



UNION TO UNION

LO, TCO & SACO GLOBAL

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



UNION TO UNION

LO, TCO & SACO GLOBAL

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Union to Union coordinates the work of LO (the Swedish Trade Union Confederation), TCO (the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees), Saco (the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations) and their affiliates in international trade union development cooperation. Through *Union to Union*, Swedish unions support more than 80 trade union development projects in as many countries. This represents support to trade unions all over the world.

Union to Union

Upplandsgatan 3, SE-111 23 Stockholm, Sweden

Telephone: (Int.+46) (0)8-798 00 00

E-mail: info@uniontounion.org

Website: uniontounion.org

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Foreword

In 2022, trade union solidarity once again tested its almost immeasurable limits. In February, Russia launched an illegal invasion of Ukraine. Just a few days later, Swedish and global trade unions, working with trade unions in Ukraine, started to redirect development projects into humanitarian actions. The mutual trust on which all our projects are based enabled the networks previously used to exchange union strategies now to be focused on saving lives and mobilising resistance in Ukraine. Initiatives were taken to get members across the border to safer ground, while others helped keep the country's train drivers working, driving train after train towards the border under intense rocket attacks. Trade union networks were used to channel supplies. In neighbouring countries, trade union training centres were transformed into reception centres for thousands of refugees.

The war continued, month after month. Just as unrelentingly, Swedish trade unions continued to provide support to partners in Ukraine. There is no doubt that the reconstruction of Ukraine will involve Swedish investment, building materials and loans. However, it is equally important that the construction workers employed to build new schools do so with job security and safe working conditions. And that all the teachers who have fled the country are given the opportunity to return to secure employment in order to receive the students at the rebuilt schools. When that day comes, we will be ready with support for projects and inter-union cooperation.

The past year was also the one when aid was treated like the government's petty cash and money was taken out of the aid budget without warning. I have recalculated so many budgets that I have lost count. Then came the autumn and a parliamentary election with an election debate that ignored the importance of aid in a world hit hard by crises and war. And election promises from the parties forming the new government, indicating more cuts and worrying changes to the objectives and nature of the aid provided. The year ended with a radically amended aid budget for Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency).

Hardest hit were the partners that we support

around the world. Associations and union members in Kenya, Tunisia and Colombia, who were unable to perform important activities for members, young people and women outside the labour market, as well as migrant workers with no rights at all. After several tough years during the pandemic, the organisations that were already working under difficult conditions had to reorganise activities and work wonders to recruit more members, support threatened trade unionists and provide training on the vital right to organise.

Despite war, austerity measures and new policies, our work continues, of course. Our development cooperation activities are more important than ever. During the year, I travelled to projects in Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Brazil. I visited workplaces and trade union offices, and saw the difference our support makes. I remain convinced that trade union rights must be defended again and again to create a better future for people and the environment alike.

In May 2022, Sweden organised a climate summit, Stockholm +50, in which we participated. Many of the discussions centred on the green transition – how important, but also how hopeful, it is. And what role Sweden can play in the process. But too many scenes had no voices from those in the midst of transition, whose jobs will change and whose lives have already become poorer in the wake of climate change. We work with them in many of our projects around the world. Speeding up trade union activity in the green transition and improving the vulnerable situation of our partners are two of many important issues for us going forward.

How do you sum up a year like this? I have always been driven by the idea that it is right now, in these times and in this world, that global trade union solidarity is needed. Because, although we are working against the odds, there is security in the knowledge that we are part of the world's biggest democratic movement. The union.

