

# **Trade Union Actions to Promote Environmentally Sustainable Development**

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## Preface

This booklet was developed as part of the International Labour Organization's Bureau for Workers' Activities Project entitled "Workers' Education and Environment" (INT/93/M12/NOR), which was started in 1990 with the support of the Norwegian Government.

Since this project on "Trade Unions and Environmentally Sustainable Development" began, dozens of case studies have been developed which show how environmentally sustainable development issues have been integrated into trade union work. Trade unions have drawn the attention to issues as diverse as occupational health and safety, the transportation of hazardous cargo, water pollution control, coalition building, and reforestation, to name a few. The variety of the subjects studied shows that environmental issues are coming to the forefront at workplaces around the world, thanks to dedicated trade union members and the knowledge this project has helped spread.

One objective of the Project was to put the cooperating trade unions in a position to participate in the formulation and implementation of national environmental and sustainable development policies which reflect the special needs and concerns of the workers and their organizations. The other major goal of the Project was to increase trade union represen-

tation on relevant environmental advisory and decision-making bodies at the bi- and tripartite level. Since the beginning of the Project, trade unions have become involved in formulating and implementing environmental and sustainable development policies at all levels. Additionally, trade unions are networking between one another and forming alliances on environmental issues.

The Project developed materials entitled "Trade Unions and Environmentally Sustainable Development" and "Using ILO Standards to Promote Environmentally Sustainable Development", which have since been translated into several languages. Using these materials, workshops have been held throughout Africa and Asia since Phase two of the Project began in 1994, training over 2600 members how to develop trade union policies and action plans to be carried out in their workplaces and communities. In addition, through cooperation with ITSs and through the ILO network, the Project has reached even more members, both in Asia and Africa, and in countries in the Americas, the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe.

Country to country, the needs and priorities of trade unions and the workers they serve differ greatly. The case studies chosen for this booklet seek to highlight the different kinds of work

trade unions have done in different places to effect change on environmental issues. These case studies are exemplary lessons on coalition building, collective bargaining, fact-finding, direct action, and training, to name a few.

Results from case studies, campaigns, workshops, etc., can be difficult to measure and results can take time to develop. With the case studies sampled here, we hope to illustrate the diversity of approaches, methods used, and results obtained on different topics in different regions by different trade unions. The idea is not to show that one method or case is better than another, but to learn and exchange experiences.

There were many other successful actions carried out in cooperation with this Project. Given space and time limitations, we could not list them all in this booklet, but instead have chosen a representative few. Thank you to all of the cooperative partners who completed case studies and please accept our ap-

preciation of the fine work done by all involved. The reporting of your efforts, successes and shortcomings have given this project much to be proud of. Thank you also to Ms. Kristi Bascom, who wrote and edited the case study summaries presented in this booklet, and to Ms. Annie Rice, who also lent her input.

We hope that you find these case studies interesting to read, and that they lead you to think about how your trade union could be active in environmentally sustainable development issues. The ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities continues to be interested in your input on trade unions and environmentally sustainable development, your feedback on these case studies, and in keeping the flow of information going with trade unions around the world. It would be most appreciated if you could find time to keep ACTRAV informed about your trade unions' involvement with environmental issues.



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ILO/ACTRAV November, 1999

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# Introducing Occupational Health, Safety, and Environment Committees in the Workplace: A Goal of the NCEW in Eritrea

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>The Establishment of Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment Committees in the Workplace</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>The National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW)</b>

## About the Organization

The NCEW is probably the youngest national centre in Africa, established in 1994. Trade unionism, however, is not new to Eritrean workers. The struggle for improved living and working conditions has been going on in Eritrea for decades.

The NCEW is composed of five federations covering industries as diverse as Food, Hotel and Tourism, Mining and Chemicals, Service Industries, Textile and Leather, and Transport and Communication. The NCEW has a membership of over 17,000. The Confederation has six branch offices, which carry out the tasks of the National Centre in addition to assisting the five federations carry out their responsibilities.

## Introduction

The practice of occupational safety, health and environment in Eritrea can be described as being at its infancy stage. Following independence, Eritrea inherited poorly managed and run-down factories. The conditions pre-

sented right after independence, therefore, were not conducive for reinforcing or institutionalizing safety and health practices.

With the privatization of former government factories underway, the promotion and institutionalization of safety and health practices, especially among the privatized enterprises, is becoming increasingly necessary. Technologically advanced machinery and dangerous chemicals are entering the country and exposing workers and the environment to all sorts of health hazardous and environmentally unfriendly situations.

NCEW visits of two newly established factories in Eritrea were carried out and showed that even in the newly constructed factories, appropriate safety and health practices were not being followed. For instance, in one of the factories visited, a hazardous chemical was being used without the workers' knowledge of its harm. In another newly constructed factory, the safety signs were only written in English. Visits to two older factories showed deplorable working conditions. Most of the machines were run-down and dangerous to use. Waste materials were simply let into the main stream, where neighbouring residential areas' water supply could easily be polluted. The NCEW was very concerned about these findings which demonstrated the urgent need to institutionalize rules and regulations on health and safety practices.

Following a workshop in cooperation with the ILO/ACTRAV "Workers' Education and Environment" Project in 1995, the participants strongly supported their National Centre, the NCEW, to get involved in environmental issues.



Eritrea, Massawa

With the help of these workshop participants, the NCEW drafted their environmental policies and action plan. Their successful approach was even used as an example in the training materials developed in the ACTRAV Project ("Trade Unions and Environmentally Sustainable Development", Guide to the Booklets, Page 44).

In order to implement their environmental goals, the NCEW proposed a project to be implemented in cooperation with the ACTRAV Project, which would:

- promote awareness and concern on environmental issues;
- administer regional and local training seminars;
- prepare the relevant educational materials for the training programme, including the development of a training video and the translation of relevant ILO training materials into Tigrigna and Arabic, where appropriate.

### Project Description

The training workshops proposed by the NCEW aimed at bringing together workers and employers to discuss the possibility of forming occupational safety, health, and environment (OSHE) committees in their workplaces. Specifically, the workshops provided the opportunity to:

- exchange experiences, ideas and materials on existing activities on OSHE;
- identify constraints in establishing OSHE Committees and develop strategies for meeting these constraints;
- collaborate on proposed ideas and develop a potential working structure for establishing OSHE Committees at the workplaces;
- determine the most suitable structure for forming a bipartite relationship surrounding the issues of OSHE;
- train participants on how to form OSHE Committees in their respective workplace, whereby trained participants would be expected to hold a workshop on forming OSHE Committees for their co-workers;



- provide information kits to participants on OSHE Committee structure and policy formation;
- discuss and identify follow-up activities.

## Project Implementation

*The following groups were identified to participate in the project:*

- Union members and particularly workers at workplace level
- Union Leaders
- Management
- NCEW
- Representatives of different ministries and organizations involved in environmental issues and legislation

## Workshops

The workshops were held in the Eritrean cities of Asmara, Assab, and Massawa. In each of these cities, an area-wide workshop was conducted, in addition to multiple follow-up workshops at specific workplaces. At the workplace workshops, both trade unions and management attended. In total, more than 750 members participated in this programme.

## Fact Finding

Through a series of surveys and interviews, the NCEW looked at the current practices of OSHE in the workplace in Eritrea. The NCEW examined the awareness of workers, trade union leaders and management of OSHE practices. They also identified unsafe practices and acknowledged the challenges of monitoring and maintaining health and safety procedures. Combined with site visits, the interviews and surveys provided information on what needed to be done in order to make OSHE Committees effective. The NCEW used the

findings of the study in conjunction with "Occupational Safety and Health Awareness Week" in April 1998 in order to draw attention to the need to adopt OSHE practices and prevent workplace injuries.

## Material Development

During the progress of the project cooperation, a number of materials were produced and translated, including the ILO/ACTRAV material on "Trade Unions and Environmentally Sustainable Development" and the earlier Discussion Booklets on "Workers' Education and the Environment" in Tigrigna. In some regional centres, however, translation of the materials were prepared in other local languages including Arabic. The materials prepared for this project were developed through the participation of the workers and resource persons.



## Campaigning

In addition to the surveys and workshops, a full range of other activities were undertaken, including photo-exhibitions, poster design and creation, writing and publishing newspaper articles and conducting radio interviews. The NCEW developed an awareness-raising video, entitled “The Role of Workers’ and Environmentally Sustainable Development,” which highlighted the need for workers to be active in safeguarding Eritrea’s natural resources.

## Results and Reactions

Workshop participants concluded that OSHE Committees were needed in Eritrean workplaces. Workers and management agreed that OSHE Committees in the workplace should serve multiple purposes:

- an organizational framework for problem solving;
- an internal responsibility system;
- a mechanism for the exchange of information;
- the means through which employee participation is increased;
- a system through which to put in place health, safety, and environmental procedures;
- a pooling of knowledge and expertise.

Overall, it was agreed that the main objective of the OSHE Committees should be the promotion of cooperation between employers and employees in the investigating, developing, and carrying out of measures to ensure a safe and healthy working environment.

The workshop recommendations went on to specify the membership and structure of OSHE Committees, the committee’s role and activities the committee should and should not undertake. There was also the acknowledgment that a bipartite OSHE Committee could provide the day-to-day oversight at the workplace level that yearly inspections are not in a position to do.

The workshop participants also identified challenges that were likely to be faced in establishing OSHE Committees in the workplace. These challenges included the acknowledgment that Eritrean enterprises are not bound by law to establish OSHE Committees, there is limited knowledge about establishing OSHE Committees among workers, employers, and government, old machinery at many factories in Eritrea do not lend themselves well to security in safety and environmental protection, and there is an absence of national health and safety standards to refer to.

The workplace-level workshops conducted in the three regions served to establish the specific OSHE Committee at that workplace, which was a very successful approach.

## Discussion Points

1. What policies has your union developed on environmentally sustainable development issues?
2. How have these policies been implemented?
3. How have the different action plans your trade union has developed, reached the workplaces?



### Note from the CTA

The NCEW case study is an excellent example of how training and education can lead to successful capacity building. Because of a long history of civil war, Eritrean workers in general received limited education, their opportunities taken from them by decades of civil unrest. In spite of these challenges, the NCEW's efforts to establish OSHC Committees at the workplace was very successful.

Regional workshops conducted in Asmara, Assab, and Massawa brought forth strategies and recommendations from both employers and workers. The networks developed in this project between the regions of Eritrea were very important and the initial establishment of the OSHC Committees in the workplaces was successful. However, the unfortunate fact is that continuing war-like conditions in the country make it difficult to know if the efforts have endured.

The success of this project is a credit to the NCEW and its dedicated members. The serious enthusiasm shown by the NCEW to improve the living and working conditions of their members is impressive, and it speaks volumes about their commitment to the future of Eritrea.



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### Acknowledgments

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## A Korean Trade Union Spreads Environmental Awareness in Asia



FKCU, Korea

<b>Project Title:</b>	ICEM/ILO/FKCU Workshop on Trade Unions, the Environment, and Sustainable Development in Asia
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	The Federation of Korean Chemical Workers' Unions (FKCU) and the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine, and General Workers' Union (ICEM)

### About the Organizations

Some 20 million workers worldwide are organized within the ICEM, the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers Unions. The ICEM is an industry-based world labour federation dedicated to practical international solidarity. The ICEM's main focuses are providing support for member unions during industrial disputes and union-building programmes in countries where unions are weak or non-existent. The ICEM also provides information and expertise on topics ranging from collective bargaining to health and safety standards and offers skills training and development work with trade union cadres and rank-and-file union members. The Federation of Korean Chemical Workers' Union is an affiliate of the ICEM in Asia.





## Introduction

In September 1997 the ACTRAV “Workers’ Education and Environment” Project, in conjunction with the ICEM, held a workshop in Seoul, Korea for members of the Federation of Korean Chemical Workers’ Unions. Participants from many different factories attended the course, representing a range of industries, from chemical, paper and pharmaceuticals, to gas and glass production.

The aims of the workshop were to:

- identify a list of priority environmental concerns;
- develop a strategy to deal with these concerns and promote sustainable development;
- identify further local work;
- outline ideas for a wider project to campaign for sustainable development.

The workshop used the ILO Project manual, “Trade Unions and Environmentally Sustainable Development,” which was developed for trade union educators and researchers. The manual contains ideas and activities to help trade unions carry out their own environmental work after the workshop. Activities included conducting surveys, environmental audits, future workshops, points for bargaining on environmental issues, etc.



