

100 UNION ACTIONS ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

2022 CLIMATE CHANGE CONTINUUM REPORT



BWI
Building and Wood
Workers' International
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BWI is the Global Union Federation grouping free and democratic unions with members in the Building, Building Materials, Wood, Forestry and Allied sectors.

BWI brings together around 360 trade unions representing around 12 million members in 117 countries. The Headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland while the Regional Offices are in Panama, Malaysia, and South Africa.

Our mission is to defend and advance workers' rights, and to improve working and living conditions in our sectors. The BWI, above all, has a rights-based approach. We believe that trade union rights are human rights and are based on equality, solidarity and democracy, and that trade unions are indispensable to good governance.

BWI goals include 1) to promote and defend human and trade union rights; 2) to increase trade union strength; 3) to promote a stable and high level of employment in our sectors; and 4) to influence policy and strengthen the capacity of institutions and tripartite structures in our sectors.

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FOREWORD

For most people, the dangers of climate change are no longer an abstraction. Nor are they seen as problems that will arise in the distant future. With extreme climate events from droughts and forest fires to tornados, hurricanes, and flooding, risks have become visible, widespread, and tangible, and they jeopardize health and safety in workplaces and communities.

This publication, 100 Union Actions on Climate Justice, shows workers and their trade unions in BWI sectors' growing contributions to a more sustainable planet. It also examines challenges and opportunities. Although it focuses on union experience and needs of workers, it also covers related issues such as actions by governments and employers and how trade unions can interact with and influence both.

Our goal is to affect decisions through our engagement. We are convinced that climate justice will only be obtained if it is twinned with social justice. The market alone and its corporate actors during globalization, have not and will not bring either.

That means that governments must act. They should employ the tools that they abandoned in the last half century with the excesses of de-regulation, liberalization, and privatization. Governments must provide "hands-on" leadership. If not, the social and environmental pillars of sustainable development will forever remain in the shadow of the economic pillar.

Municipalities and other local authorities can also make an important contribution in many countries. They often have ongoing cooperation with local companies, trade unions, and community groups. BWI's partnership with the C40 cities has revealed an appetite for innovation and a willingness to consult and involve both sides of industry.

The report is based on reactions from trade unions on all continents and from all of BWI's sectors. All sectors have distinct positive and negative effects, which require sector-specific approaches.

Construction emits carbon, but it also offers possibilities for significant reductions in greenhouse gases. New technologies and materials are being developed. Employment is likely to go up and give additional opportunities for women and young people to join the sector. The success of this transformation process will depend on the workers who will make it happen.

In other words, the future of our planet is also about the future of work. In too many countries, the construction industry has been plagued with precarious, insecure, and exploited labour. The modern construction industry needs workers equipped with high-quality training and capable of handling new technologies and tools, but who also understand the whole construction process and how the pieces fit together. It is only then that they can drive and adapt the technology rather than being driven by it.

Forests are the lungs of the planet. Deforestation in the Amazon Forest alone has made it short of breath. Massive fires have further worsened its respiratory system. Forests should be expanding, not shrinking. To the extent possible, they should be managed sustainably to avoid fires as much as possible and ensure a steady supply of wood. As in construction, the future of our forests is also related to the future of work and the rights and conditions of forestry workers.

In the building materials sector, there are serious problems of carbon emissions, especially in cement. Advances in technology may help, however, it is probable that more workers will be displaced as is already happening in several countries if the transition is not managed fairly.

Just transition is important for affected workers in building materials as well as some other sectors. It is not only crucial that affected workers have social protections, but that they have decent work opportunities and protection of their trade union rights.

Climate change is global. It makes no difference to the temperature of the atmosphere whether the carbon emissions are from your country or the other side of the world. Unfortunately, world leaders do not have a good record of thinking globally as we have seen with the pandemic.



That is not true for BWI, however. Global solidarity is in our DNA. But it will take some effort to convince governments to act globally and show solidarity, without which the warming of our planet cannot be stopped.

Ambet Yuson
BWI General Secretary



INTRODUCTION

The construction, building materials, forestry and wood industries are mission-critical to mitigating and adapting to climate change. To limit global warming to 1.5°C, global greenhouse gas emissions need to begin declining before 2025 and be cut by 43% by 2030 (IPCC). Deforestation is the second largest source of carbon in the atmosphere, after fossil fuel combustion (IUCN, 2021). And the construction and use of buildings contributes 37 percent of global emissions (GlobalABC, 2021).



Meanwhile the construction industry is growing fast. Under current projections, the floor area of buildings globally is expected to increase by 75 per cent between 2020 and 2050, of which 80 per cent will be in emerging and developing economies. This means a corresponding growth in the construction workforce. In turn, global material use is expected to more than double by 2060, with a third of this rise attributable to materials used in the building and construction sector (GlobalABC, 2021).

Building-related emissions will need to be reduced through a triple strategy: “namely a combination of reducing energy demand (behaviour change and energy efficiency), decarbonising the power supply (e.g. electrification through renewable sources and increased use of other zero-carbon heating technologies) and addressing embodied carbon stored in building materials” (GlobalABC, 2021). The role of the forest sector in climate mitigation includes reducing deforestation and degradation, and the expansion of forested areas to generate forest products. In adaptation and resilience, the role of the forest sector includes the restoration or expansion of forest ecosystems to protect against flooding, landslides and storm surges.

Climate change has major implications for workers in the BWI sectors. This includes direct impacts in their workplaces and homes – such as extreme weather events, sea-level rise, increased heat and forest fires. The physical and mental experiences of these impacts are unequally distributed by gender, age, ability and other factors. Climate change is also an increasing driver of internal (primarily) and international migration, with many migrants both male and female entering work in the construction industries in the areas that they migrate to. In construction and in forestry, the workforce is also increasingly on the scene responding to extreme events.

Climate change also means transformation in industrial processes and the direction of economic development, with significant implications for BWI industries and workplaces. These transformations are happening at various paces according to region and sector. Some are “planned”, in which there are clear pathways for union jobs. Most, however, are unplanned and can be very disruptive: this in turn can slow progress towards combatting climate change, by generating resistance to climate policies. Action by BWI unions plays out within a wide and geographically-specific context of climate change-related action (and inaction) by governments, finance and industry.

For more on the wider global context and momentum underway see section 5 on “wider context and trends”.



100 UNION ACTIONS ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

From February–April 2022, a research process developed a database of 100 BWI affiliate actions on climate change. The examples were gathered from the following sources:

- **A survey of BWI affiliates**, disseminated by BWI’s regional offices in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas. Forty affiliates responded to the survey, representing unions across the BWI industries and regions. In addition to asking for examples of action, the survey asked a range of other questions about the affiliates’ responses to climate change (see Annex 1 for the list of survey respondents)
- **10 semi-structured interviews**, similarly with a cross-section across industries and regions (see Annex 2 for a list of interviewees, who were referred by the relevant regional offices)
- **Materials and presentations** from regional workshops hosted by BWI as part of the Climate Change Continuum project
- **And desk research**, including academic articles, media reports, reports by unions and international organisations, and social media sources.

The following sections share insights from the 100 examples of climate-related action by BWI affiliates, as well as union perspectives on challenges they face and opportunities they have identified.

The actions fall within three main intersecting groups:

- action focused on workers and union members themselves;
- alliances with other organisations;
- and social dialogue and advocacy with governments and employers.

WORKER-FOCUSED ACTION

Workplace protections

Construction workers are already experiencing the direct impacts of climate change in their workplaces and in their wider lives. Forestry workers are exposed to increased instances of forest fires, and are experiencing changes in the availability of wood due to different weather patterns – sometimes having to walk longer distances to reach it.

The seasonal work of brick-workers who need dry weather for making bricks is affected. And workers on construction worksites as well as other workplaces are experiencing increased levels of exposure to high temperatures and heat stress. The impacts of heat stress can be heightened for women, young, and elderly workers and those with underlying health conditions. BWI affiliate unions are taking steps to protect workers from climate and environmental-related impacts.

“The places we used to get the wood from – they are now depleted – we have to go far away before we can get small trees”

TWU, Ghana, interview

ADVOCATING FOR GREATER PROTECTION FOR FOREST WORKERS IN TURKEY

1 Following forest fires in Turkey, TARIM ORMAN-IS conducted the first panel on climate change in Turkey to review its impacts on forests and workers, and called for urgent action plans. The government had failed to provide workers battling the fires with adequate protection, aerial tools and coordination and had also allowed harmful excessive deforestation over the years (TARIM ORMAN-IS, 2021).

ADDRESSING HEAT STRESS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES IN AUSTRALIA

2 In Australia, CFMEU New South Wales construction & general division is active on the issue of heat stress in multiple ways. It advocates for changes to legislation and regulation, submits to inquiries and coronial inquests, sits on consultative bodies and safe work authorities, trains delegates and union members of heat stress management, and does organising and advocacy on work sites on high heat days (Newman, 2019).

