

External Evaluation Report
LO-Norway's Programme of Cooperation with BWI
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Final Report 15.01.2012

Introduction

LO –Norway commissioned an evaluation of the BWI East Africa project 2006-2009 and a mid-term review of the current project, which runs from 2010-2014.

The projects were variously entitled:

- * (1) Project on Women in the Construction Sector in East Africa region (2006-2007)
- * (2) Programme on Improving Living and Working Conditions of Building Construction Sector in East Africa (2008-2009)
- * (3) Scaling up gender fair structures in BWI sectors in East Africa (2010-2014)

They are usually referred to as the BWI gender project.

The objectives of the East Africa gender project fluctuated over the years but can be summarized as follows:

- To strengthen the capacity of BWI affiliates in construction in East Africa to organise and recruit construction workers and to sign recognition and bargaining agreements with employers;
- To promote women's participation in the trade unions, and to integrate gender issues into their policies;
- To strengthen the capacity of BWI affiliates to negotiate gender fair improvements in collective agreements, including decent wages, anti-discrimination measures, OHS protections and HIV/AIDS policies;
- To build alliances with other social partners and gender activists so as to campaign for gender fair policies for the construction sector at workplace, national, sub-regional and regional levels;
- Over the last period, a new area was included related to the environment; the goal was to ensure that unions were involved in national reviews on policy and legislation on gender, the environment and climate issues;

The scope of the evaluation was described in the terms of reference with 6 main points. **(See Annex 1)** The evaluation is based on an analysis of the narrative and financial reports of the BWI gender projects 2006-2010, various workshop reports, BWI policy documents and research reports as well as a survey of all affiliates participating in the project, based on a questionnaire. **(See Annex 2 BWI Questionnaire)** The evaluator also undertook a field mission to Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana carried out from November 9th – November 23rd 2011. The evaluator interviewed BWI headquarters Staff, Jasmin Redzepovic and Jin Sook Lee, and Paul Opanga, former BWI East Africa Coordinator and now Education Coordinator at the BWI Regional Office in South Africa. **(See Annex 3 Schedule of Visits)**

I would like to thank everyone who assisted me in the evaluation and during the field mission and in particular Alice Siame (LO-Norway Zambia) and Joe Macharia (BWI, East Africa), who were extremely helpful at all stages of the evaluation.

Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- (1) Assess the results of the support provided to BWI and the affiliated unions by LO;
- (2) Assess the modality of cooperation with BWI and provide recommendations on areas for improvement, in particular related to monitoring and reporting on performance by BWI;

1. Relevance

The project specifically focused on the construction and building materials sector in East Africa although BWI also organises forestry and wood products, where the proportion of women in the workforce, while still relatively small, is certainly larger than in construction. The origin of this decision was that a similar project had been successfully implemented in Southern Africa. A project planning mission identified women working in road construction and building materials, in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, who were experiencing discrimination and sexual harassment but the unions had no policies to address gender issues. It was also mentioned that other projects covering forestry and wood existed at the time.

A project focusing on gender equality where the workforce is perhaps 95% -98% male dominated would from the outset appear to present considerable challenges, particularly where the main perceived goal is increasing women's participation in the internal life of the trade union. The evaluator was not introduced to a single female construction or building materials worker during the mission.

In practice, the project has been reshaped to deal with reality on the ground. Its primary focus has been on recruitment and collective bargaining – nearly all activities have ensured women's participation and the coordinators have included sessions in the programmes related to women's participation in trade unions.

Because of women's limited participation in the workforce, and as others were tasked with designing the applications, the 2nd and 3rd phase of the project opted to include other issues together with gender: HIV/AIDS, occupational health and safety and finally climate change and the environment. Hence the goals of the project have become more diffuse and more ambitious, and certainly harder to achieve. On the other hand, the policy directives from Congress have become more targeted and strategic, and the annual work plan for 2011 has clear recruitment and collective bargaining goals, although there are no specific gender components. **(See Annex 4 2011 East Africa Work Plan)**

The decision to include UNRISK, a trade union of government research institutes, which has affiliated to BWI for its forestry research membership from 2010, lacks coherence with some of the project objectives.

1.1 Findings: a gender equality project for the construction sector in East Africa had some but limited relevance. In practice it has been modified on the ground to meet organising needs. Because the few women who do work in the administration in construction companies have a generally higher level of education and are permanent members of the workforce, the project focus on women's empowerment has had some startling and almost "revolutionary" outcomes in some countries.

