

TOOLS FOR ORGANIZERS

IN EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES AND INDUSTRIES



USING TRADE PROVISIONS TO ORGANIZE DEFINITIONS

■ **AFL-CIO:** The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations is the largest national labor federation in the U.S.A.

■ **BRAND:** A brand is the unique name that a company uses to sell its products. Sometimes the brand name is the same as the company name.

■ **CAMPAIGN:** A campaign is a series of activities that a group of people, such as members of a union, do together to achieve a goal. Workers may carry out campaigns to organize a union in their workplace. After organizing a union, workers may carry out a contract negotiation campaign to win a legally-binding contract that spells out wages, benefits, and working conditions.

■ **CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (COSATU):** One of 3 major federations of trade unions in South Africa. Now representing over 2 million workers, COSATU was central in the struggle against apartheid and continues to fight for labor rights. www.cosatu.org.za

■ **CONTRACT NEGOTIATION:** Contract negotiation is the process by which workers in a union bargain with their employer for a union contract. Usually the union will present their proposal, the employer will make a different proposal, and the negotiation proceeds from there. Workers may build support for their proposals by conducting a contract campaign that includes identifying workers' priorities, researching the employer, and pressuring the employer through rallies, strikes, or other kinds of activism.

■ **CORPORATE RESEARCH:** Investigation about a corporation, industry, or industrial sector to find information that may be useful for workers in an organizing or contract negotiations campaign.

■ **EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE (EPZ):** EPZs are industrial areas in a country that offer special incentives to foreign investors. These incentives may include low taxes, lax environmental regulations, and low labor costs. Low wages, long hours, and dangerous and repressive working conditions are the norm in many EPZs. Sometimes organizing unions is banned or restricted. EPZs are also known by other names, such as Special Economic Zones, Industrial Development Zones, etc.

■ **GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP):** A trade program established by the U.S. government that allows certain countries to export their products to the U.S. at lower tariffs than those established by the World Trade Organization. The GSP contains a labor rights clause requiring countries to meet some minimum human and labor rights standards in order to qualify for the program.

■ **INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU):** A former confederation of 233 trade union federations and other organizations from 154 countries and territories around the world. Representing over 135 millions workers, the ICFTU organized and directed international campaigns on issues important to working people. The ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labor (WCL) merged in 2006 to become the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). The ITUC has 304 national affiliates in 153 countries representing over 168 million workers.

■ **INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION (ILO):** The ILO is a part of the United Nations that promotes workers rights and human rights. The ILO sets international labor standards to protect basic rights such as the right to organize, collective bargaining, abolition of forced labor, equality of opportunity and treatment, and other conditions at work. Workers, employers, and

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INTRODUCTION TO FIGHTING FOR LABOR RIGHTS

Besides unions at the workplace and alliances with other organizations, local, national, and international labor rights policies and laws are also an important part of worker power. These rights may include organizing rights such as the right to form unions, bargain collectively, and strike. They may also include minimum standards for wages, health and welfare, and safety. The stronger the labor rights laws and policies are, the greater the likelihood that workers will use them to organize for greater power.

Currently, the laws and policies governing the global economy favor corporate investors at the expense of workers. EPZs offer investors low costs for labor, utilities, and rent while often barring workers from organizing unions. Trade agreements contain regulations to protect investors' rights but rarely include enforceable provisions to protect workers. International finance policies offer loans to poor countries but require repayment through economic reform policies that often cause higher unemployment and lower wages.

The rules governing how the global economy works are written and managed by international public institutions, like the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), regional development banks, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Only the OECD allows labor a formal advisory role (the Trade Union Advisory Committee, consists of labor federations from OECD member countries, headquartered in Paris, France).

In spite of this exclusion, some strong unions have been able to make significant breakthroughs in shaping labor laws and labor rights policies. This section, "Negotiating Labor Rights in EPZs," looks at South Africa to see how unions negotiated with their government for provisions that require foreign investors to recognize unions and adhere to labor laws. "Using Trade Provisions to Organize Unions," examines how unions in Swaziland used language in the Generalized System of Preferences to pressure the government to force employers to recognize unions. Finally, "Stopping Anti-Worker IFI Policies" studies how a coalition of unions and NGOs in Sri Lanka prevented their government from dismantling protections in labor law despite pressure from international financial institutions to do so.

MODULE 9: USING TRADE PROVISIONS TO ORGANIZE

WORKSHOP GOALS

INTRODUCTION

In the massive demonstrations held against the World Trade Organization during the past few years, union federations and other advocacy organizations have demanded the inclusion of labor rights as an integral part of trade agreements. They argue that the rights given to multinational corporations must be balanced by rights that protect workers. If not, then these corporations have almost unlimited power, whereas workers have none.

Union organizers often wonder what concrete relationship international trade policies have to organizing in their factories. One way to understand this is to see how trade policies with labor rights provisions have actually helped union organizing.

