Trade
Union
DNA

Education International

Development Cooperation Handbook:
A guide to successful partnerships

A guide to successful partnerships

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Glossary: Terms and Abbreviations

DC: Development Cooperation

Development Cooperation refers to the efforts done through international cooperation, trade union cooperation, and solidarity, development programmes, development projects, aimed to promote and support basic trade union and human rights.

EI: Education International

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

A document that records the details of an agreement between two organisations, which has not yet been legally approved

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Project: A piece of planned work or an activity that is completed over a period of time and intended to achieve a particular purpose

SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound. This method sets out criteria to guide the setting of objectives in project management

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.

This is a strategic planning technique used to help an organisation to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to project completion or project planning

UN: United Nations

Union: This term is used to refer to an education union, association, educators' organisation, education personnel's organisation, education support staff's organisation, etc.

Who is this handbook for?

This Development Cooperation (DC) handbook has been developed by the Education International (EI) Secretariat and the EI regional offices. It has been informed by input from participants at the annual DC meetings in Brussels, Belgium, in 2019 and 2020.

This guide is intended for the use of all affiliates. Those that are already involved in DC will find food for thought and tools for use in their work. Affiliates that are not yet involved in DC will find useful information to help them to get started in this area.

What will you find in this handbook?

This handbook contains suggestions for successful engagement with DC. These suggestions have been gleaned from and build on the experiences gained by EI and its affiliates in the field of international DC.

No one model of DC is infallible. Nevertheless, this tool will contribute to reflection, help to avoid certain pitfalls, and ensure EI affiliates utilise human and financial resources as efficiently as possible.

Development Cooperation, how does it work?

International trade union solidarity

EI is a global network of 400 education union organisations, in 175 countries and territories. Over 32 millions of us, teachers and education employees, comprise this large family. Regardless of the country in which we work, we share similar values. We work to achieve quality, inclusive and free public education – which is the only way to build societies of peace in which citizens are informed stakeholders. We also work to get statuses guaranteeing the rights of employees, protective social systems, environmentally friendly economic systems, and democratic and just societies.

EI's Development Cooperation policy (see Annex) states:

> *Development Cooperation constitutes an important tool for international trade union solidarity.*
>
> *Education International considers Development Cooperation as a core business for two main reasons: first, to expand access to quality public education for all everywhere in the world as a human and social right, and, secondly, to organise the teacher and education workers' trade union movement to promote, defend, and expand the rights of teachers and education personnel.*

EI's activities are fully in line with this policy. EI encourages all affiliates to develop or deepen relations with education unions in the same country, in neighbouring countries, and around the world. Some affiliates have extensive experience in international cooperation, the concrete implementation of the spirit of solidarity that characterises the union movement.

Since its inception, unionism has been based on solidarity between workers, relying on strength in numbers to defend interests, and gaining new rights which could not have been attained alone. The rights that we enjoy today would not have been attained by one person or one union working alone in one part of the world. We have successfully gained these rights by coming together in solidarity and working for the common good.

Why engage in Development Cooperation?

A matter of solidarity across borders

International union solidarity constitutes a natural extension of the solidarity values that each union promotes among its members and within its country.

To cooperate with an education union in another country is to become part of the community of teachers and to join the global community of education unions. It is about implementing our core value: that those who enjoy a better situation should be encouraged to support those who are confronted with difficulties, and those who face difficulties are encouraged to seek help from the wider community to overcome these difficulties.

People learn about themselves by interacting with others

It is a fact that, in unions, we are confronted with several difficult questions:

- *How can we attract new members?*

- *How can we petition in a truly collective manner?*

- *How can we acquire improved competency on educational issues?*

- *How can we better share our values and messages of solidarity, unity, fairness, social justice, peace with the educational workers and with the community?*

- *How can we create broad alliances?*

- *How can we mobilise on a large scale?*

- *How can we obtain better and sustainable results?*

Union cultures often vary from one country to the next, largely due to the significant diversity of educational systems, territorial organisations, school curricula, teacher training programmes, and methods of dialogue employed between unions and the authorities. Far from being obstacles, these differences constitute helpful points of reflection through which we can build the answers to the questions formulated above. Unions, then, should not be wary of their cultural differences as, in interacting with one another, we realise that we all face the same difficulties and can find ways to overcome them together.

In helping others, you help yourself

It is in the interest of all unions to help each other and to build capacity to face challenges in education – and society – globally.

Many national policies on public services, including investment in education, are influenced by international organisations such as the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Private international groups such as Bridge International Academies and Pearson promote the commercialisation of education around the world and are influential in many countries.

National, regional, and global policies that erode the value of quality public education are detrimental to ensuring just societies, social cohesion, economic development, democratic functioning, eradication of corruption, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press and security worldwide.

Under the threat of these unfriendly policies and global crises, countries, unions, and individuals can lose access to human and trade union rights, a balanced social dialogue, a free quality public education system, and a positive status for education staff.

Climate, food, and health crises in one part of the world affect everyone globally, as do wars, dictatorships, acts of terrorism, droughts, floods and other global crises.

Progress on human and trade union rights, public services, quality public education, and the status of teachers, in any part of the world, helps all of us to make progress in our part of the world. That is why it is in the interest of all unions to help each other to continue making progress in these fronts.

Development Cooperation: What is the purpose?

