average household size is 5.3.

XIII.2 Political and Government Structure

Zanzibar obtained its political independence in January 1964 following the revolution that ousted the Sultanate of Oman. In April 1964 Zanzibar united with Mainland Tanzania but continues to enjoy significant autonomy over its internal affairs, including its own Constitution, development policy, education policy, and budgetary matters. Zanzibar has its own organs of power, which include the Presidency, the Cabinet, the Legislative Council, and the Judiciary.

The United Republic of Tanzania (URT) Constitution provides for Union matters that cover the Mainland as well as Zanzibar. While some national portfolios like defence, finance and internal affairs are Union matters, implying that they are centrally handled by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, labour is not. The Government of Zanzibar (GOZ) and other institutions on the island) are responsible for non-union matters. In other words, the Zanzibar government enforces legislation specific to Zanzibar and Pemba islands while the Union government takes care of the mainland.

XIII.3 Economic Situation

The United Republic of Tanzania, of which Zanzibar is a part, is one the poorest countries in the world. The per capita purchasing power parity in Tanzania is US$ 610 (2001 est.). Zanzibar is almost exclusively agricultural, but there is a sizable fishing industry. The principal imports are foodstuffs and fuel and the main exports are cloves and copra. Tourism is an increasingly promising sector, and new hotels and resorts have been built in recent years.

On 2nd May 2002, the Government launched the Zanzibar Poverty Reduction Plan (ZPRP). It has a three-year span and focuses on reducing income poverty, improving human capabilities, survival and social well-being, and containing extreme vulnerability.

The target is to improve growth of the economy to 5.0% during the first year of the ZPRP, to 5.5% during the second year, and 6.0% during the third year. To realise both high and pro-poor growth, efforts are to be directed to selected sectors, including agriculture for reducing income poverty; tourism and trade for higher growth; education, health and water for improvements in human capacity, survival and well-being; and infrastructure for accessibility and lower costs of production.

The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and a number of bilateral donors have all provided funds to strengthen Zanzibar's economic infrastructure.

XIII.4 The Trade Union Situation in Zanzibar

The trade union movement in Zanzibar was in existence before the establishment of political parties and before the revolutions of 1964 and 1967. However, trade unions were later banned, a state of affairs that prevailed until to 1978.

The merger of the political parties [Afro Shirazi Party (Zanzibar) and Tanganyika African National Union (Tanzania Mainland)] to form Mapinduzi (CCM) in 1977 made all mass organisations under CCM operational both in Zanzibar and Tanzania Mainland. This included, for example, youth organisations, parent's organisations, women's organisations, and workers' organisations.

Following the winds of political change throughout the world in the 1990s, Tanzania became a multiparty country and paved the way for the establishment of free trade unions under the Organisation of Tanzania Trade Unions of Trade Union Act. The enactment of the Trade Union Act No. 4 of 2001 in Zanzibar further declared that trade unions were not Union matters. All trade unions that were still operating under the OTTU Act in Zanzibar were required to transform themselves and seek registration under Act No. 4 of 2001.

By April 2003, seven workers' unions and one employers' union had formed and registered. The seven registered trade unions are:

(i) Zanzibar Local Government Workers' Union (ZALGWU).

(ii) Zanzibar Union of Public and Health Employees ZUPHE.

(iii) Communication and Transport Workers of Zanzibar (COTWU-ZNZ).

(iv) Researchers', Academicians' and Allied Workers' Union, Zanzibar (RAAWU-Z)

(v) Zanzibar Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union (ZPAWU).

(vi) Zanzibar Teachers' Union (ZATU).

(vii) Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial (TUICO-Z)

(viii) Zanzibar Employers' Association (ZANEMA).

On 4th of April 2003, workers in Zanzibar united and formed a Federation known as the Zanzibar Trade Union Congress (ZATUC). It had seven unions affiliated to it.

XIII.5 Problems concerning Administration, Communications and Provision of Service

Since its establishment, few activities have been carried out by ZATUC, and so very little can be said about its use and application of IT. ZATUC has four computers, all without Internet connection or link. Lack of computer skills is paramount, as there are no members of staff with adequate knowledge of IT. Most computer use is solely secretarial.

Furthermore, trade unions and the national centre in Zanzibar face many administrative problems. Most of the affiliates have very small staff due to financial constraints (see Table 6).

Table 6: Staff Situation in Zanzibar Unions

Names	No. of Officers	No. of other Staff	Total
ZALGWU	4	5	9
ZATU	3	1	4
RAAWU 'Z'	2	2	4
TUICO 'Z'	4	3	7
ZUPHE	3	3	6
ZPAWU	1	-	1
COTWU ZNZ	2	3	5
ZATUC	1	-	1

Note: Officers including Secretary Generals and Zonal Secretaries

In the area of communication, workers in Zanzibar are lagging very far behind. Only one union has its own fax machine; some do not even have a telephone connection. For those unions that do have a telephone connection, the service tends to be temporary or terminated due to delayed payment of telephone bills.

Chapter Fourteen

Information and Communication Policy of ICFTU-AFRO

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XIV.1 Introduction

Communication is one of the most important activities in our globalised world. Without communication, our societies would come to a complete standstill. To achieve our aims and objectives we need the skills to communicate effectively. As a regional trade union organisation, ICFTU-AFRO spends most of its time communicating with affiliates. We inform our affiliates through our newsletters, website, circulars, and reports about important activities that have taken place. We communicate by telephone or Internet on action to be taken, and respond to requests by providing accurate information. We present our reports and plans in regular meetings and deliver speeches with our policies in mind, at regional and international conferences. These all involve communication.

To enhance communication, an organisation needs a policy on communication. A communication policy clearly spells out how communication can help an organisation achieve its overall goals more effectively. Given the important role of communication at ICFTU-AFRO, there is a need to develop a communication policy.

Technological developments have made enormous progress over the last decade. IT has become an important strategic science and a new, expanding industry with enormous financial interests. It has made communication faster, cheaper, and more reliable than ever before. Personal computers and access to the Internet brings communication to a very broad public base, both at the individual as well as the organisational level. Trade unions see the need and advantages of using these communication tools more and more.

The application of the knowledge of communication as a science has become a very important and powerful tool for organisations to improve their performance and effectiveness in achieving their objectives. It is ICFTU-AFRO's mission and ultimate goal to serve the interests of its affiliates. Enhanced communication skills are crucial for the organisation to meet its objectives.

Over the last decade, ICFTU-AFRO has experienced an enormous growth of affiliates throughout the African continent. This has already shown a great increase in the demand for quality service and support. Affiliates expect fast, accurate, and effective support from their regional organisation. They also need to be informed timely and properly on ICFTU-AFRO's activities. Affiliates also expect ICFTU-AFRO to represent and serve them at regional and international level. This can only be done systematically and effectively when a clear communication policy is developed and implemented. Insufficient quality, mistakes, and failures in ICFTU-AFRO's service to its affiliates will impact very negatively on ICFTU-AFRO's image and will thus weaken its position.

Over the last 10 years ICFTU-AFRO has done a great deal to develop its communication tools. Monthly newsletters, a regularly updated website, reports on important meetings and conferences, and other publications have contributed much to building ICFTU-AFRO's image as an open, democratic, and effective regional organisation. However, many of these efforts remain without an overall communication policy. Such a policy would enable ICFTU-AFRO to increase its overall output and quality by linking its activities within an overall strategy.

Presently, ICFTU-AFRO employs 19 people in seven departments: the Finance Department, the Economic and Social Department, the Human and Trade Union Rights Department, the Women and Equality Department, and Projects, Education, and Communications Departments. For proper co-ordination and management of ICFTU-AFRO's flow of information and the improvement of ICFTU-AFRO's internal communication on a day to day basis, a clear communication policy is of great significance.