## Project Description

### *Identifying a list of priority environmental concerns*

During the three-day workshop, the participants identified environmental issues relevant to the trade union and examined priorities for the union regarding these issues. Among others, the participants identified the deterioration of working conditions as a result of employment policies as the main hindrance to sustainable development, mentioning long working hours and occupational hazards in their work. They drew attention to the “3D Phenomenon” their union members often faced: difficult, dirty, and dangerous jobs.

The group also looked at education and training as an important issue, drawing attention to priority problems such as lack of education on occupational health and safety in addition to basic environment and development issues.

From their discussions, the participants defined these priorities that were of concern to the union members and colleagues:

- improving working conditions and organizing occupational safety, health, and environment (OSHE) committees at the workplace;

- awareness-raising, campaigning, and training of OSHE officers;
- promoting international issues of trade and solidarity between industrialized and developing countries and their unions.

### *Developing an action plan*

During the plenary discussion of possible strategies, it became obvious that developing environmental awareness of trade union members and local residents should be a starting point for any campaign.

Strategies were discussed and a workable action plan produced. The overall goal was to raise awareness, so the first step was to choose priority issues to use as a focus for an awareness-raising campaign. It was decided that workplace surveys should be conducted in order to determine the status of the environment at several local workplaces, and that trade union members should be consulted on their impressions of environmental issues at their worksite, including, but not limited to, health problems, fish and wildlife, waste disposal and water pollution.

Furthermore, it was suggested that environmental inspection teams (EITs) be developed to carry out the surveys and interviews. These EITs would also be responsible for observing and monitoring environmental problems at worksites.



FKCU, Korea

### *Identifying further work*

The participants decided that further action plans should be developed that are based on the results of the surveys, but that the plans should include:

- producing a video to use for awareness-raising;
- developing training sessions for union environmental inspection teams;
- including environmental demands in Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs);
- lobbying Government to ratify relevant ILO Conventions.

Additionally, the participants sought the support of the Federation through regular coverage of environmental issues in the union magazine, and decided to contact relevant local, national and international organizations concerned with the environment.



FKCU, Korea



FKCU, Korea

### Results and Reactions

The participants summed up their feelings about the workshop and likelihood for success with **[? - ! - OK]**. This statement reads that prior to the workshop, participants knew very little about environmental issues and how they were relevant to trade unions (?), the workshop was an eye-opener (!), and that after the workshop, given their knowledge, commitment, and conviction that they will receive support from trade union members and leaders, their campaign on environmental issues should be a success (OK).

Following the workshop, the participants announced their efforts with a press conference, outlining their plans to make Korean industries and communities more environmentally aware.

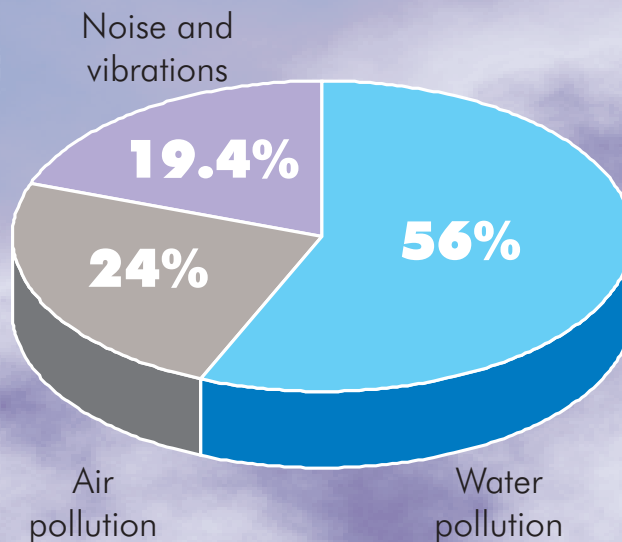
To begin their efforts, surveys were conducted at various worksites. Survey results came in

from all sectors of the Federation's organizational jurisdiction, including food processing, paper, general chemical, pharmaceutical and concrete, to name a few.

To summarize the survey results, the biggest environmental problems found in these sectors were water pollution (56%), air pollution (24%), and noise and vibration (19.4%). When survey respondents were asked if they thought the trade union should have an interest in environmental issues and adopt it as one of the principle policies, 75.2% answered "yes", 21.1% answered "agree but premature", and only 0.9% opposed. When asked whether trade unions should collaborate with environmental groups, 80% of the respondents expressed approval. As to the question of whether environmental issues should be a part of collective agreements, 67.3% agreed and 27.4% agreed, although thought it is difficult to do in realistic terms.



## Main environmental problems



Following the analysis of the survey results, an Environmental Monitoring Team was formed, which met to discuss the related environmental activities of trade unions. The Team worked out a plan for water sampling and further visited two workplaces to conduct monitoring activities with regard to water quality. The Team also reviewed the direction of the Federation's environmental activities, discussed the creation of an official Federation Environment Committee, and reviewed a draft model "green agreement" for collective bargaining.

This first attempt at a model agreement contains the joint efforts of labour and management to prevent pollution, disclose information on polluting materials, guarantee time for environmental education at the workplace, and to allow the formation of an environment committee at the workplace, among others.

The next step for the union, which is expected to take place over the next year, is to conduct

an analysis of collective agreements in order to assess the degree to which the Federation model "green agreement" was used by the affiliated trade unions in their negotiations.

In addition to the successes of the Monitoring Team and the model agreement being developed, FCKU also developed a video which is being used to raise awareness on environmental issues in communities and workplaces. The 26-minute video, produced by FKCU's Labour Film Group "Hope", touched on some of the detrimental impacts of industrial pollution. The video examined the closing of an elementary school due to nearby industrial pollution, the impacts on people who live near polluting industries, the cadmium poisoning of a factory worker, the increase in ovarian disorders among women workers exposed to industrial solvents, and other workplace hardships.

The video includes fascinating footage of interviews with workers, community activists and



union members, and shows drastic examples of water and air pollution caused by industry. The video concludes with footage from a memorial ceremony for a worker who died as a result of mercury poisoning. The narrator of the video finishes the story by asking workers to think about whether they want to continue to work in existing conditions and suffer or pursue their right to live and work healthily.

The video continues to be used to raise awareness on the plight of communities and workers faced with industrial pollution, and to encourage action to prevent future damage.

## For the Future

Experiences from this case study will be used in the ICEM's work, especially in the Asian region. Additionally, information from the study have been integrated into ICEM's general programme on environmentally sustainable development and have been helpful in developing a broader perspective on how to deal with environmental issues at the trade union level.

## Discussion Points

1. How could your trade union develop tools for increasing awareness on environmental issues in your community and within your union?
2. What issues at your workplace deserve attention? What kind of monitoring could your trade union do on environmental issues at the workplace?
3. How effective has your trade union been in implementing the results/recommendations from a workshop? Were your efforts successful? What could be done differently?





## Note from the CTA

The Korean Federation of Chemical Workers' Unions participants who attended the ILO/ICEM workshop were a dedicated, motivated group. It is encouraging to see the recommendations developed at a workshop implemented in such a timely and persuasive manner.

The ICEM has been very active on environmental issues to date, especially in the mining and chemical sectors, and has been effective in integrating environmental issues into their existing occupational safety and health programmes. It is hoped that the FKCU will receive additional assistance from the ICEM to ensure that the video continues to be used as an educational tool, the monitoring team continues to function and receive training, that the "green agreements" are adopted in Korean workplaces, and that the unions are empowered to lobby Government to adopt relevant ILO Conventions concerning workers and their working environment.

A special thank you to the participants of the ILO/ICEM workshop who were instrumental in affecting change at the FKCU and at their communities, trade unions and workplaces.

## Acknowledgments

Thank you to Ms. Annie Rice, Consultant and Workshop Coordinator, and Mr. Phee Jung-sun, Regional Representative of the ICEM, who provided information and reports for this case study summary.

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# An Environmental Disaster Motivates Trade Union Actions in the Philippines

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Case Study on the 1996 Mine-Related Environmental Disaster in Marinduque</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine, and General Workers' Union (ICEM) and National Mines and Allied Workers' Union (NAMAWU), Philippines</b>

## About the Organizations

Some 20 million workers in 404 trade unions across 113 countries are organized within the ICEM, the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers Unions. The ICEM is an industry-based world labour federation dedicated to practical international solidarity. The ICEM focuses on support for member unions during industrial disputes and union-building programmes in countries where unions are weak or non-existent. The ICEM also provides expertise on topics ranging from collective bargaining to health and safety standards and conducts skills training and development work with trade union cadres and rank-and-file union members.

The NAMAWU, an affiliate of the ICEM, is a national federation to which the Marcopper Employees Labour Union (MELU) has been an affiliate since 1972.

## Introduction

Marinduque Island is located in the central Philippines and has a population of nearly 120,000. Farming and fishing are the two main sources of family income. While the Catholic Church is an influential presence on the island, non-governmental organizations and community organizations are becoming a notable force in the province as well.

The Marcopper Mines Company (MMC) is located on Marinduque Island. The mining of copper on Marinduque began when Placer Dome Development Limited of Vancouver, Canada initiated the development of the Tapan open pit during the mid 1960s.

While open pit mining is considered to be an environmentally-unfriendly economic activity, it is, however, an economic activity which provides raw materials for industry and jobs for thousands of miners. An acceptable trade-off between the need for mineral extraction and processing for economic growth and the need to preserve the environment had to be found. When a disaster occurred on Marinduque Island, such as the one described below, the costs became unacceptable to the unions in terms of environmental and social consequences.

At the start of mining operations in 1969, the company constructed a tailings pond which would serve to hold the undesirable waste by-products generated by the mining activities. In 1975 the Government approved a proposal by Marcopper Mines to discharge their mine tailings by submarine outfall off the island at Calancan Bay. Over time the discharge caused the massive destruction of coral reefs

and fish sanctuaries in the area. In spite of the objections from church, community and environmental groups, the sea dumping continued.

Eventually, the company developed another place to hold the tailings, which was to use the now mined-out Taipan pit for waste storage. The old pit was sealed and used as a tailings pond until a long-term solution could be developed. In 1996, a plug on the pit's drainage tunnel gave way and mine tailings spilled into the nearby Makulapnit River, at one point reaching a discharge of 10 cubic meters of mining waste per second. The spillage continued for seventeen days, polluting and silting the Makulapnit and Boac Rivers with an estimated 1.5 million tons of mine tailings.

Immediately after the spill, the Marcopper Employees Labour Union called for a stoppage of Marcopper operations until the Boac River

could be cleaned up. The union also issued a statement that in this situation, the workers' interest could give way to environmental protection measures. In addition, some of the union officers were visible in various community actions against the Marcopper Mines Company. This was a radical departure from the union's actions in the past, where they had usually sided with the MMC in the interest of protecting jobs.

The spill was indeed an ecological disaster. It reduced fish catches and destroyed other marine life, dislocated residents and disrupted community life, and dislocated workers. The nearby community of Boac was angry at the MMC, fearful of the health impacts of the mine tailings, fearful of the potential flooding of the clogged Boac River, and became increasingly interested in the environmental impacts of mining on their island.



ILO, J. Maillard



## Aims and Objectives of the Project

Several studies had been made regarding this environmental mining disaster in Marinduque. However, none of these studies considered the workers, especially the union, as a stakeholder. Since the views and perspectives of the workers had not been examined up to this point, this case study was conducted to fill the gap.

The case study aimed at assessing the impact of the Marcopper disaster from the point of view of trade unions and at formulating policy recommendations from the lessons learned from the disaster. Specifically, the study expected to:

- contribute in determining the extent of environmental and social damage caused by the spillage;
- contribute in determining preventive measures which need to be undertaken to prevent similar occurrences;
- contribute to the development of policies regarding the disposal of mine waste at the national, industry and workplace levels;
- enable the NAMA-WU to mobilize at all levels on environmental issues using participatory research methods and to integrate environmental issues into its ongoing mines safety and health project;
- outline possible courses of action that can be undertaken by the NAMA-WU and other mining unions to protect the environment and to promote safety and health not only within the working environment, but also the living environment, by negotiating a “green” Collective Bargaining Agreement.

## Project Description

Among other things, the case study sought to:

- document the events before and after the Marcopper tailings spill of March 1996;
- document the activities of the union (MELU) before and after the spill;
- evaluate the perceived and actual impacts of the Marcopper tailings spill on the union, the communities and other stakeholders;
- evaluate the responses of the union, the communities and other stakeholders to the disaster;
- identify the legal, management, technical, and institutional weaknesses which contributed to the Marcopper disaster;
- analyze the role of the MELU — in particular — as stakeholders and the mine workers — in general — in environmental protection at Marcopper;
- make recommendations to strengthen the effective participation of mine workers in environmental protection in mining operations.

