

A faint world map is visible in the background, with numerous small dots placed across various continents, particularly in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The map is rendered in a light gray color against a darker gray background.

ACTIVITY REPORT 2018

BELLEVILLE INSTITUTE

 **Cidt:** International trade union cooperation

FOREWORD



A few weeks ago, trade unions, employers' organisations and national governments issued a joint call for action to increase social justice.

The ILO Centenary Declaration focuses on building a human-centred approach to the future of work, placing workers' rights and the needs, aspirations and rights of people in general at the centre of economic, social and environmental policy. Making the transition from an informal to a formal economy and developing appropriate social protection systems that reflect changes in the work environment feature prominently among

the 17 measures needed to establish a fairer world of work.

These two objectives are a common thread in the CFDT's trade union cooperation policy. They are clearly reflected in the review of the Belleville Institute's activities, which you will find in the booklet.

Goals can only be achieved through concrete action by stakeholders. The CFDT commends the political scope of the international declaration for the future of work. But the declaration will succeed only if it translates into concrete improvements for workers. The actions taken by the Belleville Institute are all, in their own way, important milestones towards meeting these challenges.

Yvan Ricordeau

President of the Belleville Institute

COOPÉRATIONS PAR THÈMES ET RÉGIONS

	Africa	Latin America	Asia	Middle East
Trade union training	Africa (3 countries) / ITUC-AFRICA, CSN Mali, CSTM Togo, CSTT Senegal, UNSA Trade unionizing and training of workers in the informal economy		Cambodia / CLC Union training	
	Africa (9 countries)/ITUC-Africa Benin, Burkina, Ivory coast, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Tchad et Togo Training of focal points within the framework of coordination and follow up of the French speaking network integrating the coordinators of the nine targeted countries			
	Ivory coast / Dignité, SIT Ivory Coast Training program on organizing and managing a trade union			
	Coopération with CSTT Strengthening CSTT capacities			
	Africa (8) countries /itu -Africa, FAD Supporting trade union action regarding economic and social issues to fulfill decent work in Africa			
Human trade Unions Rights		Haiti / ITUC - Americas Unionization and decent work joint project to support trade union movement in Haiti	Cambodia / CLC Make workers aware of their rights	
		Haiti Experience sharing between Western Africa and Haiti on Social Protection	Inde / Fedina Trade union organising and human rights in supply chains	
		Venezuela ASI National Campaign of affiliation «Affiliate ASI»		
Corporate Social Responsibility	Afrique (8 countries)/ITUC- Afrique, AFD Supporting trade union activities regarding economy and social issues to fulfill decent work			Tunisia / UGTT Vocational training
Dialogue with civil society	Guinea / Concerted program including several actors PCPA/PROJEG Strengthening professionalisation of Civil Society organisations. Campaigning and lobbying to influence public policies Accompanying and promoting actions aiming to mobilization and developement of young people			

SUMMARY

Preamble.....	01
Activity board	02
Supporting social and economic action by trade unions to ensure widespread access to decent jobs in Africa	04
Training for focal points in nine French-speaking African countries	09
Organising and training women in Africa's informal economy	14
The PCPA, an instrument of democracy in Guinea	20
Structuring trade unions and defending human rights in global supply chains in India	22
Training and unionising workers in Cambodia	26
Cooperation with trade unions in Latin America and the Caribbean	30
Promoting experience sharing between trade unionists in Haiti and West Africa to increase worker access to social protection	32
Resources and budget	36
The Belleville Institute-CFDT at the 49 th Congress in Rennes	38
Structure	40



SUPPORTING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ACTION BY TRADE UNIONS TO ENSURE WIDESPREAD ACCESS TO DECENT JOBS IN AFRICA

MAIN THEMES

2018 saw the continuation of the project "Supporting social and economic action by trade unions to ensure widespread access to decent jobs in Africa". This project is a partnership between the Belleville Institute and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)-Africa, which is coordinating operations at the regional level. It involves 28 ITUC-Africa affiliates in eight countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. The project aims to enhance research capability in the West African trade union movement to inform the demands of trade unions and increase their ability to influence public policy, thereby enabling more effective solutions to the concerns of workers and the populations of these countries in general. To achieve this, trade union research and analysis committees (CARES) have been set up in each of the eight countries where

the project is being implemented. Each national CARES is composed of representatives of the trade union confederations affiliated with ITUC-Africa in the country concerned. They are tasked with conducting research to inform the debates of the trade union movement as a whole.



The second phase of the project, which began in July 2016 and is scheduled to end in December 2019, focuses on three main topics:

- The extension of social protection to informal economy workers;
- National budget analysis;
- The corporate social responsibility (CSR) of multinational companies and the implementation of international framework agreements (IFAs) between some of these companies and international trade union federations.



As in 2017, training seminars were organised in 2018 for members of the national CARES in the different project countries (excluding Burkina Faso, where the seminar took place the year before). While the 2017 seminars focused mainly on the extension of social protection to informal economy workers and national budget analysis, those held in 2018 looked more closely at CSR performance and the monitoring of international framework agreements. France's 2017 duty of vigilance law was presented to CARES members, who heard about the context in which the law was adopted, its content and objectives, and the challenges related to its enforcement. This process illustrated the importance of developing trade union cooperation along global supply chains to force companies to comply with legislation and honour any CSR commitments they have made. To the same end, CFDT representatives from several French multinationals took part in three seminars in 2018 (in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Senegal). They talked to CARES members about the IFAs concluded by their companies, which will also apply to their subsidiaries in West Africa (including Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Senegal). Beyond IFAs, such meetings are an opportunity for trade union stakeholders to get to know each other better, which is likely to result in more productive discussions and cooperation in the future.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITIES

The training seminars were also a chance to review the work that the CARES members had been doing nationally. Meetings were organised with the leaders of the unions involved in the CARES to talk about uptake of the approach and the sustainability of the project.

