

A stylized world map in white lines is centered in the background. Numerous small white dots are scattered across the map, with a higher concentration in Europe and Asia. The map is overlaid on a dark grey horizontal band.

# ACTIVITY REPORT 2020-2021

**BELLEVILLE INSTITUTE**

 **International trade union cooperation**



# AVANT-PROPOS



## The worth of our international efforts

This booklet outlines the most important points of our international trade union cooperation work. As usual, it presents how the CFDT is contributing

practically to the development of free and independent trade unions in various countries across all continents, and distributing it at the confederation congress will certainly ensure it is widely read. But in many ways this report is unique.

Firstly, international cooperation was particularly badly hit by the Covid-19 crisis, even more than our usual trade union activities. Although we cannot deny that we encountered difficulties, we are proud that we managed to continue to support all the organisations with which we work. Not one cooperation programme was halted during the two years of the crisis. In 2022, normal operations are gradually being resumed. The way is therefore clear for a new-look Belleville Institute team to begin work on strengthening all our activities. The Covid-19 crisis was global, but the consequences hit hardest in already vulnerable countries.

Secondly, the CFDT, while taking a position on war situations, is committed to supporting populations exposed to conflict. This is what happened when the Taliban regained power by force in Kabul in the summer of 2021. From the first days of these dramatic events, the key issue was to maintain minimum security conditions for the leaders of the Afghan trade union NUAWA by evacuating them from their country, which the CFDT made possible. Lengthy cooperation between the CFDT, the Belleville Institute and the Afghan union is now beginning, to continue defending basic human rights in Afghanistan.

Another war situation, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, brought an outraged reaction from the CFDT. Since then, cooperation has intensified in trade union branches, territories, professions and in fact confederation-wide. These initiatives show through action what the CFDT is constantly doing: giving a degree of priority to and spending a portion of union subscriptions on ensuring that workers' rights are respected worldwide.

**Yvan Ricordeau**

President of the Belleville Institute

## COOPÉRATIONS PAR THÈMES ET RÉGIONS

	North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin America	Asia	Europe
Union education	Tunisia/UGTT Support programme for professional training and integration	Africa (8 countries)/ITUC-Africa, AFD Supporting the social and economic action of trade unions to promote decent work in West Africa	Venezuela/ASI Supporting the ASI in Venezuela	Cambodia/CLC Union education to boost unionisation and improve working conditions in Cambodia	
		Africa (3 countries)/ITUC-Africa, CSTM (Mali), CSTT (Togo), UNSAS (Senegal), CSN (Canada) Organising and training workers in the informal economy	Haiti/CTSP, CTH Empowering workers through awareness raising on decent work and trade union education		
		Africa (9 countries)/ITUC-Africa Focal point training			
Human and labour rights		Senegal - France/UNSAS (Senegal), ESSENTIEL (France), CFSI (France) Promoting decent work for vulnerable people		India/Fedina Organising workers, both male and female, to defend their rights	
		Côte d'Ivoire/Dignité, SIT (Switzerland), CSC (Belgium) Promoting social protection of informal economy workers			
Corporate social responsibility					France, International/Syndex Study into the implementation of France's duty of vigilance law in parent companies and instructing parties

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# TRAINING FOR FOCAL POINTS IN NINE AFRICAN COUNTRIES

The purpose of this project is to analyse the development of the informal economy in nine African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo). The economic circumstances in these countries highlight concerns surrounding the informal sector, the need to expand social protection, and the search for alternatives to the informal economy, including through the creation of more formal structures for sectors and professions. In 2019, seminars on these topics were held with activists from Burkina Faso, Senegal and Mali.

After a year when Covid-19 prevented any project activity from happening, the programme resumed in late 2021, leading to a seminar being held in Togo from 30 November to 3 December 2021 at ITUC-Africa's headquarters in Lomé.

## TOGO SEMINAR

Organised by the Africa-region International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) with support from the Belleville Institute, this seminar attracted some 30 attendees, mainly

workers in the informal economy. Six trade union organisations were represented:

- Trade Union Confederation of Togolese Workers (CSTT)
- National Confederation of Togolese Workers (CNTT)
- National Union of Independent Trade Unions of Togo (UNSI)
- General Union of Free Trade Unions (UGSL)
- General Confederation of Togolese Management (CGCT)
- Group of Independent Trade Unions (GSA)

At the opening of the seminar, the ITUC-Africa programme coordinator reiterated the progress made by the inter-union movement in various African countries.

The objective of this seminar's work was to capitalise on an approach to alternatives to the informal economy, entailing setting up formal structures for sectors and professions based on existing initiatives and experiences.



Deux présentations ont été effectuées sur :

Two presentations were given on:

**An analysis of Togo's economic situation**, with key points such as:

- Placing Togo's general situation in 2021 in context
- Macro-economic policy and direction
- Economic and political governance
- **Difficulties: school drop-out rates**, lack of financial resources, rural exodus, lack of jobs, poverty, corruption, etc.