The trade union used two methods for the data gathering and surveys. Firstly, an environmental audit approach was adopted to reach an objective assessment of the legal, management, technical and institutional failures leading to the spill. After reviewing relevant materials, the research team, with a prepared questionnaire and guidelines, gathered information on the Marcopper disaster from key informants.

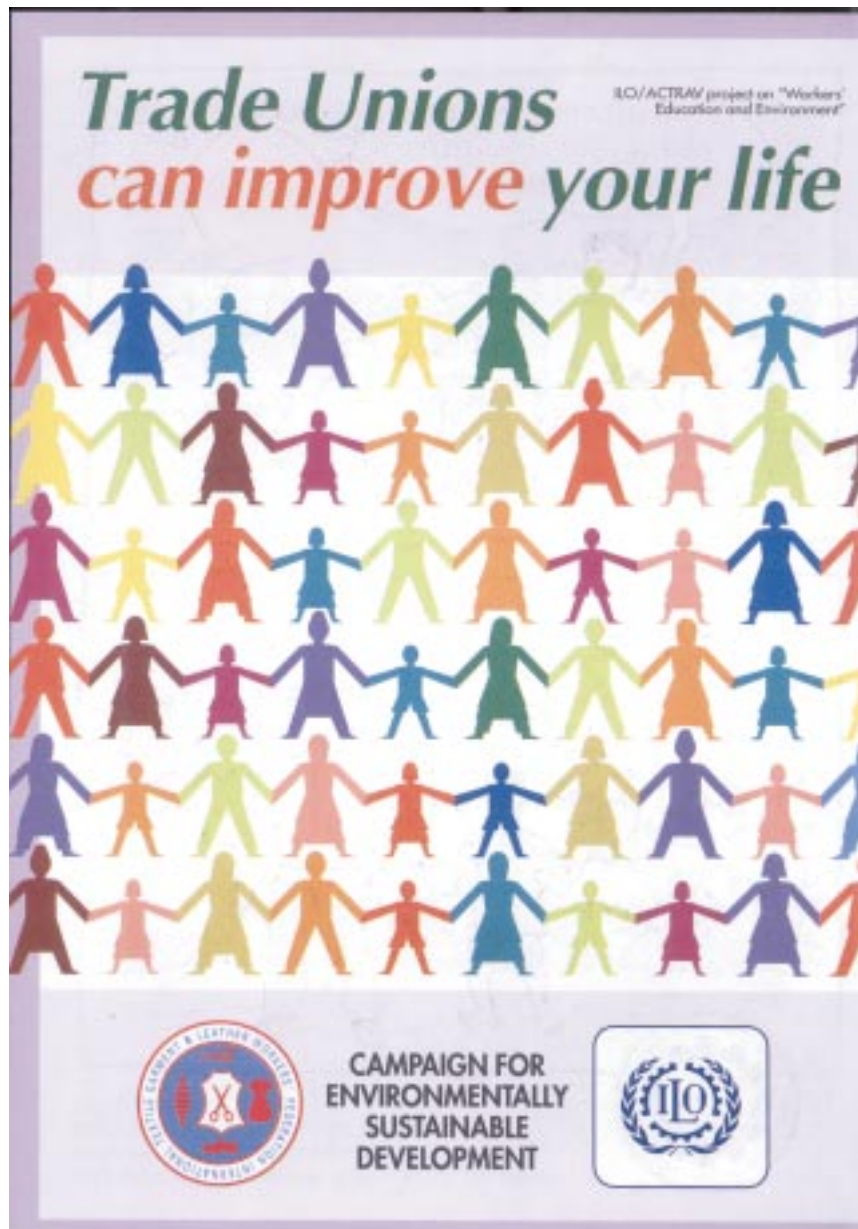
Focused group discussions were held and interviews conducted with the many interested parties. These included the management of the mine, officers and members of the union, the personnel of concerned national government agencies, local government officials, community leaders and residents, non-

governmental organizations and experts in the field of mining and the environment.

The study provided information on possible contributory factors to the disaster and a survey of the extent of the damage to the surrounding ecosystem. In addition, policy recommendations at the national, industry and workplace levels were developed by the union. These recommendations aimed at minimizing and/or eliminating the risk of similar occurrences. Also developed was an outline of possible courses of action that could be undertaken.

### Union Recommendations and Resulting Actions

From the information compiled, the NAMAWU was able to make several proposals for increased worker involvement and recognition. Described below are the recommendations developed by the union along with the actions currently being taken.



Recommendation	Action Taken by Union
Workers can be an asset for environmental protection. They can undergo training on environmental legislation, the environmental commitments of the company, and general environmental standards.	The NAMAWU has integrated a module on mining and the environment in its existing safety and health education programme.
Workers should be recognized in future environmental impact assessments as stakeholders.	The NAMAWU has made this proposal to the Philippine Mines and Geosciences Bureau, the government agency concerned with mines.
Workers should bargain for the right to stop work on the basis of unsound environmental conditions.	The NAMAWU is currently lobbying for the Philippine Government to implement the ILO Convention 176 provision on the right to stop work in dangerous mine sites. Once this battle is won, it is felt that the Government will be receptive to accepting this recommendation.
Workers can set up a structure such as "safety circles," where workers can speak freely on the environmental impacts of mining operations.	There are existing study circles in the NAMAWU's unions. One of the topics in the "Mine Safety and Health" module is "Mining and the Environment," where such topics are discussed.
Workers should bargain for an "economic displacement fund" or "environmental guarantee fund" to be provided for in case of a similar event in the future.	A policy paper has been drafted and a campaign is soon to be planned.
Workers should be aware of environmental management tools and work for their adoption and support their implementation in mining operations. These tools include multi-partite monitoring teams and environmental audits, among others.	The NAMAWU is in the process of implementing this recommendation.

## Other Developments

In November 1997 the NAMAWU's national president signed a Memorandum of Understanding together with leaders from both the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) and the Labour Advisory Consultative Council (LACC), committing itself to pursuing the goals of environmentally sustainable development. This is a substantial accomplishment.

While this project has certainly strengthened the bipartite cooperation of workers and employer through its participatory approach, it has also led to advances in trade union representation on environmental advisory bodies. The President of the Marcopper Employees Labour Union has been made a member of the Marinduque Council on Sustainable Development, a multi-partite body which includes NGOs, local government, the Church, and labour.

Another benefit of the Marcopper case was to motivate local union officials in Philex Mines in the northern part of the Philippines to take part in the company's environmental promotion programme. They have had dialogues with Government and Labour-Management Councils and have brought environmental issues to the attention of management. At the time of publication, they were campaigning for improvement in pollution controls of the company's power plant.

In addition to these formal developments, the NAMAWU's efforts for this Marcopper case study have produced other beneficial results. The awareness of union members on environmental issues has increased, the union itself has been strengthened, and also relevant national laws which will help industry avoid such accidents in the future have been influenced.



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## Discussion Points

1. What environmental problems does your industry face that could inspire union involvement?
2. To what degree are workers in your industry trained in occupational safety, health, and environmental (OSHE) issues?
3. How are members of your union in a position to negotiate improvements concerning OSHE issues at the workplace?
4. What can your union learn from this specific case study?





### Note from the CTA

The ACTRAV “Workers’ Education and Environment” Project started its cooperation with the trade union confederations in the Philippines in 1992 by conducting a series of workshops aiming at assisting in the development of trade union policies and action plans.

Since then, the workshop participants formed a “working party,” which has acted as a reference group for project cooperation in the country. One of the members of this working party is from NAMAWU and has been instrumental in sustaining their involvement in environmental issues.

I am very appreciative of the professional work and continued efforts of the NAMAWU on this case study. Although it is unfortunate that this environmental disaster had to occur on Marinduque Island, a positive outcome did develop. The NAMAWU was able to use this regrettable incident, with the successful participatory approach to the situation, to invoke extensive trade union engagement in environmentally sustainable development issues.

### Acknowledgments

Thank you to Mr. Benjamin Basquinas, National Vice President, and Mr. Rolando Librojo, Asst. General Secretary, both of NAMAWU, who provided information for this summary. Thank you also to the ICEM for providing their report of the case study.

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# Trade Unions in India: Solidarity for Environmental Protection

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>The Creation of the Trade Union Partnership for Environmental Protection (TUPEP) in India</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>A coalition comprised of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), and Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)</b>

## About the Organizations

There are five Central Trade Union Organizations (CTUOs) which constitute TUPEP. Although each may have different religious, political, or other interests, they are united in their concern about and commitment to workers' rights and environmental protection. The stated missions of the organizations range from securing workers' rights at the workplace and safe working and living conditions, to organizing employees with a view to ameliorating their economic life standard, to the overall goals of protecting the life and health of the workers and raising the standards of living of the Indian people.

Collectively, these organizations represent approximately 20 million workers in over 17,000 affiliated trade unions. They represent affiliated unions in all major industries, including manufacturing, agriculture, banking and commerce, construction, transportation, iron and steel, power, chemicals, textiles, mining, pulp and paper, and engineering, to name a few.

TUPEP itself is not an independent, structured organization, with its own directors and staff, but an informal forum set up by the CTUOs to raise awareness and promote bi- and tripartism in regard to environmental policies in India.

## Introduction

During the Chief Technical Adviser's (CTA) mission to New Delhi in 1991, the main CTUOs agreed to hold joint workshops aiming at collaborative policies on environmental issues. From these joint workshops emerged the understanding that a common approach to environmental questions would be beneficial to promoting the cause.

Another important reason for collaboration between the CTUOs was the attitude of the Ministry of the Environment, who had refused to accept trade unions' (and employers organizations') participation in the National Council for the Environment and the state-level Pollution Control Boards. The national committees had been established worldwide by the mandate of the Earth Summit Conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. Specifically, the Agenda 21 agreements adopted in Rio stated that "Governments, business and industry should promote the active participation of workers and their trade unions in decisions on the design, implementation and evaluation of national and international policies and programmes on environment and development."

In spite of the Agenda 21 agreement, the Ministry of Environment had only invited members of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) to participate on advisory bodies, arguing that NGO's could also be considered to represent the workers' perspective.



In order to facilitate their representation on advisory bodies, the different CTUOs recognised the need to act with one voice on priority environmental issues. Individually, although some of the CTUOs had been requesting trade union representation on advisory bodies, it became apparent that in order to have the most effective representation, a common approach on environmental issues should be developed. Therefore, in 1994, the Central Trade Union Organizations joined together of their own initiative to form the Trade Union Partnership for Environment Protection (TUPEP). The formation of TUPEP was quite an accomplishment, especially in a country like India where trade unions often have had conflicting views and approaches.

Since its creation, TUPEP meetings have rotated between the headquarters of the different member organizations and costs paid by the hosts. The aims and objectives of TUPEP have been to develop and advance a common position on environmental issues and to lobby for bi- and tripartitism in the field of Environmentally Sustainable Development.

### Project Description

Since its creation in 1994, TUPEP has mounted numerous campaigns, including lobbying for a ban on toxic waste imports into the country and pressuring the Delhi State Government to address trade union concerns

about industrial closures on account of environmental problems, among others.

The members of TUPEP meet on an informal basis to discuss current environmental issues and to determine what sort of approach is needed from the trade union perspective. The members who attend TUPEP meetings are the top leadership of each individual CTUO, which enables TUPEP members to discuss issues and decide on strategies to implement their policy at the meetings. At that point, each of the individual CTUOs will bring the TUPEP recommendations back to their organization and the group can act accordingly.

### Results and Reactions

Members of TUPEP have approached the Ministry of Environment & Forests to give due representation to trade unions in the governmental committees designed to deal with environmental issues, in particular on the National Council for the Environment (the Agenda 21-mandated national environment committee) and the state-level Pollution Control Boards.

The new Government has assured a positive response in this regard, although there is still no representation for trade unions on the National Council (neither is this advisory Council a very active body at the moment). In that sense the demand for tripartitism in environment matters still remains unachieved. As a

member of TUPEP explained, "environmental issues have taken root in India, but official action on the issues is grossly neglected. The advisory committee that has been formed by the Ministry of Environment is not meeting regularly, and its functioning leaves much to be desired."

Despite upheavals caused by new economic policies in industrial relations since 1993-94 and political disturbances such as mid-term elections to the Parliament, TUPEP has continued to function since its creation. The frequency of the meetings have varied, due to the ad-hoc nature of TUPEP, but the partnership has helped the trade unions unify and speak together with one voice.

