



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2012

Réseau  

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Education  
et Solidarité





## INTRODUCTION

Following an initial activity launch period in which we explored and welcomed various options, we decided to focus our efforts on priority projects in 2012 to demonstrate the value added by the Network through achievements in the field. At the same time, we tried to consolidate our member and partner base. Finally, we established our role of promoting solidarity-based social protection at international level.

### 1. More focused projects to demonstrate the Network's added value

#### 1.1. *Set-up and development of mutual societies*

Since its creation, the Network has become involved with a number of trade unions or organisations seeking to study, implement or develop solidarity-based social protection systems, based mainly on the mutual society model. This is a long process for which there are no immediate results. We therefore decided to focus on projects with the greatest chances of success and those which will serve as examples.

Consequently, we worked with education trade unions in Burkina Faso and the local NGO, ASMADE to launch an education sector mutual society in this country. As a result of work carried out, a pilot mutual society for basic education was launched with the support of the relevant trade unions. MGEN, SOLIDARIS and CSQ are supporting the project with their expertise. The project will mainly be run with the local NGO, ASMADE whose mission is to develop mutual society-based healthcare cover in the country. It will therefore be coordinated with community-based mutual societies. It will also benefit from the dynamics of creating a social protection floor with the support of P4H (a programme supported by the ILO and WHO). The project should be implemented in 2013.

This is a benchmark project in terms of mobilising stakeholders in the field and coordinating with the national social protection framework.

The second project on which we focused was the development of the Mutuelle de l'Enseignement Public (MESP) or State Education Mutual Society, an initiative of the Education Ministry of the DRC. This project launched in 2009 with the Mutualité Neutre de Belgique aims initially to cover education professionals in Kinshasa. It will then be rolled out to the entire country. This project has a sound technical and logistical basis and has already allowed education professionals in Kinshasa and their families to receive free healthcare. The Ministry has committed large-scale funding to develop this mutual society. However, it still rests on uncertain foundations. The network and MGEN have therefore joined with the Ministry and EI trade union members to tackle two key areas of work defined during a mission in September 2012:

- Ensuring structural sustainability based on a technical balance which has not yet been established;
- Structuring a system of governance which both guarantees efficiency and is representative of covered education professionals.

This is a benchmark project in terms of the soundness of its technical structure. However, it also stands out in terms of the necessary balance struck between effectiveness and the representation and empowerment of user representatives. An action plan has been drawn up for 2013 with a view to optimising management and governance through training and sharing of expertise.

## **1.2. Training, education and disseminating a culture of social protection**

This is the essence of what is expected of the Network: mobilising the education and social economy sector to promote training of executives and managers to initiate and support actions on social protection education and disease prevention, and in the longer term, to contribute to the emergence and development of a culture of social protection.

Besides the set-up of mutual societies, pilot projects demonstrating the benefit of our methods and constituting applications which will serve as benchmarks were a focus for the Network in 2012 and work will continue to be carried out on them in the first half of 2013.

In terms of mutual society training, the Network focused on strengthening its network of university and professional expertise by:

- MGEN introducing an initial module on mutual insurance with the Université de Versailles St Quentin;
- Consolidating links with other partners to broaden this initial contribution through national/regional monographs and by compiling an international body of knowledge with IRECUS – Université de Sheerbrooke (Canada), Argentinian universities and AFECYM.

Work has been carried out on compiling a framework of reference for training programmes and social protection education which incorporates mutual insurance. The aim of this framework compiled based on contributions from our partner CIESS and backed by the ILO is to supplement trade union and social protection education training programmes. Information and affiliates' reactions to this topic were gathered in a survey conducted with EI in October 2012, which will enable us to adjust our framework and strategy in the first half of 2013.

As regards trade union training and mobilisation, it should be noted that an initial meeting was organised with the ILO and CIESS in Mexico in January 2012 with trade unions from 6 Latin American countries with a view to starting the process of mobilising the education sector on the topic of social protection. Moreover, a pilot training session on social protection was carried out with UNSA-Education and ETUI in Brussels in autumn 2012. On this initial basis, a training session organised by the Network will be run in the first half of 2013.

An initial social protection education programme has been under development since September 2012 with SOLIDARITE LAIQUE and MGEN in Haiti. The results of work in progress will be available in schools from September 2013.