- **Requirements:** the need for tri-partite negotiations, incorporation of the needs of workers in the informal economy in state-run programmes, implementation of the ILO's recommendation 204, setting up a tri-partite economic and social council, etc.
- **The alternative to the informal economy in Togo.** This presentation brought the following salient points to light:
  - An overview of the informal economy in Togo
  - An intolerable situation
  - What alternative is suggested?
  - Formal structures for sectors and professions



- Methodology and resources
- Gradual ratification of stakeholders in the system

During the debates held after these presentations, other topics were addressed, such as the lack of accounting or bookkeeping records, tax pressure, the profitability of income-generating activities, the high level of women's contribution to household expenses, and putting the activities of informal economy workers on a more formal footing.

## TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES IN TOGO AND DEBATES WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Each trade union involved in this process was able to present the actions it is taking with workers in the informal economy. These various presentations gave a clear idea of the steps taken by Togolese unions, particularly in terms of training, support for informal economy stakeholders, lobbying for access to social protection and the creation of training centres, mutual healthcare organisations, and cooperatives.

Civil society organisations such as the Representative Committee for Togolese Farming (CTOP), the microfinance institution WAGES (Women and Associations for Gain both Economic and Social) and the Grand Lomé Regional Guild (CRM-Grand Lomé) also organised their own debates.

## WORK SUMMARY

A number of issues emerged in conclusion to the seminar:

- The mobilisation of resources and collective responsibility for implementing measures
- Access to social welfare
- Improving how workers are organised
- Decentralisation of union activities to better reach unions across the entire country
- Partnership with civil society
- Training for workers in the informal economy

Some priority measures to be taken with non-union stakeholders were outlined:

- Work in conjunction with microfinance providers to improve credit terms
- Work with the government to set up appropriate structures to put the informal economy on a more formal footing
- Work in conjunction with civil society to raise awareness of workers in the informal economy



# PROMOTING DECENT WORK IN WEST AFRICA BY SUPPORTING THE TRADE UNION ACTION OF CARES IN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REALM

The third phase of the project “*Supporting the social and economic action of trade unions to promote decent work in West Africa*” began in April 2021. While face-to-face national and regional seminars have not yet resumed, several video conferences have taken place. These meetings have provided an opportunity to speak to the various trade union analysis and research committees (CARES) about the objectives and activities of this third phase, and about national advocacy and sustainability strategies regarding trade union research.

Each country was invited to identify two advocacy themes related to “*the extension of social protection to informal economy workers*” and “*the analysis of the national budget*”:

## **BENIN:**

- Extend social protection to informal economy workers (in addition to those in the 21 municipalities currently envisaged by the government);
- Make sure that sectoral trade unions are effectively involved throughout the national budget process.

## **BURKINA FASO:**

- Make the National Social Security Fund’s voluntary insurance scheme accessible to members of Burkina Faso’s National Union of Merchants in Ouagadougou, Bobo, Koudougou and Koupela;
- Make sure that trade unions are involved in the national budget cycle.



- Address the issue of the contribution of public-sector administrative and industrial organisations to the national budget;
- Create and operate an informal economy department at the National Social Security Fund (CNSS).

#### **MALI:**

- Increase the share of the national budget allocated to social protection by optimising the available fiscal space;
- Determine what proportion of the Covid fund to allocate to male and female workers in Mali.

### **NIGER:**

- Engage the trade unions in the preparatory phase of the national budget process;
- Increase the share of the national budget allocated to social protection by 4%.

### **SENEGAL:**

- Extend social protection to young street vendors in Rufisque, in the Dakar suburbs;
- Advocate for human rights and trade union rights in the workplace.

### **TOGO:**

- Campaign to extend universal health coverage to vegetable growers, both male and female, in Togo.

In line with the recommendations following from the external assessment of the project's second phase, each CARES was invited to indicate the practical changes it wished to implement in each of the areas covered by the campaign. They were also asked to identify the national stakeholders they could work with to bring these changes about, as well as those that might, on the contrary, pursue objectives contradictory to theirs.

The CARES have also established national strategies, taking into consideration the need to continue inter-trade union research beyond the third phase of the project. To do this, new material and financial resources will have to be mobilised. This is the work facing the CARES over the remaining two years of the third phase, not to mention their other key objective: to inject fresh impetus into research, this time on a regional scale.

# ACTING TO EXTEND SOCIAL PROTECTION TO INFORMAL ECONOMY WORKERS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

This project, which began in 2016, has provided support to the Ivorian Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Dignité-CISL, in partnership with three trade unions: the interprofessional workers' union (SIT, Switzerland), the confederation of Christian trade unions (CSC, Belgium), and the CFDT via the Belleville Institute (France).