2. Efficiency

The current system for transfer of funds appears both costly and time-consuming. Funds are transferred from Norway to Switzerland to South Africa to Kenya and then disbursed to the other partner countries. In the case of Ethiopia, funds are converted from Kenyan Shillings to US Dollars and then to Ethiopian Birr (ie the funds have been converted through no less than 6 currencies before reaching the recipient.)

The East Africa coordinator reports that it can take up to three months for a request for funds to translate into a credit in the bank account. The net result is that in most calendar years, although funds are requested in February, they are not available until May or later and most country programmes take place between June and November. The recent evaluation and planning workshops have taken place in May.

The coordinator is reluctant to approve activities in December in order to ensure the annual accounts are closed in time. Hence an annual work plan effectively becomes a 5-7 month calendar of activities. (See annex) For example, large balances in country programmes in Kenya were attributed to the late transfer of funds. The Ethiopian union explained this point very clearly in the questionnaire *"the LO-Norway gender project fund is released after 6 months and we are requested to report within 3 months and the time gap between implementation and planning is very less. We could have much result if we have money and time."*

While arguments related to accountability and protocol were put forward, the evaluator considers that there would be ways of effectively stream-lining this system, improving delivery rates, reducing losses from bank charges and exchange rates, while maintaining BWI's deservedly strong reputation on standards of accountability.

The 1st and 2nd project application include funds for a full-time project coordinator. The 3rd application does not provide details but the budget is maintained at the same level. The East Africa coordinator is in practice responsible for a number of other externally funded projects and general tasks, including recruitment of new affiliates. He estimates he is currently spending around 40% of his time on the LO-Norway project.

Coordination costs for the project are high. In years where there has been under-expenditure on activities, such as 2009 and 2010, coordination costs have been over 40% of the total. Over the period 2006-2010, coordination costs are an average of 38% of expenditure. **(See Annex 5 Budget Comparison)** This is above BWI's own guideline of 30%.

2.1 Findings: The project management system appears unnecessarily cumbersome and costly and has had a negative impact on the implementation of project activities. There is a key role for a project coordinator, which indeed could be a full-time position, but only if BWI were able to fund an additional full-time officer post at sub-regional level to manage the other projects and tasks the coordinator is currently carrying out.

3. Results of Project

The evaluator has used the grid attached to the cooperation agreement of 2010 to analyse the results of the project.

3.1 Organising and recruitment goals

Over the period 2006-2010, the GDP in the 4 project countries has been consistently high, apart from Kenya during 2008 -2009, a consequence of the post-election ethnic violence. Although there has been a slight downturn with the global financial crisis, growth remains high: in 2010 GDP in

Kenya was 5%; in Tanzania 6.5% in Uganda 5.2%; and Ethiopia 8.0%. The construction and building materials industry is consequently enjoying a boom period as the road works clogging the streets and the cranes dotting the horizons of Nairobi and Dar bear witness. The economic environment is therefore conducive to membership gains.

GDP in Project Partner Countries

Year	Ethiopia	Kenya	Tanzania	Uganda
2006	11.5%	6.3%	6.7%	10.8%
2007	11.8%	6.9%	7.1%	8.4%
2008	11.2%	1.3%	7.4%	8.7%
2009	10.0%	2.6%	6.7%	7.2%
2010	8.0%	5.0%	6.5%	5.2%
2011*	8.5%	5.7%	6.4%	6.0%

*Estimates

Source: Global Finance: www.gfmag.com

Apart from Ethiopia, where women make up a larger percentage of the construction workforce, (perhaps 10-15%), in the other East African countries, there are very few women on site, and most are working in the administration or accounting departments.

The 2006-2008 and the 2008-10 proposals both set a recruitment goal of 10% increase in women’s membership and although there were no goals for increased membership in the 2010 application, the LO Norway contract includes a reference to a general increase in membership, more women organised and new workplaces organised. All project partners perceive the organising and recruitment goals as the main focus of the project.

All unions report membership increases and new workplaces organised and the evaluator was pleased to note the generally optimistic attitude of the union leadership. “Membership is growing and women members are many,” as one General Secretary reported. This qualitative analysis should perhaps bear as much weight as the membership figures.

The percentage figures for women’s union membership are much higher than their total workforce participation. It would seem clear that the gender focus of the project has clearly attracted women, who are permanent members of the workforce into the union. In Tanzania, where the organisational scope of the union is wider than Kenya or Uganda, the number of women is larger (ie senior personal secretaries would not be allowed to join the union in Kenya according to the Industrial Relations Act).