The DC policy paper adopted by the EI Executive Board in 2011 states (see Annex):

The objective of Development Cooperation within EI is to assist in the development of independent and democratic education unions in order for them to:

- *Represent and defend the interests of union membership*

- *Defend the status of teachers and education workers and promote the teaching profession*

- *Work towards the Education for All and Millennium Development goals*

To build strong, independent, and democratic unions

DC within EI assists in the development of strong, independent, and democratic education unions.

Strong education unions have	Many active members – paying dues and organising
	Members united and mobilised
	Government recognition and consultation
	Respect in the society and partnership with other organisations
	Constitutions that provide for the above to happen
	A history of struggles and achievements
	Knowledgeable leadership and membership
Independent education unions have	Constitutions that clearly show the ultimate power vested in members
	No affiliation to any political or religious or such groups, except for union associations
	Systems whereby operational costs are borne by union membership dues. They do not rely on other sources, donations, etc.
	Been established, organised, and operated by education personnel. They are not part of any government or external apparatus, including political parties
	Leadership elected directly by members or by the representatives of the membership
Democratic education unions have	Fair and free elections held at regular intervals
	A Constitution providing for every member to vote for immediate leadership and get elected to the leadership
	Provisions for members or representatives of the members to take actions against the elected leadership if such action is warranted
	Provisions for financial transparency and regular practice of submitting reports (accounts) to members or their representatives
	Provisions for due process against charges within the union

For the benefit of the organisations

DC aims to benefit education unions as well as individuals. It is important that the participants in workshops and conferences feel responsible for sharing new knowledge and skills with the leadership of the union. How this sharing takes place must be clearly defined within the project description.

To serve union strategies

It is important that the cooperation is in line with the orientations, priorities, and strategies of each of the cooperating partners. Otherwise, if it is inconsistent with the unions' policy, it may not serve to strengthen them.

To build sustainable organisations

All DC activities must have as their goal, whether in the short or long term, the achievement of autonomy. Failure to prioritise this goal and translate it into concrete actions could lead the partners to rely heavily on the support of others and create dependency in the long term.

Development Cooperation: Which principles?

The DC policy paper adopted by the EI Executive Board in 2011 states (see Annex):

The following principles, based on trade union values of solidarity, respect, collectivism and cooperation, should form the basis of Development Cooperation within EI.

• Partnership

• Needs-based and context-specific

• Accountable and transparent

• Long-term

• Strategic and adjustable

Good cooperation

- Is on equal footing with mutual respect for each other's demands and needs
- Is trade union solidarity across national borders
- Values all partners equally. There are no givers or takers. All partners are co-developers and benefit from the cooperation

The cooperation is not about

- Imposing ideas
- Providing charity
- Our own countries
- I know better than you
- Big and small or wealthy or poor
- Developed or underdeveloped

How to find a potential partner?

I am willing to help. How can I engage in DC work?

Would you like to share experiences with trade unions in other countries? Do you have expertise in different issues that may be useful to others?

You can start by contacting your EI regional office, which will probably have recommendations on how to make the best use of your skills. Please note that financial resources are not a prerequisite for engaging in DC.

If you wish to get more involved and devote funds to DC, you have to obtain approval from your executive office or may even have to convince your Congress before you enter DC. You can also draw on the experiences of other unions that have allocated funds to DC (please refer to the paragraph below, 'What resources should we use?').

I need help. How can I find support?

All unions face challenges: how to organise effectively, how to communicate effectively, how to train activists, how to negotiate, how

to convince people to join the union. However, each union has internal resources to analyse, reflect, decide, and experiment about possible solutions to these difficulties. Sometimes, a union may feel that it lacks the expertise or the financial means to implement actions. In this case, it may be interesting to find out whether other unions can share experiences, contribute ideas, techniques, or even financially support certain actions.

Such support can help to break the following vicious circle:

Depending on the type of difficulties encountered, exchanges with other

trade unions may help to find solutions. The first thing to do is to contact the EI regional office, which will either provide answers to the questions or direct you to a cooperation partner that can provide support.

What resources should we use?

Self-funding

The rule of 0.7 per cent

As the United Nations (UN) recommends that all countries devote 0.7 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product to DC[1], EI encourages its affiliates to devote the same proportion of their resources to solidarity activities (see in Annex the resolution adopted at the Congress in 1998).

EI applies this principle by contributing 0.7 per cent of its membership dues to the Solidarity Fund each year. Similarly, several EI affiliates have implemented systems that are aimed at saving a specific annual budget devoted to international solidarity.

As a consequence

Implementing DC using our own resources will allow almost full autonomy in choosing partners and deciding on the type of cooperation to address the needs identified by the partners. There are fewer formalities and time-consuming procedures. However, there might be limitations as the available budget for cooperation will depend on our own organizations.

External funding

Even though unions and their cooperation activities are not often considered a social priority, it is still possible to find funding agencies that will support cooperation between unions.

Which partners?

National development agencies in some countries fund cooperation by the education unions in their countries. The European Union, UN agencies, foundations, and non-government organisations are also potential sources for additional external funding.

What it implies?