WORKERS' PROTECTIONS FOR DAM COLLAPSE IN BRAZIL

3 In Brazil, SITICOP Minas Gerais -Sindicato Dos Trabalhadores Naas Industrias Da Construcao Pesada de Minas Gerais - works with mining workers and the communities affected by the rupture of a dam in the city of Brumadinho in the state of Minas Gerais, in order to expand the protections of dam workers following the environmental disaster of 2015. The union also advocates for compensations and works with complaint mechanisms of the OECD, and the American Commission on Human Rights, as well as proposing legislation to protect dam workers to the legislative assembly of Minas Gerais.

4 BWI and its forestry union affiliates work to raise awareness of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s guidance and case studies on heat stress in the forestry and agriculture sectors. This guidance highlights the fact that the physically demanding nature of work in these sectors means that workers often produce excess heat, increasing their risk of heat stress even in moderately warm conditions. This is particularly the case if they are wearing protective clothing.

5 BWI successfully pushed for the inclusion of preventive measures in the revised version of the ILO Code of Practice for Safety and Health in Construction. These include: proper design of the workload and station; the introduction of routine medical surveillance; and immediate work stoppage when workers experience symptoms of heat stress. The ILO has projected that by 2030, 2.2 percent of total working hours will be lost due to temperature increases caused by climate change. This is the equivalent of 80 million full-time jobs (FTEs), out of which 15.2 million FTEs are predicted to be lost from the construction sector.

6 Through health and safety inspections and joint audits, BWI was instrumental in the process of advancing the protections against extreme heat for migrant workers employed in the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 construction sites and in the projects of other multinational companies operating in Qatar.

The protections introduced by the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy include the shift to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)'s "wet bulb" temperature index and the introduction of other remedial measures, for example the Cool Suits technology.

Organising, awareness-raising and member action

Many unions highlighted the ways in which climate action needs to be firmly grounded in organising strategies and fundamental workers' rights.

ORGANISING IN MAURITIUS TO CREATE A STRONG PLATFORM FOR ACTION

7 In Mauritius, only ten percent of construction workers are employed on a permanent basis. Those on a permanent basis pay 0.05% of their basic rate in dues to the CMWEU union, and non-permanent often migrant workers pay a symbolic single rupee for membership in the union. This means the union can ensure wide representation. It is from this base that the union has been in a strong position to bargain at the sectoral level, and to advance on climate-related action. This has included successfully advocating for a light-rail project, and securing subsidies for solar energy installation on people's homes.

ESTABLISHING COOPERATIVE BRICK-MAKING PARKS IN ARGENTINA

8 UOLRA organises many migrant workers, particularly from Bolivia and including increasing numbers of women, in Argentina's bricks industry. Traditionally the work takes place in home-based kilns which are fuelled by wood, generate a lot of emissions and waste, and are harmful to the workers and families. UOLRA is engaging with local governments to establish "Parques Industriales Ladrilleros" (industrial brick-making parks), where cooperatives of brick-kiln workers come together on a larger site. The parks will have kilns that use gas instead of wood for energy, generate far less waste, improve the working conditions and reduce the risk of child labour.

In some sectors climate change impacts can be used directly as an argument for expanding unionisation.

9 IG BAU's forestry department makes the case that with forests increasingly vulnerable to higher temperatures and fires, you need qualified unionised people to work within them.

10 In New Zealand, First Union is organising factories for off-site pre-fabricated construction, which can potentially be easier than organising individual construction sites.

“First of all you need to organise and sensitise your workers on climate change. It has to be connected to the fight for decent work and decent wage.”

CMWEU, Mauritius, interview

Unions' awareness-raising on climate change with members

BWI affiliates engage in training and awareness-raising on climate change, using different strategies and angles depending on the context and members' priorities.

- ▶ In Finland, Trade Union Pro conducts surveys to hear members' perspectives and values on climate change.
- ▶ In Australia, ETU together with ACTU (Australian Trades Union Congress) has developed a training course for workers on climate change.
- ▶ In Ghana, the General Construction, Manufacturing and Quarries Workers Union of TUC organizes capacity building workshops for its leaders at the branch level on issues about health and safety, and the effect on climate change on their work
- ▶ In Japan, BWI-JAC held learning sessions on carbon neutrality with constituent organisations.
- ▶ In Belgium, CG FGTB is raising awareness and training permanent staff and activists by means of an internal coordination and training modules.
- ▶ In Austria, Gewerkschaft Bau-Holz (GBH) has instituted climate-friendly awards "Faire Vergaben klimafreundlich".
- ▶ In Venezuela, Sindicato Unico Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Madera conducts national activities in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and University faculties on forest science.

11-17

Many are taking specific actions in the workplace, such as:

- ▶ Sorting waste for recycling – Sinticomp, Brazil.
- ▶ Partnering with Recycling Partners of Jamaica to set up recycling stations – Bustamante Industrial Trade Union, Jamaica.
- ▶ Awareness-raising on waste management – UOCRA, Argentina.
- ▶ Training on waste separation and recycling – TDBC, Togo.
- ▶ Reducing the extent of car use to and from worksites – BAT Kartellet, Denmark.
- ▶ Discouraging the widespread felling of trees for scaffolding – CMWEU, Mauritius.
- ▶ Harvesting rainwater – SEWA, India.

18-24

25-28 Other affiliates that are conducting climate change awareness-raising campaigns with members include Sinticomp (Brazil), Sintraconstrumad and Intergremial Sintrapulcar – Duratex (Colombia), Fetra-ceppe (Peru), and Syndicat National des Travailleurs du Bâtiment et du Bois (Burkina Faso).



“Just transition... has to start being a lived experience... When we talk about JT [Just Transition] we think it’s a phrase associated with employment law contracts or something legal. We have to get to point where the process of JT is understood by members in a very practical way, so can be understood in terms of process, application and creativity. So we can come up with solutions that address the shortfalls of employers.”

Unite UK, interview

Re-skilling and training workers for a green economy

BWI affiliates are also training members in green economy skills, advocating for government and industry funding for training members, and partnering with universities on training. A challenge that unions face is the “lack of joined up-ness” in terms of political and industrial policy, for example with low carbon targets for specific sectors not being linked to corresponding investments in net zero apprenticeships and future skills development. In Europe, for example, a “Build Up Skills” investigation demonstrated the “sheer scale of the task facing the construction sector. The number of construction workers in need of training runs into millions across the EU.” (Clarke, 2020).

“Energy advice training is getting more and more popular among the members, who can apply this in multiple trades”

BAT Kartellet, Denmark, interview

BWI affiliates training and re-skilling workers for green jobs

Several affiliates are involved in training workers in the new skills needed for green construction:

- ▶ In Denmark, BAT Kartellet has trained about 4,000 energy advisors through a technological institute, who can advise home and other building owners on steps to improve the efficiency of their buildings.
- ▶ In Germany, IG BAU lobbies for greater government funding for re-skilling and training of cement workers.
- ▶ In Belgium, ACV-CSC BIE is in close consultation with employers' contacts in the sectoral training fund to anticipate the new skills needs of workers.
- ▶ In Italy, FILCA CISL is conducting ad-hoc trainings to re-qualify workers towards green jobs in the cement sector.
- ▶ In Austria, GBH has set up training models for green jobs at regional level.
- ▶ In Argentina, UOCRA is conducting trainings in renewable energy and waste management, and other environmental issues for workers and union representatives. UOCRA trainings differ according to the different contexts where they take place, including in the interior/non-coastal areas where workers' fear of job losses in association with environmental transformations is greater.
- ▶ EFBWW works on scaling training and re-skilling in construction at the regional level in Europe, through initiatives such as the Pact for Skills in Construction, and with multiple countries including the Mediterranean countries of Greece, France, Slovenia, Italy and Spain on building renovation skills (Interreg Mediterranean, 2022)

29-35

“Politicians think it’s the steel and automotive industries that need transition support. We are trying to show them that it is more sectors. And we need to get the funds because we don’t have the big companies that can lobby for this.”

IG BAU, Germany, interview

Expansion of opportunities for women, youth, immigrant workers and people with disabilities

The climate transition in BWI sectors can create opportunities to expand access for women, young workers, people with disabilities, immigrant workers and others who have traditionally faced barriers to unionised work in the BWI sectors.

36 in Burkina Faso, the Syndicat National des Travailleurs du Bâtiment et du Bois trains young people in solar installation for households and services.

TRAINING WOMEN SALT-WORKERS IN THE INSTALLATION OF SOLAR PANELS, GUJARAT, INDIA



37 In Gujarat, India, SEWA is training approximately 1,000 women salt miners to work in solar panel installation and maintenance, in collaboration with UNEP and the clean energy company Green Power. They will also receive technical training from the Electronics Sector Skills Council of India.