The first set of more realistic membership figures date from 2008. Earlier figures are generally acknowledged to be aspirational. It is clear that over the last few years, there has been a significant improvement in the reliability of the membership data. The evaluator was able to verify membership figures in the case of Tanzania and Uganda, disaggregated by collective agreement and in some cases by gender. Tanzanian membership figures are an example of good practice. The assistant national organiser printed of an excel sheet in a matter of minutes, with figures by region, and by company, on the workforce (m/f) and union membership (m/f), percentage union density and a situation report on the status of the collective bargaining negotiations. (See Annex 6 TAMICO Membership Chart)

3.1.1 Findings: Union density in the construction and building materials industry remains weak. The construction workforce has been growing consistently over the project period. While membership has grown over the last few years, it is not clear if it has grown at the same rate as the formal workforce. The percentage of women members, from the permanent administrative and accounting departments, has grown considerably. In recent years there has been a marked improvement in data collection and accurate figures are now available for membership. TAMICO, Tanzania is a good practice example which could be usefully shared with other affiliates.

Membership Figures Compiled from BWI Reports and Applications

Country	Male	Female	Total	% female
Ethiopia				
2006		2,700	30,000	
2008		2,490	25,492	9.6%
2010	23,452	2,490	25,942	9.6%
2011	28,597	4,269	32,866	12.9%
Kenya Building				
2006		750	15,000	
2008		467	9,000	5.2%
2010	8,533	467	9,000	5.2%
2011		1,980	16,500	12.0%
Kenya UNRISK				
2010	2,200	800	3,000	26.6%
2011		400	1,200	30.0%
Tanzania				
2006		400	13,000	
2008		3,900	13,000	30.0%
2010	9,100	3,900	13,000	30.0%
2011	9,873	1,150	11,023	10.4%
Uganda				
2006		549	4,055	
2006*	1,593	252	1,845	13.6%
2008		328	2,713	12.0%
2010		328	2,713	12.0%
2011	5,675	446	6,071	7.3%

Sources:

- 2006 Figures from Application to LO-Norway 2006-2008
- 2006* Figures from Evaluation Survey October 2011
- 2008 Figures from Evaluation Seminar Report August 2008
- 2010 Figures from Application to LO-Norway 2010-2014
- 2011 Figures from Evaluation Survey October 2011

3.2 Women's participation in decision-making

“Women jumped in!” as one male organiser remarked. “We held gender mainstreaming workshops to encourage women to participate in the trade union and to contest trade union positions, first in the Branches and then at the National Executive level. We held awareness campaigns,” reported a female member of the NEC. “Congress was good. There were elections over one day. They were well organised and very democratic,” reported the male administration and finance officer.

One of the clear results of this project has been the extraordinary growth in women's representation in decision-making in the trade unions and in the Secretariats of the organisations. There has also been an increase in young women participating in the training and taking up positions within the Secretariat, possibly because they have good IT skills. Key positions, such as legal adviser, are filled by gender aware women.

In Ethiopia, the National Standing Committee has increased its female participation from 9% in 2006 to 18%. There is also a female staff member for the first time. Women's committees have been created in 24 companies.

In the January 2011 Congress in Kenya Building, 45 out of 276 Branch Committee members were women. In the policy and finance department, 3 out of 7 are women, including the legal officer, in the Secretariat as a whole, 15 out of 31 personnel are women, in the education committee, 2 out of 4 are women and in the ohs committee, 5 out of 11 are women. While the NEC remains all male, the view is that next Congress, women will be elected. The union has adopted a gender policy, focusing on 30% women's participation in all activities.

In Tanzania, the Congress was held in August 2011 with 24% female representation. The evaluator was indeed amazed by the report that 7 out of the 12 National Executive Committee positions were won by women (or 58% of the positions). Previously there were 2 women on the NEC. There are 2 women organisers and the legal officer is also a woman. Women's committees have been established at Branch and zonal levels. Tamico has adopted a gender policy.

In Uganda, although the information is not “unpacked”, the union reports increases in women's participation at the Branch level, the formation of women's committees and changes to the Constitution adopted in October 2010, where there is a women's representative at each shop stewards committee, a Branch women's leader and a National Women's Committee, and a post Congress, women's delegates conference.

