

APPLICATION FORM

Country/project name: ICEM Asia MNCs & Social Dialogue Project
Project No.: BE 004621

Implementing organisation: ICEM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and previous experiences:

Based on the 2006 pilot project, and experience of similar MNC projects in other countries and regions, the following analysis was made internally by the ICEM:

- The key weakness to company networking and projects is the reduction in collective bargaining in almost all countries where ICEM operates
- As a direct result unions are having to take up processes of social dialogue with employers to maintain a relationship and deal with issues/disputes at site level
- MNCs continue to be vulnerable to international pressure to implement CSR policies and systems
- ICEM has had good experience of initiating formal and controlled processes of social dialogue with MNCs and affiliates at national level. (BASF Asia Network: annual dialogue meeting betw. BASF Asian Management and ICEM unions, focusing on OHS and Environment)

The main assessment made during the pilot period so far is that affiliates find the practice of national networks a necessary step before expanding to regional networking. In the case of Korea, where the project activities have started, the unions are themselves starting up MNC/CSR networks at national level which the project is then able to work with targeting specific MNCs and providing training on international standards/CSR/negotiation skills.

As a result, the number of countries will be limited to 3, allowing the project coordinator and ICEM sufficient resources and time to establish functioning structures at national level.

The strategy of the project therefore will focus on assisting the trade unions to understand and also negotiate with these companies using accurate company information and an agreed platform for dialogue. This platform will be fundamentally rooted in core human, social and economic rights enshrined in core ILO conventions.

The process requires the commitment of all partners to carry on a process of constructive social dialogue, despite any local or international disputes that might be taking place. The primary objective of this process is to facilitate firstly a constructive dialogue between the partners but also to promote agreement and joint action on central issues. These issues, based on our experience, could include OHSE, HIV/AIDS, Contract & Agency Labour, Productivity & Competitiveness, CSR/International Standards. Projects provide the much needed coordination of this process, research and information on the target companies and training for the partners where part of the social dialogue process.

In effect the project is a revised approach, moving away from funding network meetings, towards activities that form part of an agreed process of dialogue.

Following discussions with affiliates the following priority companies and countries have been set. These are:

- Asahi Glass
- Lafarge
- LG Chem

- Goodyear
- Norske Skog
- Novartis
- Freudenberg

Target Countries

- Indonesia
- Korea
- Malaysia
- Vietnam (2008 project year)

Problem analysis:

There are clear trends which hamper ICEM affiliates being able to establish constructive bargaining or social dialogue with MNCs. These can be summarized as follows:

- Hostility to unions and ignorance of international standards by management
- High degree of casualisation and rapid increase of contract and agency workers
- Lack of clear non-academic sectorial and company analyses
- Lack of exposure by unions to international level contacts and networking
- Lack of union own ability to use unanalyzed information in negotiations
- Lack of exposure and training on global agreements and networking for unions
- Need for coordinated and effective union networking and solidarity action

Development Objective

The overall development objective of this project is to initiate and develop peaceful dialogue between companies and trade unions operating in ICEM sectors, based on fundamental human, social and economic rights.

Project Objective

- Develop a unified platform of action for trade unions in Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam in ICEM sectors based on fundamental human, social and economic rights
- Promote social dialogue and improved negotiations between social dialogue partners
- Build best practice and models of social dialogue to be promoted amongst ICEM affiliates in the region
- Organize contract and agency workers with a clear trade union strategy
- Promote gender-conscious union activities among ICEM affiliates in the region

Expected results: General

- Establish a consistent team of managers and trade unionists participating in a formal process of social dialogue at national level
- Awareness raising and skills development on international standards, dialogue and negotiations, basic human and workers rights within the participating organizations
- Clear and comparative company and union information within the target MNCs
- National MNC networks formed in Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam coordinated by the unions themselves

- Central coordination point in the region where affiliates can get information and advice on international standards, tools, union and company initiatives in the region
- Organise contract workers into unions of regular workers or form separate unions depending local conditions and trade union strategy
- Awareness raising and policy development on gender issue for ICEM affiliates in the region

Indicators: General

- Raising of complaints within the national networks in relation to target MNCs and resulting solidarity action
- Organizing drives initiated within at least one of the target MNCs
- coordinated international level support for those unions carrying out organizing drives
- Improved gender-conscious union activities by ICEM affiliates in the region
- Dynamic review process of the Global Agreements with Lafarge, Norske Skog, Freudenberg
- Joint management/union activities generated through a process of social dialogue
- Publications: database, e-bulletin, organizing manual(update), reference manual for partners

Institutional Framework

The overall project will be managed by the Project Management Team made up of the following:

- Yoon Hyowon, Asia MNCs Project Coordinator
- Aranya Pakaphat, Thailand MNCs Project Coordinator
- ICEM Programmes Officer
- Phee Jung Sun, ICEM Regional Contact Point

The Project Coordinator will be responsible for the implementation of the project in cooperation with the network coordinators (national contact points) and key affiliates active in the networks/global agreement.