As Reema Nanavati of SEWA has said: “This program will not only help in creating alternative livelihoods for our SEWA sisters, but also help to deal with the environmental challenges present in traditional sectors such as salt production [given diesel pumps are often used]. It will help achieve an appropriate shift towards environmental sustainability... We look forward to expanding this program to other regions of the country” (United Nations, 2022).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND YOUNG WORKERS IN GREEN BUILDING IN MONTENEGRO

38 In Montenegro, SGIGMCG has developed presentations and training materials on subjects such as “Green construction as an opportunity for the female workforce and youth” and “the importance of education about the benefits of green building”. It has also organised an educational activity “Greening construction – strengthening of the Women Network”.

LOW-ENERGY SOCIAL HOUSING CONSTRUCTION IN SCOTLAND EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

39 In Scotland, Unite is a partner in City Building Glasgow, which constructs low-energy social housing. The company’s manufacturing division RSBi has the capacity to design, test and produce a range of building materials and internal fittings. 60% of employees has a disability.

A POST-PANDEMIC PLAN FOR INCLUSIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN ARGENTINA

40 In Argentina, UOCRA and other unions have created the “Plan de Desarrollo Humano Integral – Tierra/Techo/Trabajo” (Land/Roof/Work), a vision for post-pandemic development in Argentina. The plan’s priorities include expanding access to decent affordable housing, advancing the energy transition, using sustainable production methods, and strengthening transport connections, while also formalising informal sector workers. The plan projects that it could create four million jobs in the informal sector, and 170,000 covered by collective bargaining agreements (UOCRA et al, 2022).

Participation in protests

Beyond being an opportunity for members to advocate directly on climate change, protests and demonstrations can be transformational moments in terms of alliance building and shared advocacy when indigenous, youth, and union activists are marching alongside each other. This happened, for example, at climate strikes in Australia in 2020, helping to strengthen alliances between some unions, environmental groups and aboriginal groups that had traditionally been at odds (Mason, 2020).

Several unions mentioned in survey responses that their members participate in climate protests, such as CLAWUZ (Cement and Lime Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe) whose members participated in the Global Strike against climate change as Zimbabwean youth, CG FGTB in Belgium, UNIA in Switzerland and IG BAU in Germany.

41-44

Renewable energy and efficiency in members' and their communities' own homes

Unions can also work with their members to improve access to renewable energy in their own homes, and those of their community.

INSTALLATION OF CEILING LIGHTS FOR ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN INDIA

45 In India, SEWA has trained women construction workers on the installation of traditional ceiling lights, which enable sunlight into rooms where home-based work can be done, reduce dependence on the energy grid and reduce costs. They are advocating for loans to cover the cost of installing these lights. They also work with street vendors distributing solar panels for powering lights. Actions such as these strengthen “resilience” in many senses of the word – creating and supporting other sources of employment and promoting self-sufficiency while also reducing climate impacts.

“There are immense amount of sun here, and with the coal prices rising so high, the electricity is becoming so expensive”

SEWA, India, interview.

ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Over the course of history unions have formed strategic alliances with other constituencies to broaden their base of power and win progressive change. When it comes to climate change, which involves major economic shifts and impacts on workers, building alliances is particularly important. BWI affiliates are finding common cause with other unions in construction and other sectors, with environmental groups, housing organisations and indigenous peoples' organisations. Some of these alliances involve the collective development and advancement of visions for transforming the economy; others are focused on specific interventions to secure political buy-in or overcome obstacles to putting policies into practice.

“Coalitions are essential. I don't think anybody necessarily has a monopoly on the green ecosystem”

UNITE, UK, interview

Alliances with environmental groups

Unions can face obstacles and resistance in partnering with environmental groups – this was raised in the BWI Asia Pacific workshop on climate change, for example, elevating that environmental groups can perceive unions at standing in the way of change given their priority of protecting jobs. Strategies to overcome this including building a movement that advances climate action and decent jobs together, and educating the environmental movement on what extreme measures such as the rapid, unannounced rapid closure of plants means for workers and their lives, risking an environment in which corporations can control the narrative. An example of this happening is multinational companies selling off assets in high emitting sectors such as cement in emerging markets, rather than making investments in CO2-mitigating technologies.

“By engaging with environmental organisations we also train them on the social issues. And also we send a message to our members that climate is important.”

IG BAU, Germany, interview

Alliances with environmental groups in Germany and the UK

46 In the UK, Unite participates in The Greener Jobs Alliance which “works with training bodies, colleges, universities, employers, local and national government, trade unions, housing associations, campaign and community groups – to build the policies, investment and partnerships needed to drive the transition to a zero-carbon economy”. The environmental groups involved include Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace.

47 In Germany, IG BAU is a member of the Germany Climate Alliance, a group of environmental NGOs, fair trade organisations, church-related organisations and banks. It is the only one of the eight affiliates of the German Confederation of Trade Unions to be a member.

48 In the UK, Unite has established the Unite Environment Task-force (UET) which meets on a fortnightly basis: it includes union representatives, members, activists from national and regional offices, researchers and other stakeholders.

49 In Australia, Energy Trade Union (ETU) often collaborates on the climate agenda with the national federation ACTU; this has included for example in a research report on offshore wind that highlighted the related job opportunities.

“The unions in Ghana and in the world should come together and have a common voice. If we can do that then employers will not take us for a ride. And won’t see us as adversaries but as partners in development”

TWU, Ghana, interview

Alliances with indigenous peoples and First Nations

UNIONS IN AUSTRALIA AND INDIA ADVOCATING WITH FIRST NATIONS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

50 In Australia, Energy Trade Union (ETU) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) are part of the First Nations Clean Energy Network. The network works on three fronts: community (supporting First Nations communities to shape the design, development and implementation of clean energy projects at every scale); industry (promoting best practice standards and principles that companies should adopt and investors should require before committing capital to a clean energy project); and policy reform (advocating to lift federal and state regulatory barriers and stoke government investment for energy security and clean energy generation).

51 In India, the All-India Union of Forest Working People advocates for indigenous tree cultivation practices to be recognised under the country's forestry policy, calling for farmers to receive benefits to encourage them. As Roma Malik of AIUFWP puts it: "Climate change policies will never work until adivasis are included... These practices have been in place for a long time. Ideally, they should have been recognised under the forestry policy and farmers should have received add-on benefits to encourage them. But we didn't see that happening" (Sabrang India, 2021).

52 In Zimbabwe, the Cement and Lime Allied Workers Union (CLAWUZ) partnered with local resident trusts to campaign against settling in wetlands to protect the area against environmental degradation.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR A MINISTRY OF GREEN WORKS FOR AOTEAROA / NEW ZEALAND

53 In New Zealand, First Union has developed a policy platform called the "Campaign for a Ministry of Green Works for Aotearoa – an ambitious approach to housing, infrastructure and climate change." It emerged from a convergence of challenges: the fact that the union's members highlight the cost of housing as a major issue for themselves and their families; years of deregulation in the construction industry leading to inefficiency through layers of subcontracting; and wastage in the forestry sector. The platform is being presented to government ministers with a view to it being incorporated in the labour government manifesto (First Union, 2022).

Alliances on access to housing

The crisis in access to affordable and decent housing is a pressing social issue that plays out globally, for which there are implications and connections with action to mitigate and strengthen resilience to climate change. BWI affiliates recognise the key role that they play as builders of homes, as workers who will make homes more energy efficient and resilient to climate change, and whose members themselves sometimes experience the lack of access to decent affordable housing. In Germany, for example, IG BAU has issued joint calls with housing organisations for public funding to prevent rent hikes in the context of buildings decarbonisation.

ACTION ON CLIMATE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN AUSTRIA

54 In Austria, Gewerkschaft Bau-Holz (GBH) is part of the “Umwelt + Bauen” initiative with 15 institutions and other associations. The coalition addresses climate problems that are specific to Austria including heavy rain, flooding, hot summers and melting glaciers. Its main goals include increasing the supply of affordable housing, as well as increasing the renovation rate, switching to renewable energy sources and building forward-looking public infrastructure.

As the members state: “Our common concern is to convince politicians and the public of the need for intelligent, sustainable future investments in the environment, construction and housing. This not only stimulates the economy and creates thousands of jobs, but also benefits the public sector and thus every Austrian.”

55 Ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference 2021 (COP26), BWI issued a call to workers and their unions for actions for clean construction. The call lists principles and actions to support BWI affiliated unions in their advocacy, negotiation and consultations including for green jobs, training and skills development opportunities, social protection and inclusion, and social dialogue. It also campaigned at COP to raise the voice of workers in construction.

56 UOCRA from Argentina participates in COPs with the Americas union delegation, and also engages with the ILO’s international green jobs programme which has identified construction as one of the priority sectors for Argentina.

57 CG FGTB of Belgium participates in global-level advocacy through its national and regional federations.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND OTHER FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT

As the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) in the Philippines highlighted in BWI’s Asia-Pacific regional workshop on climate change, “participation and dialogue need to expand”, in order for workers’ rights to be truly a part of the climate transition.

With governments

BWI affiliates engage in social dialogue with and advocacy campaigns targeting governments at all levels, from the international, regional, national through to the local – i.e. states and cities.