Maria Nyberg
Secretary General
Union to Union



PHOTO: MAJKA BRAND

The year in figures

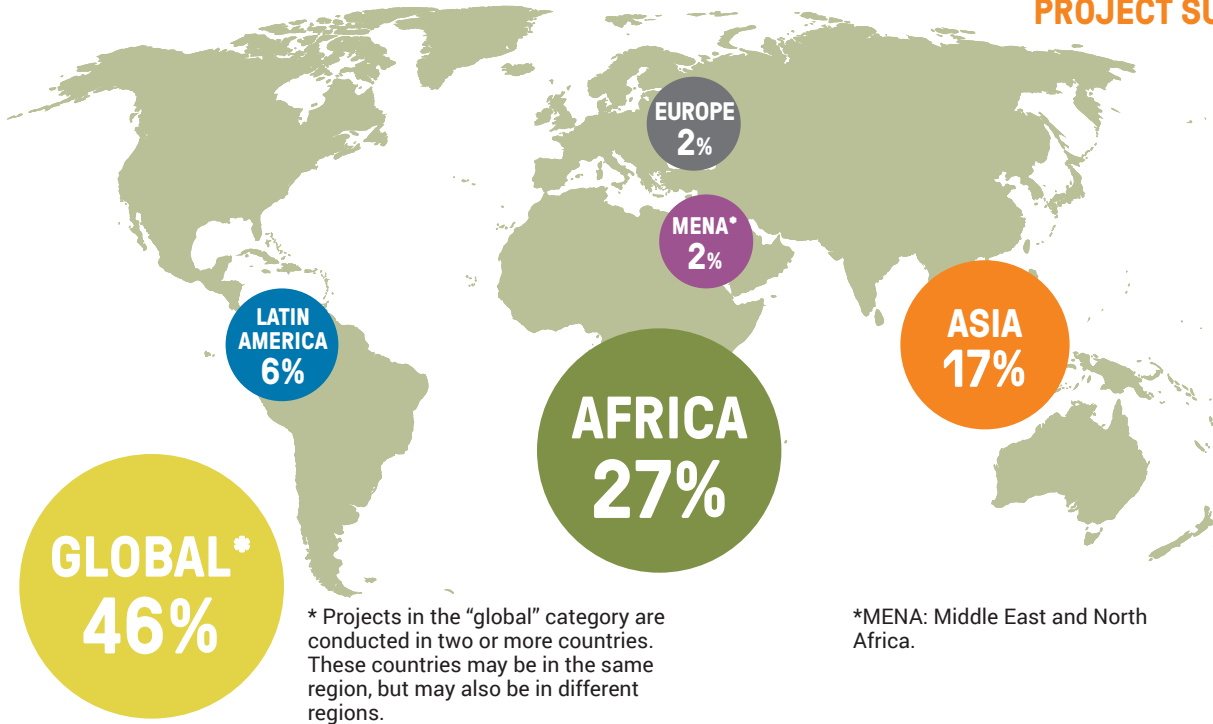
86

PROJECTS

80

MILLIONS IN
PROJECT SUPPORT

ECONOMIC BREAKDOWN BY REGION:



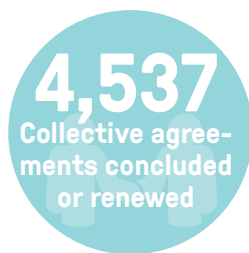
2018–2022 in figures

Union to Union operates on a five-year business cycle.

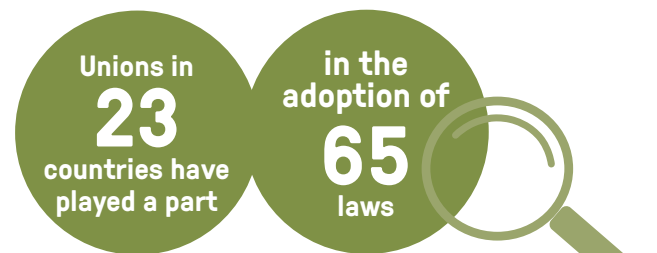
2022 was the last year of the 2018–2022 cycle. The figures here reflect the entire programme period.



This is partly a result of renewal within the trade union sector. Renewal may include new ways of organising, recruiting and claiming trade union rights – which have driven up membership. More members means a more powerful voice for workers, and a stronger democracy.



The agreements represent improvements for workers in all forms of employment, in every sector where development projects have taken place. Through these projects, trade unions have learnt more about negotiation techniques and workers' rights. This has brought higher wages, a healthier work environment and safer workplaces for women and men.



Legal requirements and labour market regulations mean improvements for both workers and society at large. The greater ability of trade unions to campaign and present common demands has led to millions of workers having their rights recognised, informal workers having their working conditions regulated and new groups of workers benefiting from social security systems.

This is Union to Union

Union to Union is the joint international cooperation development organisation of LO, TCO, Saco and their affiliates. The organisation's work focuses on creating strong democratic trade unions and more decent jobs globally.

Union to Union also engages in knowledge dissemination and advocacy to help bring about a more just and equal world.

History and background

In the 1970s, as more and more countries gained independence from their colonial systems, the worldwide International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the Trade Secretariat began to organise trade union aid activities.

Initially, the financial resources were provided exclusively by trade unions. But in Sweden the aid budget increased and in 1970, LO and TCO contacted the aid agency Sida to investigate the possibility of also obtaining grants for trade union education activities in countries with widespread poverty.

In 1977, the Secretariat was allocated a block grant for the first time, and the LO-TCO Aid Council was established. Since then, the process has continued: In 2015, the central or-

ganisation Saco signed up. On Saco becoming a member, the organisation changed its name to *Union to Union* and adopted new Articles of Association.

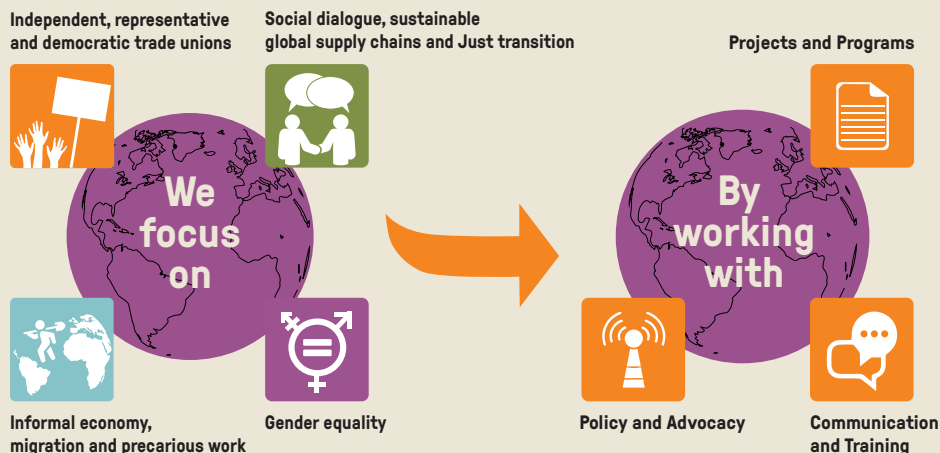
Focus of activities

The organisation has three main functions. The first is to support and coordinate the activities of LO, TCO, Saco and their affiliates in international trade union development cooperation. The second is to secure and develop methods and processes for implementation and quality assurance and to evaluate outcomes and impacts of trade union development projects. The third function is to communicate and conduct information-forming initiatives aimed at increasing knowledge of, strengthening confidence in and support for international trade union development cooperation.

