

**GLU Annual Council Meeting  
(25 February 2009 - Tata Institute for Social Sciences,  
Mumbai)**

**1. Update on Programme Development**

**In addition to the tabled progress report oral updates were given from the different countries**

**(a) Brazil:**

The student's first year has just finished this past February. Students are scheduled to leave Brazil in late March (after arriving in January 2008). A remaining challenge is that students have to finish their thesis in the coming months. Students would either have to continue working back home or stay two months longer. It was agreed that students should be encouraged to finish their thesis before leaving, even if this requires two more months.

The new students arrived two weeks ago and they are presently involved in Portuguese language classes. Six students have already enrolled and four more are on their way. This year there are students from Ghana, Malawi, Philippines, Tanzania and Canada (only one candidate from Latin America who wasn't linked to the TU movement). Language is an important reason for insufficient applications from Latin America. The CUT has begun English classes with leaders and unionists. There is a need to integrate more Brazilians and Latin Americans into the course.

CUT and OS have regular meetings with UniCamp. They are working jointly on how to include the labour-union content inside the course. Seminars and meetings for this semester have been scheduled to bring about changes in this coming group (in terms of content).

**(b) Germany:**

The programme is in the 5<sup>th</sup> year. Students come from a large number of countries; however it would be good to have a few more Germans and Western European students. . The re-accreditation of the programme took up a lot of time, however, this has been successfully achieved for the next seven years.

This year the programme experimented with the introduction of an inter-cultural awareness course (given by Laura Roberts of Canada); this decreased (so far) the number and degree of conflicts within the group.

Exchange of lecturers with partner universities continued on a regular basis this year. The internship programme is always very work intensive. Approximately 70% of them work out well but this year two students were told at the last minute that they didn't have internships. They have since gone to Brazil, but this was a very expensive solution.

There is still the issue of admitting a person who doesn't have an officially recognized bachelor's degree. Some students were admitted without the formal qualifications. They did very well in the course, but could not get the Master degree.

The Steering Committee is composed of the Universities, the DGB, FES and ILO, and meets two to three times a year.

#### **New initiatives:**

##### **Three month course**

Kassel University and Berlin School of Economics and Law will most likely receive some funding to offer over a three year period 3 month courses on Global Economic Governance. The course will consist of 6 modules: Global Wage Policies, Global Finance, Trade Regimes, Development Economics, Participating in Global Governance plus an optional 2 month Internship. INWENT, the German partner and funding organization, will provide 12 scholarships for students from the Global South. European participants would have to pay for this (roughly 1300 Euros) as it is not an official Masters Programme and the University has to charge fees. Participants can attain credits which would be recognized for a GLU Master Programme

The target group should be trade unionists with some academic training. **It is important if GLU partners could assist in advertising and also proposing candidates.** GLU needs to produce sufficient candidates otherwise INWENT will select anyone they desire.

##### **Centre for Decent Work and Development**

Kassel University is trying to win a DAAD tender for a centre for Development and Decent Work. The center is envisaged around a graduate school (a virtual school with periodic meetings), in the field of development and decent work. The GLU Summer Schools (post 2009) would be integrated, as well as funds for field research, a web portal (Development and Decent Work), publication strategies and knowledge Transfer. There will also be guest professorships. Joint field research would be very welcome. The ILO is the major international organization participating in this project, which underlines the strong focus on decent work.

#### **(c) India:**

The programme is in the first international year. It is open for regular and trade union students. For the regular students, TISS had 1000 applications for 14 places. There were only 4 trade union students. However, for this year the trade unions indicated already at least ten applicants.

The programme has been facing a number of teething problems. There is in particular a need to strengthen the areas of macroeconomics, global governance and international trade union strategies. TISS will be able to fill two additional staff positions for the new course. The possibility of co-teaching with colleagues from partner universities will allow the development of stronger exchange and cooperation in the above mentioned areas.

A National Steering Committee will be established within the next month in cooperation involving the following Indian Trade unions: AITUC, HMS, INTUC, and SEWA.