In Swaziland, a group of foreign employers refused to allow workers to form unions. Through a series of international connections, the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions joined with the AFL-CIO to file a complaint under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences, which provides that countries should uphold labor rights or certain trade privileges provided by the U.S. can be taken away. This was the leverage that the Swazi labor movement needed to pressure their government to force these foreign employers to recognize the unions in their plants.

TEACHING GOALS

- To understand what internationally-recognized core labor standards are.
- To understand how core labor standards in trade agreements can help union organizing.
- To understand various forms of trade agreements, including the Generalized System of Preferences.

SKILLS GOALS

- To understand how trade policy can be used in organizing.
- To map the flow of a campaign.
- To create policies that would help organizing.
- To research existing labor rights policies.

TRAINER'S NOTES

TIME TO DO THIS WORKSHOP:

The whole workshop will take about **4 hours** if you do all the exercises as well as the Welcome, Action Planning, and Closing activities. If you want to make it shorter, you can do only one of the exercises or divide the workshop in half and present it over 2 training sessions.



TRAINERS TIP

When a workshop is over 2 hours long or participants are tired, breaks and energizers are important tools to keep participants interested and engaged in the training. Energizers are short, fun activities that let participants move around and take a mental break from the hard work of learning. Be sure to plan time for energizers, especially after lunch and in the evening when participants' energy is lowest. You can even ask a group of participants to form an "Energizer Committee" with the job of calling for a game or energizer whenever they see the participants are getting sleepy or distracted. This committee can then lead the games or ask you to lead them. Energizers can be songs, chants, or any non-competitive game or activity the group can do together.

TRAINER'S NOTES (CONTINUED)

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THIS WORKSHOP:

- Something to write on that everyone can see: large paper and marking pens, or chalk and chalkboard.
- Some materials for drawing (Exercise 1 only): paper and pens, pencils, markers or crayons, chalk and chalkboard, cardboard, charcoal, or anything else you can find for drawing. In some places, people use sticks and make their drawings in the sand or dirt. In other places, people use scissors and cloth to make pictures.

OPTIONAL: Trade agreement language on worker rights from an agreement that your country is part of (Exercise 3 only). See the Trainer's Tip for Exercise 3 on page 21.

BEFORE YOU START:

- Read the whole Workshop Curriculum.
- Plan your agenda for the workshop. Decide how long the workshop will be. Choose which exercises you will do. Plan time for breaks and energizers.
- Collect all the materials you need.
- Set up the room the way you want it.



TRAINERS TIP

Some words and terms in this curriculum may be new for you or for the participants in the workshop. Look on the inside front and back covers for a list of definitions.

HOW THE WORKSHOP WORKS

HOW THE WORKSHOP WORKS

The workshop has 6 sections. In each section you and the participants will be doing a different kind of activity. There is a picture to remind you of the kind of activity you will do in that section. Here are the pictures and what they are reminding you to do:



WELCOME AND
GET STARTED



DISCUSS THE
STORY AND/OR
PICTURE



LEARN ABOUT
OTHER WORKERS'
SUCCESSSES



DO EXERCISES
TO LEARN NEW
SKILLS



LEARN BY DOING



EVALUATE AND CLOSE
THE TRAINING



WELCOME AND GET STARTED

TRAINER: In this section, you will tell the group what the workshop is about. Then participants will introduce themselves to each other. The other activities suggested on this page can help people feel welcome, comfortable, and respected during the workshop. When people feel comfortable, they will learn more and the workshop will be more successful.

TIME: 30 minutes (or less if there are fewer than 20 people in your group)

ACTIVITIES FOR GETTING STARTED:

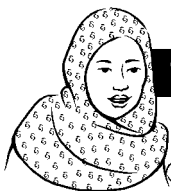
First do Activities **1** and **2**, then choose among **A**, **B**, and **C** for one more activity.

1. Tell the participants what the workshop is about.
 2. Ask everyone to introduce themselves to the group.
- A.** Ask everyone to take turns saying why they think the workshop is important.
- B.** Ask a volunteer to sing a song, say a prayer, or recite a poem.
- C.** Ask everyone to take turns answering the introduction question in the box. Answering the introduction question can help people to start thinking about the topic of the workshop.



INTRODUCTION QUESTION:

If you had the power to make one new law for your country, what would it be?



TRAINERS TIP

SONGS, PRAYERS, AND POEMS let people know that their culture and spirit will be respected in the workshop. Songs, prayers, and poems are also an opportunity to let a participant be the leader.



TRAINERS TIP

INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS help people use their voices and participate in an easy way for the first time. Then they will be more comfortable to speak later on.



DISCUSS THE STORY AND/OR PICTURE

TRAINER: In this section, you can ask someone in the group to read the story out loud or you can read it out loud yourself. If you don't want to use the story, you can just look at the picture together. Then discuss the story and/or picture using the questions on the next page.

TIME: 30 minutes

MIKE TSABEDZE's Story:

"It was very challenging at first. When we would talk about labor laws and our right to join a union, the management would complain to the government and try to avoid the labor laws. The managers would just say to us, 'Remember, you are a worker! I didn't employ you to speak for people here, to talk for the workers.'"