Union to Union is a "strategic partner organisation" of Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency). Operations are financed via grants from Sida and funds from the Swedish trade union movement. The organisation is politically and religiously non-aligned.

UNION TO UNION

Organising for decent work, democracy and social justice



How we work

Union to Union's work is primarily geared towards building up the capacity of unions in low and middle-income countries for organising, negotiating, advocacy work and promoting gender equality and democracy.

We perform our work via a wide-ranging network consisting of *Union to Union* and Swedish trade unions, which carry out the projects in cooperation with Global Union Federations (GUFs, see page 12). The focus is on strengthening local trade unions in countries where poverty is widespread.

Union to Union also supports and initiates knowledge-enhancing activities in Sweden. These aim to increase awareness of and engagement in international trade union development cooperation, and to develop an understanding of how this is linked to sustainable development around the world.

Project activities

In 2022, *Union to Union* supported 86 projects/programmes in 75 countries. In Sweden, 27 trade unions were involved in international projects. The expert role of Swedish trade unions, through which they contribute experience and knowledge, means they have an important role. All projects are grouped into four overarching thematic areas. See the infographic on page 6, and read more on the following pages.

Personnel and organisation

Union to Union has an office in Stockholm. The office coordinates and conducts activities, such as offering expertise in methodology, financial monitoring and training to Swedish and international trade unions. The Governing Board (see page 22) comprises representatives of Swedish trade unions and is appointed by the central organisations LO, TCO and Saco. The Board decides the main focus of our work.





Ukraine 2022: Trade union solidarity amidst the invasion

Widespread support for Ukraine.
Photo: Lina Barke.

Immediately after Russia launched its full-scale war of aggression in February, Swedish trade unions demonstrated their support for Ukraine. The year has been characterised by concerted engagement, in the form of humanitarian initiatives, extensive fund-raising and events. “In dark times, the forces of good are needed even more. The forces of good, including those of us in the union”, says Maria Nyberg, Secretary General of *Union to Union*.

The expertise of trade unions in organising and mobilising came to the fore immediately after 24 February 2022. During the year, Swedish trade unionists and unions have raised large sums of money and contributed in a variety of ways, often in co-operation with *Union to Union*.

In addition to ongoing project activities in Ukraine, *Union to Union's* initiatives have included organising seminars, disseminating information about trade union solidarity work and supporting the trade union press and reporting on the *Arbetet Global* website on and from Ukraine.

“Solidarity with our Ukrainian colleagues is

very important to us and we are committed to maintaining our outcome-focused and successful development cooperation”, says *Union to Union* Secretary General Maria Nyberg.

Cooperation with the unions in Ukraine has increased the depth of our contacts, which bodes well for the future.

” The war will be decided by the extent to which the Ukrainians obtain help. When our members realise that they're part of this important joint effort, many become proud of their union. – Magnus Runsten

“There is no alternative to continuing”, says Christer Wälivaara, International Strategist at trade union organisation 6F. And the trade union movement has continued to grow in the midst of the war. Our work is fundamentally about everyone’s equal right to decent working conditions.

Ukraine’s needs quickly became massive, and according to Magnus Runsten, International Officer at ST (the Swedish Union of Civil Servants), the involvement of the Swedish unions is extremely important.

“The war will be decided by the extent to which the Ukrainians receive help. When our members realise that they are part of this important cooperation, many become proud of their union. But we couldn’t have done it without *Union to Union*, both in terms of funding and the actual implementation of the projects.”

One clear manifestation of the effectiveness of trade union organisation is the Ukrainian youth network Trade Union Lifeline, which is part of SEUU, the Ukrainian trade union for public employees and ST’s partner.

The network was honoured in 2022 for “admirable relief efforts” and thanks to fundraising and support, Trade Union Lifeline received a bus, loaded with 50 boxes of supplies.

“The funds raised for the bus come from individual members and other stakeholders, as well as from ST departments”, says Magnus Runsten.

Oksana Huz, an ST project manager who fled Kyiv with her daughter in February, is impressed by the willingness of Swedish trade unionists to actively support their Ukrainian colleagues.

“It’s very clear that people are interested and want to know more about my country, about working conditions and how trade unions work. So many people really want to contribute, it’s fantastic”.

There is no doubt about the importance of trade union development cooperation.

“When our Ukrainian colleagues visited at the end of the year, they were struck by the support from the trade unions and the whole of Swedish society”, says Magnus Runsten. “It gave them hope and energy to keep going”.

Vasyl Andreyev, President, PROFBUD, the Ukrainian construction union

PHOTO: PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION



Why are trade unions important in crises?

“Trade unions are structured organisations that can provide security. For example, when advice and assistance from the government is lacking, trade unions can offer it.

At the beginning of the invasion, unions were the only stable institution for many members of the population. It’s also clear that trade unions will have an important role to play in the reconstruction of Ukraine. Trade unions represent sustainability in challenging times”.

What are the main lessons you’ve learnt in the past year?

“I’ve learnt that solidarity is more than just a word. It’s something real. I’ve also learnt that people are much stronger than we think. People have engaged despite the danger, despite ongoing attacks. And then I’ve also learnt how frightening war is. It’s something I hope I will never have to live through again”.