Funding from external sources means:

- Accepting their priorities, although the cooperation may be of some interest to union members, but may not always share the priorities of the participating unions

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1   see a brief history in this document in English and in French

- Recognising that funding comes with a political and strategic risk. Union cooperation may fall prey to a sudden change in the funding agencies' policies or preferences
- Submitting to the funding agencies' requirements in terms of follow-up, assessment, accountability, and burdensome technical and administrative constraints
- Endorsing the values of the funding agencies that may have different values from the unions on certain key principles and that could become a dilemma for the unions later.

'Low-cost' cooperation

New means of communication (Internet, e-mail, social media, videoconferencing, etc.) make it easier to quickly exchange information between cooperating unions. As a result, it is possible to remotely share and exchange documents and conduct meetings regularly, without having to make a long and expensive trip. This implies that you and your partner union have reliable information technology and power supply.

Climate awareness and concern about air miles has also increased, so it is important to think about forms of cooperation that limit the use of long-distance transport.

Delegation to a nearby or neighbouring country is also an inexpensive way to discover other approaches to union activism, to reflect on these approaches, and to work towards improving existing practices. This involves finding capable and suitable unions in neighbouring countries to align with your DC goals.

Low-cost projects do not mean low-quality projects. Well-thought-out projects, on well-identified themes, with well-defined modes of exchanges, can be extremely effective, even at a distance.

Who should we work with?

Consortia

Sometimes several unions come together and extend cooperation to either one union or several other unions by forming a consortium to address urgent needs and to overcome the lack of human or financial resources, or expertise in one single union. Setting up a consortium for cooperation enriches the sharing of experiences and helps to advance the goals of the cooperation.

In consortia, it is important for partner unions to agree on many aspects of the cooperation such as the objectives, development processes, organisation of work, allocation of responsibilities, follow-up assessments, and evaluation.

Cooperation to foster unity

Cooperation that involves all EI affiliates in a country can contribute to foster unity and strengthen unionism in the country. Working with competing unions can sometimes be complicated but there are often common issues that make it possible for the competing unions to work together. It may take time to reach an agreement but, in the end, the benefits are significant.

Bilateral cooperation

The most classic form of cooperation involves a union from a developed country and a union from a developing country. In this type of partnership, the funds available make it possible to envisage activities: workshops/seminars bringing together many people, training over several days, large-scale dissemination of documents, campaigns, etc. This type of cooperation requires building mutual understanding and trust and agreeing to put in place planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting tools.

'South–South' cooperation

Cooperation to share the successful experiences of one union with another union mainly in a neighbouring country without involving financial support is to be encouraged. Exchanges with unions with similar education systems and trade union cultures in another country can be of great benefit. An EI survey carried out in January 2020 showed that 75 per cent of affiliates in developing countries were willing to share successful experiences; 60 per cent offered to organise training sessions or start a new cooperation.

On which topics/themes can we work?

The theme of cooperation must be based on the needs assessed by the participating unions. This means that unions can objectively assess their strong and weak points and prioritise their needs. Therefore, a participative needs-identification session must be organised beforehand.

Some cooperation themes are directly aimed at strengthening a union, increasing its effectiveness and membership. Examples include capacity building of union officials to run meetings, manage the union›s finances, communicate and persuade, coordinate an activist team, and negotiate with authorities, etc.

Some themes are directly aimed at enhancing the expertise of union officials on some specific issues, such as national and international regulations on labour law, on human and trade union rights, on equity and inclusion, on education policies, on staff regulations, and so on.

Sometimes, the themes of the cooperation may seem distant from the activities of the unions – examples include cooperation to improve the pedagogical training of some union members, or cooperation to reduce child labour and get children back into school. We must bear in mind that cooperation with these types of themes helps to strengthen unions by improving its membership services and are in line with the values of EI.

Alternative/additional incomes?

Some unions struggle so much to retain members and attract new ones that they are concerned with looking for alternative sources of income. Organising side events or selling union-related merchandise can appear as simple solutions to generate money in the short term. More complex fund-raising initiatives include setting up buying cooperatives, or even bank loans or housing assistance services.

In such cases, the following questions can be raised:

• What benefits does a union get by paying attention to membership and dues?

• How does the union meet the members' needs with the limited resources of its dues?

• What are the possible threats of overindulgence in business-like ventures to raise union income?

A cooperation project step-by-step

In many cases, cooperation between unions involves developing a project with specific goals to address certain needs within a certain period of time. The nature of projects can vary, from simple one-off exchanges of experiences between two unions to multi-partner projects planned over several years and covering several topics. In this section of the handbook, we will discuss how DC projects are usually developed.

Making a good start

Whether it is to devote part of the resources to cooperation or to implement an action plan, committing to a cooperation project is a political decision. In this sense, the very first step involves consultation with your union's national office or even its annual congress.

In general, DC projects involve two partners, one providing financial resources to the other. This is likely to create inequality in the relationship and each partner should pay a great deal of attention to make this relationship as equal as possible.

On one hand, make sure that even, unwillingly, you do not impose anything on your partner. And, on the other hand, make sure you do not accept anything which does not correspond to your culture, your values, your rules, and your needs. The following table provides some tips on making a good start.

	Problem	What can be done
Provide confidence	There is inherent doubt at the beginning, on the ability of the partner union to deliver on a project, especially in a project conceived for the first time	Spend plenty of time to get an in-depth insight into the structure, membership, and leadership.
		Show a lot of trust in each other's ability to resolve problems.
		Emphasise the need to enter a long-term cooperation.
		Do not rush, take time to co-build the project.