Why has this happened? The evaluator considers that a combination of gender related initiatives have been at play. The new national Constitutional frameworks, with strong gender equality clauses, giving women a minimum of 30% political representation at all levels in Kenya for example, were cited. The union in Kenya supported a goal of 30% women's participation in the construction workforce, citing the Constitution. The BWI gender policy was also cited as a contributing factor and the goal of 30% women's participation is widely acknowledged. The trade union centres all have gender coordinators, and have also been carrying out reforms and gender-mainstreaming programmes over the last two decades. Other external support programmes have also provided training on gender issues, such as ICEM in the case of TAMICO, Tanzania.

In construction, women are part of the permanent workforce in more skilled positions than the majority of the on-site male workforce, which is largely recruited on a project basis. Encouraged to participate, they have been articulate and ready to defend the interests of the workforce as a whole.

“Women are not confrontational. They are good leaders because they are fair and good decision-makers. Sometimes they work harder than men!” reported a male Branch Secretary.

3.2 1 Findings: As a result of the project and other contributing factors, women’s participation in leadership at local, Branch and in some cases national leadership has increased dramatically over the last few years. Their union participation rates in some instances appear far higher than their participation in the workforce. Women are also found in key positions among the paid staff, including legal advisers and organisers. In Tanzania, there has been a virtual “revolution” with women now in the majority in the NEC. However, the women in leadership are not on-site or factory workers but in administration and accounting. The big unanswered question is: can they negotiate effectively on behalf of their on-site and plant male colleagues?

3.3 Collective bargaining agreements:

3.3.1 General growth in numbers of collective bargaining agreements (cbas)

The evaluator failed to obtain an overview of all new collective bargaining agreements (cbas) signed over the project period. However, she was able to review around 15 cbas. All unions can report new cbas signed with construction companies, particularly in the large road construction and other infrastructure projects. The General Secretaries, BWI staff, and others, speak about the ‘tremendous’ effectiveness of women as organisers and negotiators. In addition, BWI campaigns on MNEs and Chinese construction companies were mentioned.

While the BWI coordinator is beginning to compile a data bank on cbas for the East Africa region, this area of work needs further development, for example through an electronic library.

Kenya Building reports that the list of new cbas- includes but is not limited to- 6 new companies over the period 2006-2011. UNRISK has signed two new cbas but one is being challenged in court. Tamico, Tanzania reports it currently has 12 cbas. Uganda reports it has increased from 11 cbas in 2006 to 17 in 2011 and lists each company.

In the 2011 work plan, each union was asked to identify which companies it would target for new cbas. Kenya Building set a target of four new cbas and the other unions, two new cbas each. These goals appear SMART.

3.3.2 Specific clauses on gender equality

What is the bargaining agenda on equality in the construction and building industry? With a few important exceptions, the evaluator found that this question elicited circular responses concerning the need to increase women’s participation in trade unions. The role of women’s committees - beyond encouraging more women to join the union- was also not apparent or was regarded as related to developing income-generating projects. Neither BWI at East Africa level, nor the national unions had a clear set of priorities or model language to distribute to negotiators on equality issues. There seemed little reference to ILO standards, such as the ILO C.183 on maternity protection which has been the subject of an ITUC campaign nor the fundamental rights at work conventions C100 on equal pay and C111 on discrimination at work.

Where gender issues had been included in the collective bargaining agreements, they focused on maternity leave and paternity leave (which generally speaking women did not support!) Maternity provisions are very basic, with little improvement on the legal requirements of national employment legislation, which in the case of Kenya provides for two months paid maternity leave, with no responsibility for medical costs. The general agreement with Kenyan contractors included 3 months

paid maternity leave. In Ethiopia, the union had negotiated time off for breast feeding mothers and improved maternity leave beyond the national legal entitlement.

There was one cba with the C.K. Construction Company, Kenya, which included a clause on *Gender Equation: the employer shall ensure that 30% of the total workforce in every contract undertaken shall be woman in line with the Kenya Constitution and the BWI Gender Policy*. While groundbreaking, it was acknowledged to be aspirational given the lack of women seeking employment in construction trades at the current time.

It was not evident to the evaluator that there has been any development of a collective bargaining agenda, related to maternity protection, recruitment, training and promotion, on sexual harassment, work and family responsibilities, safe travel, child care or on equal pay. The 2008-2010 project includes an objective to increase the opportunities available for skills development, education and training for women in the construction sector by 2%. The project coordinator reported that the Kenyan Vocational Training Institute had reserved places for women in certain male dominated professions but had failed to fill them. The union had not taken this issue up.