What are your thoughts about the future?

“Right now, the future is about survival. And that the important thing in the future will be to ensure that what is still happening today – cannot happen again. It will take massive efforts to rebuild the country and I believe and hope that trade unions will grow stronger again”.

Ivanna Khrapko, Youth Leader, Ukrainian trade union SEUU

PHOTO: PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION



“On 24 February, life changed for everyone in Ukraine. In the early days, the main challenge for trade unions was to help their members in different ways. But during the invasion, we’ve also tried to be a voice of truth about the war. We’ve performed a range of different activities with our international

sister organisations. In addition, much thanks to our Swedish trade union colleagues and *Union to Union*, we’ve been able to create a project: the Trade Union Lifeline, in which we’ve helped to get various supplies to our members. During the year, we’ve carried out various training programmes for our youth leaders on how to adapt to this difficult situation. “Together” is the key word in moving forward.

A trade union perspective

2022 was an eventful year both in Sweden and around the world. What does trade union cooperation look like? Via our 'Global Union Voices' campaign, we provided a platform for trade unionists from around the world. Here is some of what they said!



Higher pay is just one of all the key issues we address. We also focus on young people working in digital media, and on the growing number of freelancers in Montenegro.

Bojana Lakovic Konatar, Project Coordinator, Sindijat Medija, Montenegro



Access to workplaces is one of the most important issues. Trade unions are prevented from gaining access to vineyard workers.

Ida Jacobs, Project Coordinator, IUF/IUL



Trade unionism is an effective tool against violence and harassment, as we are the representatives of workers against the state and employers.

Adriana Pella, Communications Officer, SUTEP, Argentina



In Nepal, the government often attacks the trade unions. But trade unions are an important countervailing force against poor working conditions.

Binod Acharya, President, NTEAN, Nepal



One of our biggest challenges is the problem of gender-based violence, both in the workplace and at home.

Everline Aketch, Project Secretary, Public Services International, Ghana



It is important for us to fight against informal work. And how are we doing that? Well, through collective agreements.

Diana Solís, Secretary General, SINCA, Peru



We mobilise young people through our podcast, and have managed to bring around 5,000 young people together in just one year. By talking about issues that concern young people, we have managed to grow.

Juscelino Novais, Trade Union Leader, SINTRACON, Brazil



By forming an anti-sexual harassment committee, we have succeeded in solving many problems. Now we also know more about gender issues.

Chandika Pokharel, Trade Union Leader, NTEAN, Nepal



In July this year, the Supreme Court of Belarus banned all activities of our independent trade unions. As a result, workers in Belarus no longer have freedom of association.

Maxim Paznyakou, Acting Chairman, Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BKDP)



One of the biggest challenges for trade unions in the Asia-Pacific region fighting for those who work in the informal sector is that these workers are effectively invisible.

Hidayat Greenfield, Regional Secretary Asia/Pacific, IUF/IUF



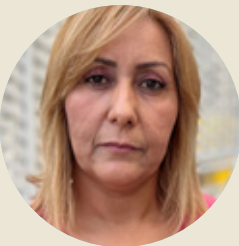
We've tried to be a voice that tells the truth about the war. Working with young trade unionists and other organisations, we've also created a project to provide humanitarian support to our members.

Ivanna Khrapko, Trade Union Youth Leader, SEUU, Ukraine



Trade unionism in Tunisia has developed a great deal, but there's still much to do.

Habib Hazami, Secretary General, FGTHCC-UGTT, Tunisia



Tunisian women face many challenges. We can defend many of our rights but we have no real freedom.

Nadia Bergaoui, Trade Union Leader, Agricultural Union of Tunisia



Women in every country must be able to exercise their rights. It shouldn't just be talk about women being able to take part.

Haifa Kansoo, Vice President, NSSF, Lebanon

Global federations are building the future together

With more than 200 million members worldwide, the trade union movement is the largest popular social movement in the world. Sweden's trade unions are part of this network and have always engaged in international cooperation. As companies, economies and labour markets become globalized, this international trade union cooperation is becoming increasingly important. This is why global framework agreements exist, establishing fundamental conditions to protect workers' interests (see fact box).

Most of *Union to Union's* projects are performed in partnership with Swedish unions and their global federations. The federations are organised sector-wise, and the Swedish unions may be members of one or more federations.

Union to Union also works with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the world's largest trade union organisation. The principal members of the ITUC are the central union organisations; in Sweden these are LO, TCO and Saco.

In addition to conducting development projects, the ITUC and the global federations



Global framework agreements

In the early 2000s, several global federations began to sign up to agreements, known as global framework agreements, with multinational companies. These agreements were a direct response to the globalisation of the economy. The idea is that the agreements should establish conditions that must never be breached within a corporate group, regardless of where in the world the business is conducted. The conditions have to be specified and fleshed out via national agreements. The agreements also counteract "social dumping", in which companies profit from relocating their operations to countries where working conditions are poorer.

monitor common union issues and represent their members in various international contexts. They also monitor and engage in advocacy on decisions in the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other UN agencies. The global federations operate via regional, and in some cases local, offices around the world.

Global federations

BWI – Building and Wood Workers' International
The construction and wood industry.

EI – Education International
The education sector.

FIA – International Federation of Actors
The actors' union.

FIA – International Federation of Musicians
The musicians, performing artists and entertainment sector.

