



Knowledge is too important to be left in the hands of the bosses

## Annual Report 2014



*"The LRS is an asset to the TU movement." (Trade Union Official)*

*"The LRS provides very useful information and ideas for bargaining and organizing that we cannot find anywhere else. The LRS has helped us negotiate better outcomes." (Trade Union Negotiator)*

*"The LRS is helping us learn and engage with workers in the workplace. They support us in what we do and are building our confidence." (Shop Steward)*

*"The LRS helps us work with women and women's issues inside the union and in the workplace the LRS has helped cultivate new layers of women leaders of tomorrow." (Worker Leader, Gender Coordinator)*

*"The LRS has interesting historical resources." (UWC Student)*

*"The LRS has been an important contributor to building company networks and alliances in Africa and allow us to succeed from a solid empirical base." (Shop Steward)*

*"LRS produces useful resources that cannot be found anywhere else." (Organiser)*

*"LRS is a part of an international community of workers' education practice." (International partner)*

## The Chairperson's Report

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting of the LRS held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 was well attended by representatives of member unions. The 27<sup>th</sup> AGM adopted the annual financial statement of the LRS, appointed the auditors of the organisation for the coming period and elected six directors to the board of the LRS.

LRS Member Unions 2013	Acronym	Membership
Chemical, Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union	CEPPWAWU	80 681
Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa	DENOSA	80 000
Food and Allied Workers Union	FAWU	127 000
Health and Other Service Personnel Trade Union of South Africa	HOSPERSA	66 721
Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union	IMATU	72 246
Metal Electrical Workers Union of South Africa	MEWUSA	17 180
National Education, Health and Allied workers Union	NEHAWU	276 486
National Union of Mineworkers	NUM	270 649
National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa	NUMSA	320 000
South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union	SACCAWU	150 000
South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union	SADSAWU	7 200
South African Democratic Teachers Union	SADTU	253 039
South African Municipal Workers Union	SAMWU	161 490
South African Transport and Allied workers Union	SATAWU	170 000
Transport Omnibus Workers Union	TOWU	3 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 Unions</b>	<b>2 055 692</b>

The board of the Labour Research Service remained relatively stable in the year under review. During the year, Shaun Wildschut of NEHAWU replaced Guy Slingsby for reason of ill health. The full board as elected at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the LRS on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 were:

1. C Chitja (CEPPWAWU)
2. S Duffy (SACCAWU)
3. S Kgara (NEHAWU)
4. B Ngcobo (NUM)
5. N Siyana (NUMSA)
6. N Syms (SATAWU)

The LRS board of directors strives to maintain a balance between officials and worker leaders, although the representation of women on the board currently sits at 33 percent. The board is currently comprised of three elected worker leaders and three officials.

The board met five times in 2014 and attendance was excellent with no less than six out of a possible seven directors present at each meeting.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
March	14	Board Meeting	7
May	19	Board Workshop	6
June	27	Board Meeting	6
August	11	Board Meeting	6
October	20	Board Meeting	6

I thank the board members for their fine efforts to discharge their duties in addition to those they hold in their workplaces and in their unions. Their attention to detail and willingness to serve without remuneration for the benefit of this labour support organisation are exemplary.

# The Director's Report

The year under review saw deepening tensions within the largest trade union federation in South Africa, COSATU. The leadership of the federation is divided, there is open conflict among trade union affiliates and increasingly there are tensions within affiliates. In addition to this there are a number of unions who remain organisationally weak. The context is characterised by contestation over Alliance politics, contestation over industrial demarcation, and contestation over trade union resources and access to those resources. The weakening of COSATU does not benefit other federations or their affiliates. It serves only to weaken the hand of organised labour in collective bargaining and social dialogue generally.

At the same time, there has been an intensification of challenges to the legitimacy of trade unions and the industrial relations system in which they play a leading role. These instances include legal challenges to the extension of bargaining agreements by the Minister, defiance of centralised wage agreements, the ongoing informalisation of work and high levels of anti-worker bias on many mainstream media platforms.

Challenging times such as these ought to prompt us to revisit our guiding mandates and to reassess how we relate to our constituency.

The main object of the Labour Research Service is to operate as a research and an educational institution of a public character, providing support to the Trade Union Movement. This support takes two main forms.