Through the commitment of the organisations involved in TUPEP, trade union leaders are realising that environmental issues have a great potential to empower trade unions at the workplace and in the community.

At present, the agenda before the members of TUPEP is:

- continuing to press the Government to accept tripartitism in regard to environmental policies;
- advocating for the right to information from the Pollution Control Boards so that the workers are made aware of the steps to be taken by the industry to control pollution;

- requesting ILO support for TUPEP activities in order to continue efforts to raise awareness among the unions on the environment and health protection at workplace; and
- collecting information from the various member unions on the initiatives being taken to promote environmental protection and workers' health at the trade union and workplace level.

It is felt by members of TUPEP that awareness on ILO Standards relating to the environment among trade union leaders is slowly increasing. TUPEP is hoping to build upon this focus, and several ILO Conventions can support union demands regarding issues such as collective bargaining and workers' health and safety.

In other countries, however, the success of TUPEP has been admired and replicated. In places such as Malaysia and the Philippines, the structure of TUPEP has served as an example for trade unions with differing perspectives to come together to create a united front on issues of environmentally sustainable development. In fact, the coalition that was formed in the Philippines between two main groups, LACC and TUCP, has been successful in achieving trade union representation on the Philippines National Environmental Committee.





## Discussion Points

1. If there is more than one national trade union centre in your country, what do you think you could learn from the cooperative structure of TUPEP?
2. How do you think trade unions can contribute a valuable perspective to environmental advisory bodies?
3. Do you see other ways of cooperation with other groups in this manner?
4. What ILO Standards do you think could be helpful in this work?

## Acknowledgments

This information contained in this summary was excerpted from the consistent and thorough reports written by Mr. Arun Kumar, former Information and Research Officer for HMS.

## Note from the CTA

Although TUPEP has run into some roadblocks along the way, I believe that this is an excellent example of the power of working together towards a common goal. The CTUOs which cooperated to form TUPEP all had differing political, cultural, and/or religious backgrounds. Given these differences, I think it shows great strength that the groups were able to collaborate in such a close manner. Pooling resources, sharing ideas, and orchestrating discussions on the topics of workers' rights and environmental protection helped each organization be more effective in their individual and collective efforts.

Additionally, although TUPEP members still struggle for representation on relevant national committees, I am very happy to report that despite occasional setbacks, they are still continuing their efforts. It can be difficult to hold together an informal organization such as TUPEP that has no official structure, but the Indian CTUOs have succeeded. Congratulations to all of the members of TUPEP for realising their vision of cooperation and solidarity.

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# Replanting Their Future: Trade Unions' Reforestation Project in Ghana

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>TWU Reforestation and Education Programme – The Kokoago Project</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>Timber and Woodworkers' Union, Ghana (TWU), and the International Federation of Building and Woodworkers (IFBWW)</b>

## About the Organizations

The International Federation of Building and Wood Workers, IFBWW, is an International Trade Secretariat (ITS) which was established in 1934. The IFBWW seeks to unite and represent all free and democratic trade unions in the building, wood, forestry and allied industries. The IFBWW currently organizes 281 trade unions with over 11 million members throughout 121 countries in Africa, the Americas, the Asia/Pacific Region and Europe.

One of the IFBWW's affiliates is the Timber and Woodworkers' Union, Ghana (TWU). Founded in 1958, the TWU has 22,000 members.

## Introduction

Ghana has a population of over 16 million people. Ghana's Forest Sector contributes 6 - 8 percent of the total gross domestic product (GDP), about 11 percent of the export value. The forest is also the principal source of energy. About 70 percent of the population live and work in the rural areas with agriculture and forestry as their main source of livelihood. The country had 23 million hectares of forests

resources before independence in 1957, but currently does not have more than 8.3 million hectares left. Excessive exploitation of forest resources for both timber and wood fuels has imposed great constraints on the sector and created unbearable environmental problems. In recent years the growing concern about the survival of the tropical forests has become an important issue on the political agenda.

The management of the forest and the long term supply of timber has economic, environmental, and social impacts, and is of central concern for the IFBWW and its affiliates. The management of the forest. Workers in the forest and wood processing sector face daily risks, receive inadequate training and often do not have the security of permanent employment. The long term future of the industry is in jeopardy as unsustainable logging rapidly depletes the remaining forest resources. Influenced by the above factors and seeking practical action, the Timber and Woodworkers Union in Ghana decided to initiate a reforestation programme with the support of the local communities in order to enhance Government policy on sustainable forest management.

## Aims and Objectives

- To raise environmental awareness and sensitize workers and the general public to the need for protection, conservation and restoration of the environment, with particular reference to forestry.
- To raise awareness of the importance of forests to workers and the general public through seminars and workshops.



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- To demonstrate the potential for and viability of reforestation throughout the different regions in the country.
- To initiate a campaign for the sustainable management of forest resources and environmental resources in general.
- To collaborate with the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC), IFBWW, ILO, non-governmental organizations, local communities and national unions on forest and environmental issues.

### Project Description

Teak plantations in Ghana were first established in 1948 by the Forestry Department. These plantations proved very successful and have been harvested for timber production both for local consumption and for the export market. Plantations have generated a great deal of enthusiasm among private entrepreneurs, individuals, and communities to establish teak plantations on both small and large scale. In the past, forestry had tended to be the exclusive domain of the Government. Recently, the involvement of local communities in

forest management has been accepted as a better approach for the sustainable management of the forest. Given this trend, the TWU began to get involved and to see how proper forest management can protect the very resource they depend on for their livelihood.

The Kokoago Project was started in 1995 and was the continuation of a pilot project at Akim-Tafo in the Eastern Region. That project was an activity initiated by the National Sawyers Association, a branch of the Informal Sector Workers affiliated to Timber and Woodworkers' Union. The Kokoago Project was done in cooperation with the ACTRAV "Workers' Education and Environment" Project.

The project was organized into these main activities:

- orientation and sensitization workshop on forestry and the environment;
- establishment of tree nurseries, wood lot and teak plantation;
- strategic planning workshop on forestry and the environment;
- campaigns and advocacy.



## Project Implementation

The union's reforestation project proceeded as follows:

**Empowering the Union** Since a reforestation programme is an issue outside conventional trade union functions, the first step TWU took was to seek a constitutional amendment empowering the leadership to enter into such activity.

**Acquiring the Land** Realising that one cannot start a reforestation effort without the property to plant, the TWU set out to acquire land from the Chiefs and people of the Techiman Traditional Council on 99-year lease.

**Establishing Funding** Once the land was acquired, the union set up a forestry project fund and established a Forest Management Committee.

**Leadership Training** Next, two workshops were organized for the leadership of the union and the local community.

### **Actual Tree Planting**

Following the workshops, one acre of land was cultivated into a nursery with different kinds of commercial species, including teak, cassia, mahogany, wawa, and cashew.

### **Hiring Workers**

The TWU employed five nursery workers and also entered into negotiations with local farmers for them to help maintain the newly planted trees.

### **Educating and Campaigning**

Throughout the process, the TWU mounted various levels of campaigns through the electronic and the print media on the importance of tree planting.

### **Managing the Project**

The project is being managed by the TWU National Secretariat through the union's newly-formed Forest Management Committee. The project also has a Technical Forestry Officer seconded to them by the Forestry Department.







### Challenges and Difficulties

There were many obstacles to surmount with this project. The union faced natural challenges such as deforestation, shifting cultivation, and bushfires. There was also the social challenge of involving communities in the management of the project. Additionally, there were the technical challenges of learning tree planting, harvesting, and maintenance practices. Finally, there were also the practical challenges, such as the need for irrigation equipment, obtaining water during the dry season, finding adequate transportation, and securing financial support.

### Project Achievements

By 1998, the TWU had established a total of 60 hectares areas of plantation, made up of mainly Teak, while Cassia and Cashew had also been planted along the boundaries of the plantation. Cassia seedlings had also been planted to be used as fuelwood by the communities. The area is serviced by two rivers, the River Subin and River Biriko. The TWU have inter-planted Mahogany and Wawa along the banks of these two rivers.

The project has established connections with the community. For example, the Sunyani Forestry School has expressed their commitment

to participate in the project by training the indigenous people in forestry extension nursery establishment, silviculture and forest management. The Chiefs and the traditional authorities have also expressed their keen interest in the project since the life-blood of the rural economics are heavily dependent on the forest resources.

The farming communities have expressed their interest in the project and have participated by providing inter-crop food crops in the plantation at the early stages of the project. They also participated in the sensitization and awareness workshop organized by the union in October 1995. There is also collaborative action approach with other tree growers associations within the districts. Networking has also expanded to the General Agriculture Workers' Union in Ghana since they are also engaged in similar activities.

Besides the union, there are many people and groups who are benefitting from the project in many ways. Among them are the community living in and around the project area, who are employed by the project and receiving a share of the proceeds from the plantations, and the Ghana Timber Industry, who will benefit from future sustainable supplies of timber.



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### Conclusions

It is intended that this 240 hectare of timber plantation, when fully developed, will be an example of community based forestry. It is planned that the community will eventually share in the revenue from the plantation, which would be paid into a general fund for rural development and support of indigenous forest-based enterprises.

The project is a long term investment, and all of the objectives of the project cannot be measured yet. It is felt, though, that the union has been able to create the necessary awareness within the trade unions circles in Ghana and the local community around the project area to sustain the project. The Kokoago Project has been well recognized and appreciated by the Government of Ghana. This has been shown by the interest of the President of Ghana when he personally commissioned the project on July 3, 1998. The union was also awarded a Certificate of Honour when the country was celebrating Ghana Forestry Week in 1998.

It is also significant to note that the Government's Lands and Forestry Department has recognized the union as a stakeholder, which has led to their involvement in decisions pertaining to the formulation of new legislation

and regulations on forestry issues. In international circles, it can also be said that their activities are recognized. The TWU was extended an invitation by the ICFTU to nominate one person to join the 25-person ICFTU delegation participating in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) meeting in New York in 1998. The union's Deputy General Secretary represented the TWU and talked about the project, which received total acclamation from the audience.

At the community level, due to the union's awareness raising efforts, tree planting has now become a household word. Many economic activities have sprung up in the area as a result of the maintenance of access roads which has led to the easier chartering of goods and services.

As far as education is concerned, the union is continuing to provide training workshops outside of the "Workers' Education and Environment" project cooperation. The union was able to organize two additional workshops (in late 1998 and early 1999) in order to increase awareness on basic tree growing methodology, sustainable forestry, and waste minimization techniques. The two workshops were well attended and built on the ongoing efforts of the TWU towards promoting resource sustainability.

### Discussion Points

1. What activities can your union be involved in to create employment?
2. Does your industry rely on a natural resource which must be replenished? How could your trade union be involved?
3. What negotiation channels exist so that trade unions can participate in social dialogue at different levels?



## Note from the CTA

At the time of the ACTRAV “Workers’ Education and Environment” Project implementation, the IFBWW already had a track record of working on environmental issues. Therefore, this cooperation was planned as a direct action programme, aimed at implementing IFBWW policies in the field.

In spite of the ambitious nature of this project, the fact that it was planned and proposed in a step-by-step manner made it feel achievable. This becomes an important factor when trying to engage participation and support for a project. If it seems too big or unrealistic, it is more difficult to attract enthusiasm.

The project also shows the benefit of creating support networks. The union had the support of the landowners, who allowed them use of the property for the project, and they had the support of the authorities, who supplied skilled personnel to assist the project. The support of others outside the union greatly helped with the TWU’s efforts.

Also important in this case is the fact that the project was planned and implemented in view of being able to sustain the project after the funding from the ILO had concluded. That the project can hopefully be continued with self-supported means and continue independently is a real accomplishment.



A. Ramella

## Acknowledgments

Thank you to the TWU, who supplied the activity reports used to develop this summary.

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## Greening Workplaces throughout the Philippines

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Trade Union and Management Partnership in Greening the Workplace</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>The Philippine Social Institute - Federation of Free Workers (PSI-FFW)</b>

### About the Organization

The Philippine Social Institute was founded in 1973 as a training and education department of the Federation of Free Workers. The Institute conducts training for organized and unorganized workers and basic sectors, in addition to policy workshops and research. The courses range from awareness-raising on trade union and workers rights, gender consciousness, to various activities relative to union involvement. Lately, new courses have been developed to respond to the new and emerging needs and situations of workers.