After developing and implementing a national trade union education plan within Dignité, the second phase of the project focused on the need to observe and engage the government at what is a critical juncture: the introduction of universal health coverage across the country.

The project also aims to unite Ivorian trade union federations affiliated to ITUC-Africa (CISL, UGTCI, FESACI, UNATRCI and Humanisme) around a common theme (social protection), the main objective being to “ensure that informal economy workers, both men and women, have access to social protection.”

## ACTIVITIES WERE DISRUPTED IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE IN 2020 BUT RESUMED IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2021

Throughout 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted efforts within the country to raise awareness of universal health coverage (UHC) for informal economy workers. A three-month extension of UHC eligibility rights has been requested to make up for the delays incurred by the Ivorian authorities due to lockdowns.

## SUMMARY OF THE MEASURES TAKEN WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE

Several meetings have been held with the action committee members. This committee is composed of eight CISL-Dignité trainers tasked with managing the day-to-day business of the project with the coordinators and managers. On the agenda: explain the activities connected



with the project, approve actions to be taken in 2020, and plan campaigns to raise awareness of UHC among informal economy workers. The committee's task was to confirm which inland cities and which municipalities in the Abidjan District had been selected, appoint the members of each training team, and establish campaign implementation times.

### **SUCCESSFUL TRAINING IN NUMEROUS IVORIAN TOWNS AND CITIES**

The trade union trainers, both women and men, managed to gather over 250 people in each of the towns and cities hosting their sessions: the participants very much enjoyed the training modules, judging by the mission reports.

The decentralised training initiative revealed firstly that the awareness campaigns did not reach all the social strata in some areas, and secondly that informal economy workers did

not know what universal health coverage (UHC) was. They had no information on where they could register and what documents they would need to get a UHC card, and they did not know the card was free. They also had to be told how much the individual subscription fee was and how to pay it.

### **NEGOTIATIONS WITH OTHER TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS**

The members of CISL-Dignité have met with all the trade unions to present the project. The discussions focused on establishing an inter-union coalition of trade union federations in Côte d'Ivoire to monitor the implementation of universal health coverage.

All the negotiations took place at CISL-Dignité's headquarters, where a General Assembly was organised to establish the coalition between the UGTCl, FESACI, UNATRCI and Humanisme federations. The assembly comprised two

members per federation, as well as the project coordinators and the national secretary of CISL-Dignité in charge of the informal economy.

To arrive at a common understanding of the role assigned to the inter-union coalition, the debates focused on the key areas of the trade union strategy document detailing the objectives of the coalition.

Since the new health insurance system could prove challenging for formal as well as informal sector workers, the former were included in the coalition's objectives.

The committee also finished drafting the Rules of Procedure and the Charter for the inter-union coalition.

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A General Assembly meeting was held to establish a system for monitoring the implementation

of universal health coverage in Côte d'Ivoire. Four out of five trade union federations were present, and around one hundred people took part, including 60 or so women. The legal texts governing the inter-union coalition tasked with monitoring the implementation of UHC were adopted. The General Assembly appointed CISL-Dignité to coordinate the monitoring system and consult with the other trade union federations to form the Coordination bureau. It also advised CISL-Dignité to do everything it could to bring the trade union federation Humanisme into the coalition.

## EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The project was completed in March 2021. An external assessment was carried out, which led to several recommendations. The results of the assessment were communicated to the members of CISL-Dignité. Two areas for improvement were identified: the professional development of trainers and the content of advocacy campaigns.







# SENEGAL / FRANCE: PROMOTING DECENT WORK FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

In 2020 and 2021, various activities were undertaken within the “Promoting decent work for vulnerable people” project, although the plan of action was severely disrupted in 2020 by Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. The project, run by the National Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Senegal (UNSAS), the Belleville Institute and the NGO Essentiel, is part of the “Cooperating differently as actors of change” programme led by the French Committee for International Solidarity (CFSI). The purpose of the activities proposed is to:

- trial a comprehensive, strengthened and multi-stakeholder package of support for two groups of women working in the fishery product processing sector in the districts of Yenne and Mbao in Senegal. The goal is to ensure decent work for

them by addressing the issue of access to social protection right from the start of the project. Thanks to the comprehensive nature of this support package and the diversity of the people involved, the participants are not only learning valuable skills, but they are also serving as an example to others who may be interested in the approach;

- reflect on trade union strategies in France and Senegal to improve the working conditions of vulnerable people and make it easier for them to access their rights, with the focus on two groups of people in particular: informal economy workers in Senegal, and those engaged in “new forms of independent employment” in France.



