

Bargaining for development

Prospect is a UK trade union representing engineers, scientists, managers and specialists in a diverse range of professions. Its [DFID-funded project](#) focused on raising awareness of the [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) in relation to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and procurement, empowering union members to make international development a workplace bargaining issue.

What did Prospect want to achieve?

The goal of the project is to build the structure, strategy and support that will enable Prospect members to take action for the MDGs within their workplaces. This includes creating a framework for branches to include development policies and practices in their bargaining agenda; training and facilitating a network of Development Advocates (DAs); and demonstrating how corporate purchasing practices impact on global poverty and human dignity, and how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can help deliver the MDGs.

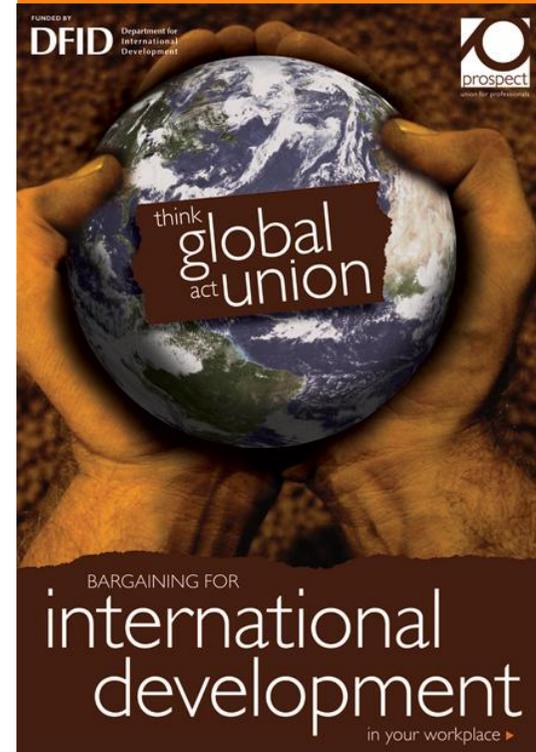
How did they set about doing this?

In response to conference motions proposing that the union do more to support the MDGs, CSR and procurement emerged as aspects the union could legitimately get involved with that would have direct impact on the development agenda.

Following a successful bid to DFID for three years' funding the initiative was publicised to members. Three training courses were set up, open to all members, comprising workshops on CSR, facilitated by [Article 13](#), and on procurement and supply chain, facilitated by the [Ethical Trading Initiative](#). Through group work, debate and discussion, links between CSR and procurement and the MDGs were identified and ways a trade union can engage with these issues explored, eg: what to look for in a CSR report or procurement policy.

Time for individual action planning was crucial. After the courses the two-person Bargaining for International Development (BID) project team looked at the aspirations expressed and compiled detailed action plans for each participant. They then facilitated a meeting between the Prospect member and their branch committee and/or employer and supported them through the implementation of their plans. Additionally the BID team provide briefings about UN global awareness days to DAs who cascade the information through their organisations. Examples of projects led by DAs include:

- working to align [EDF Energy](#)'s global CSR agreement with the MDGs and conducting verification audits, participating in an OECD consultation on guidance for multinational corporations, and reviewing UK-based CSR work with a view to adapting for developing countries in which EDF operates
- compiling an ethical procurement policy for [Scottish Agricultural College](#), advocating the inclusion of MDGs in a new CSR statement, holding training for management and branch members; introducing FairTrade dispensing machines on campus, and developing the concept for a biodiversity project in Moldova
- designing and distributing a poster about responsible purchasing practices within [Natural England](#), designing a staff survey to test current knowledge of sustainability, advocating training for procurement staff on how to use purchasing power for global change, and creating a network of members to determine future activities.



“Attendance on the course for me has snowballed into a series of many productive discussions and actions for change...”