Research into the three main themes of the project was ongoing in 2018 and will be completed in 2019. As a result, most of the advocacy campaigns directed at public authorities should also take place in 2019, given that they will be informed by the results of the research.

In addition, a regional seminar took place in Lomé in October 2018, involving representatives of the eight national CARES. During the seminar, the CARES members discussed the progress of work in their respective countries and established guidelines to frame activities in the third and final year of the project's second phase.



TRAINING FOR FOCAL POINTS IN NINE FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES

CONTEXT

In March 2017, discussions were held with 12 French-speaking countries in Lomé (Togo) following an action learning programme on “Democratic trade union management” – which had been running since 2010 – and the ensuing assessment session. Considering the urgent situation of trade unions, ITUC-Africa, in line with its congress objectives, decided to promote the role and place of inter-union action in each country. This decision has led to the establishment of a coordination network with focal points that serve as liaison between trade unions. However, experimental work has also been carried out on the role of trade unions, resulting in a different type of development that creates decent and lasting employment.

Some areas of work have culminated in a cooperation agreement between ITUC-Africa and the CFDT via the Belleville Institute. This covers the provision of training for focal points as part of the effort to coordinate and monitor the

French-speaking network, including the coordinators of the nine priority countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, the Republic of Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Chad and Togo.

ITUC-Africa plans to develop a programme to foster and build consensus between affiliates in the same country, on the subject of joint trade union action. Cooperation and solidarity must be stepped up considerably to form the backbone of a more coherent, efficient and influential trade union movement in French-speaking Africa.

Against this backdrop, a seminar took place in Togo in May 2018, attended by nine country coordinators. There were 15 participants, focal points and political leaders, mainly general secretaries.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SEMINAR

The commitment to inter-union cooperation was confirmed, with participants from all nine countries reporting a willingness on the part of trade unions to work together. All the trade unions recognised that they must work together to exercise influence at national level. Presentations on the economic situation in the different countries showed that attention is still too often focused on public administration and education to the detriment of other areas of the economy, although the predominance of informal economy workers in these countries and the extension of social protection to the private, informal and rural sectors were also mentioned.

INTER-UNION ASSESSMENT OF THE COUNTRIES

Benin:

In a context of economic slowdown and social crisis reflected in thousands of job losses, it has been difficult to mobilise workers since the general strike, which lasted from late 2017 to March 2018 and involved mostly teachers. Therefore, trade unions must conduct a more in-depth analysis of the country's situation and how the strike developed. The analysis should also consider the development of a new communication strategy to establish a balance of power encompassing all workers and ensure effective social dialogue.

Burkina Faso:

Social demands are growing across the board, with the risk of over-indebtedness pushing contributions up and bringing investment down. At the same time, populism is on the rise among young people, aggravated by the growth in terrorism and military spending. Thought must be given to expanding the secondary sector and increasing business competitiveness to create new jobs.

The knowledge and skills of trade union activists must be improved to prevent the disengagement of young people in particular, which poses a threat to the future of trade unionism and democracy in the country.

Côte d'Ivoire:

Economic vitality has boosted structural investment but has failed to disguise the social, regional and ethnic crisis. The latter has been aggravated by inter-union divisions, which are undermining the trade union movement and its ability to curb the inequality and widespread social violence fuelled by the free market economy. Therefore, inter-union ties must be strengthened; the role and operation of trade unions must be formalised to limit political interference and develop a shared vision of the country's development.

The Republic of Guinea:

Inter-union action prioritises the public sector, securing pay rises for civil servants at the expense of the very predominantly rural economy. The inter-union communication strategy must be improved to foster a better broader balance of power and put the focus on unionising informal sector workers through the existing trade union network.

Mali:

The reconstruction of inter-union cooperation is hampered by numerous security challenges, a governance system weakened by persistent corruption, and migration mainly to Libya. Inter-union cooperation must be used as a springboard to strengthen union presence in the informal sector and prioritise the agricultural industry in line with the ECOWAS 2020 Vision.

Niger:

Inter-union cooperation takes place within a highly formalised framework, reflecting a genuine commitment to united action. However, it is still disproportionately focused on civil servants in the health and education sectors. Efforts to extend social protection to the informal sector must be stepped up, and Niger must take measures to tackle immigration into Europe and climate change.

Senegal:

Inter-union involvement in implementing the objectives of the Emerging Senegal Plan (ESP) is high, and translates into active participation in extending social protection to the informal sector and a commitment to diversification (mining, food and digital). This desire to update the social dialogue framework (HCDS) brings a need to sign and enforce the inter-union charter.

Chad:

Inter-union action is hampered by the fact that the government has all the resources and funds. It implements measures unilaterally in accordance with a policy of *fait accompli*. Hence the list of demands set out by the three trade unions (UST, CST and SYNECS) and the desire to raise awareness in the informal sector of the markets (young and women) and ensure that healthcare, education and agriculture are not ignored.

