

Minutes Steering Committee meeting 20.09.2008 in Berlin

1. Update on programme implementation in Brazil, Germany, India and South Africa

The representatives of the four campuses gave an update on current programme implementation. Each university now offers a master programme. The number of participants in the courses in Brazil and South Africa courses needs to grow in the next two years. Priority shall be given to deepen the cooperation between the campuses and strengthen the common knowledge und research base. Annex I provided a more detailed description of programme implementation.

2. Joint Curriculum Development

It was debated how much diversity and how much communalities are needed within the programme. While some participants argued that they would expect the curriculum to be largely identical at all campuses, others were of the opinion that this would be neither possible nor desirable. It is a strength of the programme that students can choose between different specialisations in accordance with the academic profile of the different universities.

It was agreed that the development of a joint module for all participating universities is important for the increasing integration of the network. Moreover, it was consensus that more exchange between faculty teaching similar topics in different universities should take place. This discussion should also involve trade union guest lecturers. The annual conference in Mumbai in February 2009 shall be used to make a concerted effort to advance on these subjects. On the 21 and 22nd of February 2009 a two-day curriculum workshop will take place. On the first day of this workshop a discussion on a common core bloc seminar will take place. Frank Hoffer will circulate a draft proposal on Social Justice & Decent Work, a face-to-face-discussion between teachers of the different universities treating similar subject at the different campuses will take place on the second day.

The following colleagues will take the lead in organizing the face-to-face exchange:

- Hansjörg Herr: Macroeconomics
- Verena Schmidt: Organisation of Trade Unions
- Birgit Mahnkopf / Sharit Bhowmik: Informal Economy

- Mike Fichter / UNICAMPI: Multinationals
- Edward Webster: Labour and Development
- Christoph Scherrer: Global Governance

One goal of this effort is that it should help to strengthen the mutual knowledge about the content and methodology concerning courses with similar topics that are being taught at the different universities. It was encouraged that the password-protected website ILIAS should be used to advance the communication between teaching staff by sharing outlines, reading material and other information. Please contact Harald Kröck to add information to the GLU-website or get access to ILIAS (harald.kroeck@global-labour-university.org). The national programme coordinators (Christine Bischoff, Camila Gripp, Mirjam Klessen, Christof Dieterle, Sharit Bhowmik) will indicate to the international secretariat (Miriam Heigl) who of the teaching staff and the trade unions is involved in the different topics and should be invited to this workshop.

3. GLU Conference 2009

The call for papers (http://www.global-labour-university.org/fileadmin/download/GLU_Conference_2009__Call_for_Papers.pdf) has been issued and it is in the light of the current financial crisis a very topical issue for the union movement at the moment. It was agreed that keynote speakers from the union movement and the academia shall be invited.

It was suggested that from each partner university a research paper will be submitted. The focus should be not on the financial crisis as such, but how it affects labour and what could be a labour orientated policy response.

All partners are invited to make suggestions for key note speakers to Sharit Bhowmik. This should be done within the next week. Frank Hoffer will consult with the GUFs. Based on this input the colleagues at TISS will identify a list of possible key note speaker on the two main topics of the conference: Increasing financialisation and deteriorating working conditions.

The structure of the conference will be that there will be a few keynote speakers presenting their position to the plenum (maybe with comments). Additionally, parallel workshop sessions regarding specific sub-subjects will take place. The different sub-group will be identified on the basis of the response to the call for papers.

It was agreed upon that the different papers at the conference shall be published at different paces: Outstanding papers by 10-12 experts from unions and academia should be published as fast as possible, to articulate a labour perspective on the current financial crisis. This could be done through a GLU yearbook. The Indian colleagues have already contacted the editor of the journal Economic Public Weekly to do the editing work. The focus of the yearbook should be policy orientated and in that sense be of practical relevance of trade unions. Good conference papers that do not make it in this publication should be published online in the GURN database.

4. Closer regional cooperation between unions and GUFs

It was general agreement that the regional cooperation between national trade unions and the Global Unions has to be intensified further. (Internships, guest lecturers, research needs). The global union directory will be made available to all project partners to contact the regional offices of the Global Unions. The national trade union confederations will assist with this task.

5. Cooperation with other institutions

It was felt that the network has reached a significant size and that a consolidation is the priority at the moment. This is particularly the case as the GLU has not only expanded by including further universities and trade unions, but it has also developed new activities such as the development of joint research projects, the extension of the exchange scheme to include students and the publication of working papers etc.