International

BWI affiliates are active in international climate processes such as COPs (“Conference of the Parties” under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), through their national-level and regional-level federations.



STRENGTHENING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND JUST TRANSITION GUIDANCE BY THE ILO

58 In 2022, BWI secured two new references in the revised ILO Code of Practice on occupational safety and health (OSH) in construction.

The reference on disaster preparedness reads:

“Employers should prepare Emergency Action Programmes on construction and disaster management, in consultation with workers and their representatives. Workers should receive all necessary instruction, information and training in safety and healthy working practices during and after disasters, with particular attention given to those working in disaster relief and related remedial work”

And the reference on just transition reads:

“A Just Transition from hazardous and damaging processes, substances and work methods can lead to improvements in conditions in both the working and wider environment, and should be agreed through social dialogue, as in the ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all guideline on occupational health and safety policies.”

59 At the regional level, European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) is active in European policy-making, for example with policy positions on the region’s economic recovery strategy, the Renovation Wave (EFBWW and others, 2020), the EU Green Deal (EFBWW, 2020), the extension of the EU’s emissions trading system to buildings (EFBWW, 2021), and more, as are many of the European national affiliates.

60 Latin American unions such as UOCRA engage in Mercosur policy discussions on climate change. Mercosur countries (i.e. Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) recently announced the creation of a new collective negotiation group for UNFCCC processes.

National

National social dialogue includes high-level agenda-setting and policy advocacy.

61 In Sweden, Byggnads has published a policy report “Building programme for a climate neutral and sustainable construction industry”, contributing to the national and industry dialogue on climate change and raising core recommendations, such as:

- ▶ Use more climate-smart materials and more recycling.
- ▶ Better energy efficiency through refurbishment of existing houses and in new buildings.
- ▶ Need to set tougher climate and sustainability requirements in procurements of construction projects by clients.
- ▶ Secure the financing of socially beneficial, climate-friendly and sustainability-creating projects.
- ▶ Accountability for climate and sustainability impacts.

62 Some BWI sector unions engage in the preparation of countries’ Nationally Determined Contributions¹, for example UOCRA and other Argentinean unions were involved in the preparation of Argentina’s NDC, and COTU-K in Kenya’s.

¹ NDCs are the plans that governments have to submit to the United Nations as part of the UNFCCC COP process, setting out their interpretation of the challenges ahead, level of commitment and climate policy strategy

There is an opportunity for BWI affiliates to review their countries' existing NDCs for references to and processes relevant to the construction and forestry sectors, engaging directly or through campaigning on the content of NDC preparation, including in partnership with other unions.

- ▶ In Curacao, Sindikato SEBI “engages in social dialogue with the government on their position to prepare for the future in the context of climate change”.
- ▶ In Switzerland, UNIA develops “concepts and demands for ecological and social restructuring” and brings them into the political discussion.
- ▶ In Australia, where energy policy is created at state level but then has to be agreed nationally with other states, ETU lobbied for the creation of a full-time position on climate change at the Australian Trades Unions Congress, and has emphasised how beneficial it is to have this dedicated position at the national level.

63-65

A COMPREHENSIVE UNION POLICY ON CLIMATE CHANGE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN KENYA

66 In Kenya, the Kenya Central Organization of Trade Unions whose affiliates included the Kenya Building, Construction, Timber, Furniture & Allied Trade Employees Union has developed a comprehensive climate policy (COTU-K, 2019). The policy “is the result of [COTU-K’s] systematic approach to tackling climate change issues within the trade union movement, and outlines sector-specific guidelines to address and mitigate the effects of climate change.” It encompasses three areas relating to the construction industries:

- ▶ The strategy calls for the need to reduce emissions from transport, particularly in the major urban areas of Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu, which “requires massive public investment in mass transportation systems, including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and light rail. Benefits from these initiatives will be realised in the form of reduced carbon emissions and job creation in the construction sector.”
- ▶ Recognising that the government’s “Priority Adaptation Action for the Infrastructure MTP Sector calls for climate-proofing of infrastructure in the energy, transport, buildings and construction, and ICT industries” it says that “COTU-K and its affiliates in the energy, transport, buildings and construction industries will support the transformation of existing jobs with new skill sets, work methods and profiles.”
- ▶ And on sustainable forestry, it says that COTU-K and its affiliates support mitigation actions aimed at achieving a tree cover of at least 10 per cent.

National-level social dialogue also includes advocacy for public funding of green infrastructure and green buildings.

BWI affiliates winning public funding for green infrastructure and buildings

67 In Mauritius, CMWEU lobbied for a light railway train on which construction started in 2019, and is now lobbying for extension of this project to other parts of island. The impetus for this campaign included the fact that many construction workers live on the island’s peripheries, in social housing in remote places. Due to transport problems, including the number of cars and congestion, they would have to wake up very early to get to work. The light rail improved connectivity while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and opened up opportunities for workers to join the construction sector.

68 In Germany, IG BAU successfully lobbied for retrofit funding from the German national bank KfW: while this was a clear breakthrough the union is still pushing for greater funding, recognising that the current levels are not enough to meet the need.

69 In Italy, FILLEA-CGIL, through national bargaining processes, obtained the financing of construction schools in Italy with a special fund designated to training in new construction methods and materials for sustainability.

State and municipal level

BWI affiliates are engaging in social dialogue and advocacy with local governments in all regions. Municipalities are major owners of buildings and infrastructure, are close to the needs of their residents, and many lead on climate change while national governments lag.

BWI PARTNERS WITH C40 CITIES ON THE CLEAN CONSTRUCTION DECLARATION

70 BWI has endorsed the C40 (global cities network) Clean Construction Declaration (BWI, 2021). Together, BWI and C40 will conduct activities including:



- ▶ “Build partnerships with mayors and city authorities to develop and integrate just transition plans that drive decent work and social action, including labour impact assessments, safeguards and job targets for men and women workers”;
- ▶ “Mobilise workers’ knowledge and skills to shape and enhance the supportive actions needed to meet the commitments in the Declaration”; and
- ▶ “Embed clean construction principles in construction pilot projects in five C40 cities”.

“Municipalities own a lot of real estate: schools, nursing homes, sports and so on. They are big building owners. And they are close to their citizens. If the central government says something it doesn’t always happen: the municipalities have the chance to change things... Many [members] are saying this is a big agenda, where do we begin? We need to start somewhere: find something you can do, get inspired by others, and see what goes on, for example in the municipality, where we can join and make our presence felt”

BAT Kartellet, Denmark, interview

BWI-JAC IN JAPAN AGREEMENT WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON EMERGENCY REPAIRS

71 In Japan, BWI-JAC has signed an agreement with local governments and local organisations for the construction of emergency repairs and temporary wooden houses, in the context of the increased frequency of natural disasters such as typhoons, heavy rain and earthquakes.

A CAMPAIGN FOR BUILDING RETROFITTING AND ELECTRIFICATION IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

72 In Melbourne Australia, CFMEU Victoria and Tasmania is involved in campaigning for the expansion of retrofitting buildings, including through an initiative called “A new normal”.

A New Normal has the goal of “Transforming Greater Melbourne from a Consumer to a Producer by 2030”. The building elements within this plan include electrifying architecture (switching from gas to electricity), retrofitting the city’s buildings, and installing solar power on every second rooftop in Melbourne. Collectively these initiatives would create around 54,000 jobs in construction and insulation over the next 10 years, and 6,000 ongoing jobs afterwards.

BWI affiliates are also engaged in the following examples of action at the local level:

- ▶ In Denmark, 3F is calling on the government to harness the role of municipalities to expand the energy renovation of existing buildings and upgrade extensive district-level heating networks to renewable energy sources.
- ▶ In Australia, ETU was part of the Just Transition Working group that developed a “Just Transition Plan” for Collie in Western Australia. The group includes the state government, local industry employers, community, union and government stakeholders. The plan focusses on a five-year period from 2021-2025, aiming to support affected workers and communities in the transition from emissions-intensive industries in a coordinated way
- ▶ In Italy, FILLEA CGIL has established associations to promote urban regeneration and climate/ environmental projects in cities.
- ▶ In the UK, UNITE has engaged public and private sector employers including local authorities, and higher education institutions on climate change, low carbon learning, training and skills-related issues in construction and other industrial sectors. Specific examples include Liverpool City Council and Liverpool Community College, Lendlease, and Wakefield & District Housing.

73-76



Photo: liebherr.com

With industry employers

BWI affiliates' social dialogue with industry employers takes various forms, from bargaining processes, to site-specific demands, to research and agenda-setting, to supply chain certification programmes.

BARGAINING

BWI unions raising climate change at the bargaining table

Through global framework agreements and national negotiations, BWI unions are including climate change and the just transition in their bargaining with companies.

77 BWI, EFBWW and IndustriALL issued a joint statement (BWI, 2021c) demanding, among other demands, a social dimension in Heidelberg Cement's policies and practices that relate to the reduction of CO2 emissions, climate change protection and digitalisation, which affect employees and subcontracted workers. They also demand consultation with unions on just transition.