The unions are working together to rein in the President, and the reinforcement of inter-union cooperation has resulted in a formalised and duly observed protocol.

Togo:

The number of trade union bodies rose from three to seven between 1990 and 2016, and the country has experienced serious social unrest over the past year. This has inflated demands and heightened populism. Corporatism is undermining the trade union movement and its representativeness. Hence the need to draw up a coordination action plan as part of negotiations with the government, and improve the worker representation ability of trade union leaders within a more formalised framework of inter-union activity.



APPOINTMENT OF “FOCAL POINTS”

A quick survey of the participants at the end of the session prompted a number of remarks about the role and responsibilities of country focal points. Their roles and profiles need to be clarified with the general secretaries in their respective countries. They will be ITUC-Africa's contact persons within the network. At the end of the year, they will be asked to produce a detailed report on the work accomplished, the difficulties encountered and the objectives set, which will form the basis of in-depth discussions with the ITUC-Africa manager. ITUC-Africa will present this new inter-union approach in an internal memo, explaining the remit of focal points and the conditions for their success.

PROCESS TO BE DEVELOPED

Over the next three years, focal point training will focus on formalising the inter-union work process in each country. Topics including the financial independence of trade unions (and thus ITUC-Africa), unionisation and the collection of fees will be introduced across the board, depending on the specific situation and needs of each union.

THE TOPICS SELECTED FOR EACH OF THE COUNTRIES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- **Mali** : Analysing the development of the informal economy and unionisation
- **Burkina Faso**: Strengthening inter-union cooperation capacity when implementing the national social and economic development plan (PNDES)
- **Senegal**: Consolidating unity in trade union action
- **Benin**: Consolider l'unité d'action syndicale
- **Chad**: Analysing and defining the foundations for a joint unionisation project
- **Niger** : Conducting a detailed review of the social dialogue situation and clarifying the role of inter-union cooperation
- **Togo**: Restoring democratic operation and laying the groundwork for united action
- **The Republic of Guinea**: Conducting a detailed review of the social dialogue situation and clarifying the role of inter-union cooperation
- **Cote d'Ivoire**: Analysing the development of the informal economy and building on unionisation experiences

The approach will be based on interactive exchanges, and priority will be given to exploring strategies to increase unity in trade union action. The meetings will be an opportunity to discuss the prospects and opportunities for experimental work on the role of trade unions, resulting in a different type of development that creates decent and lasting employment.

This process should provide a new economic and social dimension, and establish unionisation as a key factor in a different kind of development alongside the social partners.





ORGANISING AND TRAINING WOMEN IN AFRICA'S INFORMAL ECONOMY

The CSTM in Mali, the UNSAS in Senegal and the CSTT in Togo are continuing to support informal economy workers as part of the 2013 project supported financially and technically by Canada's CSN, the CFDT's Belleville Institute and ITUC-Africa.

THE INFORMAL ECONOMY IN AFRICA

Worldwide, the informal economy accounts for over half of non-agricultural jobs. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the figure rises to at least 80 %. Only 40 million people are employed in the formal economy in Sub-Saharan Africa, out of a total labour force of 450 million. Most of those who work in the informal economy do not do so by choice. The majority do it to survive, as they are unable to find a decent job.

"Impoverishing growth": this is the term used by Senegalese economist SY CHERIF SALY to describe Africa's high GDP growth rates, which have risen to an average of 5% in recent years. These high growth rates are often driven by sectors that create few or no jobs due to a complete lack of value-added processing. More seriously still, the added value gained from mining production for example is appropriated by a handful of local elites and the transnational companies that operate the mines.



ACTIONS TAKEN

TOGO/ CSTT

The CSTT social and solidarity economy project has provided information and training for 127 informal economy workers, including around 20 grassroots trade union leaders from three industry sectors:

The Federation of Wood and Construction Workers (FTBC), the Trade Union Federation of Agricultural and Food Workers (FESTAATO) and the Trade Union Federation of Transport Workers (FESYTRAT).

• Federation of Wood and Construction Workers (FTBC-TOGO)

The federal office of the FTBC organised a training course on micro-enterprise management, which was attended by 30 people including three women. The two-day course covered the definition and specific characteristics of a micro-enterprise, and the participants were trained and equipped to maintain a cash book, draw up an operating budget and produce estimates and invoices.

• Trade Union Federation of Agricultural and Food Workers (FESTAATO)

A training workshop was organised as part of the social and solidarity economy project, which was attended by 37 people including three men from Togo's traditional fish processing and conservation sector. The workshop covered the values and functions of a trade union, collective bargaining techniques, and trade union awareness of the activities of female fish processors following the relocation of the Lomé fishing port.

The women decided to turn their association into a trade union to address the challenges facing the sector, and undertake awareness, advocacy and lobbying initiatives to improve social protection.

• Trade Union Federation of Transport Workers (FESYTRAT)

The FESYTRAT organised two training and unionisation events.

An awareness meeting was held at the motorcycle taxi rank, on the importance of unionisation and participation in social dialogue. At the meeting, 60 motor-tricycle-taxi drivers were educated about the trade union movement and its role in defending workers' interests.

A training seminar was organised to educate motor-tricycle-taxi drivers about social protection issues.