– MIKE TSABEDZE, SMAWU Shop Steward,
Zheng Yong Factory, Swaziland



DISCUSS THE STORY AND/OR PICTURE (CONTINUED)

TRAINER: Ask the participants to discuss the questions below. Allow about 10 minutes for each question. If you want to, you can write what people say on a big piece of paper or a chalkboard as they answer the questions.

If there are more than 20 people in the room, you can divide into small groups of 4 or 5 people for the discussion. If they are in small groups, visit each group while they talk. Make sure that each person in each group has a chance to talk.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is happening in this story and picture?
2. What legal rights do you know for sure that you have on the job?
3. In your experience, what are the differences between the legal rights workers are supposed to have on the job and the way that employers actually treat workers?



LEARN ABOUT OTHER WORKERS' SUCCESSES

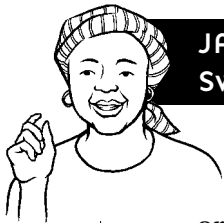
TRAINER: In this section, you can ask for several different people in the group to volunteer to read the different parts of the story out loud or you can read it out loud yourself. Then ask the group to discuss the question at the bottom.

TIME: 15 minutes



TRAINERS TIP

The trade union movement in Swaziland has led the struggle for justice, democracy, and workers' rights in the country since 1973, when the King of Swaziland issued a decree claiming absolute power and taking away many basic rights, including worker rights such as the right to join a labor union.



JAN SITHOLE's Story, General Secretary, Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU)

"People were suffering under the undemocratic political conditions imposed by the King. The government refused to change. But we didn't give up. We organized national general strikes in 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997. Shops stayed closed, transport didn't move, and water and electricity service were cut off. It was a complete standstill and everybody was affected. In 1997, COSATU, a South African union federation, helped us to stop all trucks from entering or leaving Swaziland... This had a big impact on the government because many products cross our borders by truck every day.

"The government tried to stop us...by creating a law just 2 days before our national strike in 1996 that made it illegal to participate in union activity. On the first day of the strike, some of us were arrested and charged in court. At the same time, the government tried to crush the protests, and the army shot many protesters with live bullets. A 16-year-old girl was shot dead.

"The International Labor Organization (ILO) spoke out against the government of Swaziland and sent some inspectors to Swaziland to see how bad the situation was.

story continued on page 11

LEARN ABOUT OTHER WORKERS' SUCCESSES (CONTINUED)

JAN SITHOLE's Story, CONTINUED:

After this visit, the ILO came out with a report that supported the complaints of the workers.

“Through the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) we heard that the AFL-CIO, a U.S. labor federation, might be able to help us put pressure on our government to improve the treatment of workers in Swaziland. We explained the problems we were facing in Swaziland to the AFL-CIO. The AFL-CIO also saw the reports made by the ILO about the situation for workers in Swaziland.

“The AFL-CIO has an agreement with the U.S. government that countries trading with the U.S.A. must meet certain standards and conditions for how they treat their workers and respect human rights. The U.S. government has a program called the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which allows certain countries to export their products to the United States at lower [tariffs]. But in order to be part of the GSP program, a country must meet the standard of respecting human rights and respecting the ILO conventions. The AFL-CIO can submit reports called petitions to the U.S. government if it feels that a country does not respect human rights or workers' rights. The U.S. government can then take the country out of the GSP program.

“The AFL-CIO supported us by pressuring the U.S. government to remove Swaziland from the GSP program. The U.S. government checked with the ILO and found information that supported the AFL-CIO's petition about the bad treatment of workers in Swaziland. The U.S. government began to say to Swaziland, 'If you do not start respecting your people's rights, you will not be able to trade with the United States.'

“Garment companies come to Swaziland because they can sell their products cheaply in the United States through the GSP program. When garment businesses learned that Swaziland might be kicked out of the GSP program, they told the government: 'The reason we have our businesses here is because of the GSP benefit. If that benefit goes, we will relocate.'

“The government was now pressured from employers, the market, and workers. This was very powerful. We learned that the strategy of forcing the government to change in order to defend its business with the United States was very effective. Even though the

story continued on page 12

LEARN ABOUT OTHER WORKERS' SUCCESSES (CONTINUED)

JAN SITHOLE's Story, CONTINUED:

"ILO was involved, words alone did not make the government change their attitude. Real change only started to happen when the AFL-CIO convinced the U.S. government that worker rights were being violated in Swaziland. The U.S. government set a deadline for Swaziland to change its laws and improve its treatment of workers, or it would be removed from the GSP.

"The end result of all of this was that the government conceded to our demands in the year 2000. We now have a labor law that enables us to engage in peaceful protest action without interference from government. We can publicly make demands for our members and for the society as a whole. In one recent protest in March 2003, 7,000 garment workers participated."