In terms of prevention, a decision was taken to focus on the occupational health of education professionals, a vast area on which sadly little work has been done to date on an international level. A poll of members was conducted with EI in October 2012 which prompted numerous reactions and suggestions. At the same time, network members who decided to work on this subject after the General Meeting of 2011 met at a seminar in Paris in December to outline future actions with regard to research and work on critical occupational health factors. The following took part in this work either in person or through contributions: NEA HIN / NEA MB (United States), THF (Australia), CSQ (Canada), SOLIDARIS (Belgium), MGEN (France), UNSA-E (France) and EI.

## **1.3. Practical solidarity**

This is the only key area in which we have unfortunately been unable to set up a project. Although attempts were made with trade unions and the mutual society movement in Greece, the project did not get off the ground.

We therefore decided to wait until a mutual society set-up project comes to fruition before we consider implementing the 'one euro donation' programme on which CSQ and MGEN have stated that they are prepared to take action if the right conditions are in place.

#### **1.4. Partnerships and exchanges**

Bilateral talks have continued between MGPAP and MGEN with the latter sharing its expertise with the Moroccan mutual society to help with its major project of separating the disciplines of insurance and healthcare.

From a multilateral perspective, work focused on two main projects:

- a fact-finding visit to Japan focusing on issues of dependence; through this visit, contact was made with the JTU and the education sector mutual society. A partnership was formed with a view to organising an international conference on the issue of loss of independence in 2013;
- an international seminar on occupational health issues (see above) and on the complex issue, for mutual societies, member services companies and trade unions alike, of member retention.

#### **1.5. Advocacy and communication**

A final, more cross-disciplinary key area of work, providing support to other projects is advocacy and communication activities, which have played an important role in energising the Network, providing it with visibility and widening its recruitment base.

The Network also pursued its involvement in the work of the **Coalition on the United Nations Social Protection Floor Initiative**, in which it is one of 3 NGOs working in partnership with United Nations, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and government agencies. In particular, we emphasised the importance of education professionals in social protection education strategies at a coalition meeting in New York in January 2012.

Represented by its Delegate General, the Network was actively involved in the work of **AISS** on extending social protection through mutual societies and empowering citizens with regard to social protection. A seminar was held at MGEN in September 2012 on the second topic and reports will be published in 2013 on both subjects.

Similarly, the Network was very involved in the work of **GIP SPSI (France)** on social protection in the informal sector and its contributions were addressed in the committee's report and at a seminar in November 2012.

**In Latin America**, the network was asked to take part in a parliamentary meeting on social protection education organised by **CIESS** in Buenos Aires in November 2012. At this meeting, work was carried out with the attending trade unions (SEC, Costa Rica and CGTEN-ANDEN, Nicaragua) and CIESS.

Finally, the Network has continued to work on its **communication**. In particular, it has set up a collaborative website for network members which is designed to enable group work through tools such as document sharing and video conferencing. Extensive use was made of this tool for preparing the international seminar of December 2012.

## **2. Network organisation**

No major organisational changes were made to the Network in 2012.

### 3. Network Membership and backing

As we have noted in item 2, since a decision has been taken to operate as a network, the Network's head office simply manages the network while activities are devised by members and partners. Increasing the number of memberships and partnerships is therefore a prerequisite for the success of the Network!

**In terms of new members**, the Network broadened its base in Latin America and maintained its membership base elsewhere both in terms of active members and associate members. Thanks to the commitment of larger members, it has been possible to carry out high quality initiatives throughout the year, for which they deserve special commendation.

Although this does not relate to new members, we should point out that the Network became an integral part of the **CSFEF** in 2012 as its strong arm on the topic of social protection.

As regards **financial partners**, an initial contribution was made by the FONDATION POUR LE PROGRES DE L'HOMME to support our involvement in social protection education programmes. The sum was also contributed with a view to working jointly on the empowerment of stakeholders in the field of social protection. The EUR 10,000 contributed at the end of 2012 will be used mainly to fund trade union education and training initiatives. Other leads should bring results in 2013, especially with respect to programmes coordinated with EI.

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### CONCLUSION

2012 was a year in which work was more low-key and focused on priority actions with a view to producing convincing results. We will start to see these results by the time of the General Meeting in July 2013. We must use them as a basis to develop an ambitious strategy for the 2015 AGM and the EI Congress.