

# Promotion of Gender Equality, Empowerment of Women and Gender Mainstreaming in Trade Unions

*Training Manual*



***“Poverty and inequality cannot be fought,  
nor democracy and sustainable development  
strengthened without recognizing the importance  
of gender equality and securing women and men’s  
equal rights.”***

FROM THE GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY  
OF THE LO/FTF COUNCIL

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**Promotion of gender equality,  
empowerment of women  
and gender mainstreaming  
in trade unions - Training manual**

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# FOREWORD





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## ***Foreword by Lizette Risgaard and Bente Sorgenfrey***

Gender equality and an active participation of women has always been an important cross-cutting issue for the LO/FTF Council in its programmes with trade union partners across the world. Through the years, the LO/FTF Council has supported organising and training of women workers, empowerment of women in the unions, better conditions and equality at the workplaces, women workers in the public sectors, recognition of women workers in the informal economy and lobbying for their rights.

Gender equality, equal rights and opportunities and empowerment of women are crucial elements in the global fight for democracy, poverty alleviation, decent work and sustainable development.

We have come a long way on the road to gender equality, but a lot still needs to be done - in the trade unions, at the workplaces and in society in general. As trade unionists we have a crucial role to play to secure global action to achieve gender equality and to ensure that the new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable

Development and its specific focus on gender equality and decent work for all can be achieved.

In order to secure increased focus on the issue, the LO/FTF Council recently adopted a new strategy for gender equality with focus on empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming in the unions, at the workplace and in society. In this way, we are aiming at integrating the gender aspect even more into our programmes in relation to the Decent Work Agenda, the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the new ILO Recommendation 204 on transition from the informal to the formal economy.

It is our hope that these training materials on gender equality can contribute to further discussions with our partners on how to secure focus on gender equality in the unions and in our cooperation. It is indeed trade unions across the world who must take up the challenge and secure that gender equality is a real objective in their organisations.



# Gender Equality Strategy of the LO/FTF Council

The gender equality work in the trade union movement is based upon:

- ILO Declaration on Basic Principles and Rights at Work from 1998, which covers the 8 Core Conventions including ILO Convention no. 100 on equal pay from 1951 and ILO Convention no. 111 against discrimination (in employment and at work) from 1958
- ILO Convention no. 183 on Maternity Protection
- ILO Convention no. 189 on decent work for domestic workers from 2011
- UN Conventions on human rights
- CEDAW – the Convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
- UN Sustainable Development Goal no. 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

The ITUC, the International Trade Union Confederation has identified 7 main areas of intervention to focus on regarding equality and promotion of women's rights:

- Education and training
- Employment and equal pay
- Social protection with special focus on maternity protection and access to health care
- Family responsibilities (which means better understanding of and distribution of family responsibilities between men and women)
- Harassment and violence against women
- Freedom of association
- Integration into trade unions

## ***Objective of the gender equality strategy of the LO/FTF Council***

The overall strategy on gender equality of the LO/FTF Council is to strengthen the capacity of partner organisations to promote equality and empowerment of women in the following main areas of intervention:

1. Internally in the trade union movement
2. In the labour market – both in the private and public sectors and in the informal economy
3. In society in general.

### **1. INTERNALLY IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT**

Gender equality has for many years been a special focus area in the trade union organisations both at national and at international level. The vast majority of the partners of the LO/FTF Council have adopted gender equality policies just as they have established Women's Committees and Women Coordinators at local, regional and international levels.

In the trade unions women often constitute a big proportion of the membership but there are still far too few women who are shop stewards or who are represented in decision-making structures.

*The LO/FTF Council therefore supports a gender equality strategy in the trade union organisations, which focuses on mainstreaming and also strengthens women and encourages them to be active in the trade union organisations.*

### 1.1. MAINSTREAMING

*The LO/FTF Council supports capacity building of partners to work with mainstreaming so that it can become an efficient instrument to assess the consequences for men and women of any initiative concerning legislation, policies and programmes at all levels and so that they are able to assess whether the gender perspective is incorporated in all parts of legislation and in collective agreements as well as in personnel policies at the workplace. Mainstreaming comprises:*

- Gender audits or gender differentiated statistics in order to document and limit any inequality problems and as steering instruments to secure follow up on the development in the national equality legislative initiatives as well as in the internal organisational equality developments.
- Benchmarking to compare and visualise examples of good practices.
- Analyses of gender consequences which shall document and secure that political decisions and planning do not have unfortunate consequences for gender equality.
- Efficient monitoring and evaluation of the gender equality perspective in all policies and approaches.

### 1.2. EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

*In order to strengthen a more active participation of women in the trade union organisations the LO/FTF Council supports a focused approach by partner organisations regarding:*

- Organising of more women and securing that they are heard.
- Training of women workers so that they are prepared to take active part in trade union activities and to stand for election to decision-making structures.
- At least 30% participation of women in training activities. The objective is to increase women's representation to ensure that the percentage of women in decision-making structures reflects the percentage of women in the various organisations / sectors.

## **Gender Equality Background**

Poverty and inequality cannot be fought nor democracy and sustainable development strengthened without recognising the importance of gender equality and securing women and men's equal rights as well as equal access and opportunities for participation in economic, social and political decision-making processes. Any discrimination at work limits people's freedom to develop their capacity and to choose and pursue their professional and personal aspirations.

Gender mainstreaming is the globally acknowledged strategy for the promotion of gender equality. It is a strategy, an approach or an instrument to achieve the goal of equality. Mainstreaming shall secure that the gender aspect and the objective of obtaining equality are integrated in all activities – policy development, analyses and research, advocacy, legislation, etc. as well as in all phases of planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.