The LRS provides education and training to members of the Trade Union Movement in order to enhance their ability to foster the growth and activities of the Movement, and to further the rights and interests of its members, in particular (but without limitation) by:

- i. Developing an informed Trade Union constituency,
- ii. Developing a skilled Trade Union Leadership,
- iii. Promoting the development of women in the Trade Union Movement,
- iv. Strengthening the collective bargaining capacity of the Trade Union Movement, and
- v. Assisting Trade Unions to formulate and implement appropriate policy.

The LRS conducts research in relation to the matters and aims referred to above and other issues relevant to the Trade Union Movement and, pursuant to such research, furnishing advice to the Movement and publishing relevant material.

This statement of the purpose of the LRS is taken from our articles of association of the Labour Research Service and has been in effect since its establishment. While the current context is of course very different from that in the mid to late eighties, we find that this orientation of the LRS retains immense strategic value.

The LRS is committed to the Trade Union Movement and its work in 2014 was directed towards outcome areas which may be viewed as central to the future of that movement.

- Leadership development at all layers in unions
- Developing cultures of gender equality in trade unions and workplaces including work around gender based violence and sexual identities.
- Raising awareness of labour rights in the workplace
- Supporting the renewal of strategies for trade union organising, bargaining and resource development especially around the living wage, the wage gap, vulnerable work and information management
- Supporting the renewal of approaches to workers education initiatives
- Supporting multinational union alliances to confront multinational companies
- Reshaping corporate governance
- Broadening access to resources within unions
- Promoting access to labour history and resources today

These outcome areas are pathways to the future and will serve trade unions well in their passage through these difficult times. The LRS will continue to revisit the strategies required to work constructively in this period, but will remain guided by its core principles and its goal.

*“A labour movement that is an integral part of a vibrant civil society which promotes egalitarianism through the provision of coherent alternatives for greater economic, social and political justice”*

## The Programmes of the LRS

*An Integrated Information, Education & Research Service for Trade Union Development*

The LRS designed and implemented a range of engagements in diverse settings, involving different social voices and using varied methodologies. The activities that we facilitated and supported in 2014 show that we have national presence as well as a footprint on the continent.

We estimate that over 1700 people participated directly in LRS activities in the period. The total of over 1700 individuals excludes those who might have been recipients of LRS resources or publications. The total also excludes those that were in attendance at a forum where the LRS presented, such as a national bargaining conference. This secondary estimate would number in the hundreds if not in the thousands.

The Programmes of the Labour Research Service

- Collective Bargaining Support
- Gender (including HIV and AIDS)
- Trade Union Library and Archive
- Transforming Corporate Governance
- Worker Education and Advocacy

## The Activities of the LRS in 2014

Event	Date	Project	F	M	Not specified	Total
IFWEA Study Circle Project	30 January	WEA	8	4	0	12
<b>Labour Rights for Women</b> (LRW) campaign_Strategic Planning Workshop	6-7 February	Gender	29	1	0	30
COSATU <b>Vulnerable Workers</b> Task Team	7 February	CBS	5	7	0	12
LRS <b>Living Wage</b> Forum 2014	7 February	CBS, TCG	8	32	0	40
IFWEA Study Circle Project	13 February	WEA	6	4	0	10
LRW North West <b>Sexual Harassment</b> Workshop	28 February	Gender	32	3	0	35
IFWEA Study Circle Project	6 March	WEA	0	0	10	10
Letsema Dialogues against_World Café Dialogue_Vaal Process - Vukani	12 March	Gender	36	10	0	46
Letsema Dialogues - World Café Dialogue - Vaal Process - Sharpeville	12 March	Gender	36	17	0	53
Letsema and Let Us Grow	12 March	Gender	12	10	0	22
Letsema Dialogues - World Café	12 March	Gender	24	16	0	40