XIV.2 The current ICT Situation within ICFTU-AFRO

In order to identify the areas of ICFTU-AFRO's communication policy and practice that require further improvement, this section presents the communication system operative in the organisation.

ICFTU-AFRO has a wide range of communication tools that it uses externally to promote and defend the interests of its affiliates, to raise awareness and support for its role and work with affiliates and the broader public, to share information and knowledge and to internally manage the organisation. These tools include (a) documents, reports, books, media, publications (speeches, papers, reports, country profiles, ICFTU-AFRO Newsletter, newspapers articles, books, photos, training manuals, minutes, research publications, and annual reports), (b) electronic and tele-communications (Internet/ICFTU-AFRO website, e-mail, telephone, and shared intranet), (c) internal and external meetings (regular and annual staff meetings, executive board meetings and Congress, meeting with donors, Global Union Federations (GUFs) and other key stakeholders, training workshops, and conferences, seminars and roundtables).

ICFTU-AFRO's electronic office network is functioning properly. A central office filing system, comprising a series of folders relating to different departments and categories of work of office is operational.

The ICFTU-AFRO has also set up folders for all seven of its departments. The content of each folder is the overall responsibility of the head or co-ordinator of the respective department, but the overall responsibility for the maintenance of the filing system is the responsibility of two secretaries. The folder titled 'Secretariat' takes care of the software and correspondence. The correspondence folder contains all the outgoing official correspondence of ICFTU-AFRO.

Wherever possible, ICFTU-AFRO staff members use e-mail to communicate, in preference to letter, fax, and telephone, which cuts down costs considerably. ICFTU-AFRO does, however, still continue to make phone calls and send fax documents to the great number of its affiliates who do not have reliable access to the Internet and computers.

ICFTU-AFRO publishes a newsletter monthly, and, to ensure wider coverage of issues affecting the labour movement in Africa, a reminder for input into the newsletter is regularly sent to all affiliates. It is ICFTU-AFRO's hope that all affiliates will be in a position to publish their own newsletters. ICFTU-AFRO will train affiliates on how to publish newsletters when funds are available.

XIV.3 Towards an ICFTU-AFRO Communication Policy

The principle objective of ICFTU-AFRO's communication policy is to organise and promote interaction aimed at the realisation of its broader objectives. Interaction can be organised with different stakeholders such as affiliates, governments, employers, press, international institutions, funding organisations, and NGOs. Secondly, ICFTU-AFRO's communication policy seeks to build and strengthen its image as an open, democratic, independent, representative, and reliable regional trade union organisation. Thirdly, ICFTU-AFRO's communication policy is also meant to use the different methods and tools as efficiently as possible and to benefit to the maximum from their combined application.

Some of the actions that could precede the adoption of the action plan can be summarised as:

(i) Organising a training workshop for ICFTU-AFRO staff to introduce the significance and relevance of a communication policy for ICFTU-AFRO, and combine it with practical training with different communication tools to get grip on the effects of interaction and communication.

(ii) To determine from ICFTU-AFRO's Action Plan, which was adopted at its last Congress, the priorities for a communication plan.

(iii) To assess the image ICFTU-AFRO currently has amongst its affiliates and other communication audiences.

(iv) To undertake a needs assessment among ICFTU-AFRO's affiliates in order to understand and appreciate the level of support required for developing and improving their communication policies.

Chapter Fifteen

The Information and Communication Policy of UNI-Africa

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Ndola

XV.1 Introduction

Currently, about 20% of all UNI-Africa affiliates are online. A few affiliates (South Africa) have highly computerised operations and manifest a high level of self-sufficiency in terms of IT equipment. However, the high costs of phone calls, Internet access, and web hosting services are hindering many other unions from going online. The average monthly Internet cost in Africa of US$60 (for 22 hours per month) is in fact higher than the average monthly salary in most sub-Saharan countries. This limits individual use of the Internet and creates a demand for shared or public access facilities such as telecentres and corporate networks. This is reflected in the types of e-mail addresses of UNI-Africa affiliates, the majority of whom are using free web-based services such as Hotmail, Yahoo, or Excite.

The under-utilisation of existing computer resources is also common in some trade unions, and is often caused by the lack of Local Area Networks (LANs) and/or the connection of only one computer to the Internet in offices where there are several computers. This leads to competition for the computer with e-mail connection, which is not conducive to the effective use of the Internet.

XV.2 The UNI-Online Project

For UNI-Africa, getting affiliates online will remain the first priority. This entails empowering affiliates with IT equipment and skills where possible, and ensuring that such facilities are put to common use through the Liaison Councils structures, where they exist. This will guarantee reliable e-mail facilities and, at a later stage, the development of websites.

It must be noted that the high cost of computer hardware is a major issue, for this is often the largest component of most trade unions start-up budgets. Tax regimes treat computers and other IT equipment as luxury items, thus making them less obtainable for the majority. As a result, increasing attention is now being directed towards the use of recycled computers. The only fear with donated IT equipment is that there is a likelihood of obsolete equipment, technologies, and computer applications being dumped in Africa.

To assist African affiliates facing difficulties in acquiring IT equipment, UNI has been promoting digital partnerships through the donation of computers and the running of IT training courses. Through the UNI Online Project, which aims at bringing all affiliates online by the year 2005, a number of computers, IT training and equipment have been sourced from UNI affiliates and other co-operating partners in the North.

UNI-Africa has been a major beneficiary of this initiative. In 2000, 11 affiliates from Southern Africa and English-speaking West Africa were equipped with IT skills and equipment. UNI affiliate, BBTK-Setca of Belgium, organised the training while the Flemish Government of Belgium sponsored the event and donated the equipment. In 2001, a further 14 trade unionists from the same region received IT skills in a Phase II training course sponsored by the same affiliate. In 2002, 12 affiliates from eight French-speaking West African countries benefited from IT training and equipment. The FO.Com and CFDT of France sponsored

the activity and France Telecoms donated the equipment. The Communications Workers of America (CWA) also donated computers to three affiliates in UNI-Africa. A number of other affiliates have also benefited from similar projects previously run by the respective merger partners of UNI.

Given the huge number of affiliates in UNI-Africa who are still not online and the prohibitive cost of IT equipment on the continent, the initiative of building digital partnerships through the donation of computers should be promoted. UNI-Africa will continue to support such initiatives that have greatly contributed towards bridging the digital divide in our region. As an ongoing initiative, the UNI Online Project is poised to empower many more affiliates with IT skills and equipment. It must be noted, however, that to bring all affiliates online by 2005, it will not be possible to equip each and every affiliate with IT equipment. Instead, affiliates are to be encouraged to utilise their national Liaison Councils so that existing IT skills and equipment can be utilised jointly. And, whenever the possibility occurs, donations of IT equipment could be made to the Liaison Council. UNI-Africa will continue to stress the joint efforts of affiliates in this area.

XV.3 The UNI Bridge Project

Although getting affiliates online first is the major priority in UNI-Africa, efforts have also started to promote web presence among affiliates in the region. The UNI Bridge, a pilot project covering three affiliates in Ghana, was launched at the 2nd UNI Webmasters' Forum in Nyon, Switzerland in April 2003. The project aims at assisting trade unions to bridge links between their members and UNI affiliates globally, and without heavy investment, by developing their own websites. The project draws on the expertise of the existing network of UNI webmasters who are sent to affiliated trade unions that need technical assistance in creating and building their own websites. Websites have changed in many ways and improved trade union work by:

(i) Making unions more visible.

(ii) Helping trade unions reach new target groups.

(iii) Enabling unions reach out to international solidarity to seek support and assistance during strikes, conflicts with their governments, etc.