At the same time empowerment of women is crucial to secure sustainable economic development and women's human rights including the right to development. An improvement of women's access to education, capital and jobs promotes growth, peace and stability. Investments in women and girls also have a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustainable economic growth. Empowerment of women is crucial to reach the UN Millenium Development Goals.

The approach of the LO/FTF Council to equality between men and women is based on the understanding that men and women should enjoy the same basic human rights. The work with equality is an integrated part of the agenda of the global trade union movement and more and more focus has been put on gender equality these last years. Equality is, thus, also an integrated element of all the LO/FTF Council's programmes.



## 2. IN THE LABOUR MARKET

During the past 50 years the number of women in the labour market has increased tremendously so that there are almost as many working women as men in the world (1.2 billion out of a global working population of 2.9 billion). However, there is still a long way before you can talk of equal conditions for men and women in the labour market in developing countries. And there are of course many different social, cultural, economic, political and religious barriers to gender equality in the various countries.

It is still difficult for women to get a paid job and they often end up working as contract, seasonal or casual workers, for sub-contractors, in export processing zones, at home, etc. under insecure conditions and with very low salaries. Thousands of women furthermore work at workplaces where it is usually not allowed to organise and it is thus difficult for them to claim their rights.

In the public sector women often have the least recognised and the lowest paid jobs in the health, education and social sectors. Finally the vast majority of women have to find some kind of employment in the so called informal economy.

Trade unions are working to secure equal conditions and opportunities for men and women in the labour market and to secure equal pay for equal work, equal access to education and career promotion. Trade unions are working to remove the barriers which hinder women's access to the labour market and to secure women's rights.

The LO/FTF Council has in its programmes taken the strategic choice to focus especially on those sectors where there are a lot of women workers.

### 2.1. IN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS

*The LO/FTF Council supports the efforts of partner organisations to achieve:*

- The acceptance of basic trade union rights including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining
- Equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women
- Equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for career promotion for men and women
- More women shop stewards or workers' representatives and more women in Executive Councils, Workers' Committees and Safety Committees.
- Longer paid maternity leave and more coherence between working life and family life.
- Recognition of jobs within health, education, childcare and eldercare where women are especially represented for their importance for society as well as higher wages in these sectors.
- Gathering of data about the conditions for men and women in the labour market which can serve as basis for trade union initiatives towards private and public employers and which can be used in connection with collective bargaining.





## 2.2. IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

Due to the very limited private and public sectors in developing countries, a vast majority of the population has to find a way to survive in the informal economy which often covers 70% to 90% of the working population. It is especially women who work in the informal economy. This is either due to lack of education and thus possibilities of getting a job, or because they are the first to lose their job in the formal sector. Women have the lowest, poorest paid and most insecure jobs in the informal economy as for example in the agricultural sector, with home production or as domestic workers. Some women work as small entrepreneurs but it is hard for them to get support, training and loans to develop their small businesses. Workers in the informal economy do not have any rights, they are not covered by labour legislation or social security schemes and until recently they have not been organised nor had any voice in relation to local and national authorities.

*The LO/FTF Council supports partners' endeavors to secure equality and empowerment of women in the informal economy through:*

- Organising and representation of workers – not least women – in the informal economy.
- Lobbying to secure their recognition and basic rights including the right to decent work and freedom of association as well as coverage of labour legislation.
- Development of democratic and member-based organisations in which women can play a crucial role and participate in decision-making bodies. The organising of the informal economy, thus, also contributes to increasing the number of active and elected women in the trade union movement.
- Lobbying for social protection and access to health care as most significant for an improvement of their living conditions.
- The possibility of participating in short-term adult vocational training courses, which comprise both development of their professional know how as well as entrepreneurial and accounting skills in order to be able to develop their small businesses.
- Better access to micro-credits to develop their businesses.
- Establishment of cooperatives and production networks with a view to strengthening the cooperation and increasing possibilities to make profits.
- Organising of domestic workers and campaigns to get their governments to ratify the newly adopted ILO Convention no. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
- A prominent role for gender equality and women's rights in the ILO Recommendations for formalising the informal economy.

## 3. IN SOCIETY IN GENERAL

*With a view to strengthening gender equality and empowerment of women generally in society the LO/FTF Council supports the efforts of partners in relation to policy formulation, lobbying and advocacy, participation in social dialogue and campaign activities to focus on:*

- Respect for basic human rights
- Equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men
- Generally improved living conditions and better access to education, health, employment and lodging
- Promotion of women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Paid maternity leave for women and child care facilities as crucial prerequisites to secure real equality in the long term
- Abuse, sexual harassment and violence against women as well as trafficking with women.

### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Measures targeted at a particular group and intended to eliminate and prevent discrimination, or to prevent existing disadvantages.

### **EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

The empowerment of women concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions, which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality.

### **GENDER**

Social (as opposed to biological) differences between women and men. These differences have been acquired; they are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures. Other variables such as ethnicity, caste, class, age and ability intersect with gender differences.

### **GENDER ANALYSIS**

The study of differences in conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources, and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc. - between women and men in their assigned gender roles.

### **GENDER AUDIT**

The analysis and evaluation of policies, programmes, and institutions in terms of how they apply gender-related criteria.

### **GENDER BUDGETING**

Gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring expenditures in order to promote gender equality.

### **GENDER EQUALITY**

Gender equality means that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued, and favoured equally.

### **GENDER EQUITY**

Gender equity means fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. It often requires women-specific programmes and policies to end existing inequalities.

