

KMU organiser

training: Philippines

Union Aid Abroad APHEDA
The overseas humanitarian aid agency of the ACTU



Report to Donors 2008-2009

Through Union Aid Abroad –APHEDA, many officials, organisers and staff at the AMWU are assisting the Philippines trade union federation, the KMU, by training union organisers and other organisers who work with the Philippines' urban poor.

Each year, your regular donations are assisting the training of 10 union organisers for unions affiliated to the KMU. In a year-long course that involves both theory and hands-on practical training, the trainees are taught the skills of organizing to help strengthen their unions. In a global economy where corporations continually try to drive down wages and conditions, workers in one country are often pitted against workers in others. It is crucial to strengthen trade unions and workers' rights in all developing countries.

As well as training 10 union organisers per year, your donations also assist the training of two of these organisers to also work with the urban poor in areas

of great poverty and exploitation. One such area is Manila's garbage dumps, where the organisation for urban poor, KADAMAY, helps to organise families living and working on the dumps and in other slum areas of the Philippines. This one-year program of organiser training is a continuing program of the KMU aimed at fostering a higher level of social consciousness among both new and experienced full-time organisers. It forms part of the overall education and training program of KMU. In addition to organising skills, the course covers general topics on the aims and ideals of trade unionism, community organising, socialism and courses in political education.

The project's main objectives are:

1. To help solidify the commitment and experience of trade union and community organisers in organising other workers;
2. That this series of education and training be used as a tool to encourage potential organisers to commit to full-time organising work. This is designed to complement the KMU's aim to expand the union movement by reaching out to fellow unions and importantly, establishing unions in non-unionised workplaces.

Of the 10 organisers trained in 2008-09, five were women. This is a continuing commitment of the KMU to further develop women leaders in unions and their communities.

In September, 2008, when the global financial and economic crisis exploded, the KMU thought it appropriate to include some material on the crisis in their courses. By mid-January, the effects of the global economic crisis were being severely felt in the country with company closures, massive lay-offs and workday cutbacks. In February this year, as the regular courses and training were due to finish, KMU extended their program to conduct an additional series of discussions on the global economic crisis.

In 2008-09, thanks to your assistance, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA was able to send \$10,000 to the KMU to assist this organisers' training course. Thank you for your support of this project throughout the past financial year. Your continued commitment is greatly appreciated.

Union Aid Abroad–APHEDA is the overseas humanitarian aid arm of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. We assist projects in South East Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and southern Africa, working through partners to deliver training in vocational skills, health and workers' rights so women and men may have decent work which provides a living wage, reasonable conditions and a safe workplace. Our international program seeks to empower women and men in developing countries so they and their families might live with their human rights respected, both in their workplace and in their society.

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