Following these two events, Togo's national union of motor-tricycle-taxi drivers (SYNACTRIP-TOGO) held its inaugural congress.



MALI / CSTM

The purpose of the project is to help improve the skills of informal economy workers in terms of their organisation, training and effective representation in trade unions and decision-making bodies.

Three industry sectors have been targeted: dyers in Kayes, sand and gravel operators in Koulikoro and fish vendors in Mopti.

One hundred men and women in the three target regions have been educated and trained about the importance of unionisation, trade union functions and participation in inclusive social dialogue.

More women took part in these activities than men. This can be explained firstly by the fact that many women work in the informal economy and, secondly, by the CSTM's policy of positive discrimination in favour of women, hence the predominance of jobs for women. In addition, women strongly support the unionisation movement in the informal economy.

An office of 25 members has been set up in each region.

Informal economy workers are being informed and educated about the importance and benefits of trade union functions such as worker representation, and the necessity of taking part in inclusive social dialogue; local radio stations have broadcast the awareness message in several languages (including Bamanankan, Soninké, Peulh and Bozo).

Training is being provided for informal economy workers so they are able to more effectively fulfil their role in defending and promoting their rights and interests, and make full use of collective bargaining mechanisms.

Informal economy workers are being introduced to the principles of management and good governance.

It is important to note the following key points, which have emerged from the awareness campaign and the training programme:

- The enthusiasm and dedication of the men and women targeted in the three regions;
- The enthusiasm generated by the training workshops;
- The target group's active participation in both the campaign and the basic training;
- The extent of media interest in both activities;
- The ease with which the offices were set up, the unwavering cooperation of the three regional coordination teams, etc.

In terms of immediate outcomes, more than three hundred men and women have joined the CSTM and an office of 25 members has been set up in each of the regions to serve as liaison and act as a focal point between their branch and the parent organisation (the CSTM). Their participation in social dialogue and collective bargaining will improve their way of life, giving them a greater knowledge and understanding of their rights, as well as the means to defend them.

SENEGAL / UNSAS

UNSAS set up a workshop to improve the management skills of women working in the retail, processing, gardening and catering sectors. The aim was to give women the skills they need to apply basic management principles in their informal production units (IPU), and hence increase their productive capacity and their income.

The workshop was attended by thirty-one women who run income-generating activities either alone or with their families. It should help women like these understand how to turn their income-generating activity into a more structured business,



and provide them with the basic knowledge and techniques they need to:

- increase their understanding of how business works
- improve their entrepreneurial skills
- think about their business idea and change or tweak it if necessary
- gain a relatively clear picture of how they want their business to evolve
- establish a cost price structure to make their business more profitable
- plan the development of their business together, using the prerequisite skills and knowledge provided by the training

and improve their, and their families', standard of living.

We are therefore reorganising the activities within the project to take this requirement into account.

LEARNING METHODS

A highly interactive teaching method based on role play, case studies and experiential learning enabled the women to identify and rectify their mistakes. They were clearly very interested in the different modules, which they said were relevant to their needs. The discussions were very helpful to the women, who realised that they need to change the way they run their businesses.

It must be emphasised that they were obviously very keen to learn. The participants' enthusiasm and determination to get as much out of the workshop as possible were reflected in their punctuality, diligence and active participation.

Fortunately, these women should now be able to grow their businesses by managing their resources more effectively. The management deficiencies observed arise from a lack of education, information and training. The women require coaching to increase their productive capacity. Financial training programmes should be set up to enable them to increase their income

THE PCPA, AN INSTRUMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN GUINEA

The CFDT, via the Belleville Institute, has been involved in the consultative multi-action programme run by the Coopération française in Guinea since 2009. This type of programme (PCPA¹), conducted under the authority of the French Foreign Ministry, is a means of building legitimate governance in southern countries through proactive measures to enhance their civil society's capacity for dialogue. They are organised jointly by CSOs based in partner countries and in France, and by public authorities in the host countries and France. The programme is run by a committee elected by a general assembly of Guinean and French member organisations².

In Guinea, PROJEG³ has supported the process of building rule of law since the end of the dictatorship

in 2008. Guinean civil society emerged from a social movement in 2008–2009, with trade unionists in the front line. Today, it is refusing to accept the restrictions of freedoms that the current president is trying to impose by changing the constitution so that he can run for a third term in office.

In a little more than ten years, PROJEG has contributed to the development of a dynamic and democratic civil society by financing nearly 150 dialogue projects and initiatives, and has mobilised almost 600 Guinean and French CSOs. From 2009 to 2010, one of PROJEG's first flagship measures was to bring trade unions and the Council of Guinean Civil Society Organisations together to create "vital forces". These "vital forces" produced important political and civilian members of the transitional government, who were involved in establishing the current constitution. The Guinean PCPA has been, and is still, instrumental in protecting and defending the rule of law.

One of PROJEG's most important achievements has been the creation of regional colleges. Their

1. PCPA: Consultative multi-actor programme. There are four in operation at present, in Algeria, Guinea, Congo and Tunisia.

2. PCPAs are hosted by a French NGO and administered by both the said NGO and an executive secretariat in the country concerned. Two coordinators manage and coordinate the programme, one in the south, the other in the north. Under these programmes, funds of around €1 million are transferred from the AFD (French development agency) every year.