78 An updated International Framework Agreement between ENGIE, the French utilities company, and BWI, IndustriALL, PSI, and French unions provides a "standard set of guarantees for all ENGIE employees around the world and reflects the importance of social responsibility in the Group, in line with ENGIE's purpose and commitment to the energy transition." (BWI, 2022)

79 In Colombia, BWI and its national affiliates are negotiating an International Framework Agreement with Argos which includes references to sustainability in cement production.

80 In Switzerland, UNIA includes protection from weather events in its collective agreements. For example, in 2016 it won protection for workers in the Vaud region of the country in the case of severe weather (Felli, 2018). During the winter months, the mechanism negotiated by the union with the employers' association and the regional State ensures that work on construction sites is stopped in times of heavy rain, snow, or cold weather. When work is stopped (based on official weather forecasts from the Swiss Federal Office of Meteorology), workers receive financial compensation for lost hours of work from a tripartite fund (paid for by the state, employers and workers).

In Italy:

- ▶ FILLEA CGIL led a multi-country European project called "BROAD: Building a Green Social Dialogue". The initiative aimed to make the construction sector a promoter of growth and sustainable development through social dialogue. The initiative saw the involvement of trade unions from four European countries, research centers and employers' associations with the aim of formulating guiding criteria to support social dialogue in green building at European and national level.
- ▶ In the cement sector, FILCA CISL has developed a joint paper with the Employers' Association, with strategies and initiatives, including steps to maintain occupational levels and create new green jobs.
- ▶ FILLEA CGIL and FILCA CISL of Italy advocate to include sustainable development and green building clauses in European Works Council agreements and in International Framework Agreements.

81-83

84 In the Philippines, within the companies where the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) is the exclusive bargaining agent representing workers, just transition elements are included in collective bargaining activities. These take the form of provisions to protect workers who are displaced because of corporate restructuring due to changes and the application of new technologies or structural reforms: they include transfer to other jobs, training and re-training, and financial assistance.

Sustainable supply chains and protection of forests

BWI forestry affiliates are pushing for strong working conditions in certified forests, and for measures to protect the Amazon rainforest

Afforestation campaigns and advocating for workers' rights in certified forests

Many of BWI's forestry affiliates work to promote and advance the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification or other forestry certifications, and to ensure strong labour provisions within certified forestry. These include:

- ▶ Conticom-Cut (Brazil), affiliated and actively participating in FSC meetings on environmental concerns.
- ▶ Sintraconstrumad (Colombia), campaigning on FSC certification issues.
- ▶ Sindicato Unico Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Madera (Venezuela), participating in activities promoted by FSC and BWI.

85-87

Many others engage their members on government tree-planting/re-forestation campaigns, such as:

- ▶ Syndicat National des Travailleurs du Bâtiment et du Bois (Burkina Faso), engaged in a reforestation campaign to green the living space.
- ▶ TAMICO (Tanzania), active in a tree planting campaign.
- ▶ TWU (Ghana), participating in a national tree-planting initiative and educating members about sustainable forestry.
- ▶ FTBC (Togo) works with the Ministry of Environment and Sytrebact, the Union of Workers and Farmers of Wood in Togo, on a reforestation project outside Lomé.

88-91

CALLING FOR PROTECTION OF THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

92 BWI and several Brazilian unions including CONTICOM CUT made a joint statement calling on the Brazilian authorities to urgently change their environmental policy, reactivate systems for forest surveillance and protection, and ensure controlled, sustainable economic activity.

BWI and its affiliates have established a Global Solidarity Network to support the Amazon and to promote FSC certification. BWI has also filed an international complaint against the actions of Brazil's former Minister of the Environment, who is currently under criminal investigation for international timber trafficking (BWI, 2021d).

Research and agenda-setting

DANISH UNIONS IN ACTION FOR INDUSTRIAL IMPROVEMENTS

93 In Denmark, BAT Kartellet participates in the Climate Partnership for the construction industry, together with partners from finance and industry. The Climate Partnership members worked together to “develop actual proposals to the Danish Government for which measures may contribute to reaching the target to reduce Denmark’s CO2 emission by 70% in 2030 and make Denmark a pioneering country to the rest of the world”. They had five working groups, in the areas of: Energy Renovations of Existing Buildings; CO2 reduction from the operation of buildings; Design and CO2 content of materials; CO2 reduction at the building site; CO2 reduction in the civil engineering sector (Danish Climate Partnership for the Construction Industry, Regeringens Klimapartnerskab, 2020).

94 Denmark’s 3F union has a dedicated officer on environmental action, and has set up a green think-tank that makes the case for renewable energy sources and waste recycling facilities. It calls for investments in these activities particularly in areas of high unemployment, targeting the urban-rural job divide.

GERMAN ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY

95 Germany’s IG-Metall and IG-BAU are part of a platform in which 17 partners from trade unions, business and employer associations, the German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK) and the Federal Ministry of Economics (BMWi) come together to discuss concrete actions for a just transition towards a climate-neutral industry.

PHILIPPINES’ UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS LAY OUT A VISION FOR A JUST TRANSITION

96 In the Philippines, FFW, together with the Employers Confederation of the Philippines and the Danish Trade Union Development Agency published a Report “Responding to climate change by greening the economy with a just transition”. The Report puts forward proposals for government’s, employers’ and trade unions’ actions to shape the future of work combining respect for the environment, workers’ rights and social justice. It addresses the challenges posed in implementing a just transition, and details a way forward for principles-based, inclusive, and business sustainable Corporate Social Responsibility (PBIS CSR) in the Philippines.

Construction site-level interventions

UNIONS CALLING FOR CLEANER PRODUCTION PROCESSES AT THE SITE LEVEL

97 In Zimbabwe, CLAWUZ pushes for switching to renewable energy sources at cement plants, while Zimbabwe Energy Workers Union lobbies for the adoption of cleaner production processes in thermal power generation at all Zimbabwe Power Company Stations that are currently using coal.

98 In Denmark, one of the action-areas proposed by the Climate Partnership for the Construction Industry mentioned above is for fossil-free building sites. This is the concept of having no more gas and diesel at building sites, instead using electric forklift trucks and cranes, and biofuels for excavators. This will also involve replacing diesel-powered generators and hot air generators for dehumidifying moist building materials using electricity and district heating.

With finance

Few of the survey responses and interviews highlighted specific actions that unions are taking with regard to the tracking and advocacy of financial flows, with the exception of public funding mechanisms described above. However, this area was the one with by far the highest number of survey respondents (17) saying that while they are not yet active, they are “interested to begin”. One of the challenges with green finance mechanisms is that they generally pay little regard to social dimensions, particularly labour standards including collective bargaining.

“There’s a need to repurpose public and private finance so that it works for neighbourhoods, workers and green agenda.”

UNITE, UK, interview

UNITE also referred to what is sometimes a “paucity of imagination” in terms of the opportunity to demand what financial flows should be spent on, and highlighted the opportunity for deeper engagement with union pension funds. Meanwhile UOLRA in Argentina said that one of the challenges the union faces is limited green financing, and difficulties in accessing the green financing that does exist.

99 On the public financial measures side, BWI-JAC in Japan secured a “forest environment tax” for the implementation of forest maintenance as part of Japan’s forest sink measures under the Paris accord.

100 And on the private finance side, in Australia, ETU contributed to a report by the ACTU, “Guidance to assist investors and asset managers to support a just transition” (ACTU, 2021).



ANALYSIS OF THE 100 ACTIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

As the 100 examples of action show, BWI affiliated trade unions in construction, wood and forestry, building materials and allied sectors place a high priority on mitigating and strengthening resilience to climate change. The following analysis draws on the examples of action and on affiliates' survey responses.

Most BWI affiliates are already working in one or more particular climate-related industrial processes, mitigating and strengthening resilience to climate change. These range from materials innovation to sustainable forestry, from improving the energy efficiency of buildings to installing renewable energy.