(iv) Enabling unions to carryout online organising, recruitment, solidarity, and quite recently education campaigns

(v) Enabling unions to conduct company research for collective bargaining

(vi) Giving wider membership services, etc. by providing access to UNI's websites and databases as well as the websites of other labour and international organisations.

Despite all these advantages, web presence among affiliates in UNI-Africa is almost non-existent, largely due to the high cost of web hosting and the lack of technical skills. Only the following five affiliates have their own websites:

(i) Namibia Food & Allied Workers' Union - www.nafau.org

(ii) Communications Workers' Union of South Africa - www.cwu.org.za

(iii) SASBO - The Finance Union (South Africa) - www.sasbo.org.za

(iv) South African Transport & Allied Workers' Union - www.satawu.org.za

(v) Zambia Union of Financial Institutions & Allied Workers - www.zufiaw.org.zm

The sharing of knowledge and expertise with webmasters from around the world through the UNI Bridge project is a noble undertaking that is likely to benefit many other affiliates in economically disadvantaged African countries.

XV.4 Action Plan on Bridging the Digital Divide

(a) Background

ICT in Africa is increasing. Nevertheless, there is a widening digital divide between Africa and the world's developed countries and regions. It is essential for economic and social development that this divide be bridged.

Africa should harness these new technologies to better the life of its people. ICT can make major contributions to reducing poverty on the continent because it has the potential to a) overcome barriers of social, economic and geographical isolation, b) increase access to information and education, and c) enable poor people to participate in more of the decision-making that affects their lives.

(b) Modernising Trade Unions

IT, and the Internet in particular, offers great potential for trade unions on issues such as online campaigns, solidarity actions, organising activities, networking, online research, membership data programmes such as the UNI Connect Membership Database, pamphlets, leaflets and poster production for campaigns, and general financial and administration of trade unions.

For UNI affiliates in Africa, the use of ICT can help modernise trade unions, contribute to major savings in costs and increase efficiency, and promote trade union democracy by making information accessible to many more members.

(c) Priorities for UNI-Africa

The major priority for UNI-Africa is to ensure that all affiliates are online. To this end UNI-Africa will:

- ✦ Support and promote the UNI Online project
- ✦ Assist in equipping affiliates with IT equipment and skills
- ✦ Encourage the common use of facilities through Liaison Council structures
- ✦ Promote digital partnerships through donations of computers and the running of IT training courses
- ✦ Encourage affiliates to make better use of resources by the establishment of Local Area Networks (LANs)
- ✦ Promote the UNI Bridge Project so as to assist trade unions with developing their own websites
- ✦ Support initiatives by affiliates to increase their web presence

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES

TOM MBOYA LABOUR COLLEGE, KISUMU, KENYA
7-11 JULY 2003

Appendix 1: Results of the mid-term Assessment of the Workshop

(Lunchtime, Wednesday 9 July 2003)

1. Workshop activities

(a) How far have you been satisfied with the CONTENT of the workshop?

Completely	**Partly**	**Not at all**
60%	40%	0%

(b) How far have you been satisfied with the LEVEL of the workshop?

Completely	**Partly**	**Not at all**
70%	30%	0%

(c) So far, have you been satisfied with the ORGANISATION of the workshop?

Completely	**Partly**	**Not at all**
75%	25%	0%

(d) So far, have you been satisfied with the TRAINING METHODS used?

Completely	**Partly**	**Not at all**
85%	15%	0%

2. Supporting material (files / photocopies / training documents)

(a) How much are you using the documents received during the workshop?

Fully	**Partly**	**Not at all**
80%	20%	0%

(b) What is the level of comprehension of the teaching material?

Very clear	**Clear**	**Not clear**
80%	20%	0%

3. Working relations among participants

(a) Indicate the level of communication and co-operation among participants.

Very good	**Good**	**Poor**
75%	25%	0%

(b) Indicate the quality/relevance of the following sessions and resource persons:

Session	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
1: Opening session					
Ms Simiyu	30%	45%	20%	5%	0%
Mr Chune	40%	50%	5%	5%	0%
Mr Mwamadzingo	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
Mr Omido	40%	35%	15%	0%	5%
Mr Bélanger	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
Mr Dia	63%	26%	11%	0%	0%
Mr Atwoli	65%	30%	5%	0%	0%
Guest of Honour	50%	40%	10%	0%	0%
Overall	60%	35%	0%	0%	5%
2a: Background to the workshop					
Mr Mwamadzingo	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%
2b: Guest presentation 1: Initiatives towards bridging the digital divide in Africa					
Dr Mwarania	35%	40%	20%	5%	0%
3: Country presentations					
Mr Githinji (Kenya)	30%	60%	10%	0%	0%
Ms Nketse (Lesotho)	20%	35%	35%	5%	5%
Mr Hikaumba (Zambia)	30%	65%	5%	0%	0%
4: Introduction to computer training and information technology for trade unions					
Mr Bélanger	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Mr Dia	60%	30%	10%	0%	0%
5: Introduction to Open Source Software					
Mr Subron	42%	52%	6%	0%	0%
Mr Bélanger	85%	15%	0%	0%	0%
6: Guest Presentation 2: Applications of information technology and their strategic implications in Africa					
Mr Kisonzo	34%	33%	33%	0%	0%
7: Country presentations (2)					
Mr Angula (Namibia)	37%	53%	10%	0%	0%
Ms Ahmed (Tanzania)	35%	55%	5%	5%	0%
8: Country presentations (3)					
Ms Mohammed (Zanzibar)	42%	37%	21%	0%	0%
Mr Baliraine (Uganda)	47%	47%	6%	0%	0%

9: Open Source Software for Trade Unions (2)					
Mr Bélanger	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%

10: Guest Presentation 3: Information technology for harmonious industrial relations in East Africa					
Mr Kirigua	56%	39%	5%	0%	0%

(c) Indicate the quality of the administrative support experienced so far

Support	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Travel	60%	25%	10%	0%	5%
Medical	63%	25%	0%	0%	12%
Secretarial	70%	25%	5%	0%	0%
Financial	40%	30%	10%	20%	0%
Social life	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%
Accommodation	0%	36%	36%	21%	7%
Shuttle bus	0%	23%	46%	15%	16%

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Appendix 2: Final Assessment of the Workshop

Approximate time: 15 minutes

This activity focuses on the final assessment of the Workshop and aims to:

- Assess whether the objectives of the Workshop have been met
- Provide the Workshop co-ordinators with the information necessary to improve the organisation and methods of training

Activity: Give participants the assessment questionnaire appended to this activity.

When the questionnaire has been completed, hand it back to the Workshop Director.

1. Objectives

1.1 As a whole, have the objectives been achieved:

Objective i: Assess the infrastructural capacity of the trade union movement to be able to communicate with affiliates and the rank and file, and also with the international community.

Completely 63%
- *The training workshop has been able to successfully assess the level of infrastructural capacity in unions*
- *It is now clear what equipment are required to bridge the 'digital divide'*

Partly 37%
- *We know the extent of the infrastructure but we still do not have resources to bridge the identified gap*

Not at all 0%

Objective ii: Identify major problems within trade union operations (administration, communication, and provision of services) that might be addressed with the introduction of new technologies.

Completely 58%
- *Identification of the major problems has done satisfactorily*

Partly 42%
- *Reluctant to accept change in ICT*
- *Developments of ICT policy, availability of resources, training and democracy remain a challenge.*

Not at all 0%

Objective iii: Master computer operations as a prerequisite to the understanding of information technology.

Completely 50%
- *Because this is the starting point for beginners*
- *More training is needed, especially for novices*

Partly 50%

Not at all 0%

Objective iv: Describe the major applications of IT and their strategic implications for national and international trade union development.

Completely 79%
- *More emphasis should be put on ICT to trade union leadership*
- *Involve government, national centres, national unions and the branches*

Partly 21%

Not at all 0%

Objective v: Establish long-term objectives designed to meet identified priorities in IT at national/ regional/international levels.