3. PROJEG: Consultative capacity-building programme aimed at civil society organisations and young people in Guinea.

members include associations, trade unions, women's groups, youth groups, local government officials, technical services managers, academics, etc. Guinean trade unions are involved in these consultative bodies and in PROJEG's governing body, where the CFDT has served several times.

French and Guinean trade unions (including the CFDT) participated actively in revising the mining code in 2011, which involved a large-scale consultation. PROJEG has supported citizen oversight of public accounts at the local and national levels (with the Guinean CARES). As part of a French research programme at the University of Paris VIII, students and local associations have assessed and taken part in projects to convert the mine in Fria, afflicted by the sudden withdrawal of Russian aluminium company Rusal.

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

The PCPA in Guinea is scheduled to run until the end of 2019. The current phase consists in ensuring that key improvements are sustainable over the long term, particularly the role that civil society now plays in local democracy and development alongside local public authorities.

One of the improvements in northern Guinea is the support provided for regional regulation of the gold panning sector which, given its current buoyancy, is an effective weapon against poverty.

Artisanal gold mining has spread in recent years to the detriment of other activities, causing substantial environmental and human harm, including the worst forms of child labour.

The customary authority and the local public authorities have decided to allocate some of the tax from gold mining to local development and social action, including the prevention of child labour. The momentum of PROJEG and its regional college (which includes trade unionists) provides an opportunity to take concrete measures to tackle child labour in Guinea, which is lagging a long way behind in this area. The CFDT has conducted several working sessions on ILO standards. The ILO's regional office in Abidjan sees the mobilisation of artisanal gold miners in northern Guinea as an opportunity to integrate Guinea into ILO-backed programmes in West Africa. Given its involvement in PROJEG, the CFDT should continue to support trade unions in this respect, in line with the programme's activities. The Belleville Institute is in a strong position to help.





STRUCTURING TRADE UNIONS AND DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS IN INDIA

The Belleville Institute has been working for several years with the NGO Fedina, a network of civil society organisations that works to empower poor and/or marginalised people in southern India. In the period 2015 to 2017, the CFDT facilitated a rapprochement between Fedina and China Labour Bulletin (CLB), a workers' NGO with a proven track record in helping workers organise to defend their rights. Fedina and CLB forged a partnership, within which CLB supports Fedina in organising textile workers in Bangalore to better defend their rights. During a mission in India in late 2017, the CFDT and the Belleville Institute observed that the partnership was a success and had produced numerous actions: training courses for workers and action plans set up with those workers to gain a deeper understanding of how their companies

are organised, identify existing problems and formulate trade union demands towards management, etc. In view of these positive results, and insofar as Fedina and CLB were happy to continue working together, it was decided that Fedina and the Belleville Institute would focus on other areas going forward.



STRENGTHENING TRADE UNIONS

Thus, in April 2018, our two organisations opted to direct their joint efforts towards structuring and strengthening the South India Federation of Trade Unions (SIFTU), and defending human rights in the supply chains of French multinationals.

SIFTU is a member organisation of Fedina. Its membership includes trade unions in five southern Indian states, operating in sectors such as agriculture, textiles and construction. It has existed for several years, but its activity has been severely curtailed in the past by financial constraints. The executive committee was re-constituted at the start of 2018, and convened regularly throughout the year. It has strived to help SIFTU affiliates organise their administrative procedures and thus improve their structure. Various issues have also been addressed within the organisation so that it can more effectively protect workers' rights: ILO Conventions, access to social protection for informal economy workers, etc.

RESPECTING RIGHTS

As regards the rights of workers in supply chains, the Belleville Institute has presented France's 2017 duty of vigilance law for parent and subcontracting companies to Fedina members, stressing that trade union representatives in France and other countries have a key role to play in ensuring that the law is duly applied along supply chains.

Fedina and the Belleville Institute are also continuing to work together to defend human rights in the textile sector. Thus, investigations are being conducted into the working conditions at the suppliers and sub-contractors of French textile companies in Bangalore. These investigations should continue throughout 2019 and be extended to include other sectors, such as construction. This course of action may also forge ties between trade union representatives in parent/subcontracting companies in France and workers at suppliers and subcontractors in India, to better defend workers' rights along global supply chains.



TRAINING AND UNIONISING WORKERS IN CAMBODIA

THE TRADE UNION SITUATION

In 2018, the CFTD and the Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC) agreed to continue their cooperation through the Belleville Institute for a further three years. This cooperation with Cambodia's CLC, which began in 2015, is proving important and effective in what is a particularly difficult time for our partner.

New labour legislation was announced in 2016 but without any formal implementing decrees. This has made the CLC's work very difficult, as it is subject to arbitrariness. The CLC is the only trade union independent of Cambodia's ruling regime and, like opposition parties, it faces retaliatory measures to prevent it from operating and negotiating inside companies.

Furthermore, representativeness is a key issue and trade unions must meet numerous, unequal and random criteria in this respect. However, the criteria are designed primarily to prevent the CLC from being recognised as representative. In addition, the events of 2013 have been reviewed since the 2018

elections. At the time, the so-called independent trade unions supported the democratic opposition that was ultimately robbed of its election victory. Consequently, our partner, the CLC, has borne the full brunt of what could be described as a "settling of accounts". Secretary General Ath Thorn has been given a two-and-a-half-year suspended prison sentence, which will no doubt create eligibility and registration issues. The CLC Congress is still scheduled to take place in March 2019.