### Introduction

This case study examines the efforts by PSI-FFW to engage the management of three unionized firms in the Philippines in a partnership to promote environmental consciousness and to formulate bipartite environmental policies in the workplace. This attempt in "greening the workplace" was test-piloted in three firms in the Manila-area.

The project aimed at bringing together the union and management of three firms in order to develop a workable plan of action to address environmental concerns in each workplace.

### Aims and Objectives

- To develop general labour and management cooperation in promoting environmental consciousness and formulating bipartite policies and programmes in the workplace.
- To establish and mobilize links with appropriate government and non-government institutions in order to strengthen the capacity to advocate for environmental protection.
- To arrive at a labour and management agreement to pursue viable and sustainable programmes on environmental awareness and protection.

### Project Description

Three unionized firms were selected to participate in the PSI-FFW project. The companies were chosen because of their relatively stable labour/management relations, the fact that there are critical environmental concerns in their workplaces, and the fact that they were in close proximity to the metropolitan Manila-area, which facilitated project coordination.

The three firms selected were:

- *The Superior Gas and Equipment Co. (SUGEDO) – a firm engaged in the refilling, distribution, and manufacturing of household, medical, and commercial gas.*
- *The United Pulp and Paper Co. (UPPC) – a firm which produces industrial paper grades.*
- *Adamson & Adamson – a firm which specializes in the manufacture and distribution of personal, health, and baby care products.*

The main activities of the project at each of the three firms involved:

- Project Conceptualization and Development: Developing and refining the project concept and strategies as pertains to each workplace.
- Focused Group Discussions: Organized in each firm, involving representatives from the union at the workplace, management, and PSI-FFW.
- Networking: Linking with other agencies specializing in environmental issues at the workplace.
- Joint Training Workshops: Conducting two workshops per firm in order to raise awareness of both labour and management on environmental issues.
- Labour-Management Planning Sessions: Discussing the results of the workshops and possible labour/management plans for environmental protection.
- Formalizing the Green Agreement: Signing the agreement, which contains the viable policy and programme commitments of both parties, and setting up the structure to ensure smooth implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Evaluation: Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the process.

### Results and reactions in the three workplace efforts

#### *What has been achieved in the UPPC Case?*

The management is conscious of the need to protect and preserve the environment. This is manifested in their different programmes on waste minimization and recycling, good housekeeping and health and safety. Their motivation is the need to increase efficiency and productivity, improve community rela-

tions, and to comply with governmental standards on environment.

The project intended to establish labour-management partnerships in advocating for the environment. At UPPC, labour cooperation is limited on industrial relations issues, particularly collective bargaining and disputes settlement. In the past, union members were neither interested nor aware of the environmental issues and programmes in the company. In fact, there were even worker violations of the company's health and safety procedures at times.

The project facilitated greater consciousness on environmental issues, particularly by the union officers and members. There was also realization that cooperation plays an important role, not only on industrial relations issues, but also in implementing environmental and health and safety programmes for greater efficiency and social responsibility. Both labour and management began advocating for compliance on environmental standards by polluting companies in the province, improving government's inspectorate system and initiating environmental projects by government, non-government organizations and the industrial partners.

However, more consciousness raising activities could have ensured the continuity of initiatives even after the term of the project. Follow through initiatives after the signing of the "green agreement" should have been integrated in the overall project strategies to allow for monitoring of activities and to pursue incorporation of environment issues in collective bargaining agreements.

Other than education and training and advocacy, the project could also have explored setting up some concrete project initiatives that involve the communities. Labour and management partnerships with the community, where there are concrete project interventions, may improve further.



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Other benefits of the project include:

- demonstrating that it is possible to pursue a labour/management partnership outside of traditional industrial relations parameters;
- the development of project materials, as well as new networks established in the implementation of the project, which will be useful in the environmental training programmes of other trade unions;
- the transformation of labour/management relations at UPPC, allowing the partners to tackle other labour and social issues, and hopefully institutionalize them in collective bargaining.

### ***What has been achieved in the SUGEDO Case?***

The union was convinced of the importance of tackling the environment issue. They felt that the threat to their employment resulting from a recent industrial accident, and the consequent pressures by the community to close the company, might be resolved by finding cooperation on the issue of the environment and minimizing the possibilities of another accident. The project prompted the resolution of the two-front issues confronting labour and management: the pressures from the community and the threat to employment.

However, despite efforts to raise awareness, the disputes between the union and the company and the company and the community remained distinct and separate. The union was compelled to use the mechanisms established in resolving traditional labour relations issues, but the management responded to the issues of the community alone.

In the project administration, while the strategy was focused on establishing partnership between labour and management, the initiative was already unstable in the first place, considering the afore-mentioned threats and the failing relations. Things could have been different, but definitely not easy to approach the issue as a multi-interest initiative between the local government, the community, labour and management. In this way, the employment issue, rather than just becoming another labour dispute issue was raised on the level outside of traditional industrial relations mechanisms with possible consequence resolution that complements the interests of all parties.

The project did provide a good background and experiences to draw on for future programmes on education and training, policy development and advocacy, both on environmental issues and others.

### *What has been achieved in the Adamson & Adamson case?*

It was the first time both labour and management tackled the environmental agenda. The company had a recent worksite accident, an oil spill, which prompted various environmental concerns. In addition, the company was preparing to relocate their operations to a new site, which offered a good opportunity to review the company's impact on the environment. Prior to the introduction of the project, this review had not been planned.

The project not only facilitated consciousness raising on environmental issues, but also established joint responsibility in ensuring that mechanisms are in place as the company relocates to a new plant site.

The partners have defined the steps to take and mechanisms to establish in order to ensure that the company and its operations are environmentally compatible. The project was initiated towards the latter part of the PSI-FFW project, but the results are already encouraging.

However, a follow-through project that could monitor and ensure continuing awareness raising initiatives for the partners and the new communities surrounding the new plant would enhance project impact. Also, the relocation would be an opportunity not only to making the company and its operations environmentally compatible, but also for initiating concrete socio-economic and environmentally viable projects for the communities.

The case of Adamson and Adamson, especially with the planned relocation, could be targeted for "model-building" of greening initiatives by labour and management in collaboration with local government unit, non-governmental organizations, and the supporting communities.

### Discussion Points

1. How can your union arrive at "green agreements" at workplaces?
2. What industries among your member organizations do you regard to be important to improve the environment?



### Note from the CTA

The commitment by PSI-FFW, trade unions, and management at these three workplaces have been admirable. They have demonstrated concrete ways to discuss, negotiate, and formalize bipartite environmental policies for the workplace, resulting in "green agreements." When implemented, these agreements can prove to be a very successful tool in ensuring management cooperation and participation in providing a safe, healthy, and environmentally-friendly workplace.

### Acknowledgments

This information contained in this summary was excerpted from the detailed and informative reports written by PSI-FFW.

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## Export Processing Zones in Southern Africa: a New Challenge for Trade Unions to Advance the Rights of the Worker and the Environment

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Export Processing Zones, Environment and Sustainable Development</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>The Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC)</b>

### About the Organization

The Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC) is a sub-regional trade union body which encompasses eleven countries, including Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The SATUCC has over 3.5 million members.

Following an Organization of African Unity Council of Labour Ministers meeting in 1982, which approved the formation of a sub-regional trade union organization, the SATUCC was formally launched in March 1983 in Botswana, where the organization has its headquarters.

### Introduction

Free Trade Zone? Free Economic Zone? Export Processing Zone?

What do these words really mean? These and a number of other terms have been used to describe specially designated areas for the establishment of export processing ventures. The most commonly used term, Export Processing Zone (EPZ), is most easily defined as a "deline-

ated, enclosed and policed area of a country which has an industrial estate specializing in the production of manufactured goods for export."

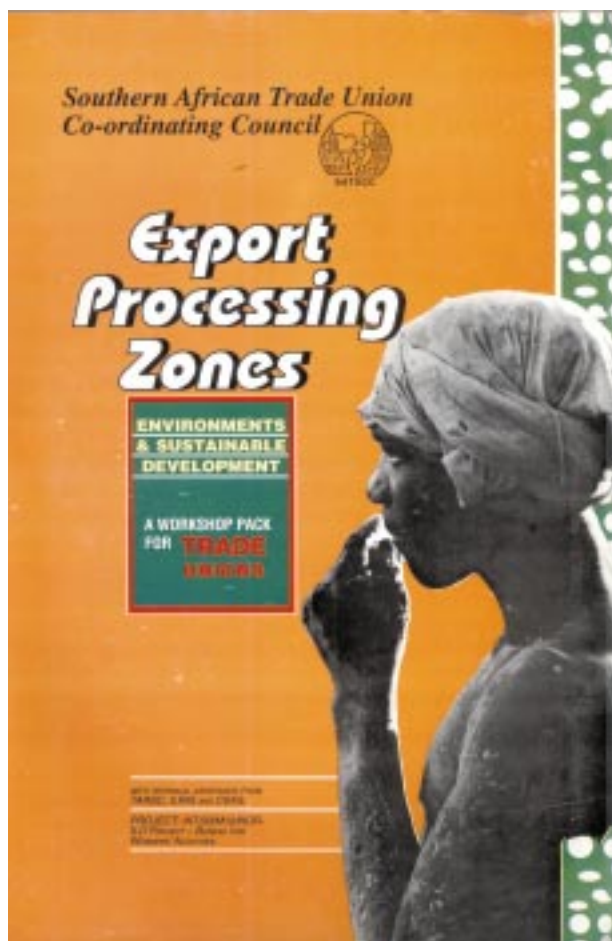
Since the 1960's, Export Processing Zones (EPZs) have increasingly been introduced in developing countries as part of export-oriented industrialization strategies. Governments of countries which have established EPZs are hoping that EPZs will make their countries more internationally competitive and also address the country's employment needs.

Many countries adopting EPZ programmes have high unemployment rates in urban areas, high proportions of their populations engaged in agricultural work, low levels of foreign investment, low levels of technological know-how and general economic stagnation.

In 1996, there were about 200 EPZs in sixty countries worldwide: 50% of them in Asia, 40% in Latin America, and 10% in Africa. These numbers are steadily growing. At the time of these statistics, EPZs either already existed or had the potential to be developed in seven countries in Southern Africa, and were being introduced in several others.

The initial trade union reactions to EPZs were triggered by the suspension of labour laws or the weakening of trade union rights that often comes with the development of an EPZ. However, it became evident to trade unions that the implications of EPZs for workers and economies in Southern Africa extended beyond labour law issues into concerns about health, the environment, resource management, gender, social development and economic development.





### Aims and Objectives of the Project

Over a two-year period, this project hoped to achieve several goals:

- to identify, analyze and discuss with unions affiliated to the SATUCC key policy, legal and institutional issues and options with respect to the implications of the development of Export Processing Zones;
- to examine the experiences of unions in Southern Africa with respect to EPZs and their response to the issues raised for workers and unions;
- to discuss options for more effective monitoring and articulation of positive and negative features of EPZs and more effective advocacy by national unions;

- to build an information and advocacy programme with the involved unions and with the SATUCC that will enhance negotiation of union policy on environment and sustainable development in EPZs;
- to link unions with professionals, researchers and research institutions in their respective countries to inform and support union work on EPZs;
- to prepare materials to support union advocacy on environmental and sustainable development issues connected to EPZs to be used to influence the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

### Project Implementation

In cooperation with the ACTRAV “Workers’ Education and Environment” Project, the SATUCC members participated in a couple of regional workshops that aimed at general awareness raising on environmental issues and developing plans for trade union action.

In early 1996, the SATUCC and its affiliates held another regional workshop to examine the implications of newly forming EPZs for regional development and trade unions. In addition to the regional workshops, the SATUCC, in cooperation with the Training and Research Support Centre (TARSC) in Zimbabwe, did substantial research on EPZs and held a series of national workshops in selected countries in Southern Africa.

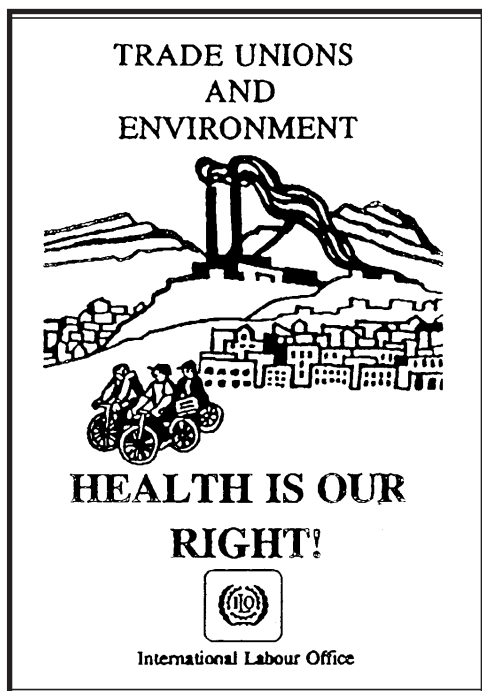
The aim of the national workshops was to exchange information and experiences relating to EPZs and regional sustainable development in countries around Southern Africa. There was also an exchange of participants between the national workshops. For instance, following the workshop in Mozambique, two of the participants were sent to the upcoming national workshop in Malawi. This helped to establish an effective network between national

centres and to allow unions to share experiences and learn from each other.