Completely 58%
- *Open up to ICT at national level, local-level fund raising*
- *We have established long-term objectives*

Partly 42%
Not at all 0%
Objective vi: Develop and adapt training materials on IT for local-level implementation of workers' education programmes.

Completely 68%
- *So that the region could catch up with the rest of the world*

Partly 32%
Not at all 0%
Objective vii: Design a workplan on IT to be applied in national centres and affiliated unions.

Completely 68%
- *Get everybody on board, as ICT is the only way to transform the labour movement*

Partly 32%
Not at all 0%

2. Workshop activities and group work

2.1 How far have you been satisfied with the CONTENT of the Workshop?

Completely 74%
- *The content was relevant and very enriching to the training needs of the participants*
- *We are going to show other developing countries that we are not behind because we have developed a network named 'Hekimanet'*
- *Substantial training materials were made available to participants*
- *We shared our country experiences*
- *Content was simplified for easy understanding of beginners*
- *There was adequate time to undertake practical exercises from what we learnt in the course*
- *More workshops of this nature need to be organised*
- *The knowledge gained will enable us to advocate for union budgets on ICT*

Partly 26%
- *Time was not enough to cover everything in detail*
- *We did not cover all the programmes for OpenSource software*

Not at all 0%

2.2 How far have you been satisfied with the LEVEL of the Workshop?

Completely 68%
- *Resource persons were qualified and used simple language*
- *Both participants and facilitators dedicated their time to the workshop and almost everything was covered within a very short time*
- *Attention was given to each and every participant, especially those who were beginners to ICT*
- *The workshop directors co-ordinated the training very well*
- *The level of the workshop materials was of high standard and I believe we are going to apply all we have learned in our respective countries and unions*
- *The workshop was conducted at a balanced level for both experienced participants and beginners*

Partly 32%

- *For such a target group, technical subjects should be taught in phases, for example Level 1: OpenSource Software Level, Level 2: Web design, etc.*
- *Time was not enough to go into details*
- *As it was the first time I attended an IT course, the level was too high for me. Some topics needed more time to practice in order to avoid some difficulties after the departure of resource persons.*
- *The mixing of beginners and experienced participants affected the outcome of the workshop*

Not at all 0%

2.3 How far have you been satisfied with the ORGANISATION of the Workshop?

Completely 63%

- *It was very organised and we hope that you will continue in the same spirit*
- *Both the literature materials and the accommodation were well organised*
- *Time management was perfect, though the course required a longer duration*

Partly 37%

- *There were a few hiccups relating to accommodation, financial refunds, and time (the duration of the workshop was not enough)*
- *Time keeping was, at times, not observed*
- *Transport availed was not to standard*
- *It was satisfactory because no one is perfect, except God*

Not at all 0%

2.4 How far have you been satisfied with the LECTURING METHODS used?

Completely 79%

- *Everything was electronically done according to IT knowledge*
- *The methods used were adequate for adult learners*
- *Very experienced lecturers, co-operative and accommodating*
- *The methods were simplified, thus making it easy to follow*
- *Lecturers allowed participants adequate time to ask questions and share experiences*
- *The presenters were well organised*
- *Questions and answers followed each session, thus allowing clarification to be offered*
- *Highly participatory*

Partly 21%

- *As adults, we need more active learning methods. Some facilitators became boring*
- *For some of us, the language used was still too advanced*
- *The course was too compact*

Not at all 0%

3. Importance of the Workshop in relation to your current post

3.1 Indicate how far the Workshop has been useful to you in relation to your trade union work:

Very useful 100%

- *I now have enough tools to advocate for IT in my union*
- *As an education secretary, I have learnt very important, easy and fast ways of communicating*
- *The knowledge gained will be useful in IT courses at our affiliates*
- *I can apply the knowledge to my daily activities, e.g., organising, database, computing, material production, etc.*

- *Using the information, we shall embrace IT for effective participation in the globalised world*

- *The software distributed will be important in discharging my secretarial duties at the office*
- *I will be able to have easy communications with our affiliates and educate fellow members*

Useful 0%

Not at all useful 0%

3.2 How far do you think the Workshop will help you resolve the difficulties of trade union activities in the context of bridging the digital divide?

Completely 61%
- *I will strive to market 'Hekimanet'*
- *Will use content for training trade union at national and regional level*
- *The workshop enabled us to exchange ideas and experiences on trade union issues, both national and internationally*
- *Given the continued support from ILO/ACTRAV and national centre, we shall be able to bridge the digital divide*
- *Take the first step and carry on the struggle*
- *Train other trade union colleagues in OpenSource software*
- *Encourage unions to participate in IT*

Partly 39%
- *Educate members and be able to co-ordinate and network with other organisations*
- *There still exist problems, e.g., high telephone charges, unreliable Internet connections, etc.*
- *It is challenging to address Africa's digital divide with limited resources*
- *Financial constraints*
- *Because of the magnitude of the problem and the difficult process envisaged, I resolve to bridge the digital divide in a ground level process*
- *Despite all the challenges, it is still a positive starting point*

Not at all 0%

3.3 How far do you think the Workshop will help you make your trade union training activities more effective?

Completely 59%
- *I will try my level best to train my members and also involve IT in our training activities*
- *It will change our mode of training*
- *It is not time consuming and is clear enough when compared to using flip charts*
- *It will be effective to use OpenSource software and the 'Hekimanet'*
- *Given financial support, the training will be fruitful*
- *There will be an opportunity of getting education materials that will be useful to our training activities*
- *I will be able to communicative with fellow participants and affiliates*

Partly 41%
- *Despite our devotion and commitments, we have no adequate equipment for teaching and practice*
- *We shall be able to do research and share experiences with others*

Not at all 0%

4. Supporting material (files / photocopies / training documents)

4.1 How much have you used the documents you received during the Workshop?

Fully 83%
- *Every reference material was distributed as the training went on*
- *The materials were simplified and thus easy to use*
- *The materials are detailed enough and should be able to use with little guidance from facilitators*

Partly 17%
- *Time was very short*

Not at all 0%

4.2 What was the level of comprehension of the teaching material?

Very clear 83%
- *Simple and understandable*
- *Clear and to the point*

Clear 17%
Not clear 0%

5. Working relations among participants

5.1 Indicate the level of communication and co-operation among participants.

Very good 84%
- *Everyone got to know each other within a short time, and with no squabbles*
- *Cordial, including 'advanced' participants who were very tolerant to beginners*
- *Easy interaction and willingness to support each other*
- *There was a sense of togetherness and belonging among the participants.*
- *Exercise maturity and team work*
- *All participants were approachable, open and frank*

Good 16%
- *Amicable, but some participants from Uganda were not very co-operative*
- *We were meeting most of the participants for the first time*

Poor 0%

5.2 Indicate the quality of teaching:

Good 95%
- *The teaching techniques and aids were excellent*
- *Directors were good at the subject*
- *Some were good and other average*
- *The language used was understandable to everyone*
- *Teaching methods were easy to follow*

Average 5%
- *Some facilitators were boring*

Poor 0%

5.3 Indicate the quality of the administrative support (secretarial / social life / travel / medical):

Good 68%

- *All the materials were distributed to participants*
- *Social life was excellent*
- *Medical issues were well catered for*
- *Participants thoroughly enjoyed themselves*
- *Travel arrangements were well made*
- *The overall organisation was well done and most of the things fell in place appropriately*

Average 26%

- *Some of the administration support staff should be trained on how to handle trade union leaders*
- *All human needs will never be fully satisfied*

Poor 6%

- *Some administrative support staff were too proud*

6. Other general comments

- *More time should be given for such highly technical subjects*
- *For better comprehension, some topics should be taught for a longer period, or consider scaling down on the subjects*
- *We should encourage the organisers to keep up the job well done and hope that they continue with the same spirit*
- The workshop was indeed a great success and we are all now poised at bridging the digital *divide in Africa*
- *Further training and re-training is required for us to remain at the cutting edge.*

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES

TOM MBOYA LABOUR COLLEGE, KISUMU, KENYA
7-11 JULY 2003

Appendix 3: Speeches at the Opening Ceremony

Official Opening Speech
by
Honourable Peter Odoyo, MP
Assistant Minister for Labour and Human Resource Development

During a Training Workshop on:
Bringing Africa's Digital Divide: The Role of Trade Unions in English-speaking Africa
Held on 7th July 2003
At the Tom Mboya Labour College,
KISUMU

The Secretary General of COTU, Mr Francis Atwoli,

Trade Union Officials from the Sub-Region,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to join you today as you share views on how trade unions in the East Africa sub-region can keep pace with the trends in the digital age.