Event	Date	Project	F	M	Not specified	Total
Dialogue - Vaal Process - Orange Farm Region						
Letsema Dialogues - World Café Dialogue - Vaal Process - Sebokeng	13 March	Gender	20	3	0	23
Letsema Dialogues - World Café Dialogue - Vaal Process - Orange Farm - Driesiek Ext 6	13 March	Gender	31	6	0	37
Letsema Dialogues - World Café Dialogue - Vaal Process - Bophelong	13 March	Gender	45	9	0	54
<b>Study Circle</b> Workshop	20 March	WEA	2	5	0	7
LRW North West Human Rights Day March against <b>Gender Based Violence</b>	21 March	Gender				
Shoprite <b>Shopstewards Alliance</b> Meeting	17-20 March	TCG	8	15	0	23
Limpopo Provincial Gender Workshop	25-26 March	Gender	24	2	0	26
IFWEA Study Circle Project	27 March	WEA	5	3	0	8
LRW North West (Klerksdorp) Dialogue	27 March	Gender	64	4	0	68
NACTU Decent Work <b>Collective Bargaining</b> Workshop	29-30 March	CBS	4	18	0	22
NUM <b>Organisers</b> Training Workshop	2-3 April	CBS	2	48	0	50
Letsema Integrative Discussion	3 April	Gender	17	2	0	19
AFRICA GUF Forum	7-9 April	TCG	3	13	0	16
National Planning Commission Secretariat Meeting_ <b>Decent Living Level</b>	9 April	CBS	2	4	0	6
LRW Durban Sexual Harassment Workshop	9 April	Gender	20	3	0	23
Capacity Development Process	7-11 April	Gender	13	2	0	15
IFWEA Study Circle Project	10 April	WEA	5	6	0	11
Study Circles Project: Workshop	24 April	WEA	3	7	0	10
LRS Course: Training Tutors for Online Workers Education	April	WEA	8	8	0	16
SAEN Steering Committee Meeting	5-6 May	TCG	1	6	0	7
Study Circles Project: Workshop	8 May	WEA	1	6	0	7
Study Circles Project: Study Circle	12 May	WEA	8	6	0	14
LRW Cape Town Coordinating Meeting	14 May	Gender	5	0	0	5
IFWEA <b>Online Academy:</b> Training Tutors Workshop	14-16 May	WEA	3	4	0	7

Event	Date	Project	F	M	Not specified	Total
COSATU National Shopstewards Council (Diamond Sector)	16 May	CBS	4	24	0	28
Study Circles Project: SATAWU Study Circle - Tablet Training	17 May	WEA	1	3	0	4
LRW Bring Back our Girls Campaign Meeting	22 May	Gender	24	2	0	26
LRW Limpopo <b>Africa Day</b> Celebration with ZCTU	24-25 May	Gender	27	31	0	58
Massmart/Walmart Workshop	11-12 June	TCG	5	20	0	25
Living Level Study Reference Team Meeting	2 June	CBS	3	5	0	8
NPC Living Level Meeting	3 June	CBS	20	30	0	50
LRW Bring Back our Girls March	7 June	Gender				
Cape Town LRW Campaign Mini Conference	12 June	Gender	50	8	0	58
Ifwea Study Circle Project - <b>Domestic Workers</b>	15 June	WEA	22	0	0	22
Study Circles Project: Launching Study Circles	19 June	WEA	4	8	0	12
Study Circles Project: Community <b>Careworkers</b>	2 July	WEA	7	2	0	9
Decisions for Life Study Circle Event	5 July	EAP	11	24	0	35
Study Circle Project: Income Inequality Group	12 July	WEA	3	13	0	16
Pick n Pay Shopstewards Alliance Network	16-17 July	TCG	5	13	0	18
Sectoral Determination Workshop: National Union of Mineworkers	21 July	CBS	0	7	0	7
COSATU Vulnerable Workers Task Team	22 July	CBS	5	7	0	12
Study Circles Project: Community Careworkers	23 July	WEA	16	1	0	17
Study Circles Project: SADSAWU Study Circle	2 August	WEA	14	0	0	14
Study Circles Project: Community Careworkers	6 August	WEA	8	0	1	9
Ifwea Study Circle Project - <b>Domestic Workers</b>	16 August	WEA	9	0	0	9
COSATU Vulnerable Workers Task Team	19 August	CBS	5	7	0	12
Administrator Bargaining Resource Management Workshop	25-26 August	CBS	4	1	0	5
Labour Rights for Women Mini-Conference on Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace	27 August	Gender	52	8	0	60
Study Circles Project: Community	27 August	WEA	4	1	0	5