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

Incorporation of a gender equality perspective in all policies, strategies, and activities at all levels and at all stages. Considering both men's and women's wishes, needs, and experience in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and efforts.

### **GENDER RELATIONS**

The relationship and power distribution between women and men which characterise any specific gender system.

### **GENDER-DISAGGREGATED STATISTICS**

The collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex to enable comparative analysis; sometimes referred to as sex-disaggregated statistics.

### **REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

Reproductive rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals freely and responsibly to decide on the number, spacing, and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health.

### **SEX**

Refers to the biological differences between men and women that are universal and usually determined at birth.

### **WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

The rights of women and the girl child as inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights.

*Participatory methods* are seen as the most effective because it engages the participants and makes them active in a training process by sharing their experiences and knowledge among each other. There are different ways to choose from when applying this method.

### **ROLE PLAYS**

In role plays the participants are just like actors and actresses in a movie or a television programme and play assigned roles from a specific situation.

### **GROUP WORK**

Group work is basically "doing things together" by discussing chosen topics. To make any Group Work productive, it is important that the AIM, TASK and TIME of an assigned ACTIVITY is clear to the group. Every participant should actively participate and make contributions in order to build motivation and enhance the individual learning process. The group appoints a leader and a rapporteur. The rapporteur summarises the results of the group work in the plenary.

### **DISCUSSIONS**

In discussions the participants interact on a specific topic. The participants express their own ideas and opinions about the topic. During the discussions, they may ask each other questions, argue or agree on some points. The trainer guides the flow of discussions.

### **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Every time a participant is called to make a presentation or offers to say something in front of the other participants, it is actually public speaking. This is not an easy skill to perform. Besides, different people have different ways to communicate. The bottom line is that if a person feels confident when addressing a crowd, he or she usually communicates more effectively. This confidence can be enhanced through practice.

### **STUDY CIRCLE**

When a group of workers decide that they want to study and learn from each other's experiences they form a study circle. The group can meet in private homes, in the workplace or in the union house. The circle assigns a study circle leader who is responsible for minutes and organising of the meetings. The method is very efficient when defining needs and guidelines for example for an Occupational, Health and Safety Committee.

# PROGRAMME FOR 3-DAY GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING COURSE

## DAY 1 · MORNING

### WELCOME

### PRESENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS

### **Session 1**

*Introduction to gender equality strategies in the trade unions*

- Gender relations in trade unions
- Data collection
- Empowerment of women
- Gender or Women's Committees and Departments / Desks
- Gender mainstreaming
- Gender analysis
- Participatory Gender Audit
- Elaboration of a gender policy
- Exchange of experiences and use of social media

## DAY 1 · AFTERNOON

### **Session 2**

*How to strengthen gender equality in the trade unions?*

*Role play:*

#### **CHANGES OF ATTITUDES**

- 0,5 hours Roleplay

*Group work and discussion:*

#### **ROLE, FUNCTION AND IMPACT OF WOMEN'S OR GENDER COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS/ DESKS**

- 1 hour group work
- 1 hour reporting and discussions in plenary

*Group work:*

#### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND GENDER ANALYSIS IN THE TRADE UNIONS**

- 1 hour group work

## DAY 2 · MORNING

### **Session 2 continued**

*How to strengthen gender equality in the trade unions?*

*Discussion:*

#### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND GENDER ANALYSIS IN THE TRADE UNIONS**

Reporting from group work of day 1

- 1 hour reporting and discussions in plenary

*Group work and discussion:*

#### **ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN YOUR ORGANISATION**

- 1 hour group work
- 1 hour reporting and discussions in plenary

## DAY 2 · AFTERNOON

### **Session 3**

*How do we promote gender equality in the workplace?*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- Organising
- Labour market
- The formal sectors (private and public)
- Workers' representatives
- Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)

*Group work and discussion:*

#### **GENDER BALANCE AMONG SHOP STEWARDS AND IN CBAS**

- 1.5 hour group work
- 1 hour reporting and discussions in plenary

## DAY 3 · MORNING

### **Session 4**

*How do we promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the informal economy?*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- The informal economy
- Organising and servicing the informal economy
- ILO Recommendation 204 on transition from the informal to the formal economy
- Focus on gender equality and empowerment of women in the informal economy

*Group work and discussion:*

#### **ACTION PLAN TO SECURE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN TRIPARTITE SOCIAL DIALOGUE ON TRANSITION FROM THE INFORMAL TO THE FORMAL ECONOMY**

- 1.5 hour group work
- 1.5 hour for reporting and discussions in plenary

## DAY 3 · AFTERNOON

### **Session 5**

*How can trade unions promote gender equality and women's empowerment in society?*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- *Main focus areas*
- *The new Sustainable Development Goals*

*Group work and discussion:*

#### **GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY**

- 1 hour group work
- 1 hour reporting and discussions in plenary

## **WRAPPING UP AND FINAL DISCUSSIONS**

## **CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP**

In the following pages there is background information and suggestions to the various sessions in the training programme, including notes to the role play and group work.

# Introduction to gender equality strategies in the trade unions

## Day 1 · Morning

*"Integrating gender perspectives means changing attitudes, looking at things differently, having in our minds women's points of view and concerns, and making these VISIBLE in all aspects of our work. By doing this, trade union activities become a vehicle for achieving real equality." - ITUC*

### GENDER RELATIONS IN TRADE UNIONS

Trade unions are no longer a brotherhood of men, but most of them did start out that way. In 1949, women were only seven of each hundred trade union members. Now they are about four out of every ten. In some unions they form the majority.