We are now in a world where virtually life is being run on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) meaning that we either swim with the tide or sink. That is why a training workshop of this nature is not only timely but also very critical in helping the labour movement in our sub-region keep pace with the rest of the world.

I therefore welcome our brothers and sisters from across the borders for being available to share with us their visions on the way forward for workers so that together, we can help each other along and probably catch-up with the rest of the developed world in the digital superhighway.

Ladies and gentlemen, within the past ten yearsor so, there has been a radical shift in way work is done and this has been as a result of adoption of information and communication technologies. The effect of this shift has been twofold.

On one hand, whereas the adoption of the ICT has made work more efficient and created new employment opportunities, it has also destroyed certain occupations. Old tasks and occupations such as the telephone switchboard operator, messengers and secretaries etc are gradually being replaced courtesy of computers, the Internet, the telephones (both mobile and fixed lines etc). The delivery of mail by hand has become obsolete thanks to e-mail. The switchboard operator is not needed any more and even many secretarial tasks such as taking telephone messages are also dying. In their place are the new telephones that will take messages and pass them on.

On the other hand, as the ICT destroys some occupations, it also creates jobs for occupations in rising demand, such as software programmers, webpage designers, call-centre workers and a variety of new intermediaries. There is a general consensus that the highest rates of job creation occur among the most technologically innovate firms when the routine tasks are automated as part of the labour-saving increases

in productivity. Given the fact that technological advancement cannot be stopped to save jobs, the only option is for us as governments and unions to help such workers to escape from these jobs before ICT renders them irrelevant.

How can this be done?

In my opinion, the first step is to promote learning in all its forms to make our workforce proficient in ICT and be able even to switch jobs when their careers are threatened. Secondly, we must invest both through capacity building and in provision of ICT equipment so that majority of our workers can effectively operate in a digital economy. For a start, labour centres such as COTU (Kenya), NOTU (Uganda) and TUCTA (Tanzania), and others must lead the way by acquiring the necessary ICT infrastructure and engaging skilled manpower. This includes having Websites where all information on labour issues can be accessed at the click of a button on matters pertaining to trade unionism and generally providing answers to contemporary questions that workers ask regarding unionisation. The sites should also contain the country labour laws, the ILO Conventions and other relevant information which workers who can access.

When it comes to acquisition of the equipment, I know this is an area that had problems in the past owing to prohibitive costs and traditional mindsets of our people. In any given community there are those who are fiercely traditional and can only trust the 'devil' they know while any unfamiliar interventions and technologies are treated with suspicions. Such people will not rush to adopt any new technology. They insist on holding on to the traditional tools and equipment. If they happen to occupy positions as policy makers then the adoption of new technology even to other workers is suppressed. Such reluctance to embrace new technology has been a cause of the low-level ICT usage.

Thirdly, until a few years ago, many people regarded new technology as a luxurious indulgence that should, at most, be enjoyed only by the top brass in the bureaucracy. Here in Kenya, for example, when computers were introduced, they used to be placed in the offices of the boss regardless of whether he could distinguish a keyboard from a mouse. The excuse was that the office of the boss was the best for safekeeping since in any case these were very expensive items. But the fact of the matter was that the computers were considered as status symbol and could only ‘ideally’ fit in an office of high status. The knowledge by other workers on their use was hence stifled.

The same was the case with mobile phones. The adoption of this technology was too slow especially in Kenya and many people have only been able to access them recently. The Government by then was not helpful and it took too long to license mobile phone operators hence placing the cost of the gadgets beyond the teaching of ordinary people. Again these remained status symbols for the affluent.

The above scenario was not restricted to Kenya but was common in East Africa and many countries in this continent and contributed to large extent to the slow adoption of the ICT. These inhibitive perceptions has led to a widening digital divide between workers of the industrialised countries who had access to the technology since inception and those of such countries as ours who had to wait until the latter started disposing their outdated equipment which many of the people in the third world could then afford.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The determining factor for ICT access in many countries is a telephone line. Telephone lines are comparatively scarce and heavily concentrated amongst the developed countries while in poor countries such as ours, they are concentrated amongst the wealthiest sectors of the population. According to the World Employment Report 2001, about one phone exists for every two persons in the US and the European Union, while in Africa, the entire population of 739 million people has fewer than 14 million telephones.

Although the use of computers and access to the Internet are growing spectacularly in many parts of the world, little more than 5% of the world's population are internet users and 88% of these are in the industrialised countries. For example, the US and Canada alone account for 57% of the world's Internet whereas Africa and the Middle East together account for only 1%. If you narrow it down to our homeland, the East African sub-region; the percentage may be so negligible such that we should not even pride ourselves as living in the digital era.

Even though there may not be precise statistics for workers in East Africa who use the Internet, the difference, or the digital divide, between an ordinary worker in the US and one in Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania is big and widening by the day. Hence this forum should explore how you as unionists can bridge this gap or at least ensure that it grows no wider. As I have indicated earlier, the first step will have to be intensive training of our workforce to be able to take advantage that the use of the new technologies presents.

As part of their collective bargaining agreements, unions should consider arguing the case for the establishment of common Internet facilities within the workplace where workers, including those who work in the production lines or farms can utilise when in need. This will promote learning both internally and through distance learning, as one can access information from everywhere around the globe.

In particular, distance learning has become a valuable substitute for classroom instruction and multinational enterprises are increasingly using its applications for their staff worldwide. In an environment of rapid change, lifelong learning has become critical to corporate success, as well as to the employment of workers hence the need to keep oneself 'employable'.

The unions will therefore need to encourage employers to promote ICT as it is no longer a luxury but an essential facility for individual growth and development regardless of the nature of the person's undertaking. This also makes it mandatory for Government to keep pace as well and establish such facilities so that simple enquiries that nowadays require workers and even employers to go all the way to labour offices can be served sufficiently without losing productive hours looking for information that may just be obtained by a click of a computer mouse.

When it comes to recruiting members, the labour centres can have an electronic membership application forms on the websites for workers who wish to join affiliate unions. They can complete the forms online and e-mail it back to the labour centre, which will then forward it to the relevant union for processing. This is being done by COSATU of South Africa and there is no harm in emulating such practices if it will help in revitalising the labour movement.

The other welfare gain that unions could achieve arises from the possibilities brought about by networking. Unionist could benefit directly through access to the information that the technologies provide or through the potential for greater collective voice and empowerment they allow. The technologies can make unions more transparent, extend their services more broadly and at lower cost.

One other effect of the technologies is that work is becoming independent of location and this is changing management practices and the quality of work. One may not need to be in the office to work but can still deliver while at home especially for office workers. When work is independent of location, through the Internet and e-mail, new ways of working arise. In industrialised countries women have mostly benefited from the new independent of work location as working from home allows a better accommodation of work and family schedules. However, this trend has not picked up in this side of the world owing to infrastructural underdevelopment. This notwithstanding the digital eras potential to improve the quality of work and the life is clearly real.