IndustriALL Global Union
The mining, energy/chemicals and manufacturing industries.

ICN – International Council of Nurses
The healthcare sector.

FIA – International Federation of Journalists
Journalists and media workers.

ITF – International Transport Workers' Federation
The federation of trade unions in the transport sector.

IUF – International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations
The hotels, restaurants, tourism, catering, food and agriculture sectors.

PSI – Public Services International
Social services and the public sector.

UNI – Uni Global Union
The knowledge and services sector.

ITUC – World Trade Union

Trade union success creating opportunities for H&M workers in Peru

For six years, wages stood still but when H&M workers in Peru unionised, they managed to secure their first collective agreement after years of struggle.

“This is an important victory not only for the workers but also for the trade union movement in Peru”, said Sergio Ortega, President of SUTRAH&M in Peru.



In Peru, society – and the labour market – is permeated by a negative attitude towards trade unionism. Against that background, when H&M workers in the country organised themselves into unions and raised their voices for better working conditions, a long struggle lay ahead.

Despite setbacks including the pandemic, store closures and provocations by employers, in 2022 the union achieved one of its major goals: a collective agreement for its members.

“This will bring better conditions for our members both in terms of income and with regard to security and safety at work”, says Sergio Ortega.

For the SUTRAH&M union, this success will have a ripple effect, with more workers joining the union when they see it making a difference.

“There are eighteen stores in the country. Right now, we have union representation in 15 of them. We’re already seeing an increase in interest”, says Sergio Ortega.

For retail workers, harassment is common, says Sergio Ortega. He explains that in many workplaces there are serious shortcomings in safety procedures – and that the psychosocial work environment in many cases leads to stress and depression.

This is an issue he wants to address in the future.

“The next step is to organise regionally as well, so that we get even stronger. My goal is that in three years we’ll have negotiated more collective agreements, but also that we’ll be a

strong player with even more members”, says Sergio Ortega. He emphasises the support that SUTRAH&M has received from the global trade union movement, and believes it has played a key role in the success achieved.

The Unionen white-collar trade union and Handels (the Swedish Commercial Employees’ Union), in association with the global union UNI, have been operating a trade union development project in the retail sector in Peru for several years, with the support of *Union to Union*. The aim is to build stronger trade unions, via both capacity building and regional knowledge sharing.

“It’s taken five long years to get the collective agreement in place. There were times when I honestly doubted whether we’d be able to reach an agreement. “It’s fantastic that after all the problems along the way we’ve finally succeeded”, says Asgeir Lundblad, International Secretary, Unionen.

“It hasn’t been an easy journey, but our trade union comrades in Peru have fought hard both to recruit members and to bring about a collective agreement. We’re proud of our work with the union in Peru, and to us it’s important to get involved in trade union work outside Sweden. Companies aren’t tied to one country, they move across borders. In that situation, we also have to organise globally”, say Karin Lindehoff, Head of the Membership and Organising Unit at Handels.

THEMATIC AREA 1.

Independent and democratic trade unions



WHAT IS THE AIM? To strengthen independent, representative and democratic trade union organisations that are able to efficiently organise new members and conduct successful trade union activities with respect for human rights in the workplace.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Democratic space is shrinking across much of the world
- Millions of workers are not being paid a living wage and are working in dangerous and unhealthy conditions
- Strong unions are essential for decent conditions and sustainable jobs for the workers of the world
- The labour market is changing – increased digitalisation, more precarious jobs, the climate crisis, rising poverty following the Covid-19 pandemic



Unionised workers on a course in the “Union Building Sub-Saharan Africa” project, conducted by local trade unions in collaboration with the IF Metall union, Unionen and the Swedish Paper Workers’ Union, with the support of *Union to Union*. Photo: Stina Petersson.

More trade unions! – was the priority for this thematic area in 2022. Trade unions are key organisations in the defence of human rights at work. As a result, employees and unionists around the world often encounter various forms of threats and harassment.

The trade union movement is working to safeguard workers’ rights in a global labour market that is undergoing constant change. Knowledge of international and national legislation and agreements governing industrial relations is an essential prerequisite for autonomous and strong trade union organisations.

An important part of the work of *Union to Union* and the trade union movement is therefore to support and help unions organise and become more representative.

Union to Union’s operations focus on the core activities of trade unions, internal democracy, economic sustainability and the capacity to serve as a negotiating partner.

Outcomes from Union to Union’s work in this thematic area are described on our website www.uniontounion.org

THEMATIC AREA 2.

Social dialogue, sustainable supply chains and a just climate transition



WHAT IS THE AIM? To enable trade unions to effectively engage in broadly-based social dialogue and collective bargaining and help bring about sustainable global supply chains.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Good relations between the social partners are crucial
- Decent work reduces poverty and increases equality
- A fair climate transition creates decent and sustainable jobs



A worker in Bangladesh dyes jeans. Photo: G.M.B. Akash/Panos Pictures.

Collective agreements at the centre and more trade unions working for a sustainable climate transition. This was the focus of trade union development cooperation in this thematic area in 2022. Effective social dialogue is based on good relations between the social partners. Social dialogue can take place at different levels; in the workplace, by sector and nationally. It covers every type of negotiation, consultation and sharing of information between representatives of governments, employers and workers.

Global supply chains play a part in economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction, but they also shift power and influence away from individual countries. The trade

union movement plays an important role in regulating working conditions; what are known as global framework agreements are becoming increasingly important (see fact box on page 12).