The suggested idea of an academic advisory board was not seen as an efficient way to increase the visibility and outreach of the GLU. The development of an “inner” and an “outer” core of the network was seen as the best practical solution: The inner core shall, for the moment, be composed of the participating universities. Regarding the outer core, the possibility shall be offered to universities, trade unions and other research institutions as well as to single researchers or trade unionists to integrate themselves in the network. This cooperation could refer to the exchange, to the invitation of members of the institution to the annual conference or to joint research projects for example.

Frank Hoffer will develop a proposition for the inclusion of these in the GLU statute at the next Annual Council meeting. Partner institutions are those organisations that are

represented in the Steering committee, affiliated association are those that want to adhere to the outer core and cooperate on specific topics. Fellows are individuals that want to cooperate with the GLU. Project partner can propose the affiliation of partner institutions or fellows. The decision will be taken by the Annual Council meeting. Suggestions shall be sent to the international secretariat (international.secretariat@global-labour-university.org) two month before the annual council meeting.

Ruskin College (Oxford University), which offers a full- and a part-time Master's degree in 'International Labour and Trade Union Studies', has already participated in some GLU events and is interested to cooperate closer with the GLU network. In the light of resource constraints and the priority given to deepening of network cooperation an involvement into some GLU activities without a commitment to full cooperation in the core network was seen as the best approach. This includes for example, the invitation of students from Ruskin to join in European GLU-events and some guest teaching.

6. GLU research initiatives

Five GLU research initiatives exist at the moment. The report of the second phase of the research on the representational gap in Small and Medium Enterprises is finalised and will be published as a GLU working paper. Further research projects focus on a) international sports events as a strategic opportunity to strengthen trade union representation, b) comparative analysis of the implementation of international framework agreements, c) the economic role of minimum wages d) trade unions advocacy work on multilateral and bilateral trade agreements. In these research projects many current and former GLU-students are involved. In addition a research proposal public procurement has been submitted for donor funding.

Further topics proposed by the CUT are: Comparisons of industrial relations systems/decent work/freedom of association, the challenge of subcontractors/outsourcing, best practice of specific ILO-conventions and union networks. It was agreed that alumni should ask their unions what further topics are of interest for the unions. However, no expectations should be risen that cannot be fulfilled.

It was emphasized that the research topics need to be linked with trade union needs and involve the trade unions as much as possible.

7. GLU Publications

Two working papers were published and are available on the web, three further papers (Closing the representational gap, Labour Markets and trade unions in China, Trade Union strategies during the soccer world championship in Germany 2008) are finished, further papers (Minimum wage) are forthcoming. To build up the common knowledge base it would be important to have at least one working paper from each university per year. It was proposed that the style-guidelines should be included in the printed version and on the web. Excellent MA-thesis will be fed into the online student MA-thesis archive.

8. Resource Mobilisation

Currently support is provided by the Germany Ministry for Development cooperation to support the development of the GLU programs in the Southern Hemisphere and support global networking. Additionally, there is financial support from the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, the Hans-Böckler-Foundation and the ILO.

In Germany a GLU association has been founded which shall serve to approach potential sponsors of the GLU. Several proposals are written by Kassel University to mobilise resources from the DAAD and from Inwent for the 3-month certificate. The DAAD resources target – if they are granted - the intensified cooperation with India and the possibility of an exchange of PhD-students working on Globalisation and Labour.

In all countries the universities contribute to the programme implementation. However for medium- and longterm sustainability it is important to broaden sources. The possibilities for funding also through government funds for South-South cooperation should be explored. India committed itself to see if there are resources for cooperation between India, South Africa and Brazil. Furthermore, the TISS will explore if there is any possibility to get a funding from the Ford Foundation. Verena Schmidt will send around a list of possible funding organisations which has been composed by the University of Cardiff.

For the meeting in Mumbai, concrete proposals on how to mobilize resources shall be elaborated.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation of the GLU (A summary of the report can be found in Annex II)

Overall, the interviewed shareholders of the programme (students, unions, donors) are very positive and think that the programme contributes successfully towards capacity building and international networking. Nevertheless, the monitoring has brought up some aspects that require further discussion and action.

Key issues are the selection and (re)integration of students in the trade union movement after returning back home. While a large number of Alumni are today active in the labour movement or in labour related research (80%) a number of them feel that it was not that easy to reintegrate in the labour movement and that they could not really apply their new skills.

It seems that the requirement of an endorsement of an application by the trade union and the requirement of a financial contribution from the sending organisation for a scholarship are not always sufficient to ensure that trade unions support applicants they want to use in the labour movement, when they are coming back. The financial contribution seems not in all cases to come from the trade unions and sometimes recommendation letters seem to be rather letters of convenience.

