

European Social Watch Report

As part of the efforts to strengthen Social Watch activities in Europe, there is an initiative to produce a European Social Watch Report by the end of 2009. The purpose of the report would be to contribute to build closer interaction between European Social Watch coalitions, and to enhance their capacity to engage in dialogue on development and social policy, and its implementation, at national and European levels. It is not intended that the European report duplicates the international Social Watch report or any national reports that are produced. It would seek to strengthen a European identity for Social Watch, with Europe being inclusive of all countries in the region, not only the European Union. On the basis that Social Watch was established to look at social issues at both national and international levels, it has been suggested that the theme of the European report should reflect this double perspective. In that sense, it has proposed that *migration* is an appropriate topic because it has both internal and external implications for Europe. From an internal perspective, the relevant issues to explore are those of citizenship, the rights of migrants, refugee reception policy, repatriation policy and the role of migrants in national labour markets. From an external perspective, the issues to be addressed include the brain drain, remittances and human trafficking. Currently Eurostep, supported by Lunaria, is leading the production of the Report. Contacts with national SW platform in Europe and other CSOs competent on the selected theme were established. The requested contributions from national coalitions eager to participate at drafting this Report are expected by mid of May 2009.

Overview of the project activities: future steps...

Next period: March 2009 — June 2009

Training and capacity building activities

Dates of training:

Rome, 17-18 March

Prague, 24-25 March

Warsaw, 26-27 March

A second training session as foreseen in the project for each SW national Coalition is expected to take place in March 2009. The training will focus on policy influencing (advocacy, lobby and campaigning) and will be facilitated in each country by a professional trainer from BBO (a Dutch consultancy agency) supported by a local trainer more expert on the local context.

Researching and reporting activities

All the national coalitions will be contributing in the coming weeks to the Global SW Report 2009 by drafting their country report.

An other contribution is expected by mid of May for the European Report.

Guidelines for both the Reports have been circulated and researchers team can be contacted for any needed clarifications.

Raising awareness and lobbying activities

The launch of the Czech national report is planned for mid of March.

Follow up activities to the launch events have to be planned in each country for going forward with the advocacy actions carried out in the project first year.

National Reports are going to be distributed to relevant actors.



For further information...

On the EU project:

Federica Corsi

Project Manager—Ucodep

federica.corsi@ucodep.org

On the Italian Coalition:

Jason Nardi

Italian SW Coordinator

jason.nardi@gmail.com

www.socialwatch.it

On the Polish Coalition:

Magda Pochec

Polish SW Coordinator

magda.pochec@karat.org.pl

On the Czech Coalition:

Jiry Silny

Czech SW Coordinator

ekumakad@volny.cz

Promoting Social Development: building capacities of Social Watch national Coalitions

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An overview on the project first year

Project Information

Title: Promoting Social Development: building capacities of Social Watch Coalitions

Duration: March 2008 – February 2011

Beneficiaries: national Coalitions of Italy, Poland and the Czech Republic

Partners of the project: Ucodep (IT) Lead Agency; Karat (PL); Ekumenica Akademie of Prague (CZ); Mani Tese (IT); Lunaria (IT); Fondazione Culturale Responsabilità Etica (IT); Oxfam Novib (NL); Eurostep (BE)

Funding Agency: European Commission



The first year of the project “*Promoting Social Development: building capacities of Social Watch Coalitions*” has just ended and is time to make a preliminary assessment of the achieved results. Being just the first out of three years project, we think useful to carry out in the coming weeks among the members of each coalition a basic investigation about expectations met and suggestions for improving our performance. Indeed, it will be valuable to receive feed back and proposals directly from the beneficiaries of this project in order to better focus the activities on their actual needs and expectations.

Looking back at this first year and at what was expected to be implemented, most of the activities have been carried out even if some of them have been delayed. This newsletter, which concerns the period from November 2008 to February 2009, will report the main results achieved in the last months when all the three coalitions had a rather intense activity.

In addition to the activities reported in this newsletter, is noteworthy to mention as well that the Polish and Czech Coalitions during this first year focused their attention on enlarging their membership and currently the Polish coalition is getting involved 12 organizations interested in belonging to the network. As far as the Italian coalition is concerned, the choice for this first year was to enhance the action of its current membership by drafting a multi-year Action Plan defining objectives, expected results and main typology of actions for the coming 3 years and a minimum set of criteria for improving the internal functioning rules. The plan is expected to be finalized at latest by June.

If you want to contribute at drafting this newsletter, please come back with your suggestions and ideas by writing at federica.corsi@ucodep.org

Research on SW successful case studies

“*Learning from successful experiences*”: this is the title of the survey carried out from October to February aimed at investigating, through a common research methodology, the crucial factors which make Brazil, Benin, Germany and Philippines interesting and noteworthy experiences among the SW national coalitions.

The idea behind this paper is to stimulate a mutual learning process among the worldwide network and facilitate sharing of experiences, know—how transfer and capacity building among its members.

The publication is expected to be on line by April 2009 on the SW website in two versions: the complete report and a short booklet highlighting the main research findings.