Event	Date	Project	F	M	Not specified	Total
Careworkers						
Study Circles Project: Domestic Workers Study Circle	30 August	WEA	8	0	0	8
LRS 27th Annual General Meeting	05 September	All	18	24	0	42
Study Circles Project: Domestic Workers Study Circle - Tablets training	12 September	WEA	10	0	0	10
COSATU Mpumalanga Gender Steering Committee	12 September	CBS	3	10	0	13
COSATU Vulnerable Workers Task Team	30 September	CBS	5	7	0	12
SAEN Workshop	13-14 Oct	TCG	6	18	0	24
Labour Rights for Women Cape Town Planning Meeting for Childcare in the Workplace Mini Conference	28 October	Gender	4	0	0	4
Study Circles Project: Domestic Workers Study Circle - Tablet Training 2nd Course	4 November	WEA	9	0	0	9
Study Circles Project: DFL Study Circle Planning and Evaluation Meeting	5 November	WEA	4	0	0	4
Mpumalanga Labour Rights for Women Launch	7 November	Gender, CBS	54	6	0	60
LRS Living Wage Conference	11-12 November	LRS	35	47	0	82
Labour Rights for Women Mini-Conference on <b>Childcare</b> in the Workplace	12 November	Gender	38	30	0	68
Workers Education Conference	15 November	WEA				
<b>Security</b> Sector Organizing Vulnerable Workers Workshop: SATAWU	19 November	CBS	4	6		10
JGF Setting up Meeting	22 November	Gender	6	8	0	14
Labour Rights for Women Cape Town 2014 Reflection Meeting	05 December	Gender	9	0		9
LETSEMA - Let Us Grow: World Café Meetings	29 December	Gender	20	10	0	30
			<b>1026</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1702</b>

## www.lrs.org.za

There are a range of excellent resources available through the LRS website, including links to our online databases.

[www.lrs.org.za](http://www.lrs.org.za)

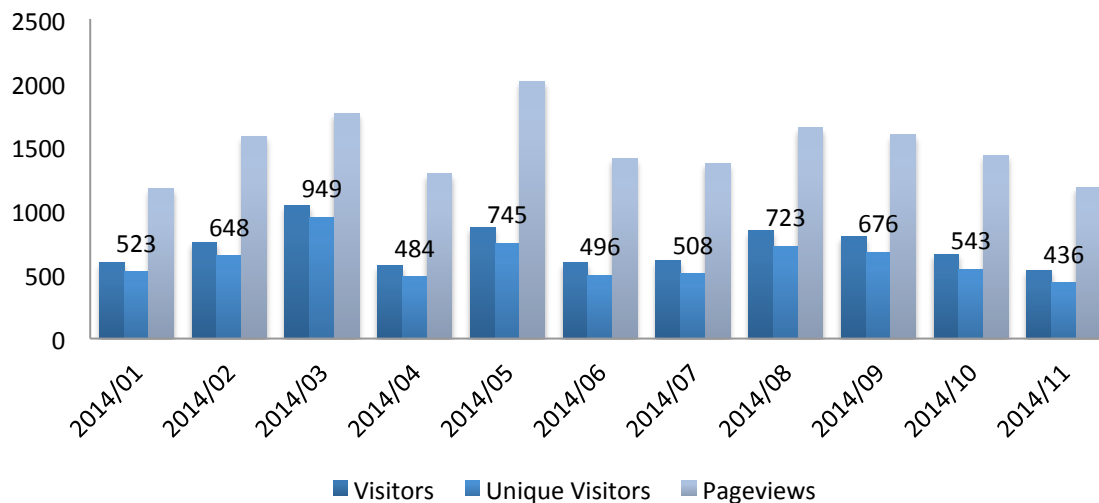
[www.lrs.org.za/award](http://www.lrs.org.za/award) for wage information

[www.lrs.org.za/mnc](http://www.lrs.org.za/mnc) for company information

[www.lrs.org.za/agreed](http://www.lrs.org.za/agreed) for collective bargaining agreements

The total number of hits in 2014 was relatively unchanged from 2013 at around 8,000 for the year. The graph below tracks hits, unique visitors and page views each month. The number of unique visitors is visible for each month.