This absence of a bargaining agenda on equality must in some sense be due to the content of the training programmes which have focused on the current labour laws and gender-mainstreaming. Resource persons from the trade union centre have only been used in the case of Ethiopia. Otherwise, external resource persons were from the Ministry of Labour focusing on labour legislation or educators from other trade unions. The previous East Africa coordinator undertook a training course at the University of Nairobi on gender and development when he took up the position. The current coordinator has had some human resource training but no specific training on equality at the workplace. BWI materials on gender equality have not been used, at least not in the recent period. This lack of a bargaining agenda was also noted in the Asia Pacific Region in the 2010 Gender Audit Report.

3.3.3 Clauses on other issues

The 2008-2010 project included an objective to negotiate better living conditions by addressing issues such as HIV/AIDS and occupational health and safety among others. The 2010-2014 application included the issue of the environment and climate issues. Nearly all the cbas reviewed included clauses on non-discrimination for those affected by HIV and some established safety committees. Environmental concerns have not been reflected in any cba to date.

3.3.4 Findings: The project has assisted the unions to target companies in order to obtain recognition agreements and sign cbas. Negotiators on occasion have been able to improve on the (unimpressive) legal minimum in terms of maternity entitlements. However, there is no coordinated approach to developing a bargaining agenda on equality and in some instances there appears to be a real confusion about the role of women's committee and gender-mainstreaming. BWI staff are not providing direction on equality bargaining. This BWI regional and African women's committee needs to provide stronger leadership on this issue.

There is considerably more coordination at the trade union centre level on HIV/AIDS work and there is standard language which has been incorporated into most cbas on HIV/AIDS, and in some instances on occupational health and safety. The environment and climate change, indeed the very concept of green jobs, are incipient areas of concern. Green gender activism seems further down the road.

4. External Impact: Strategic lobbying, networking and campaigning capacity

The trade union lobbying and advocacy work appears limited. Unions have produced calendars and diaries to publicise gender-mainstreaming policies. Unions have also participated in March 8th activities, either with their own members or participating in trade union centre commemorations. Unions have supported some legislative initiatives through the trade union centre, although many examples cited were prior to the start date of the project. One important example was the Business, Technical, and Vocational Training Act 2008 in Uganda but it was not clear what follow-up on implementation has taken place. There do not appear to be strategic advocacy or campaign goals at national or sub-regional level. However, there is a medium term plan to found an East African Federation of Building and Wood Workers, in line with the July 2010 East Africa Community protocol on free movement of labour. The Chair of the World Women's Committee also mentioned a new 2 year campaign on precarious work.

The East Africa network, which was started as a gender network, has been transformed into a general network of affiliates. It has been a useful forum, which has shared information on MNEs in the region, particularly the Chinese companies. One useful example concerned the Chinese company Sinohydro, which had signed a cba in Uganda, but was refusing to do so in Kenya. Another referred to the Saline Construction Company which had included a clause on non-discrimination in cases of HIV infection in Ethiopia but not in Uganda. The Tanzanian unions had written a letter to denounce the treatment of workers at various Chinese companies but had not thought to share it with other unions in the region. The network has considerable potential and could be used to denounce trade union rights violations, such as cases of illegal dismissal or the abuse of migrant workers' rights. There is little outreach work to the media nor use of social networking tools.

UNRISK is organising national research institutes which have internet facilities (when there is electricity) but has no internet facility itself. It is the one union which could realistically work on – line, with membership registration, electronic bulletins and a blog or website. Its offices are one floor above the Kenyan Communications Union, which potentially could provide support in this area.

4.1 Findings: Advocacy and campaign work is relatively new terrain for the construction unions in East Africa. While there is increased IT capacity among the staff of the unions, there is a need for training on social networking and campaigning. The construction e-network has considerable potential and with some minimum inputs and strategic direction could become an important campaign tool on a range of issues. It would be important to identify priorities and keep with them.

5. Sustainability

5.1 Findings: Women's participation in training programmes has been internalised within the unions and there are now a sufficient numbers of highly competent women leaders and staff to ensure their continued participation in leadership when LO-Norway support ends. Many of these women are young or relatively young which should allow for continuity. There are minimum budgets to support women's committee structures or training programmes. Male leaders are firm advocates of gender mainstreaming. BWI gender-mainstreaming policy is also clearly supported by the staff.