In Senegal, considerable work has been done to ensure that the two groups of women in the fishery product processing sector have access to social protection. A “feasibility study on health insurance for women fishery product processors in Yenne and Mbao” has been conducted by an expert on social protection. The author of the study stated that, in the current context, mutual health organisations are the most appropriate health insurance option for women and their families. The UNSAS and the project partners in Senegal have helped the women to understand better how mutual organisations work. During talks with these organisations, a number of obstacles to membership have been discussed (lack of trust of the beneficiaries due to the failures of some mutual health organisations, services offering of these organisations not answering to some needs of the women, seasonal variations in women’s

incomes making regular contributions difficult, some family members having other priorities than joining a mutual health organisation, etc.). In late 2021, further meetings between all of these stakeholders (representatives of the two groups of women, UNSAS members, representatives of the mutual health organisations in Mbao and Yenne, and the consultant who carried out the study) created opportunities to educate the women about using the tools provided by mutual health organisations (record of membership and fee collection). A monitoring will be carried out during 2022 in order to see how the membership process takes place and if the mutual health organisations answer satisfactorily to the women’s needs, in order to readjust the approach if needed.

Another aspect of the overall package to support decent employment is literacy training.

Around 50 women in Yenne and Mbao have been following a practical literacy course since September 2020, which will lead to a formal qualification and will improve not only their reading and writing skills, but also their numeracy, thus enabling them to run their businesses more efficiently. Some women have said that, thanks to the literacy course, they are also in a better position to help the people close to them. Hence, they are able to use the skills they learn on the literacy course in their everyday lives, thereby growing in self-confidence.

In addition, representatives of the two groups have completed training sessions on health and safety in the workplace. These sessions comprised four modules: handling and storage, work organisation, installation of well-being facilities (bathrooms, rest areas, etc.) and workstation (posture, etc.). Following these training sessions, an action plan was drawn up for each site. Follow-up visits have been scheduled to make sure that the women are incorporating what they learned during training into their routine practices.

Besides these activities, research has been conducted in France and Senegal to explore



the trade union strategies and actions that promote access to rights and improve working conditions in new types of independent employment in France and in the informal economy in Senegal. This research was carried out by two researchers, one based at the Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Economic Sociology (LISE-CNAM/CNRS) in France, and the other at the Laboratory for Research on Economic and Social Transformation (LARTES) in Senegal. In both countries, interviews have been conducted with trade unionists, and focus groups have been set up with male and female workers to better understand the difficulties they face and identify the trade union actions that could ultimately overcome their difficulties in three areas: living conditions and vulnerability at work, access to social protection, and collective organisation. The results of this research are currently being processed and should be published in the first half of 2022.





# TUNISIA: SUPPORTING THE UGTT UNDER THE SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND INTEGRATION (PAFIP)

For the past two years, the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT) has received help under a Support Programme for Professional Training and Integration (PAFIP). The project aims to make vocational training in Tunisia more effective as a way in to the employment market. It is supported financially by the French Development Agency (AFD).

The main objective is to boost the role of private sector structures, by improving the ability of trade union officials to hold talks in a range of technical areas of vocational training reform and human resource management.

The project was delayed in 2020 and 2021 because of the Covid-19 situation, although two seminars were held.

## **TWO SEMINARS TO EXPLAIN THE FRENCH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

The French continuous professional development system was discussed over the course of two seminars. A presentation of this system was given by the confederal department of the CFDT union responsible for employment and training. It explained the principles of this system and the key dates in its formation. Trade unions play a vital role in constructing the system, in that most training schemes and provisions were created through contracts and the signing of national multi-sector agreements, and the law extends these rights to all employees.

The October 2020 seminar in Paris was attended by trade union officials from a number of UGTT industry branches

During the October 2020 seminar, the CFDT FGMM and Interco federations explained the ways that their organisational system improved how employment and training issues are being resolved.

The organisation for mining and metallurgy is based on 32 industry branches and includes a joint skills body called OpCo to cover all branches.

Implementation of the federal policy and its subsequent development depend on employee education and engagement, because businesses are where the training issues arise. Trade unions can certainly play a role in this regard and they need to take steps, as unions, to professionalise the training function.

The “Interco” federation, representing the local authorities, explained that in the local public sector, a very low proportion of training provision is run by a national centre for local authority training (called CNFPT).

Politically, accreditation of prior learning and experience (APEL) is deemed important, and



the foundation certificate is an essential tool in encouraging access to education, training and qualifications for those starting from little education and few qualifications. The federation found that obstacles to training include the lack of a clear link between career development and the training taken. This means that an employee might obtain a qualification that will not be acknowledged, because once back at work the corresponding job is not open.

After these two talks, UGTT activists spoke about the principle of APEL. They see discussing “who does what” and stressing the value of in-service training, which does not exist in Tunisia, as crucial.

## THE DECEMBER 2021 SEMINAR IN PARIS WAS ATTENDED BY UGTT OFFICIALS REPRESENTING A NUMBER OF REGIONS IN TUNISIA

At the December 2021 seminar, representatives of the Île-de-France and Pays-de-la-Loire regional unions chose the topic of taking charge of vocational training at regional level, and more specifically how they are involved in vocational training, the provisions, the areas for negotiation at their level, and main issues.

