

The Danish Union of Teachers in Kenya

Partner in Kenya

The independent teachers' union Kenya National Union of Teachers, KNUT, organises all teachers from pre-school to secondary level. KNUT has approximately 200,000 members out of a potential of 260,000 teachers.

Development goal

KNUT has already consolidated its position in the Kenyan society - and as a trade union it has an extended network of school representatives (shop stewards) all over the country. The current project supports the restructuring of the finance department at central level and the introduction of ITC in the union. Further it seeks to consolidate the social dialogue – in Kenya as well as in the East African Community, EAC.

Time frame and budget

DLF began the bilateral cooperation with KNUT in 1982. The cooperation has now developed into a regional cooperation all the East African teachers unions of FEATU (Federation of East African Teachers Unions).

Country facts

- Kenya is situated in East Africa and has a population of 48m inhabitants. Approximately 40 per cent of the population live below the poverty line of US\$2 per day, and the unemployment rate is currently at 39 per cent
- Kenya's GNI pr. capita is US\$ 1470.
- 80 % of the adult population in Kenya can read and write.
- Uhuru Kenyatta has been elected president twice, in 2013 and in 2017. The results of the presidential elections in August 2017 were nullified by Supreme Court due to irregularities, and in the new elections in October 2017, the opposition led by Raila Odinga chose to boycott the elections.
- Kenya got a new constitution in August 2010. The constitution limits the president's power and contains paragraphs on the right to establish unions, the right collective bargaining and strike.

School situation

Within the past few years the country has employed an additional 10,000 trained teachers. Together with other trained professions, the teachers form part of Kenya's growing middle class.

Background and project development

The cooperation between DLF and KNUT has focused on the development of a school representative system for the Kenyan schools, during the previous phases of the project cooperation. All 20,000 public schools in Kenya have democratically elected school representatives and most of these now have completed union training.

KNUT's members pay two per cent of their income in membership fees, which provides very good chances for the system of school representatives to continue without external financing in the future. The system is decentralised, which means that the branches pay for the training.

KNUT has reached a point of development that allows them to provide solidarity assistance to the teacher organisations in the neighbouring countries in their struggle for building democratic teachers unions. This is done by giving them access to KNUT's training materials and by offering advice about the production of training manuals.



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