#### **(d) South Africa**

The course has 13 students this year (a good mix between South Africans and international students) coming from Turkey, Ghana, Botswana, Zimbabwe, 6 part-time students (NACTU- one student and 5 from COSATU). Last year, one student dropped out and another converted to a diploma because he didn't do the thesis. The main challenge is getting students from the TU movement who have a bachelors degree.

Wits is presently in consultation with Ditsela (which is the educational arm of the labour movement). They provide basic union education but now they will be offering specific educational courses that ensure compatibility with the WITS-GLU programme.

The steering committee meets every month and this includes a representative from COSATU. There is a close relationship with the federation even though the reps have changed twice.

Last year the students managed to finish earlier after provision was made within the faculty that students had to finish in the 12-month period (after 6 months they had to have finished their formal proposal). Every student, bar one part-time student, finished their theses on time and they all passed. This shortened the time frame by one month.

#### **Student exchange issues**

The exchange of students is complicated. There are substantial visa and financial issues. However, the most complicated is the mutual recognition of credits. While German universities can recognize a full semester this seems to be difficult for others. There is a need to explore the different possibilities as students need to know what are their real options in terms of switching between campuses.

**It was agreed that all universities assess the rules and option for mutual credit recognition and send a fact sheet to Miriam Heigl by end of April .**

## **2. Monitoring and Evaluation of GLU**

M. Waghorne highlighted a number of key issues from the evaluation report

### **Relationship b/w TUs and the Universities.**

In conversation with Indian trade unions Mike noticed that there is need for further consultation to get at least 2 of the Federations more involved and make sure that the programme is also seen as relevant for their trade union work. In all countries there should be more discussions concerning what the TUs expect and want from the universities and vice-versa.

**Internships:** Last year people complained about logistics and getting something out of the process. However things have improved - alumni from Brazil and India gave positive feedback concerning their experiences, although in Brazil the problem has been with finding English-language positions for foreign students. In some cases the tasks of the Interns need to be defined more clearly.

**Language:** There have been problems in Brazil and Germany. In Brazil there are faculty staff problems (lack of English-speaking staff and Brazilian students). Actions are being taken to address this issues at university level and also at the level of the CUT. However this is not only a problem for trade unionists in Brazil but throughout the Latin American region.

### **Trade Union involvement**

TU representatives coming as guest lecturers have not always been well integrated into the overall programme. These stand-alone events have not in all cases been that productive. Greater effort is needed to make meetings with trade unionists a more integrated part of the curriculum process. There has been some good experience in joint workshops with students and trade union experts as part of the course.

**Selection process:** Students do need a recommendation from their trade unions. However, trade unions seem not always to be clear as to why they recommend that person and what do the unions expect of the students when they return home? **More communication with the TUs concerning the application of students and the support they receive from their union is required.** The lack of English-speaking skills is sometimes a problem. Better mechanisms to assess the language skills need to be explored. (Interviews via Skype, interview at the local office of the FES etc) in order to filter out people who can't write or speak a sufficient amount of English before coming to study.

**English resource material:** Last year in Brazil there were claimed to be many problems with English materials, but this seemed to be an oversight by the students as they later said that there was a wealth of English-reading material available at the University.

**Coordination:** The programmes rely heavily on the work of coordinators to fix a huge amount of organizational and technical issues. This results in a dependency on a very high volunteer commitment from the coordinators that is not sustainable.

**Reintegration:** There have been problems in a number of cases when alumni return home to their unions. There are now some very specific questions in the evaluation about what the students will be doing when they return home. The trade unions could be informed by the programme at the end of the course about the skills and qualification the student has acquired. The Brazilian alumni were all very optimistic

about their chances when finishing as they had maintained contact with their unions during their study period. This has, as yet, to be fully evaluated in Germany.

#### **Promotion and advertising of GLU:**

There has been an overwhelmingly negative response to this aspect. When students are asked how they found out about the GLU, very few state that it was via their federations; rather it was via informal networks.