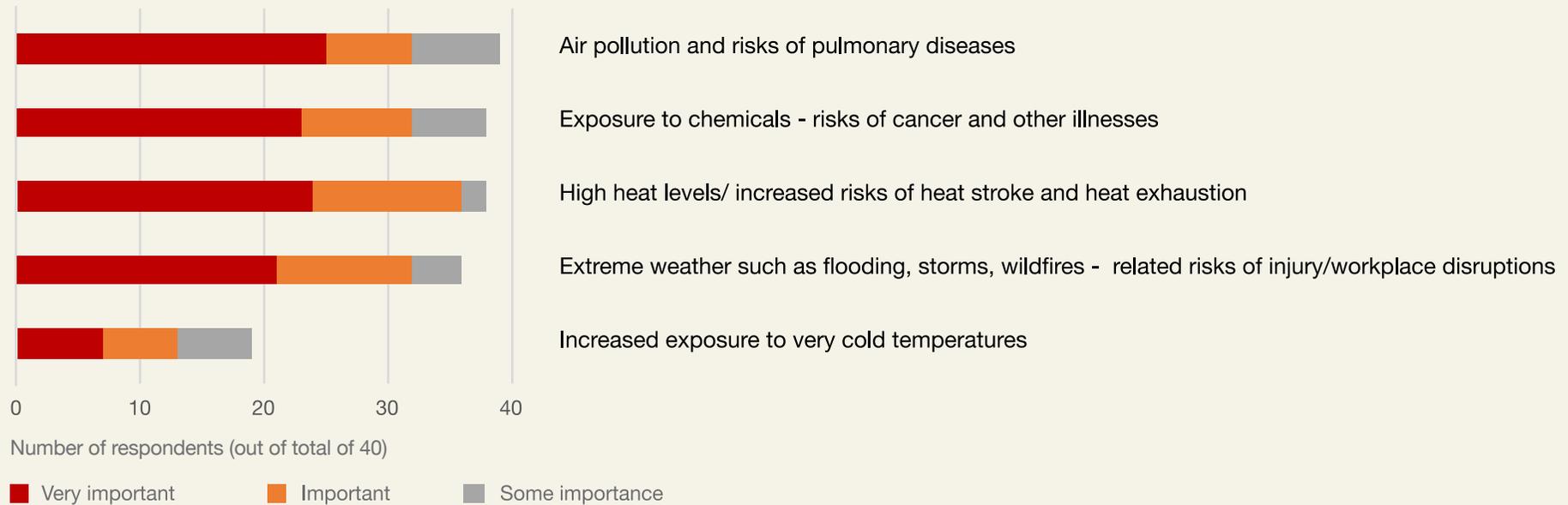
CLIMATE-RELATED CONSTRUCTION PROCESSES



Number of survey respondents active in this area (out of a total of 40)

Construction workers are already experiencing the direct impacts of climate change in their workplaces and in their wider lives. Direct experiences of climate change impacts can galvanise unions and their members to get involved in climate action.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON MEMBERS

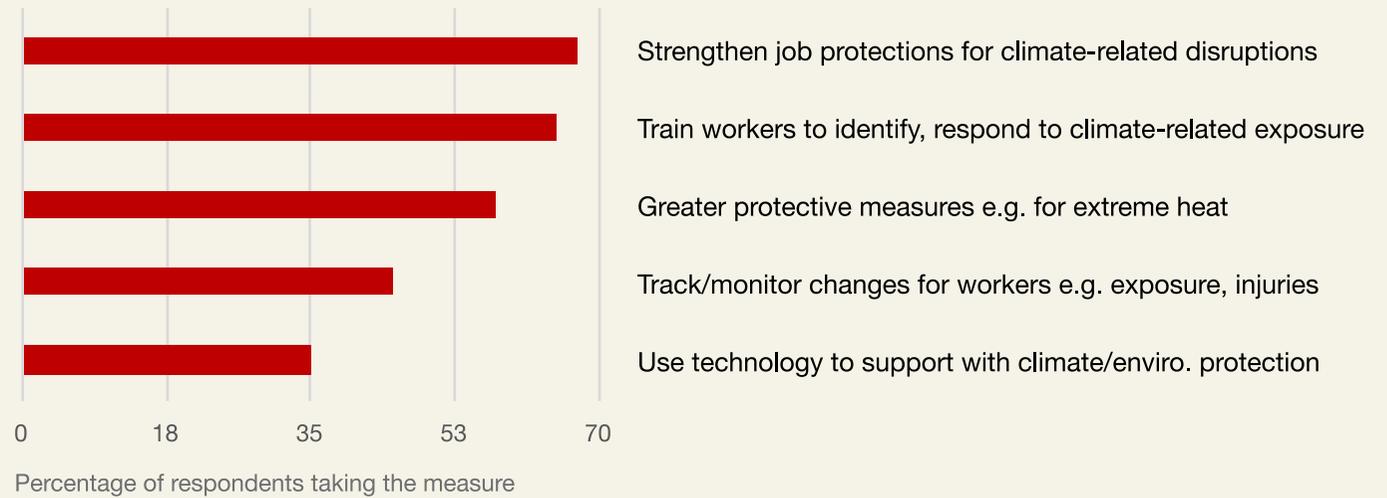


Over half of BWI survey respondents are strengthening job protections for climate-related disruptions, training workers and strengthening workplace measures such as protection from extreme heat. CG-FGTB (Belgium) highlighted the opportunity for BWI to convey the concrete reality of climate impacts such

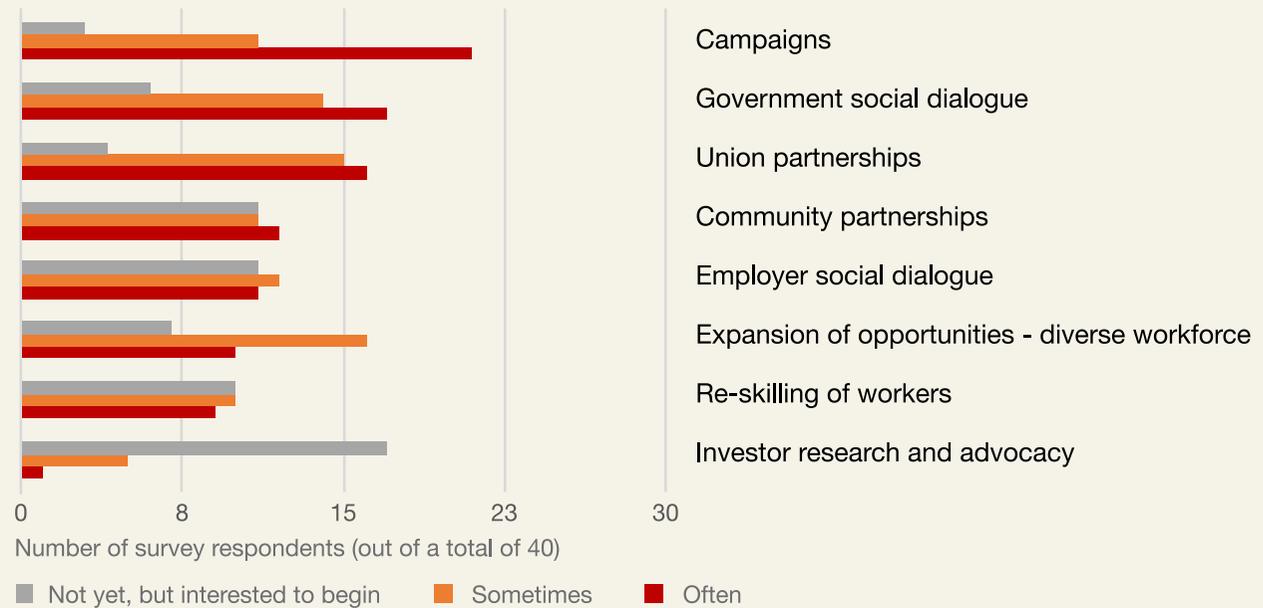
as heat waves, extreme weather events and displacement due to rising sea levels, from affiliates who are already experiencing them, across to unions and their members who have yet to face them: including perspectives on how those countries' adaptation measures are viewed by workers.

MEASURES TO PROTECT WORKERS

Currently, between 30-45 percent of respondents are tracking the specific changes for workers and harnessing technology to help with climate and environmental-related protection.