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

1. What one new thing did you learn from this story?



DO EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 1: ANALYZE HOW WORKER POWER FORCED THE GOVERNMENT TO RESPECT AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON WORKERS' RIGHTS

TRAINER: In this exercise, participants will brainstorm a list of different kinds of power workers had in the Swaziland story. They will draw a picture showing how workers used their power to put pressure on the Swazi government to respect worker rights. Finally, they will have a discussion about their picture and the story.

TIME: 60 minutes



TRAINERS TIP

- The **U.S. GSP PROGRAM WORKER RIGHTS PROTECTIONS** are rules for workers' rights that countries must follow in order to export at lower costs to the United States.
- The **ILO CORE CONVENTIONS** are rules for workers' rights that are a model for all countries. They are very similar to the protections under the U.S. GSP Program, however there is no provision for enforcement. For more information about the ILO and ILO Core Conventions, as well as the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, see the Fact Sheet on page 29 of Mounting International Campaigns (Module 7).

WHAT TO DO:

1. As a large group, ask the participants to answer the brainstorm question on the next page. You or a volunteer can write down what people say on a big piece of paper or a chalkboard.

EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 1: ANALYZE WORKER POWER (CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO (CONTINUED)

BRAINSTORM QUESTION:

In the story from Swaziland, the Swazi king and government refused to recognize worker rights in national law or in international trade agreements. What sources of power did the Swazi unions have to pressure the government to change?



TRAINERS TIP

Towards the end of this discussion, you can add the following kinds of power to the list if the participants have not thought of them already.

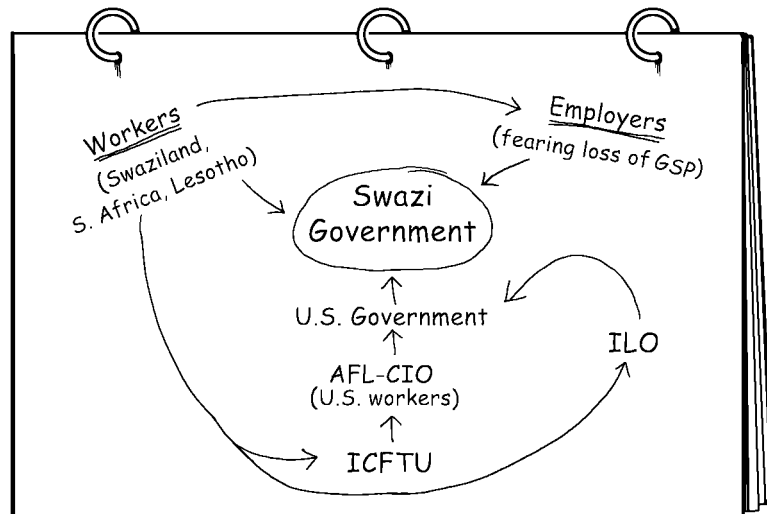
- Local power “at the base” of workers organizing in factories
- National power of organized national federation of unions
- Power to influence the nation’s day-to-day life, economy and business through national strikes (transport, utilities, shops, etc.)
- International power of cooperative relationships with union federations outside Swaziland (especially COSATU in South Africa, the AFL-CIO in the U.S. and the ICFTU international labor federation)
- Power of existing international standards for worker rights
- Power of existing standards for worker rights in the GSP agreement between Swaziland and the United States
- Power of businesses to threaten Swazi government with moving to another country

EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 1: ANALYZE WORKER POWER (CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO (CONTINUED)

2. Ask participants to sit in groups of 4 or 5 people. Give each group materials for drawing. Ask each group to draw a picture showing how the Swazi unions in solidarity with unions outside Swaziland used these different kinds of power to pressure the Swazi government to recognize worker rights. Encourage the groups to think about each step that the Swazi unions took in the story your read together. The picture might look something like the picture below. Give them about 20 minutes to draw their picture.



3. After about 20 minutes, ask the participants to return to the large group. Ask each small group to show their picture to the others and describe what they have drawn and why.
4. As a large group, ask the participants to answer the discussion questions on the next page.

EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 1: ANALYZE WORKER POWER (CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO (CONTINUED)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the same and what is different among the pictures that the small groups drew?
2. What were the different ways that Swazi unions put pressure on employers in this story? What was the result?
3. Which set of labor standards could be used effectively as a tool for workers to organize: the ILO Core Conventions or the U.S. GSP program? Why?

REFLECTION ON THE EXERCISE

At the end of the exercise, summarize in your own words what the group has learned. Be sure to include the following points, even if they did not come up:

- The Swazi unions had an ongoing history of fighting for labor rights.
- When foreign investors refused to recognize unions, the labor movement used the GSP labor rights language to force the government to persuade these investors to recognize unions.

Before moving on to the next exercise, ask the group to name 1 or 2 actions they could take to build their union using the lessons learned in this exercise. Ask a volunteer to remember or write down these Action Ideas for the group. You will use the Action Ideas to make an Action Plan at the end of the workshop.