We consider web and other information platforms to be an area of growth in future and will look to grow these mediums as a means of reaching and engaging a larger audience.



## E-distribution of resources in 2014

The LRS e-subscriber list is a channel to over 1600 individuals, predominantly trade unionists, who willingly volunteered their addresses in order to receive email delivery of LRS resources. Over 26,000 deliveries were made to the subscriber list in 2014.

	Send Date	What was sent	To How Many
<b>1st Quarter</b>	17 January 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor November 2013	1287
	31 January 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor December 2013	1286
	26 February 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor January 2014	1287
	27 March 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor February 2014	1288
<b>2nd Quarter</b>	30 April 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor March 2014	1638
	30 May 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor April 2014	1644
	27 June 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor May 2014	1647
	27 June 2014	LRS Snapshot Wage Settlements Jan-June 2014	1647
<b>3rd Quarter</b>	28 July 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor June 2014	1648
	02 September 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor July 2014	1650
	04 September 2014	LRS Bargaining Monitor September 2014	1647
	25 September 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor August 2014	1646
<b>4th Quarter</b>	27 October 2014	The 2010 FIFA World Cup Campaign: The Lessons for Building Trade Unions (link)	1524
	10 November 2014	LRS Inflation Monitor September 2014	1640
	10 November 2014	LRS Living Wage Conference, 11-12 November 2014 (Programme)	1639
	11 November 2014	LRS Launches Bargaining Indicator 2014: Twenty Years - A Labour Perspective	1365
	11 November 2014	Labour Rights for Women Mini Conference on Childcare in the Workplace (notice)	1632
<b>TOTAL deliveries</b>			<b>26 115</b>

## The Gender Programme

*Sustaining and growing a layer of gender activists in the union and broader worker movement.*

We see our work as assisting a layer of gender activists to sustain themselves in a context of a number of challenges, some old and some new. There is an increasing fragmentation of the union, infighting and bureaucratisation and in turn a further marginalisation of gender work. This translates into few resources being allocated to work focussing on increasing and valuing the voices of women in the union and workplace and dealing with discrimination and oppressive gender relations.

In the Labour Rights for Women campaign we work with trade union gender coordinators across federations and in some cases, shop stewards or officials from gender committees.

When we started the Labour Rights for Women project there was a lot of division and competition between the federations. It was impossible to coordinate a joint meeting with all federation coordinators without a deadlock. The campaign opened up a space for us to build real relationships between the different roleplayers.

The LRW campaign gained momentum in 2014. Increasingly, the events we organize are jointly funded by the ILO, government departments and other solidarity support organisations. This has allowed us to reach more women and workplaces.

These stakeholders also now have a relationship with other LRS projects and this has encouraged collaboration in the LRS. The LRS Living Wage Conference in November 2014 was a “show stopper” and made participants understand and value the broader range of resources and the support that the LRS provides to trade unions.

Sustaining this layer of gender activists includes raising their consciousness and understanding of power relations and particularly the power they have to influence and make change happen. We have assisted this layer of activists to critically engage with existing legislation, government and employer policies and strategies as well as engage with concepts like power, feminism and patriarchy. Activists have also been exposed to training on innovative educational and organising approaches e.g. using dialogues and methods like the “world café”.

We have facilitated supportive spaces where activists have been encouraged to share their learning and challenges and experiment with feminist education and organising methodologies. In this way we have managed to keep alive a positive and enthusiastic attitude as activists attempt to sustain themselves, deal with backlash and grow the union work.

These layers of activists we are engaging with are taking up a range of individual and collective actions. They are initiating campaigns to address gender based violence, improve maternity protection in the workplace, ensure decent work for domestic workers and defend the rights of LGBT workers. They are also involved in testing out more innovative organising strategies. An example here is connecting with workers in the community through community forums. Cross-federation campaign teams are planning, coordinating, implementing and evaluating their actions, an achievement in itself.

We are intersecting more with government officials including the Department of Labour, Department of Community Safety, Department of Social Development, CCMA and Human Rights Commission. In some processes we are working with community activists and others who are committed to working on gender based violence such as Proudly Out Limpopo and GALA.

