



Climate Change: Building Trade Union Capacities and Quality Public Services for a Just Transition

Jamaica Workshop | September 25 and 26, 2018

Background Note

Introduction

For the vast majority of the developing world without strong and progressive interventions from the public sector much of the agendas set by the NDCs or [SDG 13](#) will not be possible. This is an ideal opportunity for PSI and public services trade unions to promote a stronger public sector as the key mechanism to addressing climate change and a [just and green transition](#).

The pilot phase in 2016 in three African countries (Zambia, Kenya and Tunisia) measured the capacity development in the tools being used, demonstrating a moderately successful take up of climate change issues by the unions. In 2017, the workshops in Jamaica and Perú were designed to Work also commenced on an analytical tool which can be used to critically evaluate the NDCs from a trade union perspective.

The 5-year project (2018 – 2022) is designed to build upon the intervention points made in the 2017 workshops held in Jamaica and other partner countries. In addition, it will enhance public sector trade unions' understanding of the challenges posed by climate change for the world of work and sustainable development. The project is expected to contribute towards public sector trade unions' technical and organisational capacities for effective social dialogue for policy development on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

With the coming into force of the [Paris Agreement](#) countries have turned their attention to implementing the agreement. For individual countries, this means translating the climate change targets outlined in [NDCs](#) into concrete actions to be implemented at the national or sectoral level. The period 2017 to 2020 is a window of opportunity to refine the NDCs to ensure that they achieve the dual objective of controlling global warming while safeguarding pathways to sustainable development.

A strong public sector is critical

A strong public sector and enhanced investment in quality public services are essential elements of the strategy for addressing climate change.

Evidence shows that the public sector remains central to developing Renewable Energy (RE). In developing countries, there are big opportunities to use renewables to extend systems that can provide universal access. However, the transition from fossil to RE sources might leave some

people behind. The green transition will create a lot of job opportunities and it is important that those who might lose their current job in the process can have access to these opportunities and not become the casualties of the green transition.

Target group, key sectors

Trade union leadership, Executive Committee members, Education Officers, Women representatives, young worker representatives, delegates and shop stewards.

Workers in emergency services, health, energy and water and local and regional government will play a major role in adapting to the consequences of extreme weather events caused by climate change.

Expected outcomes

At the end of the project, public services unions will have the capacity to engage in broader work on climate change issues and promote a Just and Green Transition to sustainable development.

Participating public service unions will have improved their capacities through the development of a methodology for analysis of NDCs and implementation of trade union responses.

Public service trade unions will have identified and sought greater participation and key roles in providing solutions to environmental problems that are as a result of climate change.

Project objectives

The focus of the project is to develop trade union strategy to intervene in government policy on climate change as expressed in the national commitments to the Paris Climate Change agreement. So the project will give unions an analytical tool to analyse national commitments, and assess these through a public services and labour perspective. In addition, the project intends to contribute to realistic and positive changes that unions can lobby for that would address climate change from a gender perspective.

The project will make an analysis of the varying vulnerabilities and capacities within communities while supporting strategies for better engagement of women and youth. The project aims to promote equal opportunities for women and young workers to provide input and participate throughout the design and implementation of national climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes.

Capacity building activities will raise awareness among trade union leaders and national executive committee members about climate change and its impact on employment and development. The project will also enhance public service trade unions' understanding of the links between environmental protection policies and workplace conditions.

Project activities include:

1. Identifying and developing strategies aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of participating trade unions that will support them in developing strategic partnerships with civil society actors supporting the implementation of the NDCs.

2. Helping public service trade unions better understand climate change issues through mobilisation, awareness rising and capacity building at the national level, while highlighting the role of just transition and decent work in national climate strategies.
3. Developing the ability of trade union leadership to support efforts to tackle the impact of climate change on members and the economy with a view to ensuring that public service trade unions have the ability to effectively engage with the national government on the implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and responses.
4. Familiarising public service unions with strategies to effectively engage in collective bargaining on issues related to climate change and environmental degradation.



Akademikerförbundet SSR

Kommunal.



SYM/September 2018