Women who are busy with household and children tend to have less access to information about their rights. When women join a union, they must adapt to unfamiliar thinking and male ways of talking. If they want to represent fellow workers, they must try to keep up with male standards, withstand disputes and fight for positions in ways that don't come easily.

Trade union strength is based on treating workers as equals, each member having an equal say and together building a collective voice, but even where men are in the minority they predominate in union decision making. Long standing, deeply embedded practices prevent equality policies really working and allow women and men within unions to tolerate or fail to question the existing bias against women in selection and election to positions. This makes it difficult to speed up progress towards gender parity and it can often lead to a sense of exclusion for women.

The achievement of gender equality implies changes for both men and women. More equal relations will need to be based on a redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of both men and women. And a prerequisite for any efficient gender equality advances in the unions is that we are willing to admit that men and women are different and have different needs and priorities.

### DATA COLLECTION

The collection of data is crucial if you want to make efficient gender equality analysis and gender mainstreaming in the unions and at the labour market.

This means that efficient systems to register members (men and women), dues collection, shop stewards or workers' representatives, participants in training activities, collective agreements, salaries, etc. should be developed and maintained on a regular basis. If such data are not available, it is impossible to make any analysis of the actual situation and progress made.

### EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Women's empowerment is crucial to achieving gender equality. Through empowerment, women become aware of unequal power relations, gain control over their lives, and acquire a stronger voice to overcome inequality in their home, workplace and community. Ensuring the equal participation of women as agents of change in the unions and in economic, social and political processes is essential to achieving gender equality.

Main barriers faced by women in trade unions in gaining gender balance:

- The culture of unions values the participation of men and this discourages women's participation;
- Negative stereotypes work against women's union participation
- The economic crisis has impacted negatively on women's representation
- Women hold themselves back and often lack the confidence to push themselves forward for leadership roles
- Time constraints impact on women's possibilities for participation



### Ten things trade unions can do to promote gender balance in union leadership and decision making roles

1. Make the argument for gender balance a core union priority.
2. Actively promote gender equality at all levels of the organisation through gender mainstreaming.
3. Introduce statutory rule changes on gender balance.
4. Prepare women for decision making and leadership roles.
5. Engage men to build a consensus for balanced gender representation.
6. Address the image and culture of unions.
7. Build union organisation so that women are actively involved and can participate in decision making at all levels of the union.
8. Ensure that trade union organisations promote gender diversity through their own internal human resources.
9. Provide gender-disaggregated data.
10. Take a strategic approach and develop a gender equality policy and concrete action plans to improve gender balance, including measures to monitor and assess the outcomes and implementation of actions.

- Women lack the knowledge about union structures and how to get into decision-making positions;
- Young women are not attracted to union decision-making roles
- Union structures replicate women's disadvantaged labour market position
- Most trade unions do not allocate financial resources to support gender programmes and activities
- There is still a great deal of misconception on what constitutes gender. Most men and some women equate it to women affairs, or to discriminating men in favour of women through practices that promote the insubordination of women to men, and also discourage women from taking a leading role in society

Supporting and targeting women to take up decision-making and leadership positions:

- Present positive images of women in senior positions, for example, in union reports, newsletters and publicity.
- Show senior level commitment to women in decision-making positions.
- Identify, support and encourage women who have potential for leadership positions.
- Provide professional coaching for women with potential to enable them to realise their goals and to support them through the process of applying for senior and decision-making positions.
- Consult with women to identify what barriers exist and develop policies and procedures to address these problems.
- Put in place targeted programmes for women, including assertiveness training and confidence building, support in job application and interview skills.
- Develop women's networks to enable women to share experiences, identify goals and gain experience.

## GENDER OR WOMEN'S COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS/DESKS

During the last decades, most national trade union centres and affiliates have established Women's Committees and a Women's Department or Desk, thus giving women a space to discuss their situation, problems and needs. This has indeed helped strengthen women and build their capacity and confidence and has been a training ground for future women union leaders. However, we also have to question whether this is the right strategy and whether it has really led to an improvement of gender equality in the unions. At an ITUC-Africa workshop on gender mainstreaming in 2010, two challenges were raised. One challenge is that the Women's Desk may be used more for publicity than for conceptual purposes. The desks are often under-staffed, lack technical and financial resources and rely on external support. Due to these limitations, these desks have not managed to discharge their duties as desired. The second challenge is the lack of linkage between Women's Committees and decision-making process.

There is, thus, the danger that Women's Committees become parallel structures for women without much influence or impact in the organisations. This is why we have to question their role, function and impact. Do they have sufficient support from leadership? Are they listened to? Do they make a difference? Do they get funding for their activities? Do they make concrete proposals for leading structures which are taken into account? Do they make gender analysis and secure gender mainstreaming in the organisation? Do they have cooperation with other departments in

order to secure that gender mainstreaming is indeed embedded and taken seriously in the whole organisation?

The links between the women's structures and the decision-making bodies of the union are crucial to ensuring that the ideas and issues which women agree on are acknowledged by the whole organisation. Issues raised and recommendations taken by the Women's Committee will only be taken into account by the whole organisation once they have been submitted to and approved by the governing bodies.

It should also be assessed whether Gender Committees with the participation of men would be more appropriate and give more results. It is not easy to assess the correct answer because it is also a question of balance, knowing the need that women do have for a space and capacity-building on their own.