	Problem	What can be done
Get attention	Most of the time, most of the people meet someone with a preconceived notion. They are planning to say something, they are not planning to listen	The key to the process is to show respect and be curious.
		Every union is intertwined in the political fabric of society. Get to know the political context.
		Unions are part of national history. Knowing the history of the unions, the national articles of association, and the present functioning of the union will help.
Reduce power-imbalance	There is an inherent power imbalance between the unions providing support and unions receiving support	The key is to take some time, learn the culture.
		Plan with the partner union to overcome cultural and linguistic differences.
		Establish that both unions are in a team that must attain important goals.
		Invite the EI representative to participate in the process.
Understand	Like most of the other people, you also go to meet someone with a pre-conceived notion. You will not be listening	Give attention, ask clarifying questions, listen.
		Respect each other's demands and priorities. Critically evaluate them.
		Avoid prejudice and understand each other's frustrations and circumstances.
		Use EI documents, resolutions to further each other's understanding.
Build common understanding of the project process	A common understanding of the project's logical framework is paramount	Agree on the baseline data and information.
		Jointly define necessary change activities,
		implementation, timeframe, outputs, outcomes, indicators, and expected impact, as well as the reporting modalities.

Preparations	How to make the preparations?
Union's approval	You need your union's approval to start the project. Get it, from your union's Executive or Congress.
Legal permissions	Your union may have to send or receive funds across borders and hold rallies, meetings, training, etc. Source the necessary legal permits to undertake these actions, especially in countries where there are conflicts or strict legal frameworks.
Membership support	You know your members best. Do the needful to get their support from the beginning. Inform, listen, and take actions that benefit the members.
Organisational needs	Make your union address the needs as specific as possible. There must be a clear logical pathway to address the needs through the strategies. This document could be used as a tentative project proposal for the partnership.
Capacity	Evaluate your union thoroughly and build the capacity to undertake the additional administrative work that comes with the project. Establish mechanisms to make the project inclusive, sustainable, non-discriminatory, and gender equal. Your union may have to develop policies for this to happen. Develop those policies.
Reporting	The success of the project depends on honest evaluation and reporting. Establish mechanisms that enable timely communication of evaluation, monitoring, narrative, and financial reports.
Management	Your union should be ready to take on the management of the project. Put in place mechanisms that enable usage of the project to the proper end and ensure proper management of the project funds, full implementation of the project strategies, and zero tolerance of corruption.
Unionism and ownership	A clear policy outline must be drawn to emphasise that your union is a membership-based union, and the project is to help the union in improving membership services, such as negotiations, organising, policy interventions, etc.

Make sure the following happens

- Support of your union members
- Proper management of the project's funds
- In-depth understanding of the partner union's needs
- Timely communication between partners

Assessing the needs

Identify what you need to become a strong, independent, and democratic union and carry out your responsibilities effectively. Please refer to the table, under the sub'-heading "To build Strong, Independent, and Democratic unions" in this handbook under the heading "Development Cooperation: What is the purpose?". Evaluate your union on the spectrum of one to five, one being not perfoming well to five being very good. See where your union is strong and where it is weak and determine the needs[2].

Specify your union's needs as clearly as possible. Try to address those needs with your own resources. If your union is short of resources or has excess resources, seek the cooperation of EI and find a union to cooperate with.

Choose a potential union willing to cooperate with your union. Most unions emphasise cooperation, dialogue, and exchange of experience on an equal footing. They are inclusive and value solidarity, equality, strategy exchange, co-responsibility, cultural diversity, and a mutual commitment towards a cause.

With the partner union, plan a project to address the needs of your union. Ensure that the project developed is sustainable and is based on the principles of solidarity, collectivism, and cooperation.

Analysing the situation

Internal analysis

Strength	Weakness
An internal characteristic or asset that gives a union a competitive advantage relative to its mission and objectives.	An internal characteristic or limitation placing a union at a competitive disadvantage relative to its mission and objectives.

Environmental analysis

Opportunities	Threat
An external context that gives a union a chance to improve its competitive position and increase its effectiveness and efficiency.	An external condition that places a union in a position of incurring a decline in its competitive position and a loss in its effectiveness and efficiency.

2   For detailed analysis, go to ITUC's Trade Union Organisational Capacity Tool at https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc_guidelines.pdf or its Trade Union Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool at https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/organisational_capacity_presentation.pdf

	Keep these in mind	Take these actions
Needs Assessment	The partners involved in planning a project know that the needs are real and important.	Openly discuss why the union seeking support needs support and why the union extending support gives support.
	Reasons for seeking and extending support are genuine and respectful.	Avoid emphasis on "why the support is sought", focus on "why the support is extended".
	Those with the needs should be the ones to identify and prioritise the needs.	Use the process as an opportunity to learn from each other.
	We tend to think that our organisations are better than they actually are.	Undertake "Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats" analysis and encourage objective assessment.
	Opportunities and threats are more difficult to write than strengths and weaknesses.	Encourage more discussions on opportunities and threats.
Baseline information	Situations, examples, etc., make things easy to understand objectively.	Ask to give examples or incidents of the situations, and list them down in a chart like the one below this table.
	This is the baseline from which the project has to make improvements. These will help you to write the baseline statements.	Work hard to specify examples with numbers. Take your time. Make coherent sentences.
Strategies	Outline what the strategies will be.	List possible actions against each example of the situation.
Goals	This will provide a parameter to evaluate how the strategy worked and will help to formulate goals for the project.	List desired changes after the actions.
Indicators	This will help to develop evaluation measures or indicators.	For each desired change, write a realistic change expressed numerically.

