

Management Response to the final evaluation by FocusUP of the ACV-CSCi programme 2017-2021

This external evaluation concerns the 3 continental outcomes of ACV-CSCi within the joint programme of WSM/ANMC, BIS/MSI and ACV-CSCi. These 3 continental outcomes involve the following partner countries and partner organisations :

Outcomes :	Specific partner countries	Partner organisations (trade union confederations)
Africa	Niger	AAA
	DRC	BBB
Asia	Cambodia	CCC
	Indonesia	PPP
Latin America	Haïti	XXX, YYY and ZZZ
	Dominican Republic	QQQ

The evaluation by FocusUP was carried out in line with requirements of DGD, and in line with the Terms of Reference of ACV-CSCi : at least one field visit was conducted for each continental outcome – a one week visit to PPP by a local consultant in Indonesia, a one week visit to CCC in Cambodia by the Belgian evaluator (Patrick Vander Weyden), and two one day visits for triangulation purposes to XXX/YYY in Haiti and to BBB in DRC by local consultants.

As requested by DGD, the evaluation mainly served to fulfil accountability purposes for the main donors - DGD (80%) and ACV-CSC (20%). The findings of the evaluators shed a positive light on programme management in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, (financial, social and technical) sustainability, relevance, impact, gender mainstreaming, environmental and climate change action, and crisis management (cfr. COVID 19). Evaluators were also able to validate all of the achievements (results and outcomes) and performance scores being reported to DGD and ACV-CSC by ACV-CSCi and its partner organisations.

In addition, the evaluators were able to formulate 8 recommendations for optimisation of future programme work – based on good practices as well as identified challenges. By and large these recommendations fall in line with ACV-CSCi's planning for 2022-2026 – such that no budget reorientations will be necessary in order to be able to put the recommendations into practice.

Below you will find ACV-CSCi's Management Response to the recommendations - as validated by the board of ACV-CSCi :

Recommendation 1	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Do not withdraw from supporting independent Trade Union(s)/Confederation(s) in deteriorating fragile and autocratic political systems. The evaluators assess the presence of ACV-CSCi in difficult political contexts as necessary. The fact that political systems are evolving into autocratic regimes should certainly not be an argument for leaving such countries. Often independent trade unions are the last straw for the pursuit of labor rights of vulnerable people, and still manage to achieve a good measure of results. Pulling away international support would mean that government-independent trade unions have to drastically scale back their operations.</p>	Agreed	<p>ACV-CSCi fully agrees that it is important to continue to support the goals, objectives and strengthening of capacities of trade union partners operating within deteriorating political contexts and rights situations, characterised by shrinking civil space. The challenge is to keep well informed on evolutions within the context of partner countries, and to support partner organisations in adapting their strategies to new challenges arising, as well as helping in gathering as much international support as possible. In this way, trade unions almost always manage to defend or advance workers’ rights or minimise the damage for workers in the most precarious situations.</p> <p>In this sense, it must be noted that within the joint programme 2022-2026, ACV-CSCi will continue to support its trade union partners in Indonesia, Cambodia, DRC and Haïti - even if the political situations in especially Cambodia and Haïti have seriously deteriorated over the period 2017-2021.</p>	
Planned actions		Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations
Continuing to support CCC in Cambodia for as long as the political situation allows for cooperation and the obtainment of a reasonable measure of results		2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Asia
Continuing to support XXX and YYY in Haïti for as long as the political situation allows for cooperation and the obtainment of a reasonable measure of results		2022-2026	Continental desk officer for Latin America
Continuing to support other TU partners should the political situation seriously deteriorate within their home countries – again for as long as the political situation allows for cooperation and the obtainment of a reasonable measure of results		2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America