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Gender mainstreaming appears for the first time in the "Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women" from the UN World Women's Conference in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985. The concept was defined in the UN in 1997 and has been used ever since in the UN organisations. In the ILO it was seen as an instrument for action in the ILO's technical cooperation and in various policy areas (employment, social dialogue and poverty alleviation). It was adopted in the ITUC in 2007 as an Action Programme on achieving gender equality in trade unions.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy to achieve and maintain gender equality and women's empowerment. It is the (re)organisation, improvement, development





and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, programmes and activities at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making. It thus involves considering both men's and women's needs and experiences in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies. *It is a process and not an end in itself.*

For gender mainstreaming to be effective, there must be political will to commit fully to the political agenda of gender equality. Promotion of gender equality concerns men just as much as women, and is not exclusively a women's issue. The achievement of gender equality implies changes for both men and women. More equal relations will need to be based on a redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of both men and women.

*The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment so that both women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from the development process. The aim is to transform relations between women and men through shared decision-making, and to promote women's equal treatment, participation and opportunities.*

### NEED FOR GENDER ANALYSES

A prerequisite for mainstreaming gender equality is to understand how and why gender inequalities are relevant to the work at hand, to understand the differentiated impact and effects of policies and programmes on women and men, and where to find culturally appropriate opportunities that support greater equality between women and men.

It means:

- Consistent and formal integration of gender issues at the planning and implementation stages of interventions, including the allocation of adequate human and financial resources;
- Gender-responsive awareness-raising and capacity-building activities;
- Appropriate monitoring and evaluation tools and mechanisms to enable ongoing assessments of how and to what extent gender is being effectively mainstreamed.

Gender mainstreaming and specific interventions to promote equality of opportunity and treatment are complementary strategies to help ensure that inequality is not perpetuated. Such specific interventions are essential for mainstreaming and can target either women alone, both women and men, or men alone in order to redress the effects of past direct and indirect discrimination.

### DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination based on gender affects both women and men adversely. However, in the current situation where all the statistical indicators indicate that women are overwhelmingly more disadvantaged than men, it is justified to prioritise strategies which advantage women. Addressing gender inequality to redress discrimination against both women and men requires actions by both women and men to challenge their existing attitudes, privilege and practice. Direct discrimination occurs when women are prevented from enjoying rights and freedoms simply because they are women. Indirect discrimination occurs when the same rules or established practices are applied to both men and women where one or other will find the conditions harder to meet. This is sometimes called institutional discrimination, because it usually arises from long standing, deeply embedded habit and practice within an organisation. No one person is consciously discriminating, but established relations, values, attitudes between women and men lead to a discriminatory situation.

### GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA ARE CRITICAL

A necessity for the promotion of gender equality is the availability of gender-disaggregated data for every statistic, which involves counts of people. This is critical to detect and quantify inequalities between men and women. Such data also give an understanding of the playing field to be leveled and the basis for measuring outcome and impact of change processes.

*A Gender Analysis helps to identify the practical things you can do to move towards greater equality.*

## GENDER ANALYSIS

The aim of a gender analysis is to gather the evidence, the views and experience of members and any potential membership, as to how well the union currently meets the needs of women and men. If one gender, or the interests of one gender are more prominent, then you assess whether such inequalities actually matter. If they do, then you identify priorities for improvement. Plans for improvement should be underpinned by a permanent policy commitment to integrate

women, set measurable targets, which can be used to monitor progress and steadily improve practice.

You may take *positive action* when necessary to involve more women for example, in decision making or recruiting members. You should check resolutions for congress for bias; involve all levels in gathering and examining gender information. Gender mainstreaming is a continuous process of checking impact and keeping up the visibility of the issue.

### *Steps in carrying out a gender analysis*

*from ITUC manual on Achieving Gender Equality*

#### 1. IDENTIFY GENDER GAPS

Conduct a gender audit to identify gender gaps. Assess your core activities and/or the actions of key departments using accurate figures and up to date information. Search for gaps and differences by gender and pick out the significant ones.

#### 2. ANALYSIS

Understanding why there is a gender gap can be tricky. Many different factors will be involved. There are differences between men and women in terms of:

- Resources - time, money or transport available
- Confidence - which often comes with education and job status
- Work and leisure - responsibilities at home
- Value - attached to participation in activities
- Rights and freedoms
  - to do what we decide is right
- Behaviour and priorities
  - of those already involved

#### 3. CONSULT THE MEMBERSHIP

Figures may tell you what is happening but can rarely tell you why. You may need to go to your member and potential members and ask them, if you want to know why people join or do not join the union. A small sample, taken from an informal group discussion, a questionnaire or face-to-face chat with a small cross section of members may help you to understand.

#### 4. MAKE A PLAN

When you know what is happening and why, you can work out and agree your plan of action. Involve as many people as is practical in developing your plan.

#### 5. MAKE GENDER MAINSTREAMING WORK

Four key factors have been identified as crucial:

- Leadership - people at the top must lead the way to make gender mainstreaming work
- Clear responsibility of officials - ensure everyone knows what to do, make a short checklist and give this to all those involved
- Building expertise and training - discussion, practical help, understanding the benefits to the whole union from mainstreaming, challenging negative attitudes
- Monitoring and reviewing your plan - membership involvement in collecting evidence of union performance, reviewing and making changes to the plan where necessary.

## PARTICIPATORY GENDER AUDIT

The next important element after determining what gender equality measures are needed and how these should be implemented is to verify that gender issues are indeed being mainstreamed by establishing an *accountability framework*. Here a Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) is a tool to evaluate whether gender equality policy and action plans are adhered to. It must, however, be stressed that gender equality policies and action plans need to be in place in order for the PGA to be most effective as an accountability tool. Conducting a PGA does not yield the same results if an organisation's policies have not been clearly articulated, and if modalities for operationalising the policies have not been put in place. Furthermore, the PGA must be endorsed at the highest levels of the organisation.