The information is currently distributed to national centers, but does not get widely disseminated. Following steps were suggested

- Distributing the information through the Alumni Network
  - Using other e-mail lists
  - Getting articles or adverts in trade union journals
  - Working more closely with the Global Unions
  - Identifying contact persons in trade unions that will circulate the information.
- We should go way beyond the national setting. The alumni should be missionaries for the programme and identify potential students to get into the course. Perhaps the GUFs should be used more to help identify potential students.

### **3. GLU Research Initiatives**

#### **Alumni Research Projects**

GLU research teams have been set up, looking into a number of themes; three are currently under way and there is a new one on the minimum wage. Each alumni research team is led by a professor from the GLU network. This has shown itself to be a good structure to involve the alumni in GLU research work.

#### **South-South cooperation**

The governments of India/Brazil/South Africa have agreed in supporting also research cooperation between the countries. It was suggested to take advantage of this link and involving the TUs in each country and making comparative studies on labour issues in each country. It should be possible to attain support for this in the IBSA framework. The GLU Summer School and the Decent Work workshops in Brazil could be used to develop these proposals further.

#### **GLU column on the Crisis**

The Global Crisis is having a massive impact on working people. It might open opportunities for policy changes. The labour movement is facing the twin challenge of defending workers against the immediate fall out of the crisis and proposing an agenda of change. The GLU could try to contribute to this debate by inviting members of the network and other progressive academics and trade unionists to contribute a regular column on the crisis. The column should provide short, fact based, and well written commentaries, focusing on specific aspects of the crisis and possible alternative responses. While there was general support for such a forum, there were different views on the focus. Should it be a discussion of ideas focused on labour issues, should it be an intellectual debate or should it focus more on a critical assessment of the policy actually proposed by the trade union movement? Should it be published on the GLU web-site or should we try to find a more prominent way of publishing it?

Frank Hoffer agreed to circulate a concept note within the next weeks. This would also include some further suggestions regarding how to organize and resource this undertaking.

C. Scherrer mentioned that for the PhD school he has put in resources for a half-job for publication strategies and media work in the English.

#### **4. GLU Alumni Initiatives**

##### **Decent Work alumni workshop SA**

From 22-27 March in Johannesburg there will be an African regional Alumni meeting, as a combined German-South African event. This will include GLU Alumni from both programmes and the current South African GLU students. The students will be giving presentations on their own research initiatives. The thematic focus will be on Decent Work .

##### **Decent Work alumni workshop in Brazil**

There is also funding for a Latin American network. There are time constraints on this and we need to push it through relatively quickly. The Alumni don't have to be Uni Campinas alumni; they can come from any of the campuses. The preparation is in the hands of Uni Campinas. It should be done before the end of the year.

##### **GLU alumni Summer School**

This year's Summer School in Berlin is from the 14-24<sup>th</sup> of September (2009). The first week would be predominantly in the form of seminars with the alumni presenting their own research initiatives (parallel sessions), the discussion of GLU research projects as well as new ideas for research projects. The second week will focus more on general debates related to the economic crisis. Here some keynote speakers will be invited as guest lecturers. This restructuring allows more flexibility for those alumni who can't participate for the full 10 days. They can decide what they wish to attend in advance. The general theme will be the overall impact of the Global Crisis and aspects picked up here in this Conference.

#### **5. GLU Publications**

##### **(a) GLU Working Papers**

A number of GLU working papers have been published. All colleagues are invited to contribute. Mike Waghorne volunteered to do some final proof-reading after editing.

##### **(b) GLU Conference Publication**

After 5 Conferences only one Conference publication appeared. Sharit Bhowmik was confident that TISS will come out with a publication soon . There are 34 papers available, and an intention to select the best ones and contact some international editors who would be interested. In fact, publication houses had displayed an interest in the same. There will be probably two publications focusing on the two themes of the conference.

##### **(c) Information sharing via ILIAS**

All the reading material should be placed on ILIAS to give us an idea of how the courses are being structured and the content. This aspect needs to be improved. It is an obligation all partners agreed upon and it would make information sharing much easier. If ILIAS is not fast enough outside Europe we need a type of mirror site where ILIAS can be accessed?