COOPERATION ASSESSMENT

The goal is to strengthen the trade union's capabilities through a training programme set up by the Garment Manufacturers Association, C.CAWDU and the Belleville Institute-CFDT. Significant emphasis has been placed on the participation of women in the training programme, as they constitute the major share of textile industry workers.

Since cooperation began, almost 300 activists – including 138 women – have been trained. In 2018, women outnumbered men on some courses.

Several courses have taken place, covering:

- rank and file issues, trade union organisation, labour law, dispute resolution, accountability and gender relations;
- trainer training.



Ath Thorn, President of CLC

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen the network of trainers; increase numbers of local trade union leaders, activists and members;
- Improve women's access to positions of responsibility in the organisation, particularly to branch leader positions in factories (companies).

Basic training courses have taken place, with twenty (male and female) participants per course; all the participants had a permanent employment contract and their average age was 32. There are several problems in companies: short-term employment contracts that put employees in a precarious situation, and numerous disputes that monopolise the time and attention of trade union activists and leaders.

Despite the pressure placed on workers and activists by redundancy threats, all those who attended the courses managed to overcome their apprehension and indeed their fear, thanks to their newly acquired knowledge of workers' rights. During the assessment, they all said how much the course had boosted their self-confidence.

Familiarising themselves with the company's organisation chart has enabled them to identify the appropriate manager to approach and the best way to resolve the numerous conflicts that arise in the company. Many of them have told us that there are fewer strikes because they are more successful at resolving conflicts.

From what they have said, we know that their employers are all Chinese. Working conditions are still very difficult and the majority of workers are paid on a performance basis. Some women say that they go back to their machines after clocking out to finish the required number of articles, as they are afraid they will be made redundant if they fail to meet expected performance levels.

At present, C.CAWDU has a strong network of 20 trainers, including 10 women. Some have produced their own training materials with the support of three permanent trainers.

CLC and C.CAWDU are extremely satisfied with the outcome of the training courses, which have made the organisation stronger in these particularly difficult times. The 2019 programme will include:

- New basic training courses aimed at activists in new target companies;
- Skills reinforcement courses for the 20 trainers.



HAITI

In 2018, the CFDT – through the Belleville Institute – continued to support the joint project run by the International Trade Union Confederation and its American regional organisation to strengthen the trade union movement in Haiti.

Unity of actions

Five Haitian trade unions are involved in the project. The review of phase 4 (January 2017 to July 2018) showed that the actions taken have strengthened the capabilities of the various inter-union committees set up to address specific issues: social protection and social security, oversight and coordination of the labour legislation reform process, women's rights, decent work in export free zones, etc. These capability improvements have enabled committee members to carry out various actions and campaigns: campaigns to ratify ILO Conventions and implement ILO recommendations (C102 on social security, C189 on decent work for domestic workers, R202 on social protection floors, etc.), and an information campaign condemning the 2017 adoption of the law on working hours and night work, which goes against the interests of workers, etc. The measures taken as part of the project have encouraged more people to join trade unions while, on the other hand, anti-trade union offensives have led to membership losses in some sectors/companies. In this context, the project has underlined the need to provide training for new members of the participating trade unions, and training courses have been set up for their benefit.

COOPERATION WITH TRADE UNIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

VENEZUELA

As the country sinks into an endless crisis, the ASI (independent trade union alliance) is continuing to work at the grassroots level to organise workers and help them cope as best they can with the enormous difficulties of everyday life. In addition to the now customary shortages of food, medication, hygiene products and spare parts, blackouts are increasingly frequent and gas and fuel are getting harder to find.

In October 2018, the CFDT conducted a mission to Venezuela, during which the ASI organised meetings with activists and workplace representatives. These meetings were a further opportunity to see the work the ASI is doing on the ground. Despite the current chaos in the country, its activists are working with a wide range of actors, helping to organise united action and putting forward workable proposals. In

view of the work accomplished, the CFDT decided to continue supporting the ASI in 2019.

Mission CFDT

The mission also provided an opportunity to meet the citizens' rights groups that are operating in Venezuela despite the difficulties (Amnesty International, Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict), as well as various institutions. Such meetings increase awareness of the ASI's activities among other stakeholders, and the CFDT will continue to work in this direction.



PROMOTING EXPERIENCE SHARING BETWEEN TRADE UNIONISTS IN HAITI AND WEST AFRICA TO INCREASE WORKER ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION

COMMITTED ACTORS

The CFDT, via the Belleville Institute and in cooperation with the African and American regional organisations of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), supports trade union projects in West Africa and Haiti. Those involved in these projects have reported that the situations in Haiti and West Africa are similar in some respects, particularly as regards the organisation of workers and their access to certain rights. For example, the question of extending social protection to informal economy workers is being addressed in the framework of projects run by

ITUC's regional organisations in West Africa and Haiti, in partnership with the Belleville Institute. It therefore seemed useful for Haitian and West African trade unionists to share their experiences to see how the current situation in the two regions, and the initiatives taken there to promote workers' rights and bring about greater social justice, can inform joint trade union discussions and actions.



EXPERIENCE SHARING BETWEEN PARTNERS

With this in mind, a Beninese trade unionist travelled to Port-au-Prince in May 2018, then two Haitian trade unionists went to Togo (Lomé) and Benin (Cotonou) in October 2018, with the Belleville Institute.