According to the ILO, a PGA is *a tool and a process based on a participatory methodology*. It promotes organisational learning on mainstreaming gender practically and effectively.

A PGA:

- Considers whether internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective and reinforce each other
- Monitors and assesses the relative progress made in gender mainstreaming
- Establishes a baseline for the audited unit
- Identifies critical gaps and challenges
- Recommends ways of addressing them and suggests new and more effective strategies
- Documents good practices towards the achievement of gender equality

The key components of the methodology are:

- An extensive desk review
- Semi-structured interviews with staff of the audited unit at all hierarchical levels
- A collective workshop.

The PGA could for example be used to make a complete analysis of the number of men and women in leading structures, committees and departments at all levels in the national trade union centre and in all affiliates and the developments through the years as well as an assessment of the number of men and women participating in training activities. It could be an assessment of the gender equality activities in the various departments. Assessment of impact and follow up on action plans on gender equality can also be made through the PGA. At workplace level it could be used to analyse wages for men and women for equal work, i.e. to assess wage differences.

It is not possible to make a full description of the PGA in these training materials, but for further information on the PGA we refer to the comprehensive ILO "A Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators" found at [www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/WCMS\\_187411/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/WCMS_187411/lang--en/index.htm). ITUC-Africa has also been assisting affiliates to carry out PGAs.

**Vision:** Policy on gender equality

**Act:** Implement policy through action plan

**Verify:** Verify PGA to establish accountability



### ELABORATION OF A GENDER POLICY

If gender equality is really to be achieved in the trade unions, a gender equality policy should be elaborated and adopted by the Congress or Delegates' Conference in order to ensure that it is widely accepted in the organisation and embedded in its Constitution and structures.

A gender equality policy could contain the following areas:

- Mission
- Vision
- Objectives
- Women's Committees (or Gender Committees) - composition, role, function, relation to central structures, financing.
- Gender Desk or Department - staff, finances, role and function. Relation to Women's Committees and central structures.
- Annual action plans and budget.
- Collection of data.
- Gender Analysis.
- Participatory Gender Audits.
- Quota systems.
- Training activities (empowerment of women and joint activities for men and women. Integration of gender equality aspect in all training activities.)
- Organising.
- Collective Bargaining Agreements (secure gender balance and gender equality in agreements as well as special claims regarding maternity and paternity leave, childcare facilities, etc.).
- Lobbying and advocacy against sexual harassment and gender-based violence.
- Lobbying and advocacy for gender equality in society (education, health, property rights, housing, sexual and reproductive rights, etc.).

### *Active involvement of men in gender activities*

As mentioned before it is crucial to involve men in all gender activities. It is not just a "women's issue" and if real advance is to be made in the unions on gender equality, men must understand and support the idea of promoting gender equality. Otherwise it will remain an issue for discussion among women without much real impact on the organisation.

#### **MEN - THE OTHER HALF OF GENDER**

Often "gender" is incorrectly used to mean "women". Promoting gender equality has for the most part consisted of efforts focusing on empowering women economically and/or politically. However, because gender concerns the relationships between men and women more often than not, women's well-being cannot improve without including men.

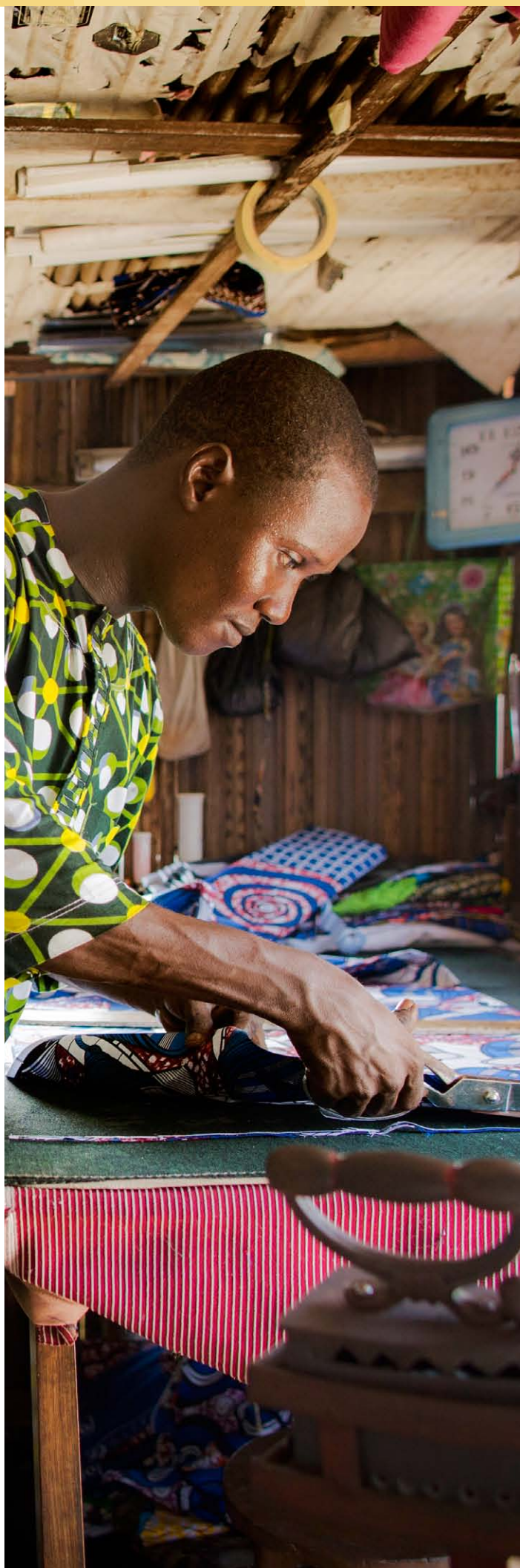
Failing to understand the social structures that govern the way men and women behave and interact, can undermine actions directed at women and render them ineffective.

## EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

It is always useful to gather good experiences and positive results and to share these with other trade unionists at local, national and regional meetings and encounters. Exchange of success stories and lessons learnt are crucial to enhance focus on these issues, to encourage others and to make advances.

We experience an incredible boom in the use of social media among trade unionists across the world. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other ever emerging sites are used on a daily basis especially among young people. Experiences, challenges, campaigns, demonstrations and success stories can thus easily be exchanged on these sites. They are incredible new tools for communication and exchange of experiences.

Use them in your efforts to achieve gender equality, to empower women, to denounce violations, to create networks and alliances across sectors, countries and regions



# How to strengthen gender equality in the trade unions?

*Day 1 · Morning*

*Day 2 · Afternoon*

It is now time to involve the participants actively in the discussions on how to secure gender equality in their trade unions through participatory activities (role play and group work) and follow up discussions. Through the discussions it should be made clear what the present situation is in their trade unions, what the problems and challenges are and how these could be solved or improved.

*Role Play:*

## CHANGING OF ATTITUDES

- **Objective:** To illustrate in a humorous way the attitudes of men and women in the unions.
- **Task:** To perform a role play on men's and women's reactions to a woman seeking election to a leadership position in the union.
- **Time:** Half an hour.

### ROLE PLAY

A strong and popular local trade union woman leader wants to run for one of the leading positions in the union. However, the male leaders are not very much in favor of her candidacy. They don't think a woman is suited to have such a high position and they are afraid of their own positions. She finds support among a lot of women, but there is also opposition among some of the women colleagues due to jealousy and lack of solidarity.

Select five to six of the participants to play the roles of the woman candidate, two male leaders of the union and women colleagues and make a role play of their reactions using some of your own experiences from your work in the union.

*Group work and discussion:*

## ROLE, FUNCTION AND IMPACT OF WOMEN'S OR GENDER COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS/DESKS

- **Objective:** The role, function and impact of Women's or Gender Committees and Departments/Desks.
- **Task:** Discuss your experiences with Women's Committees/Gender Committees and Departments/Desks in your organisation and the impact they have.
- **Time:** One hour for group work and one hour for reporting back from groups and discussions and summarising in plenary.

### DISCUSSION

Discuss the role, function and impact of Women's or Gender Committees and Gender/Women's Departments/Desks in your organisation.

Some of the questions which you may discuss are listed below as examples, but the most important is to discuss the real role and impact of the committees:

- Is it a Gender Committee with men participating also or just a Women's Committee?
- What has it achieved?
- Has it secured more focus on gender equality generally in the organisation?
- Is it taken into account?
- Is the Women's Committee and/or Department allocated funds for activities?
- What is their relationship to the leadership structures in the union?
- Do you have a Gender or Women's Desk/Department in the union?
- If so, what are their tasks and what is the relationship to other departments?
- Should any changes be made to make them more effective (Desks and Committees)?



### *Checklist for Mainstreaming*

- **The Organisation's Policy**

Does the organisation have a clear policy on all aspects of gender equality including a policy to promote the integration of women?

- **Use of funds**

Is adequate funding provided to carry out all aspects of gender policy?

- **Procedures, putting policy into practice**

How is the gender policy put into practice, does it really guide all of your activities?

- **Understanding needs**

Are there significant gaps in your membership? How do you consult members? Do your consultation practices help you to understand the needs of women?

- **Decision making**

When making decisions or setting priorities are women well represented? Do you routinely consider the impact of your activities on your women members?

- **Monitoring information**

Do you collect enough information about women and men to monitor activities by gender? Do you consult monitoring figures when making decisions? Do you regularly use this data to assess the effectiveness of your core activities?

- **Visibility**

Can a woman's voice be heard or seen in all your reports, speeches, meetings and publications?

- **Breaking down barriers:**

Do you fully understand the barriers, which deter women from joining, taking part, speaking out or competing for leadership in your union?

- **Leadership**

Are men in leadership active in promoting change? How do you ensure men develop an understanding of gender issues?

- **Women's structures**

Are women's structures and representatives of women members fully integrated into union decision-making structures?

- **Targeting**

Do you target your activities and services? Are women challenged to get more involved? Do you recognise that positive action may be necessary if you want just results?

*Group work and discussion:*

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND GENDER ANALYSIS IN THE TRADE UNIONS**

- **Objective:** More awareness of gender mainstreaming and gender analysis in unions as a process towards achieving real gender equality in the trade unions.
- **Task:** Discuss the present situation, the ideal situation, your dream and what is realistic?
- **Time:** One hour for group work and one hour for reporting back from groups, discussions in plenary and summarising.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Discuss the present situation, the ideal situation, your dream and what is realistic:

- What is the present situation regarding gender equality, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, etc. in your organisation?
- What would be the ideal situation in order to achieve real gender equality in your organisation?
- What is your dream vision of how it should be?
- What is realistic to obtain?

#### **POSITIVE ACTIONS IN THE UNION - ITUC WHAT COULD BE DONE?**

- Keep separate statistics for women and men in all positions, monitor progress towards equality
- Examine the election process to find out why women don't come forward or don't get elected, make changes such as mentoring and training to encourage progress
- Where progress is slow, change the rules, create new seats, set targets or quotas, support and train women to take positions
- Include women and men in negotiating teams, give them training
- Educate male leaders about gender issues and give them the skills and know how to make progress
- Develop policy to support positive action.