UGTT activists reacted to the debates by pointing out in particular the need to have a clearer picture of the system in Tunisia and to sit on committees where the UGTT is not currently represented.

In addition, during the seminar, a presentation by the French association for adult training (AFPA) also provided an overview of its objectives, and details about its organisation, activities and achievements in terms of improved employability. The fit between the requirements of companies and employees was also addressed, as were employers' responsibilities.



## CONCLUSION:

For UGTT activists, the principle behind this cooperation is to embrace the French model and adapt it as needed to fit the model that the UGTT wishes to implement in Tunisia.

The various presentations showed that it would be useful to re-position and re-organise vocational training based on APEL, and to promote a mechanism encouraging access to education, training and qualifications for those starting from little education and few qualifications.

This project falls within the scope of the Support Programme for Professional Training and Integration (PAFIP), which aims to make Tunisia's vocational training system more effective as a vehicle for employment.





# UNION EDUCATION TO BOOST UNIONISATION AND IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS IN CAMBODIA

In 2015, noting the need to boost membership, the Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC) joined forces with the Belleville Institute to offer basic training, and to “train the trainers”, with the aim of strengthening the capabilities of local branch leaders and enhancing the role played by women leaders. Buoyed by the success seen over the last five years (2016-2020), the CLC has continued to run the project, signing a further three-year agreement (2021-2023) with the Belleville Institute.

The CLC is working with one of its federations (C.CAWDU, the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union) to run the project up to 2020. The final training of 24 trainers improved their knowledge of establishing and organising a trade union, legal procedures, employment rights, conflict resolution, general management and the relationship between the sexes. Armed with this training, the 24 local branch leaders were able, in turn, to train members in their branches.



The CLC also organised a cycle of six basic training sessions in 2020 for another 24 leaders or active members from eight federations, trade union branches and associations that are members of the Cambodian confederation.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE NEW AGREEMENT**

The cooperation agreement targets the following objectives for the eight federations:

- Reinforce the trainers' network and the capacities of branch leaders and grassroots union members;
- Increase the number of female leaders of associations, institutes, trade unions and especially local branches in the formal and informal sectors.

### **FEDERATIONS INVOLVED IN THE TRAINING PROCESS**

The federations engaged in the training process are:

- Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union (C.CAWDU)
- Cambodian Tourism and Service Workers Federation (CTSWF)
- Farmers Association for Peace and Development (FAPD)
- Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation of Cambodia (BWTUC)
- Cambodian Industrial Workers Federation (CIWF)
- Cambodian Agricultural Workers Federation (CAWF)



- Cambodian Transport Workers Federation (CTWF)
- Cambodian Informal Economy Workers Association (CIWA)

The training was completed by 24 people, including four women, from clothing, tourism and services, building and forestry, agriculture, industry, transport and the informal economy.

## TRAINING IN 2020/2021

The Belleville Institute-CFDT provided its expertise in running and evaluating the project.

Attendees were able to share their experience, and improve their knowledge and expertise in learning techniques, coordination, cross-disciplinary skills and training itself. They also learned how to expand union membership and resolve conflicts. Women were urged to take more responsibilities.

The coordinators created a Telegram group to:

- share information, session contents and documents;

- answer questions before, during and after the sessions.

The role of women in leading unions and resolving conflicts was highlighted.

Teams were formed for some role-playing scenarios. The strength of team spirit was noteworthy.

The new trainers acquired new skills in the implementation of training plans and have since trained grassroots members.



Following the training, attendees shared their new knowledge with members and workers in general, in particular as regards freedom of association and the benefits of unionisation and solidarity.

## RENEWED PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CFDT

In 2021, the CLC and the CFDT renewed their partnership, adapting the project implementation plan. The “train the trainers” attendees (23 people, including five women, from all sectors of the economy) completed their training path. The basic training attendees (23 people including nine women, from all sectors) all took the six-session cycle and will follow that in 2022 with the “train the trainers” path, together with some role-playing scenarios.

The CLC defends workers’ interests and supports them on a daily basis on issues as wide-ranging as redundancies, low wages and the reduction in their rights. Lastly, the CLC is lobbying the government to improve the social security system.

The CLC currently represents 113,393 members, spread across 284 local branches. The CLC is

a member of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), ITUC-Asia-Pacific and the ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC). The CLC’s objectives are to maintain its independence, its internal democracy and to emphasise its priority activities such as the training of workers.





# ORGANISING WORKERS, BOTH MALE AND FEMALE, TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS IN INDIA



The activities of the NGO Fedina, which has been a partner of the Belleville Institute for more than a decade, were heavily curtailed in 2020 by the Covid-19 pandemic. The lockdown measures had a huge impact on the daily lives of men and women across India: food shortages, interruption in support services for the most deprived, increase in domestic violence, etc.