However, there is a danger of women becoming disillusioned with their participation in the trade union if there is not greater clarity on the role of a women's committee and the development of a bargaining agenda to deliver improvements at the workplace. There is also a need to ensure that women in national leadership positions can effectively represent the interests of the membership as a whole to avoid any backlash or other difficulties.

Recommendations

1. **Project Continuation:** The East African BWI affiliates in the construction and building materials sector are relatively weak organisations with a limited financial base. Union density rates are well below potential to organise in the larger companies and the unions have not really been able to address the organising challenges in the sub-contracting chains. Working conditions on site and in the plants are poor to abysmal and rates of pay do not reflect the cost of living. The unions on these grounds alone should be considered priority beneficiaries of international cooperation and the current project should be continued until at least 2014. Consideration should be given to a renewal of the project thereafter, potentially to include the whole of the East Africa Community.
2. **Project Focus:** While gender-mainstreaming should continue as a component of the project, given the small numbers of women in the construction workforce, it should not represent the main focus of the project. In future, the main focus of the project should be organising new members and signing new collective bargaining agreements, and campaigning around multinationals. In practice, this change of focus has already happened on the ground, but the objectives of the project, the applications and reports have not adequately reflected this shift.
3. **Project Management:** BWI should review its current financial transfer system with a view to reducing the number of intermediary stages, in order to speed things up, make things cheaper and give the partners more time to implement the activities!
4. Consideration should be given to holding annual planning meetings at the beginning of the year with the National Executive Committee of each union rather than holding a regional event mid-year. Regional meetings could focus on campaign and bargaining strategies.
5. **External agenda on bargaining for equality:** The gender equality component of the project should focus on developing a clear bargaining agenda for the sub-region, including a set of model clauses to be negotiated in all new contracts on issues such as maternity protection, recruitment, promotion and access to vocational training, safe transport, sexual harassment and equal pay for work of equal value. This agenda should be communicated to the other affiliates in East Africa with a greater female membership and to BWI Regional and International Women's Committee.
6. New women leaders should be trained as negotiators, particularly in Tanzania where there are many new entrants to the National Executive Committee.
7. March 8th campaigns could focus on publicising the bargaining agenda, and could seek allies among the trade union centres and other women's and human rights' organisations.
8. Consideration should be given to providing a small vocational training scholarship programme to support women wishing to gain a qualification in a construction trade. It could be expected that government vocational training institutes could support this programme after a successful pilot phase. Small focus group meetings could be arranged at worksites or in association with women's groups, to encourage them to take up vocational training. This vocational training should be accompanied by a course on workers' rights and trade unions.

9. Materials, such as leaflets or posters, could be developed to support the bargaining agenda on equality, written in both English and Swahili. Consideration could be given to seeking additional funds to produce a documentary on women in the construction industry, either tracking the few women who are currently employed in manual trades or following the lives of those entering vocational training. National centres could be invited to participate.
10. **Organising and collective bargaining campaigns:** The project should continue to support targeted organising campaigns, with a gender perspective, with a view to signing new cbas in strategic companies. This organising work is in practice the main focus of the project and should be made explicit in the project goals, application and reporting. The project contract should be revised to better reflect these goals. The extent to which the East Africa unions have the capacity to address issues of sub-contracting requires further analysis beyond the scope of this evaluation.
11. Consideration should be given to providing a short training programme on campaign planning, IT use where necessary, and use of social networking to project partners and coordinators. An electronic library to store and access past and current cbas would be a useful tool for negotiators across the region to consult.
12. Model language could be developed on various issues, such as the responsibility of the main contractor to ensure equality of treatment for sub-contracted workers, HIV/AIDs, safety committees, and potentially issues such as local recruitment of non-skilled workforce, and responsibility of the main contractor to conserve or restore the local environment. Unions organising in government housing corporations involved in public procurement could be trained on the relevant ILO Conventions and BWI policy.
13. **Multinationals or a “China Watch”:** The big issue facing all East African countries is the increasing presence of multinationals in the construction sector. There has been some mapping of the MNEs already. Chinese construction companies have a notoriously poor record on trade union rights, occupational health and safety, quality construction and ethical behaviour. Consideration should be given to establishing a “China Watch” campaign in East Africa which could potentially win the unions considerable visibility and legitimacy and enhance their political influence. The campaign could develop on the basis of the existing construction network and could assist in the development of greater regional coordination, in keeping with the plan to create an East Africa Federation of Construction and Building Materials Trade Unions.

NW 15.01.2012