Recommendation 2	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Support the principles and practices of good governance within the Trade Unions (Confederations & federations). Especially in a politically authoritarian context, it is important that good governance principles of trade unions are on point. They must be placed above any suspicion in order to ensure their legitimacy and long-term operational sustainability. This includes, among others, supporting the development of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound financial and organizational management • Democratic governance structures within the trade unions • Financial sustainability (by increasing membership and income diversification). 	Agreed	<p>ACV-CSCi fully agrees with the need for good governance within trade unions, not only within authoritarian contexts, but at all times. Both for established and emerging trade unions the mastering of challenges within their own organisations determines whether they will be able to defend workers’ rights to their best ability. Sound financial and organisational management allows for long term operational sustainability and sustainability of achieved results : trade unions need to keep on defending workers’ rights over time. Democratic governance structures help ensuring that trade union goals and objectives remain in line with the need of their members, as well as help ensuring that all of the available human resources within their organisation are used in an optimal way. In fact, democratic practice is deemed a sine qua non – such that ACV-CSCi has stipulated in its partner agreements that loss of democratic practice constitutes a ground for termination of the cooperation.</p> <p>ACV-CSCi has over the past decades been supporting its partner organisations in matters of good governance – often by enlisting help for temporary support of trade union partners from experts within the structures of ACV-CSC. To this end there must be an explicit and specific demand for help from a partner organisation, as ACV-CSCi will not interfere in internal matters without having been asked to.</p> <p>As the need for support on governance issues of trade union partners of ACV-CSCi and WSM is especially high within Africa, a local coordinator with knowledge on trade union management will be hired by ACV-CSCi for the period 2022-2026 in order to assist trade union partners of both ACV-CSCi and WSM in these matters.</p>	
Planned actions		Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations
Keeping a close look on internal dynamics at partner organisations – while offering and facilitating help from experts within ACV-CSC		2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America
Employing a local coordinator for Africa from within the trade union world – whose task is to assist with the development of sound systems, procedures and practices towards ensuring good governance by African trade union partners of WSM and ACV-CSCi		2022-2026	Continental desk officer for Africa

Recommendation 3	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Continue to support international cooperation and networking among trade unions (confederations & federations). The effectiveness of the program is enhanced by supporting international cooperation between trade union partners . This is clearly illustrated using the HRDD approach in Asia. The exchange of good practices and lessons learned at regional level, is encouraging and helping unions to professionalize further. Finally, international support is necessary for unions working in an authoritarian context. It gives them backing and can potentially hinder authoritarian regimes from compromising the safety of union members. International pressure on these regimes can act as safeguarding mechanism to trade union rights.</p>	Agreed	<p>International cooperation and networking will remain high on the agenda of ACV-CSCi – who has been spearheading continental and international initiatives for exchange, strengthening of capacities, and determination of joint positions within the joint programme.</p> <p>In order to further facilitate cooperation and networking within the joint programme, WSM/ANMC, BIS/MSI, ACV-CSCi and their partner organisations have agreed on a set of 5 themes on which capacities will be strengthened at both national, regional/continental and international levels for the period 2022-2026 – among which HRDD.</p> <p>As for the gathering of international support towards safeguarding trade unionists and their work within authoritarian contexts, ACV-CSCi will continue to support initiatives (urgent appeals) of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and its regional offices. ACV-CSCi (and ACV-CSC) will stay active within the Human and Trade Union Rights (HTUR) network of ITUC and make full use of the supervisory mechanisms of the ILO (ILC and others). ACV-CSCi will also continue to actively participate in task forces called for by Belgian external affairs/DGD.</p>	
Planned actions	Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations	
Organising continental and international exchanges for trade union partner organisations of ACV-CSCi, WSM and BIS/MSI with the help of regional offices of ITUC – including on HRDD	2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa	
Continuing to engage in support of urgent appeals and task forces on Cambodia, Indonesia, Haiti and any other partner country when the need arises	2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America	

Recommendation 4	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Continue to promote and support digitalization (internet access, databases,...). Throughout the program, major digitization projects were undertaken (e.g., development of digital membership databases and working online as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic). These efforts should be continued. Digitizing membership files (to draw strategic conclusions from them, for example) remains extremely important. Increasing internet access in multiple layers and regions is also important to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of future programs and trade union strategies.</p>	Agreed	<p>ACV-CSCi agrees with the need for sound membership administration and management – starting with the development of solid membership databases – as a means towards establishing representativeness, as well as ensuring financial sustainability and democratic representation within the organisation. Whether electronic or digital databases are a valid option, depends on national infrastructure in partner countries. But ACV-CSCi agrees that wherever possible, digitalisation can be very helpful.</p> <p>At the same time, ACV-CSCi hopes to be able to digitalise its financial and narrative monitoring and reporting tools, as well as the transfer of financial support documents to its offices by partner organisations.</p> <p>In all of these, continental desk officers, the newly engaged local coordinator in Africa, and experts from within ACV-CSCi will be called on to assist partner organisations with the development of their own digital tools and/or the use of digital tools for programme management.</p> <p>Furthermore, continental desk officers of ACV-CSCi will continue to have regular virtual meetings with leaders and programme management of partner organisations, and will discuss the possibility of investing in digital infrastructure (internet access, computers and digital accessories) of programme funds which have been budgeted for investments (whenever the need arises).</p>	
Planned actions	Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations	
Assisting partner organisations with the development and use of digital tools for membership management, virtual meetings and monitoring/reporting (if requested to do so, and possibly with the help of experts from within ACV-CSC)	2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa	
Advising partner organisations on investing programme funds in digital infrastructure (internet access, computers and digital accessories), whenever the need arises	2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America	