At these national workshops, the SATUCC aimed to educate trade unions and develop key trade union policies on EPZs which were then discussed at the next regional workshop. Out of the discussions came a serious trade union position on EPZs developed from careful research and the involvement of members throughout Southern Africa.

Once their policies were developed, the SATUCC aimed at advancing the trade union perspective on EPZs and influencing the South African Development Community Employment and Labour Sector, which is a major decision-making body in the development of EPZs.

The work undertaken in this project built on previous research done on the issues of EPZs by numerous groups, including The International Labour Resource and Information Group (ILRIG), the Centre for Southern African Studies, the Faculty of Law at the University of Cape Town and research centres in Central America and Asia. Their work has focused on issues of trade, labour migration, economic integration and labour standards.



### Project Accomplishments

The project provided a framework for sharing information and experiences and the building of capacity within the unions to develop and negotiate policy on EPZs. Since the concepts of the environment and sustainable development are issues that covers economic, legal, gender, health, social welfare and organizational issues, the project was able to integrate these issues into existing trade union activities, programmes and structures.

Specifically, the project:

- developed informational materials for national workshops on EPZs based on the material compiled for and presented at a SATUCC/ILO/TARSC regional workshop and the issues raised at that workshop;
- supported research at the national level and discussed and identified union work on the impact of the implementation of the EPZ policy and its implications;
- involved in national activities and workshops participants from other national centres on an "exchange visit basis" to share experience and draw information for their own national programmes;
- held national-level workshops in cooperation with the trade union centres to examine the experience of EPZs in different countries in terms of the environment and sustainable development;
- coordinated this project with other projects in the area also covering the issue of EPZs;
- used information obtained from the national research, information and training programmes and from communication with affiliates to compile a technical report on EPZs. The SATUCC then held a four-day regional level workshop to discuss the outcome of national programmes on EPZs and to prepare their input to the SADC. The results were presented at the 1997

SADC Employment and Labour Sector Meeting along with the SATUCC resolution on EPZs;

- disseminated materials developed in the project, including an information sheet on environment and sustainable development issues in EPZs, to relevant national, sub-regional and international fora;
- developed a resource pack aimed at supporting discussions at national and workplace level on EPZ policies and discussing and defining the economic, employment, social, legal and environmental policies that will build a more sustainable development path. The resource pack used a participatory approach in national and local workshops to discuss EPZs. The pack included modules which were designed to provoke discussion of current experiences with EPZs, identify key problems and issues, discuss those problems and issues, and identify possible solutions.

Input from trade union members, collected through the national and regional workshops, helped the SATUCC formulate a policy on EPZs, which they brought to the attention of the SADC Employment and Labour Sector.

The SATUCC's resolution on EPZs makes many strong points, with the main message being that:

*"Unions believe that EPZ's are a weak and inefficient strategy for economic investment and growth whose costs to national economies and populations and to regional integration greatly outweigh any perceived benefits. Unions note that the impact of EPZs in the SADC region will be to deepen division and competition between the SADC member states and to undermine the essential and difficult process of regional economic integration."*

*"Trade unions reject the use of concessions on labour, environmental and health standards as incentives to investment, as has emerged in EPZs everywhere. No economic measures, including those of EPZs, should undermine labour, environment and health standards, and the sustainable management of domestic resources."*

Thus, it is the SATUCC's position that existing EPZ policy is not only a substantial threat to industrial democracy and sustainable development within the Southern African region, but establishes a competition between the SADC member states for investment that will not only lead to a downward spiral of labour and environmental standards, but can also lead to competition on concessions and to retaliatory tariff, transport and trade measures. It is felt that such measures will undermine the climate of political and economic cooperation necessary for regional economic integration.

However, the SATUCC conceded that should EPZ policies be implemented, they believe that the SADC Employment and Labour Sector should monitor and seek reports from member states on the measures put in place to apply labour, environmental and health laws in EPZs. The SATUCC asserts that the SADC should further monitor and report on the real impact of such EPZ policies on regional economic and trade integration.

With the trade union position made known to the SADC, the SATUCC was successful in getting recognition for their concerns. In fact, using the training manual/resource pack that was developed for SATUCC affiliates, trade unions have managed to negotiate for the inclusion of minimum labour standards in EPZs.

## Discussion Points

1. If you are affiliated to a sub-regional or regional trade union organization, in what manner does your organization participate in bi- and/or tripartite bodies?
2. What can you learn from this project in order to improve the regional organization's influence on environmentally sustainable development policies in the region?
3. Is your trade union represented on any national advisory or decision-making bodies? If no, what can be done to change this fact? If yes, how can this case study help you improve your influence?

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## Acknowledgments

Thank you to Dr. Rene Loewenson of the Training and Research Support Centre for all the time and work she put into this project, and to the other research centres, whose helpful cooperation contributed to the project's success. Acknowledged also are the former SATUCC Secretary-General, Mr. M. Tsvangirai, and his colleagues.



## Note from the CTA

The short-term aims of this project were to facilitate national-level activities and discussions on EPZs, to influence the SADC policies, and to influence and negotiate the rights of the workers and the environment in newly established EPZs. SATUCC's efforts on these were, by and large, a success.

Unfortunately, the SATUCC does not have the means to continue the training aspect that was carried out in this project or to utilize the resource pack they developed to its fullest potential. However, we can see the positive impacts that this project has had which will hopefully endure.

This project was especially effective in that the trade unions, instead of being in position to react to a challenge posed by industry or government, they were in the position to initiate action to positively influence their working and living conditions. The SATUCC was able to foresee an upcoming dilemma with EPZs, coordinate the proper research on the issue, and play a proactive role in policy formation which reflected trade union concerns.

Another highlight of this case study was the strengthening of the trade union network in Southern Africa through the project, the capacity building between national centres, universities and research institutes, which took place, and the exchange of information across trade unions, countries and across continents.



# Trade Unions Bring Clean Water to a Community in India

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Fight for a Clean Water: A Case Study of Trade Unions' Initiatives</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS)</b>

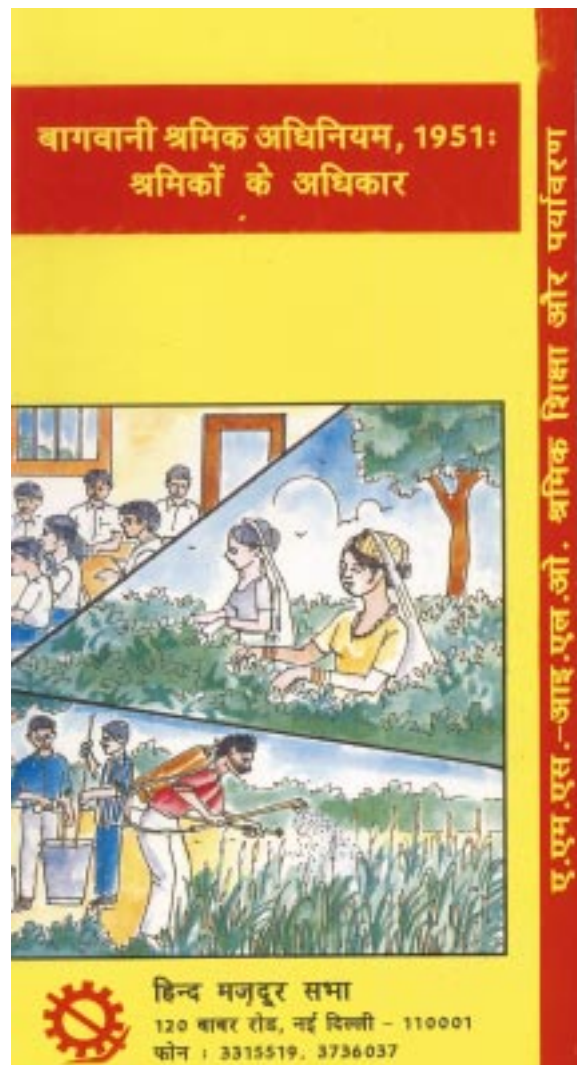
## Introduction

Ratlam, a relatively small town in Western Madhya Pradesh in India, has over the years emerged into a major industrial area. Its natural resources and its base of pre-independence industrialization (the town is famous for brass utensils, weighing scales and perfumes), combined with its strategic positioning near the borders of Rajasthan and Gujarat, led the town to become a prime junction on the Western Railway. Thousands of passengers and wagons pass daily through the town. Since 1953, Ratlam has served as the divisional headquarter of the Western Railways. Out of a population of about 300,000, Railway employees and their families number nearly 35,000 people.

Most of the railway workers are organized in the Hind Mazdoor Sabha affiliated Western Railway Employees Union (WREU). The presence of such a large contingent of unionised workers proved to be a boon to the rest of the Ratlam people in their fight against industrial pollution. This case study showcases the efforts of WREU to fight the polluting industries in Ratlam for a supply of clean water.

## About the Organization

HMS, a national trade union confederation in India established in 1948, gives priority to securing workers' rights at the workplace, including safe working and living conditions. Not affiliated to any political party, HMS has affiliates in numerous economic sectors, including Transport (such as Railways, Seafarers, Port and Dock Workers, Air Transport), Coal, Chemicals, Textiles, Mines, Engineering, and Steel.



## Aims and Objectives

The battle for a clean environment has been long, often riddled with dilemmas and debates, but also one that has borne many fruits and lessons. This case study was completed with the goal of sharing this information about polluting industries in Ratlam and the role played in it by the union. The case study objectives were the following:

- illustrate the delicate balance between workers' need for employment and the responsibility of employers and workers to ensure a healthy living environment, which sometimes results in the closing of factories to halt hazardous environmental conditions;
- raise awareness of the workers' on environmental issues;
- develop an understanding of the role of the trade unions in keeping the industrial environment clean;
- develop future strategies on how to check industrial pollution and prevent the closure of workplaces.

## Project Description

The Government and the private owners who set up factories in the wake of new industrial policies in India paid scant or no attention to keeping the environment clean and safe for the workers and people living nearby. Long

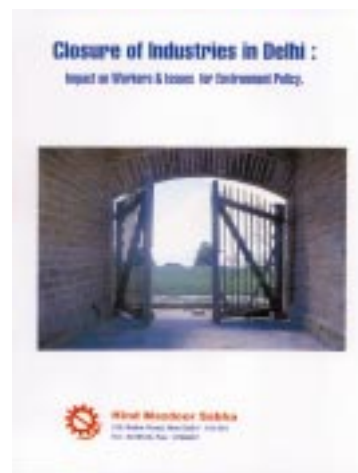
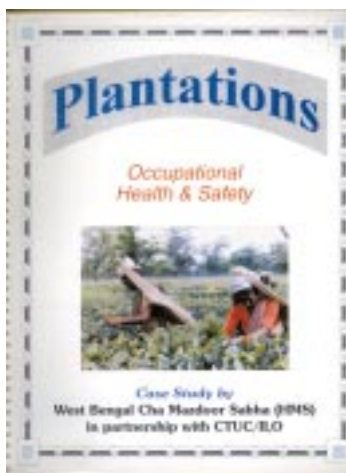
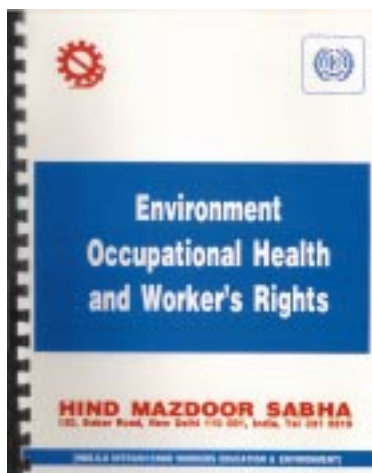
before the Bhopal gas tragedy struck, when a large number of people were still unaware of the absolute necessity of adhering to certain measures of keeping the environment safe and clean, HMS-affiliated WREU was among the first few to raise its voice against such malpractice.