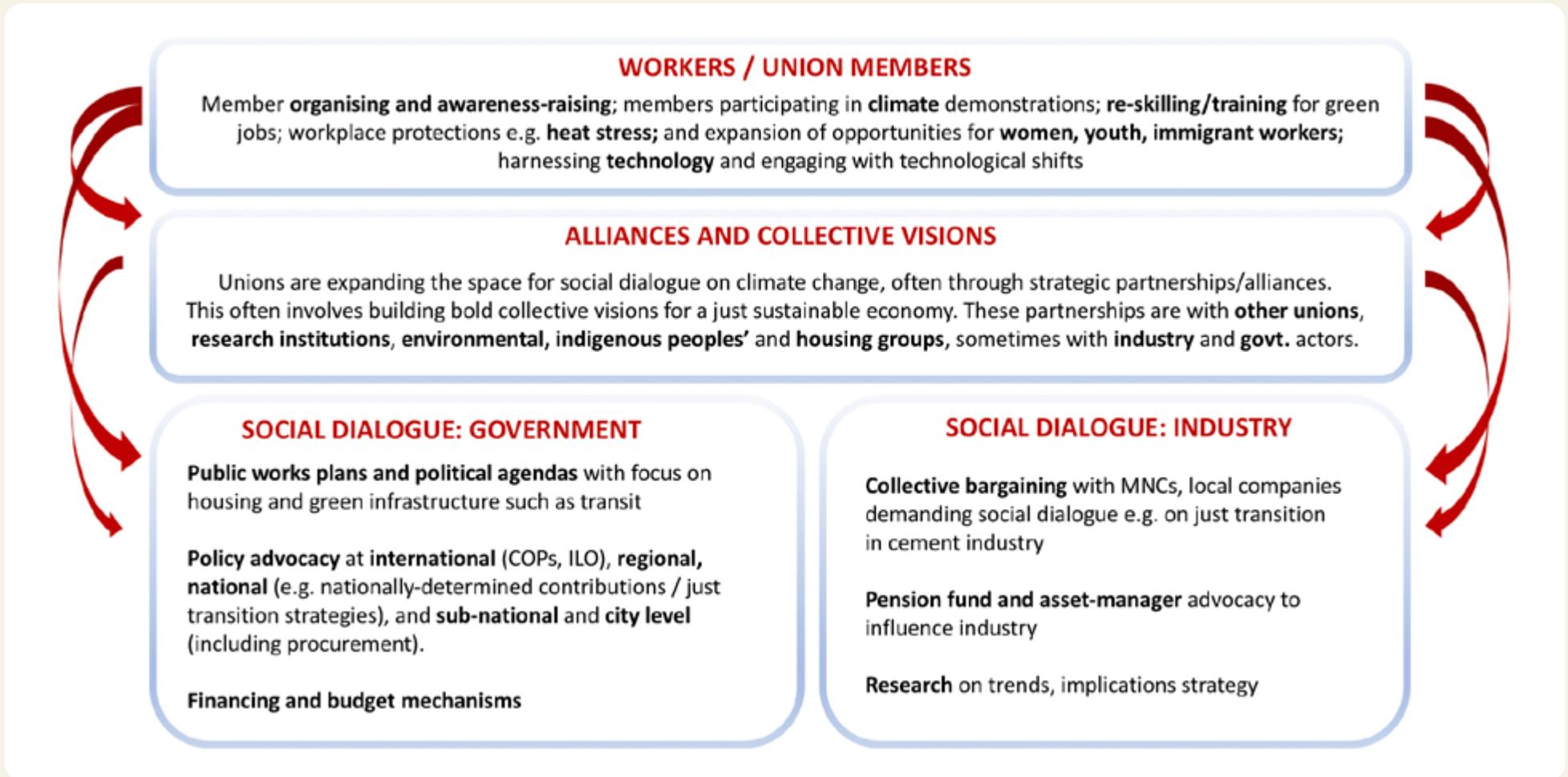


BWI affiliates are taking action on climate change at multiple levels, from worker re-skilling through to international advocacy. The actions vary according to sector, region, political context and unions' capacity: there are significant opportunities for intra-union sharing of tactics and resources to strengthen a collective movement for workers' rights in the climate transition in BWI industries.



LANDSCAPE OF BWI AFFILIATE ACTIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The 100 actions can be further schematized as follows.





WIDER CONTEXT AND TRENDS

The following section provides additional context and opportunities relating to actions that governments, financial actors and industry are taking on climate change.

Government trends

Governments' climate change agreements and targets at international, national and local level often include specific elements on forest protection, building efficiency, materials sustainability, green infrastructure (such as public transportation systems), and a growing focus on adaptation and resilience. For example, 85% of countries' "Nationally Determined Contributions" refer to climate action relating to forests (WWF, 2021). In 2020, 136 countries mentioned building emission reductions in their NDCs (up from 90 in 2015), although these vary in their ambition (GlobalABC, 2021).

The UN Sustainable Development goals also have multiple targets relating to or relevant for BWI sectors, including within Goal 5 (Gender Equality); Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure); Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production); and Goal 13 (Climate Action).

At the local level, cities in all regions are scaling their climate action relating to the built environment, often amplified and accelerated by global networks of cities such as ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), C40 Cities, and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. As two illustrative examples, in 2022, 112 European and neighbouring country cities committed to become net zero by 2030 as part of an EU Mission (European Union, 2022), while in Latin America there is significant work underway to implement the New Urban Agenda, with a focus on social inclusion, inclusive urban prosperity

and opportunities for all, and environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development (Urban Agenda Platform, 2022).

Financial trends

Finance is flowing to carbon mitigation and adaptation in the built environment, albeit with unequal distribution both between regions and between processes (adaptation finance dramatically lags mitigation finance, UNEP 2021). At the international level, the Green Climate Fund is mandated as a part of the Paris Agreement to support developing countries in establishing and realising their Nationally-Determined Contributions: it is the world's single-largest source of public finance for climate mitigation and adaptation. Many countries' COVID-19 economic recovery stimulus packages include investments in building and infrastructure, particularly given the significant economic ripple-effects of these sectors in generating opportunities and jobs in other industries as well. A proportion of these have been directed to a "green recovery", although not enough (approximately 17% of the total, OECD 2021), and with significant differences between countries – for example 54% of COVID-19 economic recovery expenditure in Germany was directed to sustainable activities, and 2% in Australia (ETU presentation, BWI Asia Pacific climate change workshop, 2021).

China is placing growing focus on climate change within its infrastructure investments. For example in January 2022 China's environmental and commerce ministries issued guidelines for ecological and environmental protection in the context of foreign investment and cooperation in construction projects, which state that enterprises should control pollution, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, purchase environmentally friendly products as well as engage with local communities (Green Finance and Development Center, 2022). Chinese companies have a major footprint

globally, particularly through the “Belt and Road” initiative. They dominate the African construction sector, with a market share larger than those of France, Italy and the US combined (Global Labour Column, 2014).

There is also a rapid escalation in private climate finance. The EU, Colombia, India, South Africa and Vietnam have “green taxonomies” under development to classify certain investments – including within the building, construction and forestry sectors – as sustainable (GlobalABC, 2021). Growing numbers of asset owners are looking to certify their building portfolios as green, with a corresponding rise in green financing of new builds and retrofits by real estate investment trusts (REITs), green mortgages and similar mechanisms. In many instances, green financing mechanisms do not currently include provisions or considerations of social dimensions, including labour practices. If they do, the emphasis and implementation are secondary to the environmental aspects, and are narrow, for example focusing on health and safety but not freedom of association.

Industrial trends

For its part, industry is transforming in response to the need and demand to reduce emissions and strengthen resilience. Climate change as an industrial issue will shape the types of jobs and industries that exist or will not exist in the future, the labour process, the wages and conditions of workers, and the strategies of organisations and management. As the OECD has highlighted in the context of high-emissions materials: “The sectoral transition planning process should include participation, input and buy-in from all key stakeholders, including those on the demand side (including architecture, construction and infrastructure firms and their unions) and the supply side (e.g. steel and concrete firms and their unions), and their regulators.” (OCED, 2019).

There are two directions, in a broad sense, underway in reducing the climate impacts of the BWI industries: one emphasising the role of technology and innovation, and the other calling for a transformation in economic models, often drawing on traditional or indigenous practices. These directions can be divergent, particularly when there are significantly different views on the

pace and scale of economic growth, or when technology is positioned as a driver rather than enabler of change. Yet they can also be harnessed to work effectively in tandem with each other. Technology is used to develop lower-carbon materials, to improve the efficiency of worksites and supply chains, to advance off-site and modular construction practices and to improve practices in forestry. While it can pose risks for unionised workers, particularly if it involves workforce reductions, technology can also improve workplace safety and expand the opportunities for women workers and others who have not traditionally had clear pathways into the building, materials and forestry industries.

At the same time, there has been a growing awareness of the fragility of economies’ dependence on fossil fuels and complex supply chains beyond the climate change dimensions (for example given rising energy costs, and disruptions in supply), which in turn is generating momentum towards strengthening local production of materials and local energy infrastructure. This momentum includes work to scale up “circular economy” approaches – moving away from linear forms of production and consumption to ones in which the use of new materials is minimised and re-use of existing materials maximised. Multiple organisations are working to scale up circularity in construction, from city networks such as ICLEI and C40, to foundations such as Ellen MacArthur Foundation and MAVA, to engineering and architecture firms.

All the above trends create opportunities for the creation and sustaining of green jobs. These include jobs in the adaptation and renovation of buildings for energy efficiency, in clean energy and transit infrastructure, in resiliency infrastructure such as drainage and coastal defences, in materials innovation, and sustainable forestry. The InterAmerican Development Bank and ILO, for example, have projected that decarbonisation could create 15 million new jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2023 (ILO and IDB, 2020). However, the trends also create significant risks for workers and their unions, if there are not adequate protections and pathways for workers in energy-intensive sectors and if new “green” sectors are not accompanied by high labour standards. Unions, with their community partners, are at the forefront of ensuring that the shift to a low-carbon built environment is just and sustainable for the long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The above findings demonstrate a breadth of existing action by BWI affiliates in all regions and across sectors, specific challenges and obstacles faced in scaling this action up, and importantly, a very clear interest in greater collaboration and engagement on climate change.

The following are initial recommendations of steps that affiliate unions and BWI as the international federation can take. These are followed by recommendations for government, industry employers and finance which could be elaborated, adapted for context, and taken forward at various levels into social dialogue and campaigns.