Recommendation 5	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Consider measuring the effectiveness of training on an ad hoc basis. Since training is a very important part of the program, it does not seem trivial to measure the effects of that training. Good examples have been identified within the current program. These effect measurements of trainings should not be done permanently and always. Measuring a selection of trainings at regular intervals is more than sufficient. Necessary lessons can then be drawn from this. In Annex 3 you will find an example on which an effective measurement can be based.</p>	Agreed	<p>ACV-CSCi and its partner organisations fully agree with the need to continuously enhance the quality of their training practices, as these are vital for the success of trade union work and make up the bulk of activities organised with ACV-CSCi programmes. While it is recognised that regular measuring of the effectiveness of training is vital, it probably remains the least developed part of trade union training processes.</p> <p>Though no specific plans for 2022-2026 have been made by partner organisations on this issue, continental desk officers fully commit themselves to bringing up the topic with partner organisations in order to assess relevant needs and opportunities. Obvious opportunities consist of exchanging with PPP on its tracer system, or looking into the use of the instrument recommended for use by FocusUP (the 4 level Kirkpatrick model). But there may be a host of other opportunities that present themselves in specific contexts.</p>	
Planned actions		Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations
Discussing the need/willingness for measurement of the effectiveness of training with partner organisations		2023	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa
Identifying opportunities (instruments, good practices, possibilities for exchange, training opportunities,...)		2023	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa
Supporting the organisation of exchanges between partner organisations and/or the organisation of trainings for programme management officers at partner organisations		2023-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa
Supporting the actual organisation of training effectiveness measuring by partner organisations		2023-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa

Recommendation 6	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Develop HRDD expertise of partners (especially in Africa and Latin America). The HRDD approach has proven to be very effective in Cambodia and Indonesia. In the new program, it appears that this approach will also be rolled out to the other continents. However, the evaluators found that the understanding about HRDD in these continents is rather limited. Therefore, it will be necessary to transfer the existing expertise.</p>	Agreed	<p>As explained above (see recommendation 3), HRDD is one of the 5 priority themes for exchange at national, continental and international levels between partner organisations of Africa, Asia and Latin America. ACV-CSCi will be organising training and exchanges on HRDD at continental levels, while ensuring that the good practices and lessons learned from Asia are successfully disseminated - for adaptation to the African and Latin American contexts. One of the (two) Asian desk officers of ACV-CSCi for the period 2022-2026 is specialised in matters of HRDD and will play a vital role in this respect.</p>	
Planned actions		Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations
<p>Organising continental and international exchanges and training for trade union partner organisations of ACV-CSCi, WSM and BIS/MSI with the help of regional offices of ITUC – including on HRDD</p>		2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the new local coordinator in Africa
<p>Ensuring the successful dissemination of good practices and lessons learned from the Asia experience - for adaptation to the African and Latin American contexts</p>		2022-2026	Expert on HRDD from within ACV-CSCi