DO EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 2:

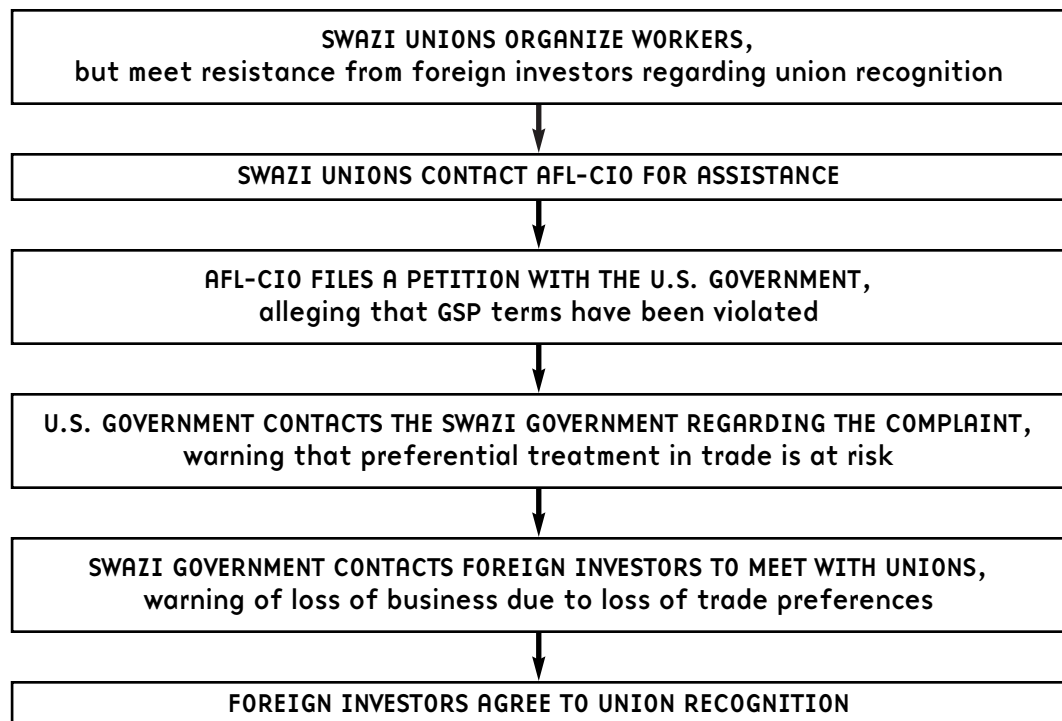
UNDERSTANDING THE STEPS IN FILING A GSP COMPLAINT

TRAINER: In this exercise, participants will sharpen their understanding of how to file a GSP complaint and use that process for organizing.

TIME: 30 minutes

WHAT TO DO:

1. As a large group, ask the participants to name the steps, in order, that were used to file the GSP complaint and win union recognition. Put these steps in a diagram from top to bottom and draw arrows to indicate the flow of effort:



EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 2: UNDERSTANDING THE STEPS (CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO (CONTINUED):

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In what way was the GSP labor rights language used as a “tool” for organizing?
2. What conditions were necessary to make use of this tool?
3. In this framework, who is responsible for ensuring worker rights: the employer, the government, or both?
4. Have you ever used laws, regulations, or other policies as tools for organizing? If so, how?

REFLECTION ON THE EXERCISE

At the end of the exercise, summarize in your own words what the group has learned. Be sure to include the following points, even if they did not come up:

- GSP petitions, because of their labor standards language, can be tools for workers to achieve worker rights.
- Unions must have a strong base of organized workers in order to use policy tools successfully.
- Unions must connect with a U.S. entity, such as the AFL-CIO, in order to file a GSP petition.
- Trade agreements give investors rights, but when they make investors rights conditional upon labor rights, this may be a valuable tool for unions.

Before moving on to the next exercise, ask the group to name 1 or 2 actions they could take to build their union using the lessons learned in this exercise. Ask a volunteer to remember or write down these Action Ideas for the group. You will use the Action Ideas to make an Action Plan at the end of the workshop.



DO EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

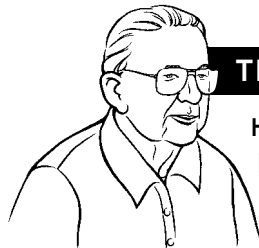
EXERCISE 3: MODEL A GSP PETITION EFFORT

TRAINER: In this exercise, participants will take what they have learned from the Swaziland example and chart a similar GSP effort with their own issues. Alternatively, they may choose to chart a campaign to insert labor rights language in another trade agreement.

TIME: 45 minutes

WHAT TO DO:

1. As a large group, ask the participants to name the worker rights goals that they are struggling for as a labor movement in their country or in their factory. Write the goals they name on a big piece of paper or a chalkboard.



TRAINERS TIP

Here are some examples of goals that participants might choose for this exercise:

- Be able to organize a union and bargain for a union contract legally.
- Be able to organize a union and bargain for a union contract without harassment or retaliation from employers or the government.
- Have a safe and healthy work environment for all workers.
- Women receive equal pay for equal work and not be discriminated against or harassed for pregnancy.

EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

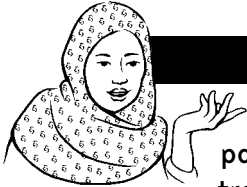
EXERCISE 3: MODEL A GSP PETITION EFFORT (CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO (CONTINUED):

2. Write the ILO fundamental worker rights (see fact sheet, page 30) on large sheets of paper or on the chalkboard, and ask the group to see where their employers or their government are violating the ILO conventions and thereby preventing them from achieving their goals.
3. In small groups of 5 to 7 people, ask the participants to chart the steps necessary to bring a GSP complaint on their country's violations.
4. Then ask each small group to prepare a skit of not more than 10 minutes where the arguments for the GSP petition are made from one level to the next:
 - The union
 - The AFL-CIO
 - The U.S. government
 - The government of the participants
 - The employers
5. If you have time, the skit can be performed for the whole group. Otherwise, the skit can either be enacted in front of one other small group, or the skit can be done within the small group itself.

EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 3: MODEL A GSP PETITION EFFORT (CONTINUED)



TRAINERS TIP

Another way you can do this exercise is to compare the list participants brainstormed in Step 2 to the language in a different trade agreement that your country has with some other nation or nations. Many countries around the world participate in the GSP program with the United States, but not all do. Also, your country may participate in other trade agreements that are more important politically and economically for your country than the GSP.

If you want to use a different trade agreement for this exercise:

1. Find out what trade agreements your country participates in.
2. Find the actual language of that agreement.
3. Read it.
4. If there are worker rights provisions in it, re-write the sections on worker rights to make the language easy for everybody to understand when you talk about it in the workshop.
5. Make a poster showing these worker rights using pictures or words. If you don't have paper for a poster, write or draw these workers rights on a chalkboard or some other place everybody can see them.
6. After the participants brainstorm their own list in Step 2, ask them to look at your poster.
7. Compare their list to the worker rights on the poster as in Step 3.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the limitations of using GSP and other policies as a tool for organizing?
2. Why can't policy maneuvers such as GSP petitions be successful without grassroots campaigns?
3. What is the use of labor standards in trade agreements without strong unions?

EXERCISES TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

EXERCISE 3: MODEL A GSP PETITION EFFORT (CONTINUED)

REFLECTION ON THE EXERCISE

At the end of the exercise, summarize in your own words what the group has learned. Be sure to include the following points, even if they did not come up:

- GSP and other trade provisions are potentially an important tool for worker organizing.
- GSP and other trade provisions are only “tools,” and can not substitute for efforts to build strong unions and make important alliances.

Before moving on to the next exercise, ask the group to name 1 or 2 actions they could take to build their union using the lessons learned in this exercise. Ask a volunteer to remember or write down these Action Ideas for the group. You will use the Action Ideas to make an Action Plan at the end of the workshop.



LEARN BY DOING

TRAINER: In this exercise, participants will make plans for future work together based on what they learned in the workshop, including the Action Ideas from each exercise. They will have a discussion and fill out the Action Plan Worksheet on page 25.

TIME: 30 minutes or more

WHAT TO DO:

1. Make an Action Plan Worksheet like the one on page 25 on a large piece of paper or chalkboard. Explain to the participants that you will fill out this Worksheet together. Ask for a volunteer to take notes if you are writing on a chalkboard so the participants will have a record of their plan.
2. Ask participants to name the overall goal of their campaign. Write what they say in the section of the Worksheet that says: “Overall Goal of Campaign or Project.”
Examples: “Win labor rights language in the upcoming trade agreement,” or “Mobilize national unions to fight for labor rights language in regional trade agreements.”
3. Ask the participants to do a power analysis. Who would support this idea and who would oppose it? What kind of effort will be necessary to increase worker power?



TRAINERS TIP

An important goal of this workshop is for participants to put their new skills in action. This exercise and the sample worksheets can help participants move from learning to action.

LEARN BY DOING (CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO (CONTINUED):

4. Ask volunteers for Action Steps to achieve the goals based upon the Action Ideas they have come up with from the exercises and the power analysis. When the steps are complete, ask the participants to decide when they will do each step in the next year. Write a word or draw a picture representing this Action Idea in the appropriate section of the Action Plan Worksheet.
5. As a large group, ask the participants to answer the questions below. You or a volunteer can write down what people say on a big piece of paper or a chalkboard.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What trade agreements does our country already participate in?
2. How can we find out more about these and other trade agreements that we could use to improve conditions for working people in our country?
3. To use these trade agreements in the workers' interest, what kinds of power will we need?
4. How will we build this power among our own members and in our alliances with other unions?
5. What changes in the trade agreements our country participates in are most important for us as a union?

As the participants name new Action Ideas during this discussion, ask them when they will do these actions in the next year. Write a word or draw a picture representing these new Action Ideas in the appropriate section of the Action Plan Worksheet as in Step #3 above.

ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

OVERALL GOAL OF CAMPAIGN OR PROJECT	
ACTION STEPS FOR THE NEXT MONTH: Example: 3 things we will do to identify specific goals we hope to accomplish using the power of language in trade or international agreements.	1. 2. 3.
ACTION STEPS FOR THE NEXT 3 MONTHS: Example: 3 things we will do to learn about our country's trade and international agreements.	1. 2. 3.
ACTION STEPS FOR THE NEXT 6 MONTHS: Example: 3 things we will do to develop a strategy to use these agreements to achieve our goal.	1. 2. 3.
ACTION STEPS FOR THE NEXT 9 MONTHS: Example: 3 things we will do to build power among workers and others in our community to achieve our goal.	1. 2. 3.
ACTION STEPS FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS: Example: 3 things we will do to build power to achieve our goal through alliances with other unions.	1. 2. 3.



EVALUATE AND CLOSE TRAINING

TRAINER: In this section, you will remind the group what the goals of the training were and acknowledge the goals you have accomplished together. You will thank any individuals or groups who helped make the training a success. Then participants will have a chance to evaluate the training and commit to taking action. The closing activities suggested on this page can help people feel successful, hopeful, and powerful as they complete the workshop.

TIME: 30 minutes (or less if there are fewer than 20 people in your group)

ACTIVITIES FOR EVALUATION AND CLOSING:

1. Remind the participants of the goals of this training (see page 3). Acknowledge that everyone has worked hard to finish the training and accomplish these goals.
2. Thank any individuals or groups who contributed to the success of the training, including those who contributed meeting space, food, time, etc.



TRAINERS TIP

Ask one of the participants to choose the closing ritual and lead the group in a chant, song, poem, prayer, etc. This gives someone in the group a chance to exercise leadership. It also makes clear to the group that what they have accomplished in the workshop belongs to them, not to you as the trainer.

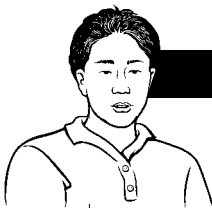
EVALUATE AND CLOSE TRAINING (CONTINUED)

3. As a large group, ask each person to say:

- One thing she or he learned in the training
- One thing she or he liked about the training
- One thing she or he will do to build their union based on what she/he learned in the training.

Options for this step: If you have a large group (more than 20 participants), you can ask for about 4 or 5 volunteers to answer the 3 questions or ask each person to answer only one question—rather than asking each person to answer all 3 questions.

4. Lead the group in a closing ritual. This could be a chant, song, dance, poem, or prayer.



TRAINERS TIP

You may want to spend more time evaluating the workshop with the participants if:

- you're working on improving your own training skills and you want to know how you can improve your facilitation;
- you're unsure of whether the content of the workshop was too easy, too hard, or just right for your participants;
- you're trying to decide whether to use this workshop again as part of your union's education program.

FACT SHEET: LABOR RIGHTS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS

Workers in Swaziland were able to use their trade agreement with the United States as a tool to improve worker rights in their country. One of the requirements a country must meet in order to be eligible under the GSP program is to ensure “internationally recognized worker rights.” The Swazi unions that were part of this struggle had the power to use the worker rights language in the GSP program because of their strong organizing in their factories and their alliances with unions in other countries.



TRAINERS TIP

“I started my trade union activity 20 years ago, when I was a worker in a food processing factory. Many factories now move to Swaziland because they can export their products to the United States very cheaply. With our very strong political actions and the help of many international allies, unions in Swaziland convinced the United States not to trade with Swaziland if it didn’t start treating its workers better and respecting their rights. Because the government wants to protect its business with the United States, it has now begun to pressure employers to respect workers’ rights.

I am very happy to share this story with other workers around the world, so that they can learn from our experience here in Swaziland.”

—JAN SITHOLE, General Secretary,
Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU)

TYPES OF TRADE AGREEMENTS

There are 5 main types of trade agreements that countries enter into:

- **Bilateral:** between 2 countries. For example, the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement.
- **Regional:** between more than 2 countries in a geographic region. For example, the North American Free Trade Agreement or the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

LABOR RIGHTS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS (CONTINUED)

- Multi-regional: multiple countries in two or more regions. For example, the proposed agreements between North, Central and South America Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).
- Global: including most of the countries in the world. For example, the former General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).
- Sectoral: between any number of countries, but limited to a specific industrial sector such as textiles. For example, the Multi-Fiber Arrangement (which expired at the end of 2004).

Workers should investigate the type of agreements that their countries are involved in and the rules regarding worker rights that are included within the agreements (see box below). Some trade agreements can benefit workers while others can harm worker rights and their overall situation.

As they did in Swaziland, unions can use language in trade and other international agreements as leverage to pressure their governments and employers to respect worker rights. If a country's trade agreements do not already include worker rights language or if they are harmful to workers, unions can launch campaigns to change this.

RESEARCH WORKER RIGHTS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS

- Check websites of the WTO to see if your country is a member and which agreements your country has signed. www.wto.org
- Check to see if your country is part of a regional trade organization (e.g. NAFTA, CAFTA, etc.) and read the documents on their website.
- Use a search engine to search for your country and “worker rights” (or labor rights), “trade agreement,” etc.