## **Collective Bargaining Support Programme**

### *Supporting inclusive bargaining*

Our work focuses on the living wage and vulnerable work. We work with trade unions across federations and involve union officials, shop stewards and other worker leaders.

We worked with shop stewards in contract cleaning, private security and construction and authored a submission to the Employment Conditions Commission for the construction industry. We were active in the COSATU vulnerable workers' task team.

We ran a course on information for collective bargaining with trade union administrators as part of an effort to develop the resource strategies of unions. In doing so we challenged gender stereotyping and the devaluing of positions occupied almost exclusively by women. It is clear however that these positions are an important resource for the union and could support key processes like bargaining and organising.

The LRS Living Wage Conference in November 2014 took the form of a micro social dialogue and included the voices of workers, the provincial chamber of commerce, the black management forum, community constituency, academics and labour support organisations.

The living wage conference coincided with the publishing of Bargaining Indicators 2014 after a two year hiatus. This edition is a contribution to the twenty year review of South Africa from a labour perspective.

This event along with other interventions is part of an effort to properly conceptualise the "living wage" to facilitate better strategy development directed at bargaining and organising. We engaged trade unionists in this process to assist them in revitalising a campaign that has been reduced to the sum of its parts. Our collaboration with SPII and SASPRI will deliver its first research outputs in 2014 and will be a ground breaking effort to quantify a decent standard of living in South Africa.

In 2014, we continued to track the outcomes of collective bargaining in South Africa and mirror this information back to our constituency in the form of union-specific bargaining reports, inflation monitor, inputs to trade union bargaining forums and ad hoc collective bargaining support to negotiators. We maintained our open access online database of wage bargaining at [www.lrs.org.za/award](http://www.lrs.org.za/award).

## **Transforming Corporate Governance Programme**

*Promoting transparency in corporate governance*

Our work includes company research, presentations to shop steward networks, online information resources and financial literacy development. The unionists we work with have applied the knowledge they have gained directly in their organising and negotiating. They tell stories of how they have taken directors' fees to their negotiations to challenge the companies on their ability to pay, or they have tackled the different wages of workers in the same operations in different countries.

Our work shows trade unionists that knowledge is not the preserve of the powerful, that the shop steward or anyone else is capable of holding and using knowledge. Shop stewards themselves have noted how they have developed a changed understanding of themselves, an understanding that they are capable of really making an impact for the union and for their members.

We have served as a resource to a number of structures and shop steward networks.

- Southern African Energy Network
- Shoprite Checkers Alliance
- Massmart Walmart Alliance
- Pick n Pay Alliance
- AngloGold Ashanti Alliance
- Africa GUF Forum (Global Union Federation)
- Evaluation of shop steward alliances in South African Multinationals in Africa.

Our publications in 2014 include Directors Fees 2014, a summary of executive remuneration at approximately 90 listed companies on the JSE.

One network participant told us a story of how for the first time she demanded the finances of the company when the company said they could not pay because there was no profit. She realised not only that she was allowed to do this, but that she was capable of it. Then the other negotiators felt they could also make further demands. So that the distance between the shop steward and management narrowed, the nature of the relationship changed and the discussion became more productive and more empowering. This story emanates from meetings of the company networks that we support.

## **Workers' Education & Advocacy Programme**

The Workers' Education and Advocacy programme developed education courses and tools to enable members of workers organisations to advocate for socio-economic equality.

The two main areas of work are online education and study circles. In 2014 the study circle facilitators initiated their own study circles that involved 65 members from different organisations. This was the first time members were involved in designing, planning and carrying out education activities involving other activists from their organisations. The participants are workers in Cape Town who work mainly in vulnerable sectors: domestic work, contract cleaning, community care work. There are also some who work in private health care and NGOs.

These workers were able to host activities to organise their constituencies and raise awareness among union members of their rights that would not have been possible in the normal course of their union's programme.

The training for this as well as the space to discuss the content and form of the programmes was provided through the study circle project run through the International Federation of Workers' Education Associations. The events hosted by the study circles are reaching members of their constituencies who would not have been involved in union activities at all. A total of about 400 people have been involved in the programme indirectly.