The current structure of application and retention is strongly based on the initiative of the individual applicant. This has the advantage of high personal motivation, but may also result in a weaker organisational commitment from the trade unions. It was seen that this tension is partly unavoidable. While the programme can neither guarantee a job after the course nor ensure that sending trade unions provide an employment opportunity upon return, the programme will apply additional measures to support successful reintegration in the labour movement. However - to avoid wrong expectations, it should also be communicated to students, that they cannot expect a guaranteed job through the programme.

The most important issue for successful reintegration is proper selection. A number of steps were suggested to improve the selection process. Trade unions should be requested in their supporting letter also to indicate what they expect the applicant to do in the labour movement when s/he comes back. The field structure of FES, ILO and Global Unions should be used more systematically to assess the trade union support for the applications. Also consultations with Alumni can be used for that purpose. Two or three month before the end of the course the universities will organise a

workshop to discuss also with the students the challenges of returning and reintegration back home. At the end of the course the programme should send a letter to the union and inform them about the skills the student has acquired.

The alumni will be asked to provide an information leaflet containing some ideas on strategies that will help the graduates to find their way back into their union.

Trade union ownership in the GLU as a whole needs to be improved. The GLU has developed and budgeted for a number of instruments to institutionalise the cooperation with the trade union movement (national and international steering committees, internships, guest lecturers, integrated workshops, joint teaching and the GLU conference). These instruments need to be applied more actively. Active involvement of trade unions is a continuous task. It needs to respond in a flexible manner to the time and capacity problems trade unions are often facing.

In addition GLU product should be disseminated widely. The research products should be policy orientated so that they can feed more easily into the work of trade unions. The now launched research projects should also be used in this sense.

Participants

Joachim Beerhorst - IG Metall

Sharit Bhowmik – Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Christine Bischoff - University of the Witwatersrand

Barbara Dickhaus – University of Kassel

Christof Dieterle – University of Kassel

Dieter Eich - DGB Bildungswerk

Camila Gripp - Universidade Estadual de Campinas

Miriam Heigl – GLU International Secretariat

Hansjörg Herr - FHW Berlin

Frank Hoffer - International Labour Organisation

Edward Kareweh - GLU alumni, Ghana

Harald Kröck - GLU Web-Coordinator

Mariano Laplane - Universidade Estadual de Campinas

Sue Ledwith – Ruskin College

Birgit Mahnkopf – FHW Berlin

Nitin More - Tata Institute of Social Sciences

S. Parasuraman - Vice-Chancellor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
Reiner Radermacher – Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation
Clair Ruppert - CUT Brazil
Christoph Scherrer - Universität Kassel
Verena Schmidt – International Labour Organisation
Mike Waghorne – GLU Monitoring
Edward Webster - University of the Witwatersrand

Annex I

a.) Brazil

The programme is in its first year. In the first semester 6 regular students and two exchange students from the German programme participated. Currently, 4 students are participating in the Brazilian programme (3 from Africa, 1 from Jamaica). Two students went back to Germany to receive their degree and two left the programme prematurely, one of which went to India. Brazilian students need to pass the general application process of UniCamp. This requires a special support for trade unionists to prepare for this application process. Language is one of the big problems to attract more Latin American participants in the programme, it was agreed that an intensive English language course should be offered at the beginning of the course. The colleagues from Campinas will explore the funding needs and possibilities to offer a two – three month intensive English course at Campinas. For those in need of such language training the scholarships have to be extended.

In July, the first round of students started their internships. Some places were found, where the language was no problem. During the first semester, there were some problems of intercultural communication amongst the students. However, the increasing experience of the national coordinator and institutional techniques to solve the problem, helped to prevent such problems to rise once again.

For the next course the University received 18 applications. The selection process will start next week.

b.) Germany

In Germany, 18 students from all over the world have been accepted in the programme (8 male /10 female). Within the curriculum, more emphasis is put now on

research methods, 'required electives' have been established and a workshop on 'intercultural awareness' has been introduced. For the year 2008/2009, 17 students have been taken in of which 6 are male and 11 are female.

There is an increasing exchange of lecturers with all southern campuses and student exchange is increased. The six-week internship is carried out amongst others with the ITUC/ETUC, the GUFs, the ILO and the DGB. Two students of the German programme went to Brazil and South Africa for their internships.

A two day workshop German and international trade unions is now a regular part of the course on 'multinational companies and labour'. The integration of such a joint workshop into the curriculum has proven to a very productive integration of trade unions in the programme.

The funding structure of the German programme has been improved. Now there are seven donors for internships, including GUFs. GLU has been registered as a non-profit organisation in Germany to acquire and distribute donations.