There is evidence of the need for changing attitudes and strategies within the trade union movement to address issue of organising and the representation of new areas of worker protection in the area of occupational safety and health. At present we have many workers using the ICT and exposed to its own hazards of which workers need protection. Unless the union is aware of them, it cannot accord the protection desired.

As I conclude, I would like to emphasise that access to information and the collective strength of communication can assist trade unions in redressing imbalances of power in the workplace. Through the Internet, many trade unions can engage in 'cyber-chats' to shed light broadly on violations of worker rights and bad industrial relations practices, etc. In such global discourse, information flows in real time giving great leverage to the voice of workers.

Information is power and when unions in Africa are able to obtain information through electronic means, it will assist them in redressing a power imbalance that now exists at the bargaining table between them and employers since the latter have an edge in ICT access.

I am happy to note that the International Labour Organisation has not only recognised this but has come in to support ICT training programme for workers. This should extend to all social partners to help us bridge the digital divide. Even though a widening digital divide may be inevitable between the haves and have-nots, using the technologies is still enormously beneficial at any level of economic development.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attention and wish successful deliberations as I declare this workshop officially opened.

The Opening Speech

by
Brother Francis Atwoli
Secretary General COTU (K)

ON THE OCCASION OF OPENING
THE TRAINING WORKSHOP ON BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES

held at
TOM MBOYA LABOUR COLLEGE,
KISUMU, KENYA
on
7 July 2003

Honourable Ali Chirau Mwakwere,
Minister for Labour & Human Resources,

Brother Marc Bélanger,
ILO Information Technology Specialist at Turin,

Brother Insa Ben Said Dia,
ILO Specialist at Turin,

Brother Mohammed Mwamadzingo,
ILO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare,

Brother Fred Omido,
Administrator Tom Mboya Labour College,

Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome.

On behalf of the entire Executive Board of COTU (K) and on my own behalf, I take this opportunity to sincerely welcome you to Kenya and specifically to the Tom Mboya Labour College. Let me on the onset start by saying that the African continent is faced with numerous problems that include armed conflicts, poverty, HIV/AIDS, high unemployment, and poor governance. The economic and social conditions on the continent have been worsened by the globalisation process, which is the rapid integration of the world market through trade and movement of capital all over the globe. With increased integration of the world market, Africa has continued to be marginalised as there has been very little direct foreign investment flow to Africa. Africa remains a net exporter of raw materials and agricultural commodities.

One of the main factors contributing to rapid globalisation is the information superhighway. However, Africa remains a poor continent separated from the developed countries through digital divide. The gap between developed and developing countries in the use of information and communication technologies is so wide that there is an urgent need to bridge the gap.

Mr. Chairman,

The trade unions, in an effort to face the challenges ahead, need to take initiatives in bridging the digital divide. Trade union leaders should be soldiers at the frontline of the war for the benefit of their membership and their larger communities. I am informed that this workshop will assess the infrastructural and institutional capacities of the trade union to be able to communicate with their affiliates, membership and international community. I am also informed that the workshop seeks to identify major problems within the trade unions

operations (administration, communication and provision of services), which might be addressed with the introduction of new technologies. I believe one of the outcomes of the workshop will be a detailed work-plan on the information technology to be applied in the national countries and affiliated trade unions.

We at COTU (K) are pleased to note that the organisers selected the Tom Mboya Labour College to be a focal point for training in information technology, which is a new area in trade union training activities in Africa. This initiative by ILO Turin and ILO/ACTRAV will go along way in bridging, the digital divide. We in the Trade Union fraternity have great need for information for our day-to-day operations and also for networking with other brothers and sisters around the world. It is only through the modern information technologies that the Unions will remain up to date and provide the badly needed services. By getting current information and adopting new information technologies the unions can negotiate better Collective Bargaining Agreements, and reach out and communicate with the rank and file to keep them informed on current issues.

Adoption of modern technologies will alleviate poverty by creating employment and increasing productivity in information dissemination and data collection.

The development of information technologies among the trade unions might be a way out to monitor the behaviour of international institutions and the multinational enterprises that apply double standards in different parts of the world.

I personally thank ILO/ACTRAV and ILO Turin for seeing it fit to launch the first training in the region in Kenya, and I believe that in this formative stages the ILO will assist COTU (K) to set up the Tom Mboya Labour College as an Information Technology training focal point until it becomes self sustaining. The design of the curriculum for Information Technology Training for Trade Unionists, and possibly resource persons, will be some areas that will need support and attention.

We thank all the participants for their commitment in bridging the digital divide in Africa and I hope with this initial training participants will ensure that their national centres and affiliated unions will be engaged in activities to popularise use of information technologies in their day-to-day activities to keep pace with the changing world and create capacity in the use of modern communication technology through training.

With these few remarks I wish you a fruitful workshop that would encourage interaction among our Brothers and Sisters.

Thank you.

Speech

by
Brother Noah Chanyisa Chune
Acting Principal
Tom Mboya Labour College

On the Occasion of
Opening of Training Workshop on
BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE - THE ROLE OF
TRADE UNIONS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES
AT TOM MBOYA LABOUR COLLEGE, KISUMU
7-11TH JULY, 2003

The Representative of
Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Management,

The Secretary General of COTU (K), Brother Francis Atwoli,

Dr Mohammed Mwamadzingo,
ILO Sub Regional Office for Southern Africa,

Mr Marc Bélanger,
ILO TURIN,

Mr Ben Dia,
ILO TURIN,

Chairperson, Sister Rosalinda Simiyu,
Tom Mboya Labour College,

Resource persons,

Distinguished guests,

Fellow delegates and participants,

On behalf of the Board of Governors of Tom Mboya Labour College it is my pleasure to welcome you to Tom Mboya Labour College and Kisumu City in general.

I'm informed that this week we shall all be participating in a very important workshop on bridging the digital divide in Africa. You are aware that Africa continues to remain behind in social economic progress. The level of poverty has increased on a very large scale owing to several factors, which include poor governance, armed conflict, declining terms of trade and marginalisation in the global trade. The globalisation process has marginalised Africa by reducing it to a mere dumping market and specialising in exportation of raw materials. One of the main features of globalisation is information technology. Information technology has made it easy to move capital around the globe and has made communication more rapid and easier in many parts of the world.

In Africa the continent still suffers from poor communication due to lack of Technology and developed infrastructure. Trade Unions remain an integral part of the international economy because it is the workers that produce wealth and at the same time are consumers of goods and services. I am glad to note that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) ACTRAV and Turin training centre have found it fit to start training Trade Unionists in Information Technology, as they will be forerunners in promoting Information Technology in Africa.

I'm indeed pleased to note that the inaugural workshop in the region has been run at the Tom Mboya Labour College. We in Kenya are grateful to the ILO/ACTRAV and ILO Turin for identifying Tom Mboya Labour College as a regional training centre on Information Technology. Through our country

paper presentation you will come to learn about the status of information technology in Kenya. However, I will point out that very few of our Unions are using modem technology in their day today operations. There are many factors to this. They include lack of resources to buy the hardware and software, the' lack of qualified personnel within the trade union movement and generally the resistance against change by some trade union leaders.

I believe this co-operation that has started in bridging the digital divide will go along way in modernising communication in the trade union movement. However, we shall still appeal to the ILO/ACTRAV to assist the college not only with the training activities but enable the college develop the necessary infrastructure for further training and for providing required communication with other workers training colleges.

We are struggling to hook the colleges on Internet and to mount full-time Information Technology (IT) courses for both the trade unions and for the community in Kisumu. We appeal to ILO, ICFTU/AFRO to continue to support us so that we continue imparting the necessary skill in IT and other trade union education activities.