You can list the exercise in an "Analysis Chart". Take the "situation" and "examples" and set the baseline information. The baseline must be written in a coherent sentence. Write down the baseline information for as many "examples" as possible. Make sure that the baseline statements are specific. Discuss the importance of the baseline including on how it is used in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the project.

Situation	Young teachers are not interested in the union		
Example	In my school, only one out of five new young teachers joined the union, compared to three last year.		The average age of the branch executive committee increased from 42 to 46 in two years..
Project action	Training on the importance of union for new teachers	Recruitment campaigns	Project action cannot be taken because it is a political issue.
Desired result	New teachers will be interested	New teachers will join the union	(various)
What has changed	All teachers in my school and 10 teachers from surrounding schools will join the training and eight teachers will join the union		Ten union leaders will visit 120 schools in three months and recruit 240 new members, of whom 120 will be young members.

Avoiding unpleasant surprises

Manage risks - have a plan

- Have the courage to foresee and identify risks both internal and external in your organisation and in your partner organisation
- Assess the most serious risks and develop mitigation strategies

Projects face many risks. It is necessary to think of all possible major risks no matter how ridiculous they may seem at the time of planning.

Select a few imminent risks and write down strategies to overcome them. Select a few risks that might seem unlikely but can seriously affect the project. Discuss the risk and develop strategies to overcome them.

Include these strategies in the project plan and, as with the other strategies, develop a system of reporting. The reporting will allow you to revisit the risk mitigation strategy and not be surprised when the risk hits the project. The reporting will indicate an increase or decrease in the risk

possibility and give reasons for that.

Here is an example of a matrix commonly used to evaluate risks.

Vulnerability

Threat	Not very significant	Moderately significant	Significant	Very significant
Not very significant	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟠
Moderately significant	🟢	🟡	🟠	🟠
Significant	🟡	🟡	🟠	🔴
Very significant	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴

Defining goals

The baseline information statements outline the situation as it is now. Look at those statements and then refer to the "Desired Result" column to see what you want the situation to look like at a designated time.

In most cases, "Desired Result" statements are not specific. They may state a narrow objective, such as, "Such and such a situation will be the overcome". Take time and make these statements specific, measurable, achievable, realistic/relevant, and time-bound/timely (SMART). Make sure the "Desired Result" statement outlines what degree of change will be made to the issue stated in the baseline by what measure, until when. Give a few examples of goal statements, if necessary, such as:

> *"We will have three female union leaders by mid-2021"*
> *"We will run four capacity building workshops for LGBTQI leaders/ members by end-2021"*

Write down the goals of the project in a manner that is clearly understood by everyone. Members will approve the project if they understand the goals.

> **Goals describe ideals, give direction, define purpose, and guide action**
>
> - The goals should be broad, set in a time framework, should not look impossible, and should be challenging and inspirational
> - Many experts suggest making goals SMART
> - Well-written goals eliminate possible conflict among members, motivate their behaviour, and serve to unify members in the ownership of the project

Setting up an action plan

Developing strategies creates the best path to reach the project's goals and vision. The principles of transparency, effectiveness, and clarity must govern the selection and implementation of the strategies.

The "Project Action" in the situation analysis chart will serve as a guide to develop strategies.

The process of determining strategies/actions is rigorous. Each action must be scrutinised, and alternatives discussed to see how effective it could be. Engaging in a critical dialogue held in equal terms will help to choose the right strategies and build respect. Respecting each other's demands and priorities will make leadership accountable.

We must not try to develop strategies to address all our needs. We must prioritise. We must find out the core strategies to undertake so that many other strategies can be left out. The "fishbone analysis[3]" must be done.

Ask questions such as the following repeatedly:

- *How do we get to the desired state?*
- *What is going to help or hinder us?*
- *What actions and programmes are needed?*
- *How will we know that the chosen strategy is the most effective one?*
- *What are the alternatives?*
- *Is there an efficient and prudent way to do the same thing?*
- *How will it be implemented?*
- *Are there duplications?*
- *Can a single action contribute to attaining several goals? If yes, what are they?*
- *What should we keep doing/stop doing?*
- *How will we know when to stop?*

Once the strategies/actions for all goals are finalised, an action plan must be developed with the timeline, venue/location, and responsible person outlined. One way of writing an action plan in a chart is presented below:

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3   The fishbone diagram or Ishikawa diagram is a cause-and-effect diagram that helps managers to track down the reasons for imperfections, variations, defects, or failures. The diagram looks just like a fish's skeleton with the problem at its head and the causes for the problem feeding into the spine.