### *Pollution of Air and Water: The Alcohol Plant and the WREU*

At Ratlam, the entire water requirements of the Railways (for the sheds, for wagons, passengers, station staff and railway colonies) are met by the reservoir made at the River Kurel, 13 miles away from Ratlam.

According to the unions' report, on the western side of the Ratlam-Ajmer meter gauge line, about a mile to the north of the Ratlam Station, is an Alcohol Plant. This Plant was set up in 1963 and used molasses from the sugar factories to make alcohol. The effluents of this plant were discharged into the open fields around the meter gauge railway line. These open fields form the catchment area of the River Kurel. During the rainy season the discharged effluents of the alcohol plant flowed into the river.

The constant flow of the polluted water not only contaminated the water of the River Kurel, but with time, the pollutants seeped below the earth's surface. As a result, the ground water in the wells and handpumps began to take on



a reddish-brown tinge with a strong foul smell. Also, the usage of this water brought on skin diseases and a number of other related serious health problems. On absorbing the poisonous substances, the quality of the soil began to deteriorate. As a result, the plants and the vegetation also withered.

## ● *Action taken by the WREU: 1975 - 1977*

The union demanded an immediate halt to the practice of letting the pollutants simply flow into the river. They collected samples of water and had them examined at the Railway's Water Treatment Plant. The water samples were found to be unsuitable for human consumption, and, on further investigation, it was found that there were several other industries responsible for the pollution of the River Kurel. The union demanded an inspection by the authorities. The official inspection report revealed the same problems discovered by the union.

## ● *Building pressure on the management*

The union took up the matter with the railway management, asking the Divisional Superintendent to take appropriate measures to ensure the supply of clean water. A series of representations and protest meetings were

held by the unions. The pressure on the management led to them issuing a circular which named and recognised the problem of water pollution and the river's consequent scarcity of clean water.

The WREU Ratlam wrote to the union head office located at Mumbai to initiate action at their level and to make the problem widely visible to the different workers and the management cadres.

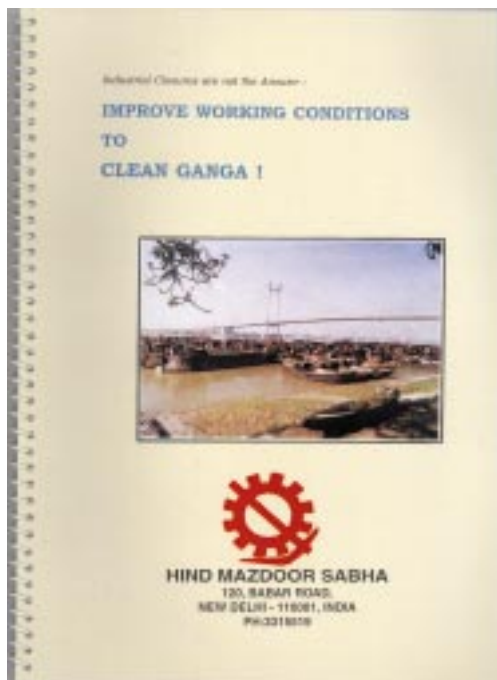
## ● *Arranging meetings*

Alert union members were also responsible for paving the way for joint meetings between the Pollution Control Board, Bhopal, Public Health Department, Ratlam, and the managements from the polluting industries. However, when these meetings made little or no headway, the union arranged periodical liaison meetings with the the Government of Madhya Pradesh and the Divisional Superintendent of the Western and South Eastern Railways. The suggestion of constructing water lagoons to contain the flow of effluents was considered, but the cost of 600,000-700,000 rupees (approximately \$13,800-\$16,100 at today's exchange) was pointed out to be against the national economic stringency. The closure of the Alcohol Plant was ruled out because of the shortage of methylated spirit which was urgently needed in other fields. The General Manager of the Alcohol Plant finally accepted that, as a temporary measure, an earthen boundary would be provided to check the flow of effluents from spreading too far out.

As it turned out, this boundary was ineffective as the heavy monsoon rains broke down the mud walls. Moreover, such unlined evaporation ponds cannot prevent the leaching of pollutants into the ground soil and water.

## ● *Workshops & Seminars*

While the union negotiated with the management, it also organized a number of local and regional workshops and seminars to educate and inform the railway employees about the problems of the polluted environment.



The non-closure of the factory, while seeming to be to the benefit of the workers was used as a cover to evade the larger issue of following stricter safeguards for the pollution spreading through the city. Still, the expenditure of 600,000 to 700,000 rupees to adopt cleaner production technologies was considered too high, even in light of the irreparable environmental damage that was taking place.

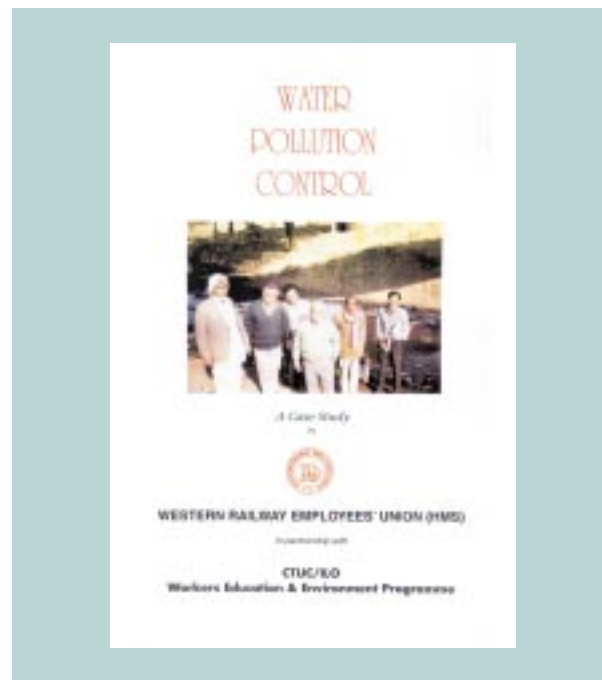
## ● *Looking to the Law for Remedial Action*

In 1977, the union was finally able to force the Railway administration, Western Railway, Ratlam, to file a Suit against a number of polluting industries in the Court of Additional District Judge. In response to the Petition, the Court granted a temporary injunction and restraint against the Alcohol Plant and other industries discharging their industrial effluents in the Kurel river until the decision of the Suit.

## ● *Spreading community awareness*

The union activists realised that the pollution was no longer an issue that was confined to them alone. The stench, the withering vegetation, and the disappearance of the birds and animals around the whole area were the concerns of the community as well. Thus a systematic and a sustained campaign to educate and stir the community was begun by the union.

Consequently, the residents of Ratlam complained to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) that the Ratlam Municipality did not do its statutory duty of removing the nuisance of filth and stench due to sewage and the discharge of effluents from the Alcohol Plant. There was no sign of the Pollution Control Board nor was the Municipal Corporation taking any steps towards basic sanitation. The Municipality was directed to take immediate action to stop the effluents flowing from the Alcohol Plant into the streets, acknowledging that "eleven such industries cannot make profits at the expense of public health." The case went to the Supreme Court.



## Results and Reactions: The Role of the Union at the Workplace and Beyond

"An important aspect of this struggle was that the union members did not loosen up the pressure on the management. At every stage the union intervened, keeping a track of the management's promises, duties, and ensuring their practice and follow up action," stated Com. Govindlal Sharma, Divisional Secretary, WREU at Ratlam.

The union got the management to organize water meetings regularly. These meetings were attended by the station staff people, union members and the management. At these meetings, the water requirements at different stations and at the residences were clearly spelt out, the shortfalls assessed, and the difficulties encountered in meeting the water needs were discussed and alternate arrangements worked out.

When the management delayed in taking action, as in the case of repairing handpumps, on the pretext that the permission for the con-





ILO, J. Maillard

tract for repairing was being awaited, the union intervened and hastened the work.

The union also played a commendable role in getting water from other places, organizing tankers and wagons to ensure the supply of clean water at the stations and the employees housing colonies. It also insisted on a certificate that verified the water's cleanliness.

The union drew the management's attention to water resources drying and suggested alternatives and insisted on a rational system of distribution and preventing wasting water through repairing overflowing tanks, leaking taps, and installing new handpumps.

The union printed leaflets and distributed them among the workers to make them aware of their rights to a clean and adequate water supply.

The union made an effort to keep the local and the national newspapers informed of the situation. The result was that throughout the long fight, the issue was kept alive in the public mind. This helped to build a solid support base among the city people. The fact that the media made visible the issues arising out of

the spreading pollution put pressure on the management to act with responsibility.

However, despite the union's active role, there was still the issue of a regular, clean water supply. The union managed to bring together the Nagar Nigam (Municipal Corporation), the Railway, and other local authorities for negotiations. After much persuasion, an agreement was reached between the Nagar Nigam and the Railway administration to ensure a regular and adequate supply of water to the Railway colony in Ratlam.

### ***Filing a Writ Petition in the Supreme Court***

Apart from the local, legal and other social activities, HMS affiliated WREU also helped a farmer of the region to file a writ petition before the Supreme Court.

Even though the union was well aware that the filing of the Writ Petition could lead to the closure of the Railway Locomotive shed (as it happened in the case of Alcohol Plant), the union still went ahead because it felt that this could well be a way to make the Railway Administra-

tion invest in technical upgrades that would adhere to clean environmental standards.

Secondly, the step had immense possibilities of fostering strong bonds with the community groups. Together with them, the union could muster enough support to impress upon the employers the need to invest in pollution control and cleaner production methods instead of resorting to closure.

### *The Decision of Supreme Court*

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), as per the order of the Supreme Court, submitted its report and the court made mandatory the CPCB recommendations. In its next hearing in March 1996, the Supreme Court announced the closure of two of the polluting industries, both at Ratlam. However, on the request of one of the companies, the Supreme Court granted it permission to produce dry goods with instructions to District Administration to keep a watch.

### **The Fight Continues**

On the basis of more complaints and a tip off received from the CPCB, the Supreme Court issued orders to 12 more industries who are now under pressure to invest in pollution control in their plants.

It is hoped by the union that this will begin a new age in India wherein the industries will follow processes for preventing environmental degradation and pollution. While the union has successfully obtained the water supply, several of its members working in the Railway shed run the risk of losing their jobs if the Railways do not invest in pollution control and opt for closure instead. This difficult situation in which the union often finds itself has enabled it to articulate the following demands:

- The law must change to give a far more stringent punishment to the parties flouting the environment laws.

- There should be regular checks to ensure that the industries follow the pollution control laws.
- The policy of closing down factories/industries should not be the rule. Closures, far from being solutions, only aggravate the problems, tending to create a division between workers and the community.
- Ways and means must be developed so that the complexities in legal procedures and delays get reduced.
- The workers and the public should have the right to information on the toxic releases and the nature of hazards at workplace that workers face in their jobs.
- The principle of tripartitism should be adopted in solving environmental problems.

### **The Current Situation**

The Railway authorities have provided clean drinking water for the railway colonies and the staff. Some of the polluting industries have installed pollution control devices, while others have not. The relevant authorities are taking action, industrialists can be politically powerful and savvy, and manage to avoid the requirements.

The pollution of the river still happens but is less frequent. Legal action taken by union activists in association with other local groups required the reparation of sewage lines and the diversion of the canal carrying the effluents, so that they do not flow into the water source.

Although the immediate crisis was resolved, the situation from the long term sustainable point of view is not very satisfactory, and much action still needs to be taken, including sustaining pressure on the local authorities to improve the situation for both the workers and the community of Ratlam as a whole.

## Discussion Points

1. What ideas can you extract from this case to be used in your own organization?
2. Do you think that addressing environmentally sustainable development issues will have an effect on union membership rates? Why or why not?

## Acknowledgments

The information contained in this summary was excerpted from the comprehensive reports written by Mr. Arun Kumar, former Information and Research Officer for HMS.

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## Note from the CTA

Although the efforts to combat this water pollution by HMS and WREU began well before the ILO project on Trade Unions and Environmentally Sustainable Development had begun its work, it has been involved with the case study since the Project became operational in India. HMS, and another organization involved in the case, the Commonwealth Trade Union Congress, India (CTUC), both received direct support from the project and in addition, WREU representatives participated in environmental awareness training workshops sponsored by the project.

In addition to this successful and far-reaching case study, HMS and CTUC have both completed a number of important campaigns on such issues as the occupational health and safety of sewage workers, a report on waste disposal practices, improving working conditions along the River Ganga, health and environment on tea plantations, and the impact on workers of industrial closures, to name a few.