With these few remarks I wish you the best of luck in your course so that we take back IT skills learned here to our national centres. I would let you know that I would take advantage of this opportunity and undergo the training as a participant since the course is in this college.

May God bless you all.

Introductory Remarks

by
Mohammed Mwamadzingo, Ph.D.,
Regional Specialist on Workers' Education
International Labour Organization
Harare
Zimbabwe

On the occasion of the Opening Ceremony at the ILO/ACTRAV Training Workshop on 'Bridging Africa's Digital Divide: The Role of Trade Unions in Africa'

Tom Mboya Labour College, Kisumu, Kenya, 7 July 2003

The Chief Guest, Honourable Ambassador Chirau Ali Mwakere, Minister for Labour and Human Resources Development of the Republic of Kenya,

The Secretary General of Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya), Brother Francis Atwoli,

The Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Tom Mboya Labour College, Sister Rosalinda Simuyu,

The Acting Principal of the Tom Mboya Labour College, Brother Noah Chune,

The Administrator of the Tom Mboya Labour College, Mr Fred Omido,

My colleagues from the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin, Italy, Messrs Marc Bélanger and Insa Ben Said Dia,

Representative of the African Regional Organisation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU-AFRO), Sister Jacinta Ochieng,

Senior trade unionists from various African countries,

Resource persons,

Distinguished delegates, and

Invited guests and friends from the media,

I am indeed very happy to be here today, if not for any thing else but to prove a single point. The best way of expressing my point is nicely put in Kiswahili. There is an old Kiswahili adage that says 'penye nia pana njia', which translates to something like 'a good intention has a clear path'. The idea for the activity that we are witnessing this week was first conceived over 24 months ago, while attending a course at the ILO Turin Centre in Italy.

The purpose of the activity is (as was some 24 months ago) to assist workers' organisations in the selected countries in Africa in strengthening the institutional and human capacities to utilise information and communication technology in all their activities. The activity is also intended to enhance the dissemination of workers' education programmes between the ILO/ACTRAV (Geneva, Turin Centre and Field Specialists) and the labour colleges in the participating countries.

Madam Chairperson;

There were many challenges and obstacles that stood our way all through the initiation and preparatory states. These obstacles ranged from internal challenges from within our organisation to the logistics of having the participants travel from far and wide to travel to Kisumu, without using the traditional communication channels of sending faxes, letters, or telephone calls. The fact that we have almost exclusively used the e-mail and Internet to co-ordinate all the travel and other arrangements is to me a clear indication that there is a clear determination to find a way to bridge the so called digital divide. With the exception of

our delegate from Zanzibar, all colleagues from participants' countries (i.e., Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, and Zambia) and of course our Turin Centre were communicating by electronic mail. It is even more amazing to note that I undertook almost 95% of all the arrangements while I was away from my duty station in Harare.

We are told that between countries, the features of the digital divide have common characteristics. Barely 6% of the world's people have ever logged onto the Internet and 85 to 90% of them are in the industrialised countries. The level of national income is strongly related to ICT diffusion and is clearly the distinguishing feature of the divide between industrialised and developing countries. The cost and availability of telecommunications determines the extent to which the Internet is used, and per capita access costs are most often higher in poorer countries. Coercive governments limit the extent to which information is exchanged, and evidence shows a higher level of Internet usage where political and civil freedoms exist.

Fellow delegates,

The concept of a digital divide is too abstract to many. To illustrate the abstraction they are many analogies that very neatly illuminate the problem. The digital divide, so the anecdote goes, can be best compared to having your best friend immigrate from Machakos, a small dusty town on the fringes of the semi arid Eastern province of Kenya, to Michigan in the USA.

'I will write to you every week,' is the typical promise and initially you actually do. However, as time goes by, he develops an annoying habit of talking about e-fax, e-chat, sending you e-cards, call waiting and streaming video. The words are in English but you have absolutely no idea what the your friend or brother is going on about. He's crossed the digital divide and you're the poor relative that time forgot.

This analogy is not that different from the exchanges we have to face every time as professionals dealing with workers' organisations. This is more evident and challenging whenever we meet participants who have gone through the 'Information Technology and Trade Unions' course at the ILO Turin Centre.

Chairperson,

What normally happens when the participants graduate from the Turin course and finally reach their national centres is that there is so much enthusiasm to show their colleagues on the wonders of the information and communication technology world. Instant communications through e-mailing and Internet chat with the resource person who took charge of the course. Occasionally, they also send attachments from their secretary general and requests to finance their work plans to ILO field offices.

The irony of the similarity between the two village relatives communicating between Machakos and Michigan is also visible in our situation. No sooner have the Turin Centre graduates settled in their respective work places, than do they start facing the realities of the digital divide between their national trade union centres and the ILO offices, including the Turin Centre. Their trade union infrastructure, coupled with the national deficiencies, does not effectively support the electronic interaction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is the role of the ILO, and particularly, the Bureau for Workers' Activities, to devise and establish training policies and programmes and strengthen well-functioning institutions to bridge the digital divide between our organisation and those that we have a mandate to serve. The ILO believes that trade unions must be the architects and engineers constructing this bridge - for the benefit of their membership and their larger communities. As a frequent user of cyber cafes, we are constantly amazed by their versatility. Changes occasioned by the rapid globalisation and technology has led to calls to manage properly the emerging information society. Trade unions as a significant interest group in our communities must develop strategies for regional and national representation at the global information society. As in many other social and economic issues affecting the modern society, trade unions must play the roles of advisor, teacher and advocates to a mix of citizenry with varying levels of tech-ignorance. In their position as the last line of defence to their membership and the general populace, workers through their organisations are probably better positioned to sell the benefits of the digital age than probably most self-proclaimed, undemocratic, rigid and unfocused civil society institutions.

In a few words, colleagues, the bridge of the digital divide will only be shortened if trade unions design and co-ordinate the ICT agenda in our workplaces and our countries. The convention wisdom must be that information technology must be seen to be important for all trade union operations, ranging from organising our members, delivery of services, collective bargaining, research, training and education, to political campaigns and maintenance of democratic principles. We must see information technology as a critical force in shaping our relevance in the future. And the need for skilful and committed leadership in ICT is obvious. It is to the best interest of trade union leadership to be computer literate. The time of thinking that computers can only be used to replace the good old typewriter is long gone.

Our Guest of Honour;

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the leadership of the Tom Mboya Labour College and to our host national centre, the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya). For me, I could not find a better place to co-ordinate such an important training course that the Tom Mboya Labour College in Kisumu. It is at this college and at the very room where we are going to hold our training sessions that I started my career as a workers' educator way back in 1993. I recall vividly receiving the personal invitation from Mr Atwoli to come to the college give a lecture on the implications of structural adjustment programmes. The college was then viewed as the centre of excellence on workers' education in the sub-region.

It is gratifying to observe the wonderful job that the chairperson of the Board and Brother Atwoli are doing to restore the dignity of the college. I believe, it is through linking institutions such as this one and its sister labour colleges in other parts of the Continent that the bridge to information technology and other disciplines shall be strengthened.

Penye nia pana njia!!

Long Live Tom Mboya Labour College,
Long Live Central Organisation of Trade Unions,
Long Live International Trade Union Solidarity.