Goal:

Strategies/ actions	Persons responsible	By (date)	Resources required	Evaluation/ measures

Remember

- Strategies/Actions are interlinked. The right action at the right time is effective. Right person for the right job.
- Some actions can only be taken after the completion of other actions.
- Some actions undertaken at once are more effective than undertaken at different times.
- Actions affect people and communities. They take place in a location.
- Name the venue/location for each event. The responsible person should be aware of possible problems with the site.
- Be mindful of the national calendar, school calendar, national and local events, religious and cultural days, national or local political elections and UN-designated days.
- Be mindful that your event gets media coverage. Decide which event you want covered by the media.
- Decide whether to hold your event on a day when everyone is holding similar events.
- Some actions may include guest speakers, the media, and others. Be mindful of their availability. Decide who should be responsible for managing these individuals.
- Your union may view some actions as more important than others. Assign responsible persons accordingly.
- Be mindful that some events may require the leaders of your union to attend, so ensure that advance notice is given to them.
- Above all, make sure that the dates you assign for an action are convenient to your union, especially the membership.
- Check - and recheck - that the dates and responsible persons are properly assigned.

Setting timelines

It is very important to agree on timelines from the very beginning. Indeed, a significant delay could reduce the efficiency of a project, or even make it completely useless.

This planning work must be done realistically, taking into account constraints identified in advance - school exam periods or holiday periods, for example - and other foreseeable possible delays. For example, transferring money between banks and obtaining authorisation from the administration can take longer than expected.

The human factor must also be taken into account in this planning. Indeed, if one person has a crucial role in the progress of the project, his/her sudden unavailability - due to illness, for example - could jeopardise the entire project.

Budgeting

The next step in completing the action plan is to estimate the cost for the strategies and properly align resources with the needs, priorities, and goals of the project. In other words, preparing a budget. The budget reflects the purpose of the project and the optimal use of financial resources through budgeting is an indispensable tool to reach the project goals.

Budgeting facilitates

- Leadership to translate plans into numbers and delegate decisions without losing control
- Membership to see what funds are spent by whom and for what purpose
- Efficiency in evaluating the costs of a project against its benefits

To prepare a budget, take the action plan and list all expenses for each strategy. Work hard not to miss any expense and not to add unnecessary expenses. Under-budgeting or over-budgeting your project will negatively impact on its operation and outcome. It may happen that resources are either or not enough or too much to apply to the activities planned. Precision is the key.

In allocating resources, we must be efficient. Sometimes, this means doing more with limited resources without sacrificing the quality of what we want

to attain. It is very important to repeatedly ask the following questions and evaluate the allocations for each strategy:

- Are there ways to reduce costs?
- What will be affected if the venue is changed, if the number of people involved is changed?
- What might be affected if a large expense on travelling to a meeting is cut and replaced by an online meeting?
- What happens if travelling expenses have to be borne by the participant?
- Is there a more efficient way to attain the same result?
- Is the cost justified for the expected outcome?
- Can we drop this strategy? Or drop another strategy instead?

It is not easy to handle funds. We must evaluate our abilities to handle funds while preparing a budget. There are strict national and international laws and regulations on handling funds, and we must abide by them. Questions such as the following must be repeatedly asked:

- Do we have the capacity to collect original receipts, keep accounts and be audited as required by law?
- Who will prepare financial reports? Is she/he capable of same?
- How much time and energy will it take to produce financial accounts?
- Is it right for the union to focus on the expenses and accounts of the project instead of responsibilities towards the membership
- How many full-time people work for the union?
- How much extra time do they have?
- What can we handle well and how?
- Should we bite off more than we can chew with this project?

We must assess the existing financial health of our unions and allocate resources. We must repeatedly ask questions such as the following:

- What are the reasons for the existing financial health of the union?
- What is my union's income?
- Is it right for the union to plan to spend more than it can afford?

- Is it right for the union to increase expenses in different ways for different reasons because this is just a project?
- How can we afford this if there is no project?
- What will happen if support for the project stops?

As far as possible, the resources should be allocated such that expenses like travel, accommodation, and meals while participating in the project event are fully covered and the cost is reimbursed or paid on producing original receipts. There should be no allowances. Needless to say, expenses such as luxury hotels and restaurants and expensive air travel should be avoided.

However, special cases may arise, especially if there are better, safer, and economical meal options near the venue, or if the participants live nearby or if the employer does not pay salaries when the participant is at the event, and so on. These issues must be scrutinised and dealt on a case-by-case basis.

Rule of thumb

Cooperation projects should not make an activist poorer or richer as a result of taking part in the cooperation projects

In dealing with special cases where allowances are necessary, we must keep in mind that every country has policies and regulations on the allowances that apply to the public sector. The allowances allocated in the project should not deviate much from the national rates and should be the same for all participants.

Trade unions should not apply the model of paying a large sum of allowances and holding events in luxury hotels for two main reasons. Firstly, the financial resources of trade unions are limited, and the money must be used as carefully as possible. Secondly, trade unionism is based on a commitment to values, on solidarity, and not on mere remuneration for the performance of tasks.

Be mindful of the market prices, inflation rates, and the regulations on accounting. Some expense headings are taxable, and others are not.

While preparing a budget, think about what existing resources can be used, such as a union meeting hall for training. We should keep in mind that meeting in luxury venues is costly and portrays unionism in a poor light. However, holding meetings in inappropriate facilities impacts the efficiency of the meeting – so do ensure that your venue matches the needs of your meeting. Keep the expenses down. Prudence is a virtue.

You may need some flexibility as well. Foreign exchanges fluctuate. Bank charges change. Follow-up assessments may recommend some small

additions to the budget. Finally, some minor errors may have been made in predicting future expenses.