Recommendation 7	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning	
<p>Continue to support gender mainstreaming, in particular at the lower levels of the (con-) federations (but not only). The program has made a huge contribution to women's capacity strengthening. It has also increased the participation rate of women in all areas within the confederations. Nevertheless, the challenges remain enormous. Women are still underrepresented. In addition, efforts still need to be made especially at the federations and local union levels to address gender mainstreaming, gender equality, women rights and gender based violence (GBV).</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>ACV-CSCi fully agrees with the need for continued efforts in the training of leaders and members at the level of confederations, federations, and local unions. As partner organisations who have developed the continental outcomes for 2022-2026 are serious about concentrating on enhancement of gender equality and reduction of gender based violence, specific indicators have been developed on gender for all 3 continents : 1 each at outcome level and 3 each at the level of results. The result indicators seek to capture progress made on the number of negotiations on gender related matters, on the number of leaders and members trained within the partner organisations (confederations) and their federations as well as local unions, and on strategic alliances being entered into with civil society actors that are specialised in gender related matters.</p>	
Planned actions		Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations
<p>Training of 13.699 members and leaders (35% women and 8% youth) by partner organisations in Niger, DRC and Ivory Coast on issues of interest to the final beneficiaries concerning empowerment of women and gender equality (such as equal pay, maternity leave, gender based violence/harassment at the work place, domestic work, child labour) - in contribution to SDG indicator 4.3.1. on (in)formal training of youth and adults (see indicator 2 result 2 for Africa)</p>		<p>2022-2026</p>	<p>Continental desk officer for Africa, and the new local coordinator in Africa Desk officers</p>
<p>Training of 3.500 of their own activists, organisers, negotiators, conflict mediators, paralegals, gender promoters, and gender counsellors (F47%) by partner organisations in Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines on women's rights in general as well as on specific issues like expanded maternity leave, C190 and Gender Based Violence - in contribution to SDG indicator 4.3.1. on (in)formal training of youth and adults (see indicator 2 result 2 for Asia)</p>		<p>2022-2026</p>	<p>Continental desk officers for Asia</p>
<p>Training of 1.630 members and leaders (67% women et 21% youth) by partner organisations in Haïti, the Dominican Republic and Brazil on issues of interest to the final beneficiaries concerning empowerment of women and gender equality (such as discrimination, maternity leave, violence at the work place, child labour) - in contribution to SDG indicator 4.3.1. on (in)formal training of youth and adults (see indicator 2 result 2 for Latin America)</p>		<p>2022-2026</p>	<p>Continental desk officer for Latin America</p>

Recommendation 8	Agreed or not ?	Management Response : Reasons for non-agreement or agreement & general planning		
<p>Continue to support (and deepen) the activities on environmental issues and climate change, in particular at the lower levels of the (con-)federations. Only PPP in Indonesia is in the driving seat at the national level around environmental issues and Climate change. It is a pioneer in this field in Indonesia, but it can also be seen as a good example for other countries. In the other countries there is still much room for deepening and expansion. Therefore, the evaluators believe that the efforts around this theme should be increased.</p>	Agreed	<p>ACV-CSCi fully agrees with the need for enhanced attention to environmental and climate change issues as workers in already vulnerable situations of work bear the brunt of the negative effects of pollution and climate change. As partner organisations who have developed the continental outcomes for 2022-2026 have become increasingly concerned about safety and health at the work place, as well as about Just Transition, specific indicators have been developed on these matters for all 3 continents : 1 each at outcome level and 3 each at the level of results. The outcome indicators reflect the intention to negotiate a reduction of environmental and ecological footprints at the final beneficiaries' work places. The result indicators seek to capture progress made thanks to the strengthening of capacities : progress made in terms of the number of (collective bargaining) agreements, MoU, sectoral agreements and government policies with clauses on occupational safety and health (OSH) as well as on protection of the environment and climate friendly practices ; in terms of the number of their own local, regional and national leaders and members trained on protection of the environment and Just Transition in the face of climate change ; and in terms of the number of campaigns, consultations, activities and projects organised by specialised civil society actors to which partner organisations have made significant contributions in favour of integrated national adaptation and just transition plans.</p>		
Planned actions		Period	Follow up in conjunction with partner organisations	
<p>Negotiating the reduction of environmental/ecological footprints of 169 work places of final beneficiaries by partner organisations in Niger, DRC and Ivory Coast – focusing on reduction of pollution, better waste management, reforestation, and environmental sanitation – in contribution to SDG indicator 8.4.1. on sustainable production and SDG indicator 13.2.2 on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (see outcome indicator 3 for Africa)</p>		2022-2026	Continental desk officer for Africa, and the new local coordinator in Africa Desk officers	
<p>Negotiating the reduction of environmental/ecological footprints in 107 work places of final beneficiaries in favour of the introduction of climate friendly transport systems and other sound company practices – such as recycling and the banning of dangerous chemicals/plastics – in contribution to SDG indicator 8.4.1. on sustainable production as well as SDG indicator 13.2.2 on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (see outcome indicator 3 for Asia)</p>		2022-2026	Continental desk officers for Asia	
<p>Negotiating the reduction of environmental/ecological footprints of 99 work places of final beneficiaries by partner organisations in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Brazil – focusing on reduction of the use of chemical products, plastic, foam, on recycling, on enhanced seeds and on pollution caused by traffic – in contribution to SDG indicator 8.4.1. on sustainable production and SDG indicator 13.2.2 on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (see outcome indicator 3 for Latin America)</p>		2022-2026	Continental desk officer for Latin America	