The two Haitian trade unionists took part in a regional seminar in Lomé from 8 to 10 October, which was part of the project organised by ITUC-Africa and the Belleville Institute on "Supporting social and economic action by trade unions to ensure widespread access to decent jobs in Africa". At the seminar, the Haitian participants, a man and a woman who are both members of Haiti's Inter-union Committee on Social Protection and Social Security (CISPSS), learned about the discussions and activities conducted by African trade unionists regarding social protection for informal economy workers and national budget analysis. They were also able to present the social protection situation in Haiti and the actions taken by trade unions to address it. To further promote experience sharing regarding social protection, the two Haitian trade unionists then travelled to Benin, where their Beninese counterparts told them about projects they had carried out to improve worker access to microcredit. The Haitian trade unionists were interested in these initiatives in that they helped workers overcome the financial obstacles to growing their business and increasing their earnings. It is important to bear in mind that, if these problems remain unsolved, they prevent workers from dealing calmly and efficiently with other issues, such as their access to high-quality social protection. However, the discussions with the Beninese trade unionists also focused strongly on the need for measures to ensure that, when such projects are undertaken, recourse to microcredit does not put workers in a worse economic situation than they were already in. Thus, the topics addressed included making sure that workers

who resort to microcredit are given professional training in accounting, management, etc., and the importance of working with microfinance institutions that are able to provide professional support for workers while tailoring their services to individual financial situations.

MEETING ACTORS FROM CIVIL SOCIETY

In addition to various meetings with trade union stakeholders (general secretaries of trade union confederations, activists from different sectors, etc.), the Haitian trade unionists met the following people during their visit to Benin:

- A state representative, who told them about a social protection scheme that the Beninese government hopes to put in place;
- The managers of a mutual social insurance fund, who explained how their organisation works, the services it provides and the problems that may be encountered in its day-to-day running;
- The President of the National Multi-Stakeholder Network for Social Protection in Benin (RNMPS), who told them about the network's activities and the benefits of a multi-stakeholder approach;
- An NGO that is a member of the RNMPS and works with a market gardening cooperative that uses microcredit.

After the meetings, the Haitian trade unionists said they would like to talk to the Belleville Institute about the possibility of working in the future on helping groups of workers access microcredit, bearing in mind the many critical aspects pointed out by the various stakeholders. They have already started to work on advocacy and awareness within the Inter-union Committee on Social Protection and Social Security, and said they would like to continue their efforts in this area to improve social protection in Haiti (campaign to ratify Convention 102, etc.). Lastly, besides the issue of social protection, the im-

portance of conducting work in Haiti on national budget analysis – as is being done through the project on “Supporting social and economic action by trade unions to ensure widespread access to decent jobs in Africa” – was also underlined after the mission.



RESOURCES AND BUDGET

ORIGIN OF RESOURCES

Most of the Belleville Institute's financial resources come from the CFDT's international trade union solidarity fund, the SSM. A percentage of the CFDT membership fee goes to financing this fund, created in 1965. The confederation therefore has the means to implement a cooperation policy in line with its European and international priorities.

The Belleville Institute is a non-profit organisation created under the French law of 1901 and has a board of directors.

CFDT FUNDS

The CFDT confederation has allocated a fund of €34,921.32 for the Belleville Institute to support and implement cooperation projects.

FRENCH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY FUNDING

The Belleville Institute has received financing from the French Development Agency for the "Supporting social and economic action by trade

unions to ensure widespread access to decent jobs in Africa" project.

The Belleville Institute's budget for 2018 is €554,921.32, which includes an operating budget of €135,432.01, representing 19.79 % of the total budget.

COOPERATION ACTIVITIES:

Activities in Africa are as important as ever, there are 9 projects representing 46.87 % of the budget.

In Asia, Cambodian and Indian projects are continuing and represent 19.79 %.