> **Programme budgeting focuses on prioritising the allocation of limited resources to the programmes that generate the most benefits:**
>
> - Programme budgeting is a systematic method for allocating limited resources in an efficient manner to achieve the goals.
> - Instead of allocating on a "line item" basis, i.e., for personnel, training, stationery, transport, etc., programme budgeting allocates resources for the entire programme.
> - Programme budgeting therefore focuses on the programmes that are to be carried out under the strategy implementation. With this method, a union can evaluate the costs of a programme against its benefits.
> - Therefore, it is important that you identify the cost benefits of your programmes up front.

In order to deal with these uncertainties, some projects prepare programme budgets allowing changes in the expense items within a budget for a strategy; other projects allocate a small percentage of the budget for unforeseeable expenses. It is for individual unions to decide what suits them best.

Never forget that unions must be financially responsible towards our membership and project and follow the laws of the country in which it operates. Make sure that the project budget enhances the proper management of funds and does not facilitate or allow malpractice and corruption.

Managing funds

One of the ways to ensure proper management of funds is to go through a detailed cost analysis while preparing a budget. Emphasise the need to follow the budget to the last detail. There should not be an expense that has not been budgeted for.

Monitor the expenses at all levels. Check if the expenses are on the right track. Ask questions such as: Does anyone take responsibility for accounting? Is there an audit mechanism in place? Do we have an "actual" versus "budget variance" analysis?

Be clear on how the fund is spent. Who is responsible? This will help to dispel any question of "profiting through a cooperation project". "What is the hidden agenda?" Be clear on how the budget will provide transparency, accountability, and sustainability to the project. Periodically review the budget, assess the project's progress, and submit reports to all members.

Open a separate bank account for the project, with more than one person responsible for operating it. Make the top leadership responsible for fund management and ensure that there is a bill or a receipt for each expense. Make strict rules for issuing vouchers.

Holding effective follow-ups

To assess the effectiveness of our actions, we need to create evaluation measures that objectively indicate our progress. These objective evaluation measures are often called "targets". The last column of the situation analysis chart - "What has changed?" - will help to develop evaluation measures for the strategies/actions. These indicators must be specific so that gradual improvements towards them can be measured.

Work hard to identify the target measures that are well understood by all. There are many ways to identify target measures. One of the ways is to focus on writing a strategy that is SMART - once the goals are SMART, it becomes easy to develop target measures that are quantifiable.

For example, if the SMART goal is "To recruit 500 new members and become a 10,000-member-strong union by organising 50 recruitment camps in 10 cities/district this year", the target measure is evident. We should hold 50 camps in 10 cities and our membership should reach 10,000 in a year.

> "What happens if we recruit 500 new members in 10 camps in two cities within three months? Do we stop?
>
> What is it that we are trying to attain? Are we trying to widen our membership base to 10 cities? Are we holding 50 recruitment camps so that we could mobilise 250 union activists? Are we only thinking of 500 new members?
>
> What is it? Membership mobilisation? Or strengthening the union nationally? Or keeping the union active for a year? Or 500 new members?"

However, it is not that simple. We should be mindful of the following questions and reach a consensus evaluation measure.

Not all goals could be written as SMART as the example above. For instance, another goal could be:

"By 2021, the living conditions of 450 teachers will have increased due to the improved management and counselling capacities within 10 union branches."

Before you proceed to identify the evaluation measures and ask questions similar to those outlined above, you may want to clearly specify the ideas in the goal. In relation to the goal around the living conditions of 450 teachers, you would want to list the existing living conditions and what conditions would be increased. You would also want to know what is the union's management and counselling capacity now and what it entails. What elements would be improved by how much, how would it be measured, and how can the improvement be attributed to the project? Why would only 450 teachers see the benefit? Why only 10 union branches? And so on …

Be prepared to see a goal such as: "Facilitate discussion and development of policy and lobbying activities". For general goals such as these, you may want to make the goal SMART before you proceed to identifying target measures.

With every target measure, we need to find ways to verify it. Our actions will have an impact on people and institutions willrecord the impact. We need independent reliable sources to verify how the project is measuring up against its the targets and what is the effect of the project?

Let us take the case of the goal discussed above:

"To recruit 500 new members and become a 10,000-member-strong union by organising 50 recruitment camps in 10 cities/district this year".

To measure its impact, you would want to list reports by the organisers from the camps, get copies of the membership receipts issued to the new members and a copy of branch membership registry.

Most importantly, you would need the bank-issued records of the membership dues paid by these new members. The bank statement showing these new membership dues is the independent reliable source to verify the effects of the project on the finances of your union.

With the second goal - "By 2021, the living conditions of 450 teachers will have increased due to the improved management and counselling

capacities within 10 union branches" - improved living conditions can be verified by some government authorities or school authorities.

Despite the absence of clarity in the third goal - "Facilitate discussion and development of policy and lobbying activities" - you may want to see copies of policies developed and submission records from the authorities where these policy recommendations were submitted, and so on.

Targets need to be monitored periodically. Monitoring reports of every event, activity, and strategy must be exchanged and evaluated with the baseline statements. This is a continuous process and it will enable us to see if we are heading the right direction or not. Evaluation baseline and target measures are essential in monitoring the project. The process of analysing evaluation and monitoring reports must be decided beforehand and reports submitted to the membership at regular intervals

Remaining flexible

Sometimes, unforeseen events prevent the implementation of certain planned activities - such as a strike, for example - or a change in a union's priorities decided at the union's congress. In these cases, the action plan must be adaptable and flexible.