Consequently, Fedina had to suspend its usual activities conducted within the framework of cooperation to provide emergency assistance.

Even after the strict lockdown measures had been lifted, the consequences of the pandemic continued to be felt by many workers, male and female alike: difficulties in finding new employment, increased pressure on the job from employers who had benefited from the crisis, etc.

However, in the second half of 2020, Fedina resumed some of the activities put in place within the framework of cooperation, mainly via remote meetings. Through video conferences, it was able to stay in touch with workers, including those belonging to the Trade Union Federation of Southern India and the Federation of Unorganised Retired Workers. These meetings were an opportunity to address issues regarding their

rights, the health situation, and the economic and social consequences of the pandemic.

The Integrated Rural Development Society (IRDS), a member of Fedina that also receives support under the partnership agreement between Fedina and the Belleville Institute, has continued to develop its activities relative to the rights of male and female agricultural workers in Tamil Nadu. Supported primarily by young people in the communities concerned, it has worked with the administration to ensure the enforcement of the Rural Employment Guarantee Act, designed to make sure that rural workers are able to work in or close to their villages for a minimum number of days per year. It has also helped women from various villages to recover their land. In addition, the IRDS still plays an active role in promoting organic farming and protecting common goods, and continues to provide villagers with training on organic farming.



# DECENT WORK AND TRADE UNION EDUCATION: RAISING AWARENESS TO EMPOWER WORKERS IN HAITI



In 2021, the Belleville Institute supported a project to raise awareness of the importance of decent work and trade union education to empower workers in north-eastern Haiti. Supported by the Confederation of Public and Private Sector Workers (CTSP) and the Confederation of Haitian Workers (CTH), this project aimed to:

- Improve knowledge and respect for trade union rights by raising awareness of these subjects;

- Inform members of unions affiliated to the CTSP and CTH in north-eastern Haiti (Ouanaminthe and Caracol) of their rights and duties under the law;
- Boost unions' organisational skills;
- Consolidate the presence of the CTSP and CTH unions in north-eastern Haiti.

This project was also intended to better prepare the trade union teams concerned for the negotiation processes surrounding the renewal of the collective bargaining agreements for the two free zones of CODEVI (Compagnie de développement industriel) in Ouanaminthe and the Caracol Industrial Park.

Two days of briefings were organised on both sites, followed by two training sessions. The latter allowed the CTSP and the CTH to talk to workers' representatives about strategies for negotiating with employers and the different aspects of a collective bargaining agreement. In addition, a process for monitoring the negotiations for the renewal of the two collective bargaining agreements was set up for the CTSP and the CTH.





# SUPPORTING THE ASI IN VENEZUELA

On 28 February 2020, ASI Venezuela finally obtained official recognition as a trade union organisation, which should help its structuring work. That same year, a positive review of the existing cooperation between ASI Venezuela and the Belleville Institute was produced, leading to a new partnership agreement being put in place from October 2020, running until December 2021.

The new agreement with the Belleville Institute, like its predecessors, aims to support activists' organisation, training and research activities, while taking the further difficulties posed by Covid-19 into account, which has only aggravated the multi-faceted crisis that has troubled Venezuela for several years.



The death of Carlos Navarro, the long-standing president of the ASI exiled in Canada for the last two years, was another tough blow for the organisation and its activists. However, they did not allow themselves to be discouraged by these events, and have worked on a number of areas under the leadership of a new president, including:

- Structuring the union;
- Training for activists, organising young people, women and workers in the informal economy;
- Campaigning against discrimination aimed at LGBTQI people, etc.

Health and safety in the workplace were significant topics, primarily protection for healthcare staff, who are very exposed to the pandemic, and demands to make vaccines available.

ASI also made use of the international campaigns of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and its Americas regional organisation (TUCA) to train its activists in the following key areas:



- Ratify the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention 190 against violence in the world of work;
- Against child labour;
- For decent work, including proposals for a minimum wage.



# AFGHANISTAN: HOSTING AND SUPPORTING TRADE UNIONISTS IN EXILE

On 15 August 2021, with the fall of Kabul, the Taliban regained power in Afghanistan, twenty years after their regime first fell. An event that marked the return of obscurantism to this country of 37 million, and raised fears for the lives of National Union of Afghan Workers and Employees (NUAWE) activists and their families. For years, the 160,000-member organisation has been fighting, despite threats and risks, to promote women's rights, individual freedoms, freedom of association, education, compliance with core labour standards and respect for workers' rights. The urgent need to help these trade unionists, who have been working for democracy for years, drove the CFDT to act, in conjunction with the International Trade Union

Confederation (ITUC). This action is consistent with the history of the CFDT and its international engagement, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with free and independent trade unions.