Practically all workers and all workplaces in the world's low and middle-income countries are affected by the climate crisis. By working within a framework for a just climate transition, workers can be at the negotiating table and create a fair transition with decent jobs – a Just Transition.

Outcomes from Union to Union's work in this thematic area are described on our website www.uniontounion.org

THEMATIC AREA 3.

Organising in the informal sector, migration and precarious jobs



WHAT IS THE AIM? To provide trade union organisations with the capacity to help improve conditions for workers in the informal economy, for migrant workers and for workers who lack job security.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- The growing global gig economy
- Migrant workers face discrimination and exploitation
- Negative trend towards labour market deregulation



Brick factory in India, where the bricks are transported on donkeys. Photo: Crispin Hughes/Panos Pictures.

Better conditions for migrant workers – and formalised informal jobs. That was the focus of this thematic area in 2022. For many years, a negative trend of labour market deregulation in several countries has been evident. This trend is leading to poorer employment conditions and lower wages. A shrinking manufacturing industry worldwide and accelerating digitalisation are also having an impact on labour market conditions.

A majority of workers in low and middle-income countries are now working in the informal economy. The informal economy is often dominated by women and young people, who in many cases struggle to survive on low and insecure incomes, working without contracts, agreements or social security.

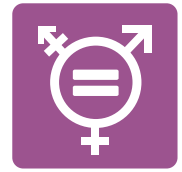
In addition, 200 million people are also living today as migrant workers. Discrimination against and exploitation of migrant workers lowers the level of pay and working conditions for all workers in the country concerned.

Union to Union's work is focused on the capacity of trade unions to adapt their structures and strategies so they are able to influence working conditions in the informal labour market. Other efforts are concentrated on working conditions for vulnerable workers, in order to establish decent working conditions, social security and secure jobs.

Outcomes from Union to Union's work in this thematic area are described on our website www.uniontounion.org

THEMATIC AREA 4.

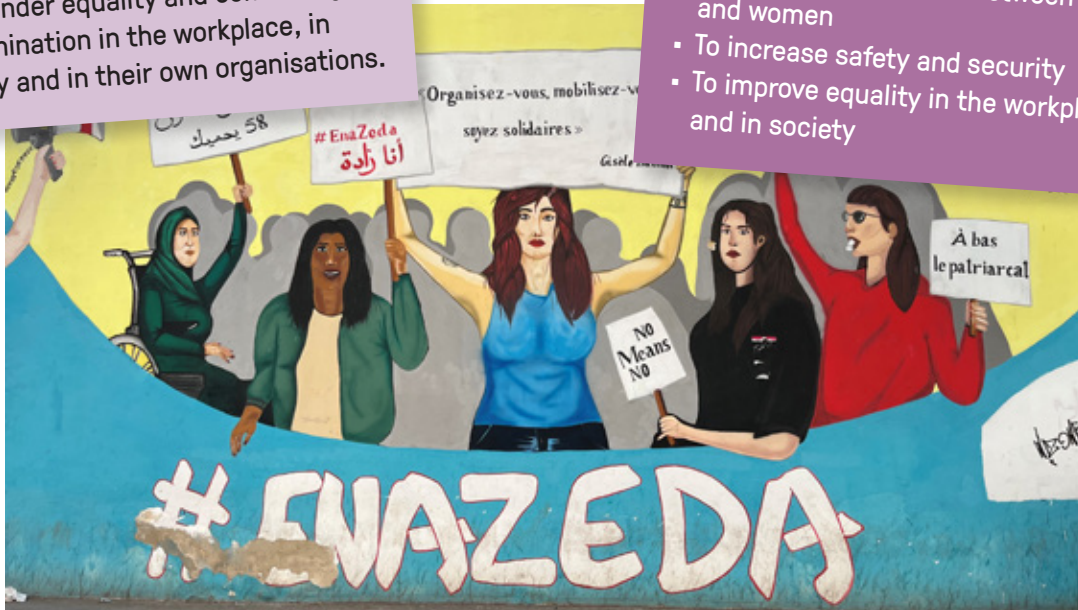
Increased gender equality in the workplace, society and within trade union organisations



WHAT IS THE AIM? To enable trade unions to take a leading role in promoting gender equality and combating discrimination in the workplace, in society and in their own organisations.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Structural inequalities between men and women
- To increase safety and security
- To improve equality in the workplace and in society



Mural created during the #metoo movement in the Tunisian capital Tunis. Photo: Martin Falkman.

More countries must ratify ILO Convention C190, against violence and harassment in the workplace! This was – and continues to be – the requirement in this thematic area. In today's global labour markets, unacceptable disparities exist between women's and men's working conditions and pay. Several structural factors, including attitudes, values, legislation and cultural norms, are holding back gender equality.

Just over a third of women over the age of 15 have experienced sexual or physical violence at work, at home or in the community. As a result of the violence, it is not uncommon for women to be unable to work because of their injuries, and they run a greater risk of losing their jobs due to absence.

Around the world, LGBTQI people are

excluded from the labour market because of discrimination. Despite the prevalence of harassment, protective legislation is often lacking or not enforced.

Strong trade union organisations are important in terms of increasing gender equality at work – and in other areas of society. *Union to Union's* activities focus on the attitudes, values and behaviours of trade unions and their capacity to work internally on gender equality. This work also aims to contribute to improving the workplace conditions of women and LGBTQI people and to increase their empowerment in society.