SW International Secretariat

c/o Instituto Tercero Mundo (ITEM)

Montevideo, Uruguay

If you are interested in knowing more about SW network www.socialwatch.org



In December 2008 the Polish SW Coalition (PSWC) produced its first national SW Report. It has been a great achievement for a rising coalition which in a few months has been able to get involved in drafting the Report about 12 civil society organizations operating in Poland (<http://karat.org/index.php?pagelid=367>)

The Polish Social Watch Report beyond including reprints of thematic articles and a selection of country reports from the International SW Report, has a special focus on human rights violation in Poland.

News from the Czech Coalition



In November the Czech Coalition had the opportunity to present at two different events the SW activity carried out at international and national level. On the 12th of November the Czech SW Coalition participated at a parliamentary debate on *"Czech Republic and new impulses of international development"* which took place at the Parliament. The debate was organized in cooperation with Czech GCAP and the Czech Forum for Development Co-operation. The Czech national coordinator made a speech in the first panel. It was a great opportunity to reach a large relevant public (around 90 deputies, ministerial clerks, NGO, journalists). On the 18th of November, in the framework of the conference *"Cultural aspects of globalization: intercultural and transcultural dialogue"* the Czech Coalition managed to organize in cooperation with the Centre for global studies a presentation on the Social Watch network and its specific monitoring and research activity. This presentation was able to reach about 40 participants (mainly academics, students and journalists).

The major and broadest section has been elaborated by PSWC and experts appointed by PSWC. It consists of 14 articles; each one elaborates in depth specific area of human rights violations in Poland. It highlights such burning problems in Poland such as jurisdiction (problems with litigation of rights), conditions in prisons, rights of minor victims of domestic violence and lingering discrimination against certain groups: women, sexual minorities, disabled people and refugees. As far as women's rights are concerned, the report focuses on the problem of low participation of women in politics, discriminatory pension system and violations in the area of sexual and reproductive rights. This section of the report also reviews the governmental proposal of antidiscrimination act which leaves much to be desired in the view of Polish nongovernmental organizations. Furthermore, two articles challenges two important but constantly neglected in the public discourse issues: human rights related to multinational corporations' activities and the right to development.

Launch of the Polish SW Report

Warsaw, 10th of December 2008

On 10th of December 2008, at the 60 anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first national report of the Polish Social Watch Coalition has been launched in the Polish Parliament. Among the speakers were Ryszard Kalisz (chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee of Justice and Human Rights), prof. Irena Rzeplińska (expert in the field of human rights) and Magda Pocheć (coordinator of Polish Social Watch Coalition). The conference was coordinated by Katarzyna Szymielewicz (Polish Section of International Commission of Jurists). During the press conference, the report which reflects the voice of the wide spectrum of civil society organizations in Poland has been passed to Ryszard Kalisz who welcomed the report on behalf of decision makers and assured that it would be treated with due seriousness. About 40 participants (mainly journalists) attended the launch.

Launch of the Italian SW Report

Rome, 19th of February 2009

Milan, 25th of February 2009

Naples, 27th of February 2009

The Italian Coalition edited in January its national Report including the translated thematic articles and the section measuring progress from the International SW Report. Along with these two main sections there is a small one focusing on Italy where the Coalition deepened the analysis on human rights in Italy. Most of the Coalition members participated in drafting the analysis on the Italian context by giving their contribution on the basis of their specific competences.

A national launch event took place at the Parliament on the 19th of February. Based on the analysis of the Annual SW Report and taking into account the current political and economic context a debate was promoted between members of the Parliament and civil society organizations.



Around 70 participants attended the launch. Representatives of each organization member of the Italian Social Watch coalition made a brief speech by presenting from different perspectives all the issues dealt with in the 2008 SW Report. Six members of the Parliament (2 from the current majority and 4 from the opposition



parties) were invited to take part in the debate and made their brief comments. It was a valuable opportunity of dialogue appreciated by most of the participants who attended the event which got a quite good media coverage. Many Italian press agencies and a few specialized newspapers reported the news pointing out the main findings of the 2008 SW Report. The days following the launch, members of the Italian coalition were invited to take part to some programme on the web (i.e. RaiNews24, Rai International).

In addition to the national launch, the Italian SW Coalition organized as well two presentations of the 2008 SW Report addressed to students and academics interested in SW analysis. On the 25th of February a round table took place at the University of Milan and an other one was organized at the University of Naples on the 27th of February. Jana Silverman from the International Secretariat was the main speaker of both these events. In total at the Universities around 150 people were involved (approximately 15 were professors).

The level of debates was quite good and the Italian coalition is eager to facilitate and deepen in the next future a structured dialogue both with decision makers and academics.

Auditions of the Italian SW Coalition at the Parliament

The Italian SW Coalition asked for and got the chance of an audition before two relevant Commissions of the Italian Parliament on the 26th of February. The 2008 SW Report was delivered at the members of the Committee on MDGs at the House and at the members of the Human Rights Commission at the Senate. The Italian SW delegation, supported by Jana Silverman from the International Secretariat, focused its speech on the risk of failure of achieving the MDGs by 2015 and provide the members of the Parliament with the analysis and estimation made by SW researchers. Relevant data concerning BCI and GEI were mentioned as well. During the audition before the Senate's Commission special attention was given to the relation between the current crisis and the implementation of Human Rights. In addition, some of the recommendations submitted to the Stiglitz Commission were presented to the Italian parliamentarians.



From February 2009 the Italian SW Coalition has its own web site:

www.socialwatch.it