## **6. Resource mobilization**

There is a need to broaden the resource base: mobilizing resources from various sources. Presently, all the international programs/ events are being funded by sources from the German government, numerous German foundations. This is not sustainable and unbalanced. In particular as in the light of the global crisis some of the current funding sources might face additional financial constraints.

The following institutions could be approached

The *Ford Foundation* funds activities that are related to taking labour and civil society activists out of the workplace.

TISS will approach the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and Action Aid for support and also look into IBSA resources (inter-governmental) from Brazil, India and SA.

Campinas has so far been relying on university funds, which also might be slightly more difficult to get in the coming year. Therefore, they need to look at other sources, together with CUT, and the Observatorio Social. The CUT has been talking about this and will explore possibilities of approaching the Ministry of Education or other government agencies.

Wits has been attempting to mobilize funds via COSATU and the secretary for Education.

## **7. Amendments to GLU Statute**

The suggested amendments of the statute were passed unanimously. There are now

3 categories of membership:

1. Full membership
2. Associate institutional membership
3. Associate fellows

## **8. Associate GLU Membership**

Based on prior consultation the following institutions and persons were offered associate membership:

### **Voting:**

#### **Associate institutional membership**

Ruskin College- passed unanimously

#### **Associate fellows**

Steve Davies

Michael Fichter

Elmar Altvater

all passed unanimously

## **9. Election Steering Committee**

- Brazil- Mariano Laplane (Uni Campinas), José Celestino Lourenço (CUT)
- Germany- Dieter Eich (DGB) and Christoph Scherrer (Uni Kassel)
- India- Sharit Bhowmik (TISS)
- South Africa- Devan Pillay (WITS) and Crystal Dicks (COSATU)
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung – Reiner Radermacher),
- ILO- Frank Hoffer
- Global Unions- pending

As the Indian National Steering Committee has not yet been constituted, it was agreed that it was too early to elect a trade union representative. Frank Hoffer agreed to send a letter to the national trade union organizations affiliated to international trade union bodies and ask them to nominate a representative for the national steering committee. The trade unions will be asked to nominate someone who has experience, interest and time to engage in the GLU. The trade union representatives in the national steering committee will be requested to nominate the representative on the international level.

## **10. GLU Conference 2010**

The 6<sup>th</sup> GLU conference will return to Germany (Berlin) and it will be from the 22 (evening) – 24<sup>th</sup> of September in 2010.

The focus will be on the global economic crisis. It should look at short and long-term responses to the crisis. The focus should be broader than a Keynesian crisis response strategy. As we will be two years into the crisis it should also provide an opportunity to assess trade union policies and strategies. The impact on and the responses from labour should be an important element of the discussion. What has been the response in different parts of the world and what are strategies for the Global South.

The idea of policy-oriented workshops such as were held in Mumbai worked well and should be repeated. However, the main presentations (plenary sessions) should involve more controversy and room for debate (different understandings that permit more dialogue). The format of having a Call for Papers should be maintained. While there was a reasonable gender balance among paper presenters and participants, the next conference should improve on the gender balance among Panelists and key note speakers.

Hansjörg Herr agrees to write up a paper outlining his understanding of the dimensions of the conference and a draft call for paper and then send this around for further discussion.



## **11. Miscellaneous**

- a) As follow up of the curriculum workshop in Mumbai a special workshop dealing with the topic of 'trade union strategies and organisational development under globalization' will be organised in Berlin at the 9./10<sup>th</sup> of October 2009 to deepen the conceptual debate in this important area. Representatives of trade unions and universities from the four programmes and the GUFs will be invited. The workshop will be funded by the FES.
  
- b) The funding from the DAAD allows for someone from SA going to India and someone from SA going to Brazil, as well as someone from India going to SA, for the year 2009.
  
- c) There will be an International Steering Committee meeting during the Summer School later this year (19 September 2009).