In fact, research on water pollution conducted at the Rourkela Steel Plant in India led to the cooperation between an HMS-affiliated union in the steel plant and the World Wildlife Federation (WWF). The WWF developed a water testing kit for the Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha Union, and they used it to test water supplies in workers' housing colonies. This initiative of the union was appreciated by the workers, as they saw the union as being concerned about other things besides wages, and one result was the strengthening of the unions' membership base. The Rourkela study is an excellent example of how trade unions can pair with non-governmental organizations to achieve both beneficial environmental results and increase union influence in the workplace and community.

My appreciation to Ms. Indira Saxena, former Regional Coordinator for CTUC, and Mr. Arun Kumar, formerly of HMS, for their relentless work on environmental issues in India.

# Promoting Worker Involvement: The IUF Researches Pesticide Use in Guatemala, and Plans Worker Training Among Affiliates

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Study of the Effectiveness of the Industry-Sponsored Safe Use Project for Pesticide Users</b>
<b>Project Completed by:</b>	<b>International Union of Food and Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)</b>

## About the Organization

The International Union of Food and Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) is an international trade union federation composed of 334 affiliated organizations in 118 countries. The IUF represents a combined membership of 2.6 million workers employed in agriculture, the preparation and manufacture of food and beverages, hotels, restaurants and catering services, and all stages of tobacco processing.

## Introduction

In 1997, the 23<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of the IUF made a number of significant decisions to extend the IUF's work in the area of occupational health, safety, and environment (HSE), with special emphasis on the use of pesticides, sustainable agriculture, and food safety. As

part of these efforts, the IUF created its own Global Pesticides Project (GPP), through which the IUF would evaluate the role of the global pesticide industry in improving HSE standards for pesticide users, and to determine if there is a role that workers could play in the industry-sponsored voluntary initiatives.

Accidental poisonings are one of the major impacts of pesticide use. In Guatemala, where over 80% of the agricultural workforce of 1.2 million farmers and farmworkers are exposed to pesticides in their work, the IUF's concern about the health and working conditions of agricultural workers is especially strong. For this reason, the GPP decided to investigate a voluntary initiative pilot project active in the Latin American country.

The Safe Use Project (SUP), a voluntary programme launched by the Global Crop Protection Federation (the international trade association of the pesticide industry), aims to provide training for large groups of pesticide users and others who have an influence on how pesticides are used. This voluntary initiative is used by the industry to demonstrate its commitment to "product stewardship" – its concern about the product from manufacture, to the product's use, through to its disposal. The GCPF claims that the SUP is helping to tackle problems and change problematic attitudes and behaviour among pesticide users, which should result in the safer handling of pesticides and fewer accidents. The IUF initiated this case study to examine whether or not the industry claims were accurate.





G. Palazzo

### Aims and Objectives

The goals of the case study were:

- to evaluate the effectiveness of the pesticide industry's Safe Use Project (SUP) in Guatemala in raising minimum health, safety, and environment (HSE) standards of pesticide use;
- to determine whether there has been independent verification of the SUP;
- to determine the degree of trade union/worker involvement in the SUP, or the potential for such involvement in the future.

### Project Description

Agriculture is Guatemala's most important industry and export earner. A wide range of crops are produced, involving the use of considerable quantities of pesticides. However, the Guatemalan Government's Pesticides and Health Project acknowledges that "there is limited knowledge in the country on the possible effects of pesticides on the exposed population and the environment," and that "the inappropriate use of pesticides is the third most important cause of natural resource degradation." In addition to the massive amounts of pesticides used, research done by the IUF found that while the training of workers in the safe management of pesticides is required by law,

the actual institutional capacity to carry out that training is questionable.

The Safe Use Project has been active in Guatemala since 1991. A voluntary programme run by the pesticide industry, the SUP has provided training on the handling of pesticides to approximately 326,000 people, including farmworkers, housewives, students, pesticide dealers, technicians and salespersons, medical personnel, and governmental staff. However, IUF is concerned that the type of training provided by the SUP may not be effective enough.

Because of these concerns, the IUF sent a field researcher to Guatemala in January 1999 to see the SUP programme in action. Over the course of 10 days, the researcher met with dozens of agricultural workers, trade union leaders, researchers, industry and government representatives, and others, conducting interviews and visiting work sites. The information gathered on the site in Guatemala led to several conclusions.

### Conclusions

First of all, there should be acknowledgment of the Safe Use Programme (SUP) initiative to train pesticide users. This voluntary initiative is a step in the right direction. However, for these efforts to be truly sustainable, they must reach other major user groups with high exposure. For example, there is no training of waged agricultural workers or involvement of their trade unions. This was found to be a serious omission, as many of the 10,000 to 30,000 estimated number of pesticide poisonings that occur each year are with members of this group.

The research done in this case also concluded that the SUP focuses too much on the number of people trained rather than on the quality of training. Although the industry claims it has trained a significantly large number of users,



ILO, J. Maillard

there is concern that the quality of training is being sacrificed for quantity.

The IUF also concluded that the SUP results need to be independently verified by an objective evaluation or audit. Without such audits, the industry leaves itself open to accusations that voluntary initiatives such as the Guatemala SUP are nothing more than a way for the industry to claim it is doing good deeds while really just promoting its own interests and continuing poor practices behind the scenes.

The IUF also asserts that there is a lack of regulatory/voluntary mix in the training provided. At the present time, training in the proper use of pesticides is exclusively in the hands of industry. Speaking on the topic of voluntary initiatives, the United Nations Environmental Programme has stated that “voluntary codes cannot be effective without a sound government regulatory and policy framework and public involvement.”

Finally, for the Guatemalan SUP to be more effective, the training programme needs to be opened up, and the energies and resources of new groups needs to be engaged, including

trade unions, small farmers’ organizations, non-governmental organizations, etc.

### Results and Reactions

The IUF published its full report on the case study in February 1999, and the report was also translated into Spanish. In addition, the IUF presented the results of this case study at the ILO Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education in Safety, Health, and Environment in the Chemical Industries, held in February 1999.

At this tripartite meeting, it was agreed to establish the principle of the need for worker involvement in the design, implementation, and verification of the pesticide industry’s Safe Use Projects and the chemical industry’s Responsible Care programmes. This agreement led to the first ever discussion between the IUF and the industry’s Global Crop Protection Federation (GCPF), held in Brussels in May 1999, where the two groups reached an agreement, in principle, to provide joint pesticide, health, safety and environment (HSE) training for agricultural workers using or exposed to pesti-

cides. The framework for this cooperation is IUF's Global Pesticides Project and GCPF's Safe Use Project. Following that agreement, the IUF was then invited to make a presentation to GCPF's SUP and regional coordinators at their meeting in June 1999 on the case study and on IUF's Global Pesticides Project.

Through the enhanced cooperation of both groups, an IUF-GCPF meeting was held in Nairobi, Kenya in October 1999 to discuss a pilot joint training project for agricultural workers on pesticides and HSE in Uganda, involving the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers. The pilot project will focus on agricultural workers in the sugar and cut flower industries, and will consist of a training course for 20 trainers in January 2000 and secondary training courses for 500-1000 workers to be held afterwards.

In addition, IUF intends to hold a workshop on pesticide use in Guatemala in February 2000 as a follow-up to this case study report.

### Discussion Points

1. What could be the trade unions' role in encouraging enhanced government regulation of pesticides?
2. What role could trade unions play in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of SUP programmes?
3. How could trade union members participate in a large-scale tripartite dialogue on pesticide issues?
4. Does your industry have any active voluntary initiative programmes? If so, do you think they are effective? Why or why not?
5. If your industry does not have any active voluntary initiative programmes, is there a need? Why or why not?



### Note from the CTA

From the research and information gathered through this case study, a sustainable working relationship has developed between the IUF and the GCPF, which should lead to the completion of successful joint training projects. This case study is an excellent example of how the information gathered in such a study can be used effectively to promote and encourage action. Using the data gathered during the field visit and a well-written report, the IUF was able to effect policy development within the ILO, advance workers' rights within the tripartite structure, and pave the way for a beneficial cooperation with the industry group.

Well done!

### Acknowledgments

This information contained in this summary was excerpted from the comprehensive and useful reports written by Mr. Peter Hurst, Health, Safety and Environment Coordinator for the IUF, who was the field researcher in this case study.

For more information about this case study, or other environmentally sustainable development-related projects of the IUF, please contact

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## REFERENCE MATERIALS

In addition to interviews and informal discussions with concerned parties, questionnaire replies, letters, and memorandums received, the following reference materials were used for the writing of these case study summaries:

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- Brief Report on HMS Project Activities. HMS. 1998.

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- Case Study report: The Global Pesticide Industry's Safe Use and Handling Training Project in Guatemala. IUF. February 1999.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACTRAV</b>	Bureau for Workers' Activities
<b>AITUC</b>	All India Trade Union Congress
<b>BMS</b>	Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh
<b>CBA</b>	Collective Bargaining Agreement
<b>CITU</b>	Centre of Indian Trade Unions
<b>CPCB</b>	Central Pollution Control Board
<b>CTA</b>	Chief Technical Adviser
<b>CTUC</b>	Commonwealth Trade Union Congress
<b>CTUO</b>	Central Trade Union Organisation
<b>EITs</b>	Environmental Inspection Teams
<b>EPZ</b>	Export Processing Zone
<b>FKCU</b>	Federation of Korean Chemical Workers' Unions
<b>GCPF</b>	Global Crop Protection Federation
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GPP</b>	Global Pesticide Project
<b>HMS</b>	Hind Mazdoor Sabha
<b>HSE</b>	Health, Safety, and Environment
<b>ICEM</b>	International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine, and General Workers' Union
<b>ICFTU</b>	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
<b>IFBWW</b>	International Federation of Building and Woodworkers
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>ILRIG</b>	International Labour Resource and Information Group
<b>INTUC</b>	Indian National Trade Union Congress

## Appendix II

<b>ITS</b>	International Trade Secretariat
<b>IUF</b>	International Union of Food and Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations
<b>LACC</b>	Labour Advisory Consultative Council
<b>MELU</b>	Marcopper Employees Labour Union
<b>MMC</b>	Marcopper Mines Company
<b>NAMAWU</b>	National Mines and Allied Workers' Union
<b>NCEW</b>	National Federation of Eritrean Workers
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OSHE</b>	Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment
<b>PSI-FFW</b>	Philippine Social Institute - Federation for Free Workers
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SATUCC</b>	Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council
<b>SDM</b>	Sub-Divisional Magistrate
<b>SUGEDO</b>	Superior Gas and Equipment Company
<b>SUP</b>	Safe Use Project
<b>TARSC</b>	Training and Research Support Centre
<b>TUCP</b>	Trade Union Congress of the Philippines
<b>TUPEP</b>	Trade Union Partnership for Environmental Protection
<b>TWU</b>	Timber and Woodworkers' Union
<b>UN CSD</b>	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
<b>UPPC</b>	United Pulp and Paper Company
<b>WREU</b>	Western Railway Employees Union
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund

# GUIDELINES FOR FINAL REPORTING ON A CASE STUDY

The INT/93/M12/NOR “WORKERS' EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT” Project plans to produce a booklet on case studies in order to share the most practical examples of activities leading on to environmentally sustainable development. It would be very helpful if you would report about the case including the following points where appropriate:

**Title.**

**Aims and Objectives of the Activity.**

**Institutional Framework:**

- What was the background of the activity?
- How was the trade union(s) involved?
- Who initiated the activity?
- Was a network utilized (other organizations, institutions, etc.), if so, how?
- How was the activity administrated?

**Description of the Activity:**

- Target group (what union, what level, geographical area, setting, etc.)
- Subject (“problem”/situation to be improved)
- The plan of work (detailed description step by step/strategy):
  - preparations
  - starting date
  - different steps of activities
  - duration

**Budget and Financial Sources:**

- What was the budget of the different activities?
- How were the activities funded?



### Results:

- What are/were the results of the activity in relation to the aims and objectives?
- What actions/results did the activity lead to (eg. improvements in working conditions, living conditions, jobs saved or gained, resources saved, new legislation/regulations, education/training and awareness, improvement in some way for others than union members, increase of membership, acknowledgement of union work, etc.).

### Assessment of Process:

- What worked/did not work?
- What could have been done differently during the process to achieve even better results?
- Is there any need for further follow-ups? If so, give a short description.
- How can you use the lessons learnt from this case in your future trade union work?



ILO Turin, GP. Brandi

*Focal points and evaluation team in Turin, January 1999*