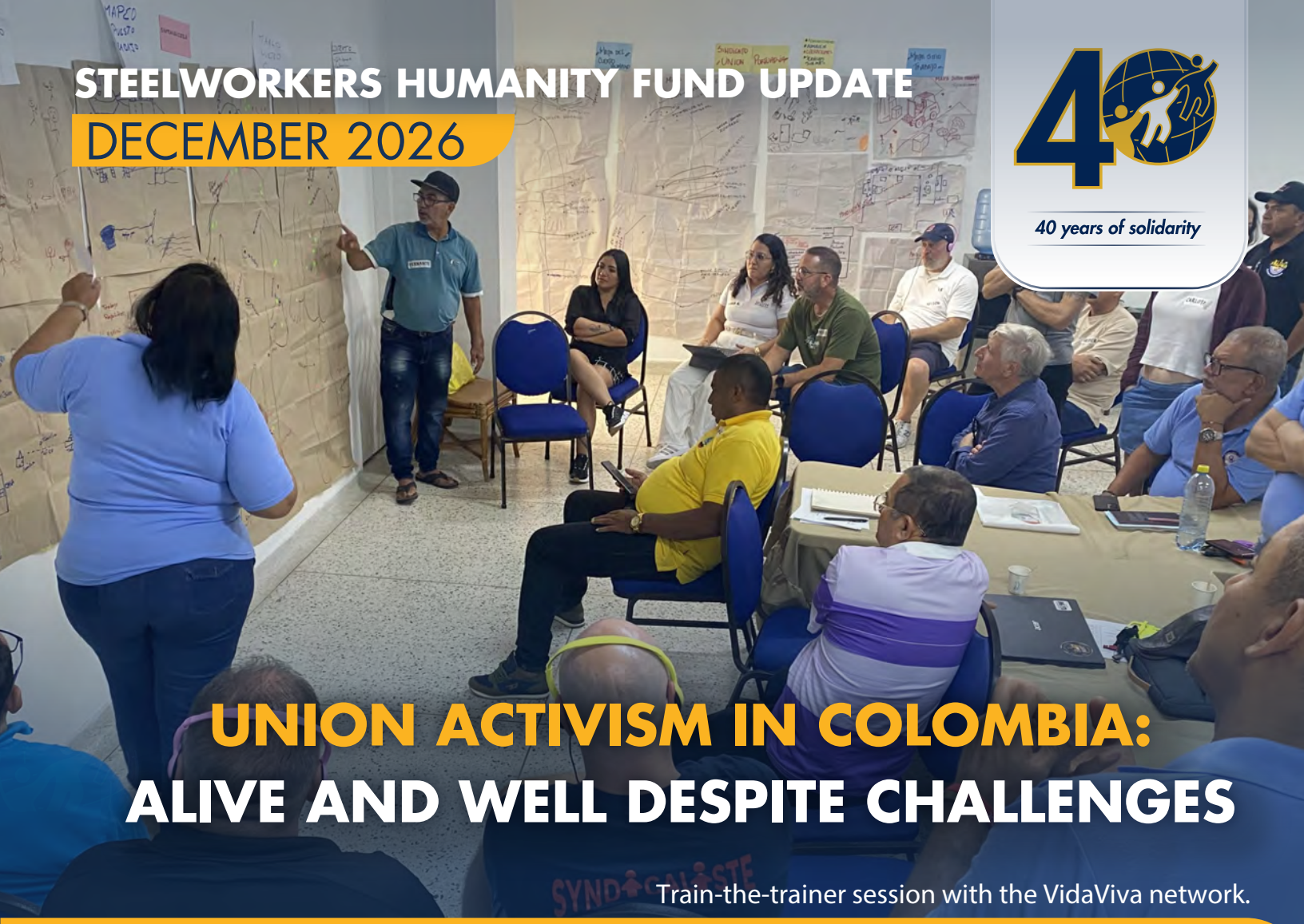
STEELWORKERS HUMANITY FUND UPDATE
DECEMBER 2026

40 years of solidarity



UNION ACTIVISM IN COLOMBIA: ALIVE AND WELL DESPITE CHALLENGES

Train-the-trainer session with the VidaViva network.

Since Colombia is often portrayed negatively in popular culture, delegates from District 5 of the United Steelworkers travelled to Bogotá with some trepidation. Fortunately, these concerns quickly dissipated upon meeting with the long-standing partners of the Steelworkers Humanity Fund (SHF).

The group travelled to the northern part of the country to meet with SHF partner labour organizations committed to defending workers' rights. Despite the language barrier, the four delegation members – all from the metalworking sector – quickly realized they had much in common with their Colombian brothers and sisters. Fruitful discussions took place during the first Congress of Colombian Metalworkers' Unions, organized by the National Union of Metal Industry Workers (SINALTRAMETAL).

The delegates' experience as union trainers also fostered rich discussions during a train-the-trainer session organized later in the week by VidaViva, a network dedicated to union education and engagement.

Throughout the meetings, the delegation members were impressed by the vitality and determination of the labour movement in Colombia. Despite a unionization rate of just 3% to 4%, the activists they met continue their mobilization and training efforts under often difficult conditions, nurturing hope for a more just and democratic future.

This visit also shed light on the challenges faced by trade unionists and Colombian civil society in general. Against a backdrop of concerns about insecurity and allegations of foreign interference, the recent election of a

The Steelworkers delegation at the first Congress of Colombian Metalworkers' Unions.

government described as far-right has reignited those fears. Given that Colombia's history has been marked by violence against social movements, including labour, these groups now fear a rollback of social gains.

In the face of these challenges, the Steelworkers are more determined than ever to strengthen lasting bonds of solidarity with Colombia's progressive unions and social organizations.

To learn more about the Steelworkers Humanity Fund

usw.ca/shf



Members of the Steelworkers' delegation upon their arrival in the Colombian capital.

Steelworkers Humanity Fund
234 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 800
Toronto, ON M4P 1K7

Phone: 416-487-1571
Email: humanityfund@usw.ca
Website: www.usw.ca/shf

UNITED STEELWORKERS USW MÉTALLOS

<sru-sdr, cope-sepb 343>