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES

TOM MBOYA LABOUR COLLEGE
KISUMU
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Appendix 4: Workshop Programme

Sunday, 6 July 2003

Arrival and Registration

DAY ONE: MONDAY, 7 JULY 2003

SESSION	THEME	SPEAKERS	REMARKS
Session One: Opening Ceremony			
9:00 am	Arrival of invited guests and the media		
	• Chairperson	Ms Rosalinda Simiyu, Chairperson, Tom Mboya Labour College Board	
9.15 am	• Welcoming remarks	Mr Noah Chune, Acting Principal, Tom Mboya Labour College	
	• Introductions and remarks from the Workshop Director	Dr Mohammed Mwamadzingo, ILO Sub- Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare	
	• Welcoming remarks	Mr Fred Omido, Administrator, Tom Mboya Labour College	
	• Goodwill messages	Mr Marc Bélanger and Mr Insa Ben Said Dia, ILO Training Centre, Turin	
	• Welcoming speech	Mr Francis Atwoli, Secretary General, Central Organisation of Trade Unions, Kenya	
	• Official Opening Speech	The Hon. Peter Odoyo, Assistant Minister of Labour and Human Resources Development	
10.00 am		Group photograph Tea/Coffee break	

Session Two: Background to the Workshop			
10:30 am	Aims and expectations of the training workshop	Dr Mohammed Mwamadzingo, ILO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare	Submitted to participants in advance of the workshop
11:00 am	Initiatives towards bridging the digital divide in Africa	Dr Eustace Mwarania, Managing Director, Softwise (Kenya) Limited	
12:00 noon	General discussions		
12:45 pm	Lunch break		
Session Three: Assessment of Trade Union Capacity on Information and Communication Technology			
2:00 pm	Commentary: Information Society in Africa and its Implications for Trade Unions	Dr Mohammed Mwamadzingo, ILO Sub Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare	
2:45 pm	Needs Assessment on Institutional Capacity-Building on Information and Communication Technology in Trade Unions in Africa	Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya) National Organisation of Trade Unions (Uganda) Trade Union Congress of Tanzania	Reports submitted to the workshop director
4.00 pm	Tea/Coffee Break		
Session Four: Main Features of Computer Training and Information Technology for Trade Unions			
4:30 pm	Introduction of Main Features of Computer Training and Information Technology for Trade Unions	Mr Marc Bélanger and Mr Insa Ben Said Dia, ILO Training Centre, Turin	
5.30 pm	Free Evening		

DAY TWO: TUESDAY, 8 JULY 2003

SESSION	THEME	SPEAKERS	REMARKS
Session Four: Introduction to Computer Training and Information Technology for Trade Unions			
9:00 pm	Introduction of Main Features of Computer Training and Information Technology for Trade Unions	Mr Marc Bélanger and Mr Insa Ben Said Dia, ILO Training Centre, Turin	
Session Five: Open Source Software for Trade Unions (1)			
10:00 am	Introduction to OpenOffice Software	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	How to install OpenOffice (OO) How to set up OO Writer
10.45 am	Tea/Coffee Break		
11:00 am	Using OpenOffice Writer	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Word Processor
12:45 pm	Lunch Break		
2:00 pm	Using OpenOffice Writer	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Continuation of using the OO Word Processor

Session Six: Guest Presentation on Strategic IT Application in Africa			
3.00 pm	Applications of Information Technology and their Strategic Implications for Africa	Mr Sylvester Kisonzo, MD, SecureNet (K) Ltd	
4.15 pm	Tea/Coffee Break		
Session Seven: Country Presentations (2)			
4.30pm	Needs Assessment on Institutional Capacity-Building on Information and Communication Technology in Trade Unions in Africa	Continuation of national reports from Namibia, Tanzania and Zanzibar	Reports submitted to the workshop director
5:00 pm	Free Time		Tour of Kisumu Impala Park
7.00 pm	COTU (K)/ILO Reception at the Tom Mboya Labour College		

DAY THREE: WEDNESDAY, 9 JULY 2003

SESSION	THEME	SPEAKERS	REMARKS
Session Eight: Country Presentations (3)			
9:00 am	Needs Assessment on Institutional Capacity-Building on Information and Communication Technology in Trade Unions in Africa	Continuation of national reports from Zanzibar and Uganda	Reports submitted to the workshop director
Session Nine: Open Source Software for Trade Unions (2)			
9.20 am	Using OpenOffice Calc	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Spreadsheet
10.20 am	Tea/Coffee Break		
10:35 am	Using OpenOffice Calc	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Continuation of using the OO Spreadsheet
Session Ten: Guest Presentation (3)			
11.45 am	Information Technology for Harmonious Industrial Relations in East Africa	Mr Isaiah Kirigua, National Project Co-ordinator, ILO/SLAREA Project	
12.45 pm	Lunch break Mid-term evaluation		

Session Eleven: OpenSource Software for Trade Unions (3)			
2:00 pm	Using OpenOffice Impress	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Presentation
3.30 pm	Tea/Coffee Break		
4:00 pm	Group Work on Project Work	Mr Mohammed Mwamadzingo, ILO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare	Development of guidelines for national action plans and project work
5.00 pm	Presentation of Group Work on Project Work		
5.30 pm	Housekeeping/Adjournment		
7.00 pm	Social Event to be Organised by International Participants		
Venue:	The Vault, Kisumu		

DAY FOUR: THURSDAY, 10 JULY 2003

SESSION	THEME	SPEAKERS	REMARKS
Session Twelve: Country Presentations (4)			
9:00 am	Needs Assessment on Institutional Capacity-Building on Information and Communication Technology in Trade Unions in Africa	Reports from UNI-Africa and ICFTU-AFRO	Reports submitted to the workshop director
Session Thirteen: Creation of WEB Pages for Trade Unions			
9:30 am	Using Mozilla	Mr Ashok Subron, NTUC Mauritius	A Web browser with a module for creating web pages
10.30 am	Tea/Coffee Break		
11:00 am	Using Mozilla	Mr Ashok Subron, NTUC Mauritius	Continuation of using the Web browser
12:45 pm	Lunch Break		
Session Nine: Field Testing of ILO/ACTRAV's Internet CourseReader			
2:00 pm	Using Mozilla	Mr Ashok Subron, NTUC Mauritius	Continuation of using the Web browser
3.30 pm	Tea/Coffee break		
4:00 pm	Using Hekima	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Continuation of educational computer conferencing
5.00 pm	Housekeeping/Adjournment		
7.00 pm	Kenyan Night at the Tom Mboya Labour College		

DAY FIVE: FRIDAY, 11 JULY 2003

SESSION	THEME	SPEAKERS	REMARKS
Session Fourteen: Field Testing of the ILO/ACTRAV's Internet CourseReader			
8.45 am	Using Hekima	Mr Marc Bélanger, ILO Training Centre, Turin	Educational computer conferencing software
10.30 am	Tea/Coffee Break		
Session Fifteen: Project Work and Development of Action Plan			
10.45 am	Group Work	All Workshop Directors: Marc Bélanger, Insa Ben Said Dia, and Mohammed Mwamadzingo	
12:45 pm	Lunch Break		
2:00 pm	Presentation of Group Work on Project Work	All Workshop Directors: Marc Bélanger, Insa Ben Said Dia, and Mohammed Mwamadzingo	
	Closing Ceremony		
3.00 pm	• Conclusions and recommendations of the Training Workshop	Mr Mohammed Mwamadzingo, ILO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare	
	• Evaluation of the Training Workshop	Mr Marc Bélanger and Mr Insa Ben Said Dia, ILO Training Centre, Turin	
	• Closing Speech	Mr Francis Atwoli, Secretary General, Central Organisation of Trade Unions, Kenya	
	• Vote of Thanks	Workshop Participants	
7.00pm	Dinner Hosted by Workshop Directors at the Lakers Inn, Kisumu		

Saturday, 12 July 2003:

Departures

Training Workshop on Bridging the Digital Divide: The Role of the Trade Unions in Africa

Tom Mboya Labour College
Kisumu
Kenya
7-11 July 2003

Appendix 5: List of Participants

	NAME	UNION/ORGANISATION	DESIGNATION	ADDRESS/E-MAIL	TEL/FAX
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