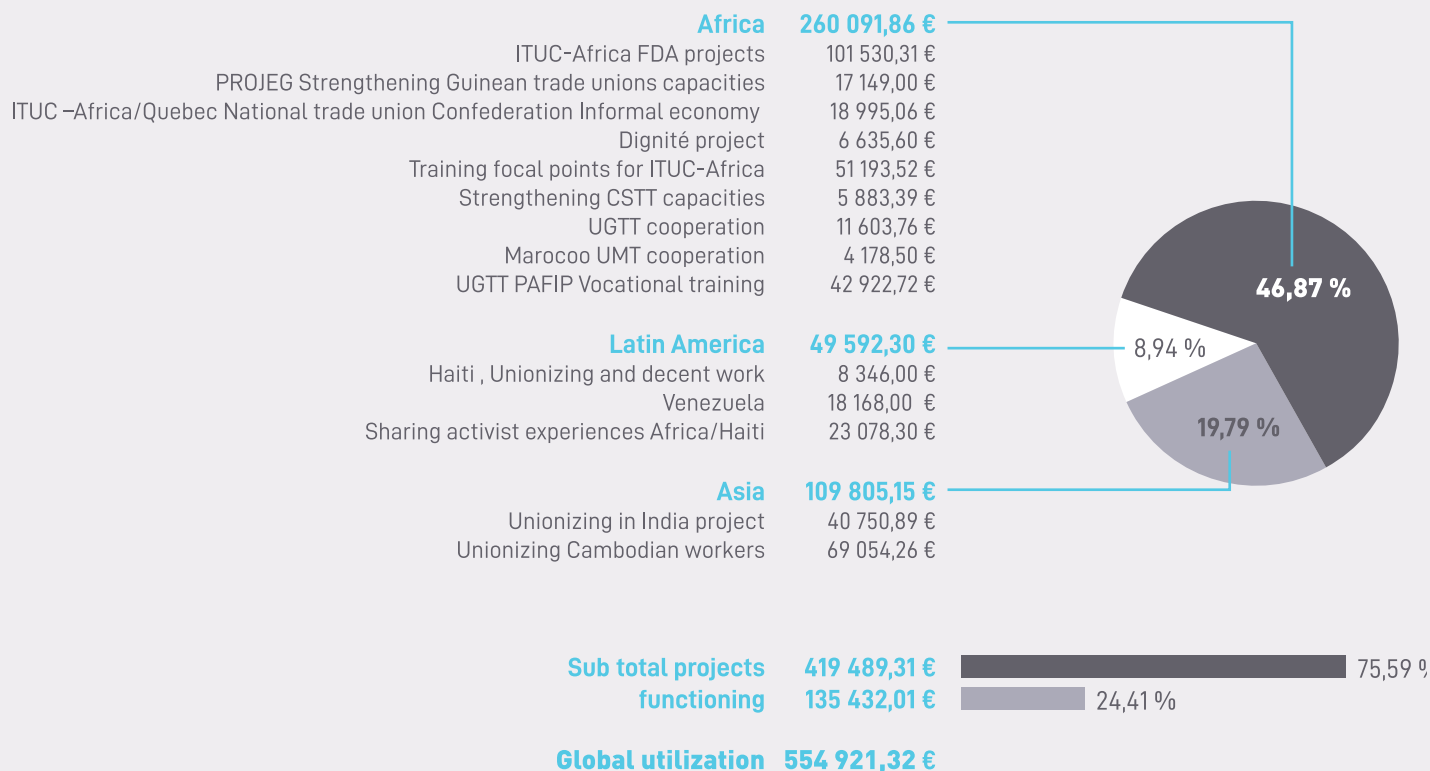
In Latin America, Venezuelan and Haitian activities represent 8.94 % of the budget.

The Belleville Institute's accounts are validated by the association's general assembly. They are included in the CFDT's consolidated accounts, and certified by auditors.

SOURCES OF THE FUNDS



RESOURCE UTILIZATION



Since the 2010 congress in Tours, the Belleville Institute has been welcoming activists to its booth at every CFDT Congress.

THE BELLEVILLE INSTITUTE AT THE 49TH CONGRESS IN

ACTIVIST INTEREST

Many international trade union representatives dropped in to pay their regards to the CFDT. The actions of some members, who have courageously supported the development of independent trade unionism in hostile environments, evoked an emotional and appreciative response from activists.

During the five-day congress, many delegates stopped by to chat with the team from the Belleville Institute. They expressed their concern about the challenges faced by trade union members in some countries.

They also said how proud they were that their trade union, the CFDT, had such strong ties with the trade unions in these countries.

Many of them were surprised to discover that a percentage of their trade union fees is used to support international trade union solidarity and fund cooperation projects.

Over coffee, they asked numerous different questions about international cooperation projects:

- Which countries are involved in the projects
- What is the economic situation in these countries
- How many trade unions do they have
- What issues are addressed
- Who chooses the training topic
- What problems do workers encounter
- How many people are there at the Institute

There are also some who are keen to get involved in the activities and training courses organised by the Institute.

At the stand, the Belleville Institute hands out presentation brochures explaining how it works and what its objectives are. The annual activity report has been very popular, especially with activists; some have told us "We'll talk about it at work, we're sure people will want to get involved in what you do".

TE-CFDT RENNES

SOLIDARITY, MORE THAN JUST A SLOGAN

Since the congress in Marseille, the CFDT has implemented around fifteen projects through the Belleville Institute. These are long-term projects, reflecting a strong sense of commitment.

They are in line with the CFDT's values: Solidarity, Autonomy, Emancipation.

The Belleville Institute designs and organises cooperation projects with national and regional ITUC affiliates and NGOs in Africa (particularly the north and west), Asia and America. They are aimed mainly at improving and strengthening capacity to participate in social dialogue, and hence defend workers' rights and contribute to democracy.

On this basis:

- Numerous projects have been set up in Africa since 2010, enabling activists in 12 French-speaking countries to engage in training activities, share their experiences, conduct assessments, work alongside other trade unions and develop their demands.

- Training courses have been organised with Fedina in India and the CLC in Cambodia to raise workers' knowledge of their rights and underline the utility of trade unions. Thanks to these courses, workers are now more able to defend their rights in the workplace.

- Support has been provided to activists in Venezuela, enabling them to attend training courses on unionisation. A project has been developed in Haiti to encourage interaction between Haitian and African activists.

- Train-the-trainer courses have been conducted in the Near East, as well as courses on vocational training in Tunisia and Morocco and a major conference on employment.

The CFDT, through the Belleville Institute, is committed to strengthening trade unions in a profoundly changing world. By promoting mutual understanding of the situation in each country, we will be able to build a better future for all workers, both men and women alike.

STRUCTURE

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These contacts, almost all members of the CFDT network, volunteer their own essential specialist expertise and knowledge.

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