

APPLICATION FORM

Country/project name: ICEM Colombia Social Dialogue Project
Project No. (if any): 3407

Implementing organisation: ICEM
Approving (National Req. Org.): ICEM Swedish Affiliates

Project period (years): 1 + 3
Application period: 2009 + 2010-2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and previous experiences

Based on the experience of MNC level projects in Latin America and other 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 the 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.

The main strategy of the project for the upcoming project cycle continues to focus on assisting the Colombian trade unions to negotiate with their companies, using accurate company information and an agreed platform for dialogue.

It is also one of the aims for the upcoming period to enlarge the list of participating companies. Priority target companies include Ross International, SCA and Petrobras. The current target companies are:

- AngloAmerican
- Xstrata
- BHP Billiton
- Owens Illinois
- Smurfit Carton Colombia
- Endesa
- Union Fenosa
- Linde

Because of the good experience gained so far through the work of the project in Colombia, the programme is seen as a leading example. As part an 'exchange of best practices' exercise, there have been regular exchanges of information and experiences with other ICEM projects, as well as with other ICEM affiliates in different parts of the world.

One particular recent development, which has been made possible, in part, through the work of the project, and which may have a clear positive impact on its future activities, is the decision to form, by merging all ICEM Colombian project partners into a new union, the "Sindicato Minero Energético, de la Química y industrias Afines".

Participation analysis

The project is well run through the active involvement of the Colombian ICEM affiliates. The project coordinating committee, which sees the involvement of representatives of each Colombian ICEM affiliate, regularly meets to discuss the projects activities, review past actions and plan future arrangements.

Problem analysis

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

- Hostility to unions and ignorance of international standards by management
- Lack of decent social dialogue
- Lack of clear non-academic sectoral and company analyses
- Lack of exposure by unions to international level contacts and networking
- Lack of union own ability to use unanalysed 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

Another, omnipresent problem in Colombia is that of the threats towards, and assassinations of, trade unionists in Colombia.

Objectives analysis

The issue of social dialogue will remain the main focus for the project in 2009, and beyond. However, a number of other issues will also be considered.

Priority activities in 2009 will include:

- Continuation and maintenance of the formal process of social dialogue that has been set up by the project, with the joint participation of representatives from the target companies and ICEM affiliates in Colombia
- Establishment of the MNCs information and negotiations
- Completion of gender activities, including through a national seminar
- Organising contract and agency labour workers
- Work on trade union unity, supporting the merger of the ICEM affiliates
- Leadership training
- Discussion to enlarge the project with new participating companies
- Support for regional activities in other countries

Strategy analysis

The social dialogue strategy of the project will continue to focus on assisting the trade union partners of the project in their negotiations with the participating companies. In addition, the project also intends to continue to promote agreement and joint action on central issues through a national platform.

Topics for social dialogue, at the national conference level, as well as at individual company level, are decided on by the project partners, and will likely continue to include such issues as OHSE, HIV/AIDS, contract & agency labour, productivity & competitiveness, CSR / international labour standards / global framework agreements, sustainable development, as well as cooperation with companies on the issue of protection for trade unionists receiving threats.

Development Objective

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

Project Objective

- Development of a unified platform of action for trade unions in Colombia based on fundamental human, social and economic rights
- To have a working social dialogue, and improved negotiations, between the social dialogue partners in all the target companies
- Development of best practice and models of social dialogue to be promoted amongst ICEM affiliates in the country

Expected results

- Establishment of a consistent team of managers and trade unionists participating in a formal process of social dialogue at national level
- Improvements in social dialogue at all the target companies
- Awareness raising and skills development on international standards, dialogue and negotiations, and on basic human and workers rights within the participating organisations
- Clear and comparative company and union information within the target MNCs
- Good contact and coordination with the ICEM Brazil Social Dialogue Project
- Support for union building strategies
- Active and representative participation of women in this process

Activities

1. National Social Dialogue Conferences
2. Trade Union Training Workshops
3. Training Workshops
4. Leadership skills activities
5. Communications, information & publications.
6. Contract and agency labour
7. HIV/AIDS
8. Continuous assistance, coordination, awareness raising and solidarity support Colombian ICEM affiliates

Institutional Framework

The overall project will be managed by the project management team, which will consist of the following:

- Erland Lindkvist, IFMetall
- Chair of the ICEM Colombia Committee
- Carlos Bustos, project coordinator
- ICEM projects officer

Inputs: Overview

ICEM

- Information and political support for company negotiations
- Staff and leadership expertise on the issue of dialogue
- Staff time supporting and monitoring the project

ICEM Colombia Committee

- Coordination of project activities
- Staff time in carrying out dialogue and negotiation activities

ICEM Affiliates Sweden

- Staff time carrying out project activities
- Monitoring visits