The establishment of a 3-month-certificate is planned. This certificate shall mainly allow German and European trade unionists that cannot leave their working-place for an entire year to participate part-time in the courses. However, trade unionists from Brazil, India and South Africa will form an integral part of this certificate-programme. Further applications to the DAAD for an exchange-programme with India and eventually for the exchange of PhD-students working on Labour and Globalisation are envisaged.

c.) India

In India, a successful start of the programme took place: In the first badge of students, 5 unionists and 20 regular students participate. For those participants that are weak in English, additional language training is offered. The one trade union student in the pre-pilot course (2007) has started his internship with the TUC in Leicester and it seems to work very well. The internship is of major importance to both students and organisers as it lasts six months. In India, some trade unionists are involved in teaching by giving guest lectures. The staff development at TISS is also favourable towards the GLU as a number of additional positions have been given to the programme.

The Indian steering committee will meet for the first time in October. For the coming year it is planned to increase the number of trade union students to 10 while the number of other students will be reduced to 10. The establishment of a short-term programme which leads to a certificate for all those who cannot leave their jobs for an entire year is envisaged as a further step of programme development.

d.) South Africa

In South Africa the 2nd group of students has successfully been taken in. There are 11 students all of which are Africans with 5 from COSATU (South Africa) of whom three are participating part-time. One of the participants left early, another one was transferred into a diploma course that was more adequate to her current academic level.

The exchange in particular with Germany has gained momentum on all academic levels: There were two PhD visitors from Kassel this year, a German guest lecturer visited Wits and in October the first South African PhD student is visiting Kassel university. The internships/field research was mainly undertaken with South African trade unions and helped to strengthen the linkages between the programme and the trade unions.

Next year the target is to increase the number of students further to 15. A Sub-Saharan workshop is planned in late March. This workshop serves a double goal: It presents an opportunity to initiate the African alumni work and to have a joint workshop with trade union activists at the COSATU winter school.

For the current course there are 11 international applications and the programme is targeting 5-10 South African participants.

Annex II

Recommendations from the 2008 interim report 'AN Evaluation of the Global Labour University'

1.) Unions and universities

GLU needs to consider mounting a debate over what unions want from universities (in general and when they are sending a student to participate in the GLU pro-

gramme). It is necessary to explore ways of enabling more trade union input into the courses, including discussions of what the students see as relevant union issues.

Recommendations:

- Plenary session at the GLU 2009 conference to discuss this issue
- A survey of national centres and unions should be undertaken during 2009, when there is a broad enough group of alumni to make for a useful sample size, to see whether trade unions feel that the returning graduates are, in fact, contributing to long-term, sustainable development of individual trade unions, national trade union centres and national development
- A covering letter from the sponsoring union requiring some information on how the union intends to use the student on his/her return

2.) Students and Universities

Some students feel that there is a lack of access to modern English resource material. They would like to see trade union issues and visiting lectures better integrated into the programme.

Recommendations:

- a database of reading material that all campuses are using should be created

3.) Universities and Students

Language capacities and research expertise of some students is a problem for some universities (in particular in Brazil and Germany). Expectations of students regarding the tasks of the coordinators should be clarified. Multicultural behaviour by the students has to be encouraged

Recommendations:

- FES suggests that their offices in the countries from which potential students come might be able to interview them to assess their English language ability
- The research expertise and experience of potential students should be assessed at the application stage
- Useful and problem-avoiding material regarding multicultural behaviour should be compiled within the GLU network and sent to students before their arrival on site. Material could be composed by encouraging students to follow the ex-

ample of the Campinas students, which compiled a dossier of the kinds of problems they have faced.

- An input regarding multicultural behaviour ought to be a very early part of the introduction to each course.
- It should be made clear to applicants that behaviour which potentially denigrates the GLU reputation or interferes with the ability of other students to pursue their course without harassment will result in a withdrawal of GLU scholarships.
- Latin America: It would be useful for the GLU to explore with the CUT and other Latin American trade union bodies ways in which either potential students who have competence in English can be encouraged to enrol in GLU programme, at UNICAMP especially, or programmes can be set up in each country to develop the English language skills of more trade unionists.

4.) Internships

The length and weight as well as the purpose of internships have emerged as issues in Brazil, Germany and South Africa

Recommendations:

- Internships could either be converted into field research experiences that help prepare for the research report exercise or a way should be found to make sure that students and their host organisation can agree much earlier on precisely what each party will be offering and gaining. These issues should be discussed by the GLU Council.

5.) GLU promotion and advertising

The GLU needs to be advertised and promoted amongst rank and file members, to ensure that all potential applicants are being reached.

Recommendations:

- During the 2008 summer school it should be discussed with alumni the ways in which they can be used to promote the GLU and whether they need specific materials to help them to do this.