Evaluating

After entering the partnership, commit to the success of the project and work towards implementing the project actions with full transparency, efficiency, honesty, prudence, and membership participation to attain the goals of the project.

In undertaking the project, you will learn many things. You would want your next partnership to be informed of this learning. So, you evaluate.

This evaluation is mostly at the end of the project cycle. It is often called summative evaluation. The evaluation is usually designed to draw lessons from the completed strategies/activities and recommend future directions.

Evaluation fails if we are

- Afraid to be critical in fear of losing funding
- Without baseline and follow-up assessment reports
- Poor at designing the evaluation exercise
- Appointing a bad evaluator due to some reasons

The evaluation is not a test of trust; it is a process to strengthen trust and the project. This is a two-way evaluation. It is planned after prolonged discussions setting benchmarks and processes. It deals with target measures, monitoring reports, narrative and financial reports, schedules, and other project documents and opinions of the stakeholders. The evaluation is participated in by a wide range of stakeholders and many of those involved in the project's implementation. The recommendations of the evaluation can be used to make major changes to the project.

A successful evaluation evaluates all partners. It entails an agreement between the partners to appoint an independent evaluator who is not afraid to go beyond the obvious in digging out reality.

Evaluations succeed if we

- Discuss the evaluation process with the partner before the evaluation
- Have clearly stated key performance indicators
- Trust the other partner
- Make recommendations for future planning
- Prepare easy evaluation questions
- Appoint a good evaluator

Evaluation is not a means to conclusively declare the project a failure or a success; it is continuous and on a long-term basis. It is almost impossible to declare that the project has attained all its goals. Be wary if you hear such declarations.

Please bear in mind that follow-ups, target measures, and monitoring processes comprise the formative evaluation or an internal audit which is a continuous and integral part of the project. It entails all aspects, including the finances of the project, and is designed and carried out by the project partners.

The summative evaluation at the end of the project is an external audit. An external and independent auditor's report is required by law in many countries. This evaluation involves a wide section of the stakeholders, some within the unions and some outside of the unions. The project partners may even appoint an external evaluator to undertake the process independently without bias.

What does a success look like? Is every action measurable?

Bear in mind that a union project is a political action, the outcome of which may be is affected by innumerable causes beyond the control of the union.

We act in a given context, over which we have partial influence but do not have control over everything - the authorities ultimately decide on education policies. Our role is to convince the authorities, to put pressure to get certain things done. Sometimes, our strategy is very well thought out, the campaign is solid, and yet the education minister may ignore our proposals/demands. This does not necessarily mean that the strategy was ill-conceived, the action plan was bad, or that the project failed.

Unexpected results can also be achieved in a project due to some external factors. For example, a sudden increase in union membership may be due to the election of a pro-labour government during a project on recruitment.

We must seek to understand the value of the aggregated positive effects of a project on the union and the changes that these positive effects will bring to the union. We must not be narrowly focused on the "numerically justifying success or failure of a strategy".

After the project cycle

The core purpose of DC is to develop the capacity of unions so that the unions are able to respond to the needs of their members and fulfil their mandate as a strong, independent, and democratic teacher union.

Due to the nature of union work, it is difficult to decide when to stop cooperation. It is almost impossible to say, at any given point, that the purpose of the cooperation is now fulfilled. There will always be some improvements to make, some issues to resolve, and some challenges to face.

However, the cooperation project cannot go on forever. It must make progress and stop. It is very important for partner unions to repeatedly discuss what progress has been made and when to end the project. Is a two-year period enough, five years? Is ten years too long? Is 20 years wise? It is difficult to discuss how to end a cooperation project before it starts, but it is necessary to formulate a sustainable strategy during the planning phase. This strategy will enable the project to have realistic goals and time frames and build mechanisms for gradual transfer of responsibilities and end the possibility of one partner depending on the other throughout the project and beyond.

It is very important to set exit strategies. In some cases, the contribution of the union receiving support is annually increased; in other cases, an agreement is reached on how long the project will continue and when it will end. The project must include a plan on how it will end and how the vacuum created by the project will be filled.

Resources

Policy documents or links to

- EI Policy Document on Development Cooperation
- The Second World Congress (Washington DC) Resolution on Development Cooperation (English, French, Spanish)
- Fourth World Congress (Porto Alegre) Resolution on Education for Global Progress and the Resolution on Promoting Quality Education (English, French, Spanish)
- Fifth World Congress (Berlin) Resolution on Joining together to build a more effective Union Movement (English, French, Spanish)
- Fifth World Congress (Berlin) Resolution on United for Greater Social Justice (English)
- EI Constitution (English, French, Spanish)

Project documents or links to

- Sample of all project-related documents such as MOUs, action plans, schedules, reporting formats, audit reports …
- Sample of charts, tools required for project development, charts to write goals, charts to prioritise, charts to monitor an activity, sample budget, vision statements.
- Sample strategic plan of a member organisation
- Sample constitution of a member organisation
-

Education International

Development Cooperation Handbook:

A guide to successful partnerships

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Education International represents organisations of teachers and other education employees across the globe. It is the world's largest federation of unions and associations, representing thirty million education employees in about four hundred organisations in one hundred and seventy countries and territories, across the globe. Education International unites teachers and education employees.