

World Banana Forum Working Group 03 on Labour Rights UPDATE December 2012

Current WG03 Coordinators:

- Martín Cooke (ETI)
- Anna Cooper (BANANA LINK)
- Wil Flinterman (FLO) – *from the Forum 2012*
- Denis Klink (Transnational Studies, Berlin University) – *from the Forum 2012*
- Marco la Touche (CHIQUITA) – *from the Forum 2012*
- Iris Munguía (COSIBAH)
- Rajendra Paratian (OIT) - *inactive*
- Víctor Quesada (ASEPROLA)
- Javier Villacis (DOLE)
- Alex Yeboah-Afari (VREL)

Key activities and results:

- **Publication on industry advances**

Time-line: First draft to be completed by March 2012, final draft June 2013

Funding update: funding received from FPH \$8000 and FAO between \$5000 and \$10000 (tbc).

During the second conference of the World Banana Forum, February 2012, a proposal was put forward for the Working Group 03 on Labour Rights to develop a publication that documents short summaries of situations where labour rights issues, in particular Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining and Gender Discrimination, have been addressed. The purpose is to draw out some lessons on "good practice" to be used by WBF members to accept and promote this aspect within the chain of production and trade of bananas. Following the publication, WG03 would therefore promote and support the implementation of these lessons and good practices and identify specific pilot projects where advances could be made.

The proposal is fully dependent on the active collaboration and input from both workers and companies to ensure a balanced and constructive description and analysis of past, existing and new advances in the industry. This process also aims to encourage greater involvement by companies in WG03, thus increasing our capacity to implement projects that promote the respect of labour rights along international banana supply chains, an aim that cannot be achieved without the active participation of all actors.

Individual cases will be categorized in order to draw out some key lessons:

1. Successful negotiations, for example:

- 🕒 Colombia: Augura and SINTRAINAGRO CBA, Uraba,
- 🕒 Honduras: CBA and specific women's clauses between SITRAGUA/SITRATERCO and national producer that sells to Chiquita
- 🕒 Guatemala: Sitrabi and Del Monte CBA in Izabal (vs Pacific)
- 🕒 Ghana: GAWU and GEL

2. Recent negotiations/advances, for example:

- 🕒 Ecuador: Dole Megabanana CBA and the Dole pilot project on women's employment
- 🕒 Nicaragua: new CBA between Fetrabach and 4 national producers selling to Chiquita

3. Framework Agreements, for example:

- 🕒 Latin America: Chiquita-Colsiba-IUF Framework agreement and women's committee

- **Gender proposals**

Time-line: Jan 2013 to Dec 2014 - see WG03 Proposal on Gender activities for proposed time-line and budget of each activity.

Funding: no funding at present, fund-raising will be a key part of the WG03 work-plan in early 2013.

In the Global Meeting of Women Banana Workers that preceded the WBF conference in February, a number of proposals were developed to push forward gender issues within the global banana industry and the activities of the WBF. A working group has been set up to work towards implementing these proposals on an international level (Iris Munguia and Adela Torres COLSIBA, Sue Longley IUF, Adwoa Sakyi IUF Africa, Anna Cooper Banana Link). So far, gender has been incorporated into the WBF statutes and gender examples have been included in the proposal for the publication on industry advances described above; the Honduras SITRAGUA/SITRATERCO Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Ghanaian GEL/GAWU CBA and the work of the Women's Committee of the Chiquita/IUF/COLSIBA Framework Agreement.

Funding applications are in the process of being developed to help finance other specific gender related projects:

- **Exchange of statistics, information and resources between regions and stakeholders**

There is currently no central source of gender specific information or resources relevant to the international banana industry. This would be invaluable not only to enable an extensive evaluation of the situation for women workers on a global level but also to enable the sharing of experiences and practices between the various stakeholders and countries within the industry towards the improvement of conditions for women workers worldwide. During the women's meeting the need was highlighted for the sharing of specific information from all countries of production:

= Information on working and social conditions for women banana workers

= Educational materials used by unions, producers and companies on family planning, HIV, occupational diseases, health and safety and prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination

= Statistics on the recruitment of women in plantations as well as the representation of women within unions, companies and certifiers.

WG03 therefore intend to collect and compile all existing statistics, information, resources and education materials on gender issues from all regional contacts, including unions and companies and other stakeholders. A bi-lingual (English and Spanish) electronic platform will be designed to enable the sharing of this information, to be used amongst WBF members and wider industry stakeholders.

Mapping will also be done to assess any gaps in information and resources, with the aim of developing and fundraising for specific research projects to fill these information gaps.

- **Regional women's meeting/WBF training for women leaders**

During the global women's meeting 2012 the need was highlighted for the training of women workers and small producer representatives to increase their capacity to actively participate in the activities of the WBF and to push forward gender issues within in each of the three working groups. Consultation with the union representatives in each region has shown that this training should include an introduction to the situation for women workers in other regions and the gender advances made by their union bodies, IT skills for international communication, information on the structure and function of the Forum and the role of civil society within that and empowering women workers to engage in productive dialogue with multi-stakeholder actors.

WG03 therefore intends to support specific WBF training workshops for key union and small producer contacts in Latin America (COLSIBA member unions and CASC Dominican Republic), the Caribbean (WINFA) and Africa (IUF Africa/GAWU Ghana and FAWU Cameroon).

In addition to this training, a need was also highlighted for regional women's meetings (in Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean) to enable participants to better prepare information from their region and discuss any opportunities and proposals that could be presented and developed within the global women's meeting and WBF conference. This is particularly key considering that participation in the global meeting will be limited to a few representatives from each region due to the expenses involved; the regional meetings will therefore empower these representatives to fully represent the issues for women workers within their region.

These regional meetings would be held in late 2013, and will be combined with the WBF training outlined above.

- **Global meeting of women banana workers to precede WBF conference 2014:**

A key proposal from the women's meeting 2012 was to ensure that women representatives from across the industry have the opportunity to meet before each WBF conference to share experiences and develop joint proposals on gender to be presented to the conference and implemented by the WBF working groups. The Global Meeting of women banana workers 2014 would be a 3 days meeting with women worker and small producer delegates from Latin America (8), Caribbean (3), Africa (3) Philippines (1) plus 12 wider stakeholder participants and 2 facilitators

The total budget/fundraising target for all the above mentioned activities from Jan 2013 to Dec 2014, including the ongoing coordination expenses of the Working Group, is \$109,500.00

Key issues for WG03:

- Minimal funding to support the coordination of the group and its activities, but this has recently improved!
- Limited capacity within the current coordinating committee to implement its proposed work-plan, or to even attempt to raise funds to support this implementation
- High levels of translation and interpretation support required, all currently carried out by Banana Link but this is not sustainable.
- Limited participation by companies, retailers, certifiers and key government institutions such as the ILO
- Limited international representation – mainly Latin America, minimal Africa or Caribbean input
- Lack of small farmer representations and lack of vision in terms of incorporating small farmer issues into the debate