Each of the study circles chose their own topics around which to structure their dialogue. The topics were socio economic inequality in S.A; gender based violence; Workers Rights and Precarious Work (focus on care workers and domestic workers and contract cleaning workers). One domestic worker study circle formed a choir where members taught each other songs and took part in recruiting and advocacy activities of new organizations. These study circles also helped members with ICT training to improve communication and to obtain information for their campaigns.

The education programme is also opening up the possibility of new mediums of workers education and in so doing increasing the potential to reinvigorate and reintroduce popular workers education in unions. We developed an online course on information for collective bargaining and trained a group of study circle facilitators. Lifelong learning is critical for unions to involve members in the union and improve their capacity and build a collective consciousness.

The introduction of online education as a medium for workers education opens up new possibilities for workers and union members to have access to education. This year we trained 12 tutors to design online courses and will attempt to get tutors to run these courses in their organisations. We developed a new course for teaching educators about online education for workers and how to use the online platform. We ran the course with eight educators drawn from NUM, SADSAWU, SACCAWU, Khanya College, NEHAWU and HOSPERSA.

## **Trade Union Library & Archive**

The LRS holds a unique body of knowledge as a result of its merger with the Trade Union Library about fifteen years ago. The challenges of maintaining a library in today's world are well known and we have struggled for some years to raise the funds necessary to run a traditional library.

We implemented a pilot digitisation project in 2014 in order to establish the capacity to take our information resources online. We imagine a new trade union library and archive where location is no longer a barrier to access and workers and worker leaders can access information and resources in their own time and space.

We successfully set up the equipment and systems required to digitise information and to render searchable digital documents. The information resources included in the pilot project were selected publications of the LRS, educational resources, resources that relate to our programmes and collective bargaining agreements. The pilot digitisation project processed about 850 documents excluding collective bargaining agreements.

We are pleased with these early gains and hope to raise further the resources to allow us to successfully transition to a digital library and archive



## **The Year Ahead**

The year ahead promises to be a great challenge for the organisation and the labour movement which it serves. As a membership based non-profit labour support organisation the LRS faces challenges of its own. The international donor environment is an increasingly constrained one and our traditional international solidarity support partners are under pressure. The challenge for organisations such as ours, to balance organisational vision, human resource needs, sustainability and the ability to deliver to our core constituency, is becoming ever greater.

Fortunately the LRS has resources to draw on as it meets this challenge. The LRS has cultivated a vibrant network of partner organisations both domestically and internationally. The LRS has a committed and skilled staff who will be central to finding creative solutions to complex problems. The LRS enjoys the support of a dedicated board of directors drawn from its member unions. The LRS enjoys widespread legitimacy and trust within the labour movement based on the character and quality of its interventions as well as its non-sectarian approach.

In the coming period we will revisit our strategic objectives to take into account the fast changing context and environment in which we operate. We will continue to build our programmes which are our key strength.

Our focus will remain on leadership, capacity development and resources for bargaining, organising, information management, workers education and transforming corporate governance. We will promote further collaboration between our various programmes to deliver a rich and engaging experience. We will continue to orient our research towards application in the public space and to empower trade union activists.

# Acknowledgements

We wish to thank our funders, those who have commissioned work from the LRS, the network of contractors who have assisted us in delivering on our mandate as well as the range of interns who have contributed to the LRS in different ways.

In addition to the support we detail below, we wish to acknowledge the continued trust and support of our member unions, their federations and the many comrades we have worked with over the past year.

## **Donors**

International Trade Union Confederation  
FNV Mondiaal  
Joint Gender Fund  
National Lotteries Distribution Trust Fund  
Olaf Palme Centre  
Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

## **Organisations that commissioned work from the LRS**

Benchmarks  
DITIKENI  
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung  
Gender at Work  
International Federation of Workers Education Associations  
International Labour Organisation  
UNI Global Union

## **Partners (organisations and individuals)**

DITSELA  
Gay and Lesbian Archives (GALA)  
Solidarity Centre  
Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute

## **Interns**

Lauren Hill (University of Ottawa)  
Anne-Marie Lefebvre (University of Ottawa)  
Portia Nyokana (UWC)  
Wuve Rubushe (CPUT)  
Bongi Jopi (CPUT)  
Lawule Shumane (UCT)  
Tami Engombe (UCT)