The CFDT intervened with the French government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to remove our Afghan comrades and their families, seventeen people in all. Communication, through instant messaging in particular, intensified between Kabul, the Afghan capital, and the confederation in Paris, to follow developments in the situation on the ground, inform our comrades of procedures in real time, and importantly to show our support. After a hiatus in flights lasting several weeks, it was a



relief to see Maroof Qaradi, the president, and Habiba Fakhri, vice-president of NUAWE, and their families reach Kabul airport and then land at Roissy Charles de Gaulle on 25 September 2021. The end of many long weeks of worry. After the relief, it was essential to welcome the activists and respond to the emergency. The CFDT has been actively involved in working with the asylum-seekers support charity France Terre d'Asile on issues such as accommodation, health (a birth has since taken place in France), transport and the asylum application procedure.

Invited to speak at the union's national conference in October 2021, the Afghan militants thanked the CFDT for its commitment and reiterated their objectives. "We want to continue to defend Afghan workers. We want democracy, we want to fight for human rights and we want to defend the rights of women and children. Thank you for all your support and help," Maroof Qaradi said. A speech to the confederation's leadership that marked the beginning of cooperation with our Afghan comrades. "It is our duty as trade unionists. You are our brothers and sisters," responded

Laurent Berger. "We will do everything in our power, using the CFDT network, to support you in settling in France, where you can continue your fight for trade union rights."

While the asylum process continues, the CFDT continues to work on getting other trade union leaders and their families out of Afghanistan. At the same time, together with the International Trade Union Confederation, the CFDT is acting to support the NUAWE leaders in their union activities. On 2 May 2022, an international conference for Afghanistan was held at the confederation to reaffirm these cooperation plans and objectives.





# STUDY INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FRANCE'S DUTY OF VIGILANCE LAW IN THREE MULTINATIONALS

France's law establishing a duty of vigilance (combining a substantial standard of care and mandatory due diligence) on parent companies and instructing parties (such as principal contractors) was adopted in March 2017. However, a few years after its adoption, it can be seen that, in general, trade union representatives in companies covered by this law are still insufficiently involved in the various stages of its application (drawing up and implementing a vigilance plan, a whistleblowing mechanism, etc.).

Furthermore, it has to be acknowledged that exchange of information between unions along the supply chains of many of the companies concerned could be far more developed than

it is at present. Such exchanges would give trade union officials greater knowledge of the realities existing at the different links in these supply chains. They could then usefully contribute to the discussion, and to initiatives developed as regards application of the duty of vigilance within their companies (for example, to map labour/employment risks).

While it is initially difficult to get a clear picture of the steps being taken in all of the companies subject to the law on the duty of vigilance of parent companies and instructing parties, it is worth looking at the existing measures in some of these companies from a trade union perspective, with a view to:

- Analysing the vigilance plans proposed and whistleblowing mechanisms put in place;
- Identifying existing practices as regards involving trade union representatives and other stakeholders in the procedure to apply the law in companies;
- Drawing some conclusions from these experiences to encourage better implementation of the law by companies and greater involvement of stakeholders, including trade unions which are a component part of any company concerned.
- The holding of interviews with various individuals in these companies (union representatives in parent companies and subsidiaries, senior managers, etc.). These interviews should make it possible to understand the extent to which trade union representatives have been involved up to now in the process of implementing the law within their company, and how management has viewed this involvement.

This was the backdrop against which the Belleville Institute appointed the consultancy Syndex to conduct a study into the implementation of France's law in three French multinationals, to learn some lessons relevant to union activity.

The study took place over the course of 2021, and gave rise to:

- An analysis of vigilance plans and whistleblowing mechanisms in the companies studied;

Recommendations to promote the implementation of the law must also result from this work, so that they can be circulated to trade unions, in parent companies and subsidiaries, as well as among suppliers and subcontractors, having to implement this law on the duty of vigilance. Trade unionists in other countries could subsequently be encouraged to consider the issue, based on this work which is due for completion in the first half of 2022.







# ORIGIN AND USE OF RESOURCES (2020 AND 2021)

## 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 FUND

In 2020, the CFDT confederation allocated a fund of €6,872.07 for the Belleville Institute to support and implement cooperation projects. This fund totalled €65,928.65 for the year 2021.

## OTHER FUNDING

The Belleville Institute has received co-funding from the French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement, AFD) for the *"Supporting the social and economic action of trade unions to promote decent work in West Africa"* project. It also received further co-funding from the French Committee for International Solidarity for the implementation of a project carried out within the framework of the *"Cooperating differently as actors of change"* programme led by the French Committee for International Solidarity (CFSI).

## BUDGET

The Belleville Institute's budget for 2020 was €516,779.71, which includes an operating budget of €131,943.79, representing 25.53% of the total budget. In 2021, the overall budget reached €559,429.41, with an operating budget of €127,494.58, representing 22.79% of the total budget.

## COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

Projects in Africa make up the largest share of the Institute's activities, with eight projects in 2020 and 7 projects in 2021, accounting for 65.2% and 66.1% of project resources for these two years respectively.

Activities in Asia accounted for 25.86% of project resources in 2020 and 18.32% in 2021. In the Americas, they amounted to 8.9% in 2020 and 9.2% in 2021 respectively.

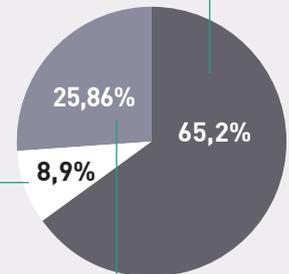
The Belleville Institute's accounts are signed off by the association's General Assembly. They are included in the CFDT's consolidated accounts and certified by auditors.

## ORIGINE DES RESSOURCES 2020

CFDT International Trade Union Solidarity Fund (SSM)	€ 420 000,00	<div style="width: 80%;"></div>
CFDT Confederation Fund	€ 6 872,07	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>
Other Income (AFD, Others)	€ 39 439,00	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>€ 516 779,71</b>	

## PROJECTS

<b>Africa</b>	<b>250 898,74€</b>
Supporting the social and economic action of trade unions to promote decent work in West Africa	€ 58 684,82
ITUC-Africa / CSN, Informal economy	€ 18 628,83
Dignité project	€ 18 491,01
ITUC-Africa, Focal point training	€ 38 782,91
Study: Business and cooperation	€ 21 122,74
CAAC cooperation, Promoting decent work for vulnerable people	€ 54 981,78
UGTT cooperation	€ 3 235,66
UGTT, Support programme for professional training and integration (PAFIP)	€ 36 970,99
<b>Americas</b>	<b>€ 34 423,21</b>
Venezuela	€ 31 311,14
Haiti, Unionisation and decent work	€ 3 112,07
<b>Asia</b>	<b>€ 99 513,95</b>
Unionisation of Cambodian workers	€ 64 971,45
Training for <i>Free Viet Labor</i> activists	€ 23 136,89
Fedina, Indian workers' rights	€ 11 405,61



<b>TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES</b>	<b>€ 384 835,91</b>	<div style="width: 74,47%;"></div>	<b>74,47%</b>
<b>FONCTIONNEMENT</b>	<b>€ 131 943,79</b>	<div style="width: 25,53%;"></div>	<b>25,53%</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>€ 516 779,71</b>		

## ORIGINE DES RESSOURCES TOTAL 2021

CFDT International Trade Union Solidarity Fund (SSM)	€ 420 000,00	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
CFDT Confederation Fund	€ 65 928,65	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>
Other Income (AFD, CFSI)	€ 42 000,00	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>
Voluntary contributions	€ 31 500,76	<div style="width: 7%;"></div>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>€ 559 429,41</b>	

## PROJECTS

<b>Africa</b>		<b>€ 340 511,73</b>	
Supporting the social and economic action of trade unions to promote decent work in West Africa	€ 83 908,04		
ITUC-Africa / CSN, Informal economy	€ 22 172,87		
Dignité project	€ 10 895,52		
ITUC-Africa, Focal point training	€ 22 467,58		
UGTT cooperation	€ 5 478,08		
UGTT, Support programme for professional training and integration (PAFIP)	€ 60 314,24		
<b>Americas</b>		<b>€ 39 601,38</b>	
Venezuela	€ 24 769,96		
Haiti, Unionisation and decent work	€ 14 831,42		
<b>Asia</b>		<b>€ 79 148,61</b>	
Unionisation of Cambodian workers	€ 58 298,93		
Training for <i>Free Viet Labor</i> activists	€ 10 993,16		
Fedina, Indian workers' rights	€ 9 856,52		
<b>Europe</b>		<b>€ 27 654,87</b>	
Study on the implementation of the duty of vigilance law	€ 27 654,87		

<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>€ 431 934,83</b>	<div style="width: 77,21%;"></div> 77,21%
<b>FONCTIONNEMENT</b>	<b>€ 127 494,58</b>	<div style="width: 22,79%;"></div> 22,79%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>559 429,41 €</b>	

# STRUCTURE 2020-2021

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Yvan Ricordeau**

President of the Belleville Institute,  
CFDT National Secretary

### **Inès Minin**

CFDT National Secretary

### **Alexandra Rettien**

Treasurer of the Belleville Institute,  
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### **Catherine Schlachter**

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### **Blandine Landas**

Head of the CFDT Europe-International  
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Confederal Secretary for Africa  
and the Middle East

## L'ÉQUIPE

### **Martine Roy**

Chief Representative, Head of Cooperation

### **Elodie Aïssi**

Head of Cooperation

### **Mickaël Goulette**

Administrative Assistant

## LES EXPERTS

These experts, who are almost all members of the CFDT network, volunteer their own specific expertise and knowledge on a voluntary basis.



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