



BUILDING TRADE UNION ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLANS IN AFRICA: *SOUTHERN AFRICA*

• Identification of common problems and challenges:

- Privatization and commercialization of basic services.
- Pollution of natural resources and waste of basic services.
- Depriving of the majority of basic services the poor people in communities
- Agreements of financial institutions with governments leading to privatization.
- Unemployment: creating job losses and immigration for survival.
- Wars and refugees.
- Lack of adequate environmental management policies.
- Escalation of diseases due to environmental pollution.
- Use of hazardous substances at workplaces and houses.
- Workers rights: in some countries there are no Trade Union rights
 - The need of recognize and respect Trade Unions
 - The need to provide resources to assist communities with community based campaigns
- Economy:
 - Africa imports more than exports
 - Practice of dumping and double standard policies in Africa
- Governments undermine the international legislations and do not implement nor elaborate national legislations.

• TU requests to advance on the accomplishment of the goals, from a sub regional perspective:

- **Requests for international institutions.**
 - To provide resources for campaigns to: (i) develop capacity building; (ii) share information and expertise; (iii) support systems.
- **Requests for governments.**
 - To include TU committees where these issues are being discussed.
 - To ensure social dialogue.
 - To standardize labour legislation.
- **Requests for enterprises.**
 - To respect labour laws.
 - To eradicate hazardous substances
 - To make available information on chemicals and hazardous substances.
 - To ensure regular checkpoints to workers
 - To cover health expenses of those workers exposed to chemicals.
 - To invest on research and development



- **Identification of training needs**

- **Priority themes with TU training needs.**
 - Capacity building of union representatives and workers on hazardous chemicals and technical training.
 - Improvement of workers' knowledge and capacity on Occupation Health and Safety issues.
 - General training on chemicals and hazardous substances to workers
 - In-depth training of union representatives who deal with health and safety issues.

- **Working areas where technical support and materials are needed for TU action**

- **Proposals for technical support.**
 - Cooperation with international organizations
 - Technical knowledge to identify hazardous chemicals situations causing harm to workers and/or environment.
- **Proposals for materials.**
 - Development of database systems
 - Elaboration of user-friendly leaflets for workers to understand these situations.

- **TU communication networks on sustainable development**

- **Proposals to better the communication on this issue and contact points to build a communication network.**
 - To have a regular share of information amongst African Trade Unions.
 - To develop and coordinate research units of Global Union Federations on these issues in the sub region.
 - To create Trade Union websites and coordinate them.
 - To include other activists apart from specialists on OHS issues in these networks
 - To establish links with other organisations to receive and exchange information on these issues.

- **Possible sub regional campaigns**

- **Common campaigns' debate and proposals in priority issues for the sub region.**
 - To develop campaigns of solidarity against globalisation
 - To strengthen labour rights through coordinated Trade Union campaigns
 - To develop networking strategies amongst Trade Unions
 - To extend the information to other African Trade Unions which were not present at the Conference



- To promote campaigns against destruction of livelihood of African communities

- **Trade union commitments**

- **Brief declaration of commitments that can be taken by the TU from the sub region.**
 - To build solidarity
 - To involve NGOs and communities in the campaigns
 - To use international organisations (as UNEP or SAICM) and other research groups as support systems.

- Botswana: BTU
- Malawi: MCTU
- South Africa: COSATU, FEDUSA and NACTU
- Zimbabwe: ZCTU