Outcomes from Union to Union's work in this thematic area are described on our website www.uniontounion.org

2022: a challenging year for advocacy and communication

A strong year came to an abrupt end with Sweden's new aid policy. *Union to Union's* unique role in disseminating knowledge on how trade union development cooperation strengthens democracy will be severely limited from the end of 2022. But the trade union network for development cooperation remains strong.

At the outset of the 2022 election year, we were planning for a year in which the pandemic would no longer dominate our activities. A year in which we would be able to fully highlight and promote our issues and complete our five-year communication and advocacy programme. The communication and journalism we fund to publicise development efforts around the world would be conducted as planned, but that was not all.

We would be looking to the future and applying for a new five-year communication programme with Sida.

But the map was already redrawn on 24 February 2022, when Russia launched its war of aggression against Ukraine. When, on the evening of 24 February, *Union to Union* took part in an anti-war trade union demonstration in Stockholm, we had no idea that the Russian invasion would affect both our communications and the very nature of our work for the rest of the year.

During the year, we wrote 15 extended articles in the form of news releases, statements of support and opinion pieces about trade union networks in Ukraine and members who have fled the war. Our Secretary General, Maria Nyberg, has expressed her support for the work of Ukrainian colleagues in speeches, columns, blog posts and opinion pieces. In March we organised a webinar on Ukraine and in April a parliamentary seminar with young trade union leaders via links from Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv.

In April, the former Social Democratic government decided to finance a large part of the intake of refugees from Ukraine with aid

money. Plans for the election campaign were quickly switched to what became one of the hottest aid issues of 2022 – resource allocations.

Nevertheless, despite savings, *Union to Union* conducted a series of opinion-forming and communication activities in the run-up to the election. We produced opinion pieces, recorded videos featuring aid policy spokespersons and participated in three seminars during Almedalen Week. We also launched the Global Rights Index – our analysis of how a large number of countries around the world comply with and respect human rights both in and outside the labour market.

For the second year in a row, we ran the “Global Trade Union Voices” social media campaign, which aims to provide a platform for trade union voices in order to focus attention on challenges around the world. We organised two seminars “Global justice – a naive dream” and “Power, bribes and dictators” on the topic of Qatar and the working conditions of migrant workers ahead of the men's football World Cup.

The reduction in grant funding had an impact on the communication projects financed by *Union to Union*. However, despite the reduction in funding, the majority of the federations, organisations and editorial offices receiving funding from us were able to conduct communication activities in 2022.

The *Arbetet Global* website continued its regular monitoring and the Fairtrade Sweden organisation was able to maintain its programme despite funds being halved. In addition, the Swedish Union of Civil Servants adapted content to take account of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and performed



Seminar on Ukraine. Photo: Lina Barke.

several Ukraine-based activities. The Press Freedom podcast, the *Arbetsvärlden* website and the *Klimatagendan* platform continued their activities during the year. Reports on working conditions and trade unionism from around the world were published.

During the year, an application process for a new 2023–2027 programme within the framework of Sida’s funding for information and communication was set in motion, with trade unions, organisations and the trade union press seeking new funding via *Union to Union*. Unfortunately, Sida rejected the application after the new government’s decision to phase out information and communication support in 2023 for the many projects that support transparency, knowledge and development.

A strong year came to an abrupt halt. *Union to Union*’s unique role in disseminating knowledge on how trade union development cooperation strengthens democracy and human rights will be severely limited from the end of 2022. But the trade union network for development cooperation is strong. Working with the Swedish trade union movement, we are continuing both a critical review and descriptions of the productive outcomes from our cooperation around the world.

The year in brief

These were the key activities for the work on information, advocacy and communication by *Union to Union* during the year:

Global Rights Index: How are countries around the world respecting human and labour rights? *Union to Union* launched the ITUC’s annual report. Read more at www.uniontounion.org/gri2022

Global trade union voices: What is the state of the trade union climate around the world? Short videos were produced and disseminated on social media.

The men’s football World Cup in Qatar: *Union to Union* organised a seminar on the conditions of guest workers in Qatar, which was shown live on Facebook, and raised the issue through various channels.

Election campaign 2022: Ahead of the election, articles were written and videos produced on social media where the parliamentary parties answered questions about Sweden’s aid and its future.

Ukraine: After Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, *Union to Union* served as a unifying force in providing situation reports from the country – and about how the trade union movement in both Ukraine and Sweden spoke out against the invasion. *Union to Union* also organised seminars on the situation in Ukraine.



“Important to highlight the situation of informal workers”

Motorbike messengers in Asia work in difficult and dangerous environments. Photo: IUF/IUL.

One of the biggest challenges for trade unions worldwide is the large number of informal jobs, i.e. jobs where there are no formal contracts or agreements with employers.

“These people are invisible. We need to stand up for workers who are working in appalling conditions”, says Hidayat Greenfield, Regional Secretary of the IUF/IUF Global Union.

The problem of high levels of informal employment spans many occupational sectors. The food and drink industry is no exception. Low pay, low security and poor conditions are very common.

“It’s important to get companies to recognise these workers. To get companies to take responsibility”, says Hidayat Greenfield. He strives every day to highlight the situation of the informal labour force in the region and, despite the many challenges, also sees successes.

As an example, he cites the situation of motorbike messengers in the Philippines, where the international trade union movement has been involved.