BWI affiliated unions

- Explore the examples shared by other unions, adapt and apply them in the affiliate unions' own context: these could be from any of the groupings above; from worker awareness-raising, organising and training, to forming alliances with other organisations, to social dialogue and advocacy with governments (including on their "Nationally Determined Contributions" processes), industry employers and/or financial actors.
- Share additional examples of action with BWI for dissemination.
- Create avenues for workers to share their own personal experiences of and views on climate-related and environmental issues.
- For unions that are at the outset of action on climate change, begin with one or two initial activities, such as participating in an event, engaging members for their views on climate change, or conducting policy research, and build out from there.
- For unions that are advanced in working on climate change and just transition, share experiences and insights with those that are just beginning.
- Promote the [BWI Actions for Clean Construction](https://www.bwint.org/web/content/cms.media/5683/datas/ActionsForCleanConstruction-2.jpg)² in campaign and advocacy work with policy and decision-makers, as well as in social dialogue and collective bargaining with the industry employers.

BWI

The following suggestions for BWI come from a combination of the research consultant and views that were shared by affiliate unions during the course of the survey and interviews.

- Facilitate the sharing of climate change strategies and strategic pooling of knowledge, strategy and resources.
- Develop related global campaign(s) – the recommendations below for various actors provide ideas for formulating demands.
- Create fora where affiliates' members from different sectors and countries can share their direct experiences with and views on climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Create and disseminate awareness-raising and training materials for affiliates in multiple languages and formats.
- Conduct advocacy with international organisations that are active on green building, sustainable materials and industrial changes, such as the financing arms of international development banks, the OECD, the World Green Building Council (and its global network of members).
- Conduct and commission strategic research and corporate power-mapping, including of construction, technology, and finance, for advocacy strategies.
- Continued inclusion of climate change issues and just transition in International Framework Agreements and in international tripartite dialogue.
- Regional offices could develop climate action / advocacy roadmaps for their regions, recognising the different contexts between and also within regions, with different avenues for social dialogue, campaigns and alliance-building on climate change.

² <https://www.bwint.org/web/content/cms.media/5683/datas/ActionsForCleanConstruction-2.jpg>

Recommended demands for governments, industry, employers and financial actors

As they address climate change, governments, employers and finance must ensure justice, respect and social dialogue with BWI sector workers of today and the future.

Governments

- **Engage in social dialogue**
Ensure workers in BWI sectors and their unions are at the table for the development of Nationally-Determined Contributions and other national and regional plans on climate change
- **Advance bold policies for climate change and economic justice**
Pass and implement bold sectoral and cross-sectoral policies that address climate change while advancing labour standards and human rights; facilitate the necessary collaboration between stakeholders
- **Monitor, supervise, inspect and enforce labour standards**
Ensure that labour standards for climate-related sectors and projects (in addition to all other sectors and projects) are upheld in practice and that there is accountability for violations
- **Harness responsible procurement**
Include labour clauses in public procurement for national and local climate-related projects including green building, retrofits, renewable energy infrastructure and green transit
- **Invest in workers**
Invest in workforce training, reskilling, apprenticeship programmes and the development of new economic opportunities in regions where workers are affected by technological and structural shifts

Industry employers

- **Engage in social dialogue**
Engage in social dialogue and collective bargaining with workers in transitioning and green industries and develop joint policy agendas with trade unions
- **Respect workers' rights in green certifications**
Ensure that green certifications – of buildings, sustainable forests and materials – always require and adhere to strong labour standards on site and throughout supply chains
- **Conduct due diligence**
Conduct due diligence through operations and supply chains to mitigate the risk of labour abuses by business partners and suppliers in the context of the green transition
- **Use technology responsibly**
Harness technology to reduce emissions, improve efficiency and connectivity in ways that support a just transition, rather than with technological developments driving policy

Finance

- **Provide green AND social finance**
International Financial Institutions, pension funds, other asset owners, asset managers and banks should ensure that their direct and indirect (e.g. via bonds) investments across their portfolios are also social in intent and practice – channeling finance to climate activities in buildings, infrastructure and forestry that also ensure respect for workers' and human rights
- **Engage investee companies on labour standards**
Engage companies in construction, utilities, infrastructure and forestry on their labour rights protections as well as on climate change
- **Respect workers' rights in project finance**
Require that finance for green construction, infrastructure, materials and forestry projects has strong worker protection requirements through the project's lifecycle and supply chains.

ANNEX 1: SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Representatives of the following unions sent responses to the survey::

Country	Union
Argentina	Unión Obrera de la Construcción de la República Argentina - UOCRA
Argentina	Unión Obrera Ladrillera de la República Argentina - UOLRA
Australia	Construction, Forestry, Mining, Maritime and Energy Union - CFMEU C&G Victoria - Tasmania
Austria	Gewerkschaft Bau-Holz - GBH
Belgium	Bâtiment-Industrie & Energie - ACV/CSC BIE
Belgium	La Central General - CG FGTB / AC ABVV
Brazil	National Confederation of Workers in the Construction and Furniture Industries – CONTICOM CUT
Brazil	Federation of Workers in the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industries of the State of Sao Paulo - FEQUIMFAR
Brazil	Trade Union of Workers in Building and Furniture Industries of Prata - SINTICOMP
Brazil	Trade Union of the Construction, Consulting Engineering and Concession Industries of the States of Minas Gerais – SITICOP MG
Burkina Faso	Fédération des Travailleurs du Bâtiment et du Bois du Faso - FTBBF
Burkina Faso	Syndicat National des Travailleurs du Bâtiment et du Bois - SNTBB
Colombia	Intergremial SINTRA PULCAR-DURATEX
Colombia	Intergremial SINTRA CONSTRUMAD
Costa Rica	Unión Nacional de Trabajadores de Obras Públicas y Transportes, UNATROPYT
Curacao	Sindikato di Empleadonan den Bibienda - SEBI
Finland	Trade Union Pro - PRO
France	Fédération Nationale des Salariés de la Construction et du Bois – FNCB CFDT
France	Fédération General Force Ouvrière Bâtiment, Travaux Publics, Bois, Papier, Carton, Céramique, Carrières & matériaux de Construction – FO BTP

Country	Union
Germany	Industriegewerkschaft - IG Metall
Ghana	General Construction, Manufacturing and Quarries Workers' Union of TUC
Ghana	Timber and Woodworkers Union of GTUC - TWU
Italy	Italian Federation of Construction and Allied Workers - FILCA CISL
Italy	Italian Federation of Wood, Building, and Allied Industry Workers - FILLEA GCIL
Israel	National Union of Building, Wood Workers - NUBWW Histadrut
Jamaica	Bustamente Industrial Trade Union - BITU
Japan	Japanese Affiliates Council - BWI-JAC
Montenegro	Trade Union of Building and Construction Materials Industry of Montenegro - SGIGMCG
Peru	Federacion de Trabajadores del Cemento y Premezclado del Peru - FETRACEPPE
Switzerland	UNIA
Tanzania	Tanzania Mines, Energy, Construction and Allied Workers Union - TAMICO
Togo	Fédération des Travailleurs du Bois et de la construction du Togo - FTBC
Turkey	Civil Servants' Union of Agriculture, Forestry, Husbandry and Environment Sectors TARIM ORMAN-IS
Uganda	Uganda Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement & Allied Workers' Union - UBCCECAWU
United Kingdom	Unite the Union Construction division - UNITE
Venezuela	Sindicato Único Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Madera - SUNTIMAVEN
Zambia	National Union of Building, Engineering and General Workers - NUBEGW
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Construction and Allied Trades Workers' Union – ZCTAWU
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Energy Workers' Union - ZEWU
Zimbabwe	Cement Lime and Allied Workers' Union of Zimbabwe - CLAWUZ

ANNEX 2: INTERVIEWEES

The research consultant held semi-structured interviews with representatives of the following unions. These interviews were coordinated by the relevant BWI Regional Offices.

- TWU, Ghana
- CMWEU, Mauritius
- ETU, Australia
- SEWA, India
- First Union, New Zealand
- UOLRA, Argentina
- UOCRA, Argentina
- Unite, UK
- IG BAU, Germany
- BAT Kartellet, Denmark

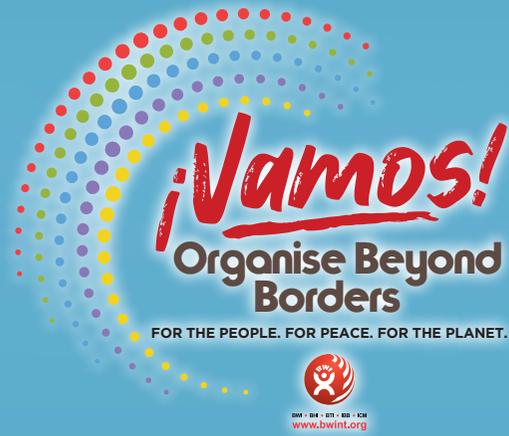
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Note: the research consultant also had access to presentations from BWI's regional workshops on climate change held in 2021/2022

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