ASK OTHER UNIONS, A NGO, OR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FOR HELP IN RESEARCHING AND UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU FIND.

LABOR RIGHTS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS (CONTINUED)

WHY SHOULD WORKER RIGHTS LANGUAGE BE INCLUDED IN TRADE AGREEMENTS?

Because working people make the clothes, toys, electronics, foods, and other products that are traded between countries, worker rights should be in every trade agreement that governments sign. The language used to describe worker rights in trade agreements can take different forms, so workers need to fight for the strongest versions of these provisions.

Most importantly, trade agreements should protect the fundamental worker rights named by the International Labor Organization (ILO):

- Freedom of association, including the right to strike.
- The right to organize and bargain collectively.
- No forced or bonded labor.
- No child labor.
- No discrimination in the workplace.
- Equal pay for equal work.

Trade agreements can also include other specific language that protects workers such as:

- Acceptable conditions of work, including a living wage, reasonable work hours, health and safety rights, regulated overtime, and overtime pay.
- No forced overtime.
- Health insurance.
- Specific protections for women workers (maternity protection provisions).

Ideally, unions should also try to make sure that trade agreements include a process for handling any violations of worker rights, including a way to make complaints when worker rights violations happen and a method for enforcing the rights in the

LABOR RIGHTS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS (CONTINUED)

agreement. The best process would allow workers or unions themselves to make complaints about labor violations directly and easily to an enforcement organization.

If national laws in every country protected worker rights and if these laws were always enforced, then there would be little reason for workers to use trade agreements to protect their rights. However, labor laws are weak or not enforced in many countries and especially in export processing zones. By including worker rights in trade agreements, unions gain an additional tool to protect their members' rights.



TRAINERS TIP

Another example of a trade agreement that includes worker rights is the 1999 U.S.-Cambodia Bilateral Textile Agreement which links trade with labor rights. Under the agreement, trade increases are directly linked to the

Cambodian government's progress in creating and enforcing labor laws. If conditions for workers improve, Cambodia's yearly export quota increases.

With garment manufacturing playing a dominant role in the Cambodian economy, the trade agreement gave the government an incentive to create and enforce labor law and to hold companies accountable. The agreement also gives workers a mechanism to bring complaints against employers. International labor institutions can also put pressure on the U.S. government to enforce the terms of the agreement.

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DEFINITIONS (CONTINUED)

governments all participate in the ILO. The annual International Labor Conference of the ILO is an important forum for unions seeking to pressure governments and employers.

■ **LABOR UNION:** A labor union is an organization of workers who build collective power in their workplace in order to protect worker rights and improve working conditions, such as wages, hours and benefits. Often the union negotiates a collective bargaining agreement (or contract) with the employer to define and secure the rights of their members.

■ **SOLIDARITY:** Solidarity is the support people can give each other in working toward common goals. In a particular workplace, it could mean people making decisions together and working as a united group. International solidarity describes support among people or organizations from different countries. Solidarity between unions increases the strength of those unions to fight for their members' rights.

■ **STRATEGY:** A strategy refers to a systematic plan or main course of action for achieving a goal. For example, a first strategy to improve working conditions in a factory could be to organize a union, followed by a strategy of union protest to draw attention to bad

working conditions and pressure management to change them.

■ **SWAZILAND FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (SFTU):** A national union federation in Swaziland. The SFTU includes 21 Swazi unions representing a total of about 83,000 members in different industries.

■ **SWAZILAND MANUFACTURING AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION (SMAWU):** A union in Swaziland that has organized Swazi garment workers in a number of factories, including those at the Zheng Yong factory.

■ **TRADE AGREEMENT:** A legally binding agreement between 2 or more countries that describes the terms under which people and businesses in the two countries can buy and sell products to each other. Trade agreements control the flow of goods between countries. One way they do this is by regulating the taxes (tariffs) countries impose on goods from other countries. Trade agreements can also include protections for worker rights, human rights, the environment, and natural resources.

■ **ZHENG YONG:** The Zheng Yong factory is a clothing factory in Swaziland, Southern Africa, where workers organized with the SMAWU.

TOOLS FOR ORGANIZERS

IN EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES AND INDUSTRIES

TRAINING MODULES IN THIS SERIES:

SECTION I: ORGANIZING STRONG UNIONS

1. Building Unity
2. Tapping Our Strength
3. Developing Democratic Leadership
4. Building Unions That Last

SECTION II: BUILDING ALLIANCES

5. Allying With Other Unions
6. Linking With Non-Governmental Organizations
7. Mounting International Campaigns

SECTION III: FIGHTING FOR LABOR RIGHTS

8. Negotiating Labor Rights in Export Processing Zones
9. Using Trade Provisions to Organize
10. Stopping Anti-Worker International Financial Institutions Policies

This booklet, **USING TRADE PROVISIONS TO ORGANIZE**, is Module 9 of 10 in a series of training modules for working people organizing in Export Processing Zones or other export-oriented industries.