“A major achievement during the year was the recognition of the United Delivery Riders Union as a trade union by the Department of

Labour. This made dialogue possible, which is the first and most important step in standing up for workers’ rights.

Motorbike messengers in Asia work in difficult and dangerous environments. They are also a disposable resource in the big companies’ mission to make money. Several employers have refused to insure the riders.

“Drivers who’ve been involved in accidents have had to pay the costs themselves. People who work in the informal sector contribute enormously to our societies. Not least to the economies of countries. They have the right to be visible. They have the right to actually have rights”, says Hidayat Greenfield.

For several years, the Swedish Food Workers’ Federation has – working with local trade unions and the global union federation IUF/IUF and supported by *Union to Union* – conducted trade union development projects in Southeast Asia. One of the aims has been to increase the capacity of local trade unions to organise informal workers.

Major challenges remain for gender equality in Tunisia

Trade unions in Tunisia are creating better conditions in the workplace – and improved gender equality. But it is not without problems. “Women working in agriculture in rural areas have a tough time. They are the forgotten women”, says Nadia Bergaoui of the Tunisian Farmers’ Union.

Tunisia’s agriculture is an important source of income for the country. The main crops are olives, dates, citrus and grapefruit. Farming in Tunisia is a tough life in general, but it is even tougher for women.

“We’ve certainly come a long way in terms of gender equality”, says Nadia Bergaoui, coordinator in the Tunisian Farmers’ Union. She continues,

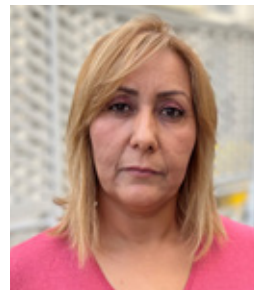
“But there’s a long way to go and there’s a big difference between urban and rural areas. In rural areas, women are not free. Women farmers can’t move freely or attend meetings and political rallies in the same way as in the cities.”

Nadia Bergaoui lists several major problems, and not just low income and high wage differentials. She says women farmers are marginalised by the country’s government, quoting issues such as unsafe transport, harassment and exclusion.

“As long as women don’t have full rights, we can’t talk about freedom”, says Nadia Bergaoui, who says many of the country’s women are in an uphill struggle.

“But I’m proud to represent these women. They’re the forgotten women: forgotten by the state and by the international community. The only time they’re recognised is on 8 March, International Women’s Day.”

To boost gender equality in trade unions, ST (the Swedish Union of Civil Servants), along with local unions in Tunisia and the global PSI (Public Services International) union federation, are conducting a gender equality project in the



Nadia Bergaoui.

Middle East and North Africa. The aim is to persuade more women to join trade unions and to provide trade unions in the region with the capacity to train women leaders. And it is producing results.

“The number of women in leadership positions has increased in many of the unions involved in the project. “By reaching leadership positions, more women are becoming able to work to defend trade union rights and combat discriminatory social structures”, says Magnus Runsten, International Officer and Project Coordinator at the ST union.



Photo: Martin Falkman.

Union to Union – Governing Board

PHOTO: MAGNUS LANJE



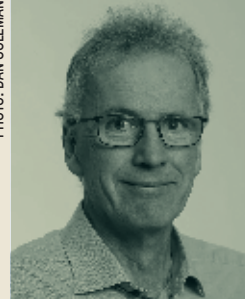
Chair: Heike Erkers, the Union for Professionals (Saco).

PHOTO: CAMILLA SVENSK



Deputy Chair: Peter Hellberg, 1st Vice President Unionen (TCO)

PHOTO: DAN COLEMAN



Mikael Johansson, President of the Painters' Union (LO)

PHOTO: DANIEL ROOS



Martin Gunnarsson, Secretary of the IF Metall Union Office (LO)

PHOTO: FREDRIK SANDIN CARLSSON



Pim van Dorpel, Vice President, Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union (LO)

PHOTO: LO



Sofia Eriksson, International Secretary, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (LO)

PHOTO: VISION



Katarina Holmqvist, Member of Governing Board, Vision trade union (TCO)

PHOTO: TCO



Anna Gustafsson, International Secretary (TCO)

PHOTO: ANDERS WIKLUND TT



Marina Tuutma, Second Vice President, Swedish Medical Association (Saco)

PHOTO: KNUZ CAPRA PEDERSEN



Peter Olding, Head of Department, Federation Support (Saco)

PHOTO: PONTUS LUNDAHL



Linda Palmetzhofer, Chair, Handels (the Swedish Commercial Employees' Union) (LO)

PHOTO: ULF HUETT



Sineva Ribeiro, President of the Swedish Association of Health Professionals (TCO).



“We in the global trade union movement represent millions of workers around the world and we stand side by side for peace, democracy and human rights. In the fight for democracy, climate justice and the eradication of poverty, trade union development cooperation is crucial.

We work with our international trade union partners to ensure climate-smart development, a Just Transition, and to build economic and political strength for sustainability and social justice. We need dialogue, unity and action to combat growing inequality, both between and within countries.”

This statement was made jointly by all global union federations and Swedish trade unions during a meeting in Stockholm in September 2022. Photo: Niklas Porter.

**UNION
TO UNION**

LO, TCO & SACO GLOBAL

Union to Union

Upplandsgatan 3, SE-111 23 Stockholm, Sweden

Phone: +46 (0)8 798 00 00

E-mail: info@uniontounion.org

Website: uniontounion.org