*Group work and discussion:*

### **ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN YOUR ORGANISATION**

- **Objective:** Preparation of an action plan for gender equality in your organisation.
- **Task:** Discuss what the content should be in a realistic action plan for gender equality in your organisation and how to secure that it can be implemented.
- **Time:** One hour for group work and one hour for reporting back from groups, discussions in plenary and summarising.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Discuss what the content should be in a realistic action plan for gender equality in your organisation and how to secure that it can be implemented.

Take i.a. the following into consideration:

- Secure that gender equality is taken seriously in the whole organisation
- Secure that gender mainstreaming and gender analyses are being implemented in the whole organisation
- Secure the support of leadership and all departments
- Secure the role and function of Women's/Gender Committees and Desk/Departments so that they have a real impact
- Secure empowerment of women
- Secure training
- Secure funding for activities
- Secure collection and analysis of data
- Secure information activities about gender equality and empowerment of women





### ***Improving gender balance: checklist of areas to cover in an action plan***

- Set out the union's goals for gender balance.
- Consider and discuss how gender balance can be achieved in the leadership and decision-making structures of the union and in collective bargaining teams.
- Collect, monitor and analyse data on gender representation at all levels of the organisation (federal, regional and sectoral) and in internal trade union structures.
- Discuss amongst union members and officers the barriers and solutions to improving gender balance, so that they can take ownership of and responsibility for implementing the action plan on gender balance.
- Ensure that quotas or other methods for gender balance are enforced and backed up by a range of other measures.
- Put in place leadership training and mentoring for women, and monitor the outcomes regularly.
- Increase the visibility of women in leadership and decision-making roles.
- Introduce measures on working time and the timing and organisation of meetings.
- Ensure that this union wide discussion is carried out with the objective of preparing a concrete action plan to actively promote gender balance in union structures.
- Develop a range of integrated strategies to promote gender balance. If quotas are introduced these should be introduced alongside other measures.
- Promote union visibility and senior commitment to gender equality. This is essential to the success of the action plan and to ensuring that women and men at all levels of trade unions have information and awareness about the benefits of and commitment to gender balanced decision-making.

# Cases from Trade Union Partners

*Relevant for session 1 and 2*

## **GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES**

A number of national trade union confederations like for example COSATU in South Africa, OTM in Mozambique, TUC Ghana, the SLLC in Sierra Leone, GEFONT and NTUC in Nepal and FNT in Nicaragua have adopted Gender Equality Policies. The adoption of such gender equality policies have been crucial to strengthen and promote the gender equality work to empower women, to promote gender mainstreaming and also to actively involve men in discussions on how to improve gender equality in the unions. Such gender equality policies should be promoted in all trade unions to secure that gender equality is genuinely incorporated in the organisations and that everybody is committed to its promotion.

## **GENDER DESK OR DEPARTMENT**

Quite some national trade union centers have established a Gender Desk or Department to work with gender equality and secure gender mainstreaming in the organisation. The fact that there is a full-time person responsible for gender equality with a budget allocation for activities from the organisation has indeed secured much more focus on gender equality. It also secures a place in the organisation on an equal footing with other desks or departments and coordination with these. It also means a direct link to the leading structures and not just dependency on the general secretary. The Gender Desk can also assist the Women's Committees just as it can secure that men are actively involved in activities.

## **PARTICIPATORY GENDER AUDITS (PGAS)**

ITUC-Africa has been carrying out training in PGAs for a number of their affiliated trade union organisations in Africa. This has been most successful because representatives from the unions have been trained in the implementation of PGAs on their own and it has initiated a process of collecting relevant gender data and discussions of status, problems, challenges and the way forward. It is, however, crucial that the trade unions actually follow up on it with regular PGAs and gender analyses and that

steps are taken to solve the problems encountered and promote gender equality. Such PGA training should be carried out much more widely.

## **ITUC CAMPAIGN**

Many national trade union confederations have adopted quota systems of 30%, 40% or even 50%, but it is difficult to implement them in reality. Although far more women are now in the leadership of unions, there is still a long way to go before reaching the average of 30%.

At its Congress in May 2014, ITUC launched a campaign to secure 30% representation of women in decision-making structures in 80% of all its affiliates and a 5% increase of women members by 2018. So this campaign adopted by ITUC affiliated national trade union centers across the world concerns all of us and should be followed by all affiliates. This can be used as a tool to convince leadership in your organisation of the need to focus on gender equality.

Some national trade union centers have already adopted gender balance in the leadership so that the positions of General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary as well as President and Vice-President must be held by a man and a woman.

## **TUNISIA**

In the national trade union center UGTT, the women have proposed the setting up of a national "Observatory" to collect all relevant data regarding gender in the unions and at the labour market. It is hoped that the Observatory will be accepted by leadership and launched in 2016 with the necessary finances and staff. The data would provide the basis for much more comprehensive gender analysis, discussions of problems and challenges and the promotion of gender equality.



#### **GEFONT, GENERAL FEDERATION OF NEPALESE TRADE UNIONS**

Mrs. Bhumikala Balal, 32 years, of the Western part of Nepal worked together with her husband at a Mohini industry site. Her husband was extremely restrictive, did not allow her to participate in meetings or be together with other people and had no respect for her at home. However, Mrs. Balal decided to join the union and became a member of the trade union committee at the site. Through training she gained self-confidence and awareness of her rights. She even got her husband to join the union. Her husband has now changed his behavior and is full of admiration and respect for his wife. He is also helping her in every way at home. Mrs. Bhumikala Balal is now a successful President of the zonal youth committee. Joining the union has changed her life.

#### **PWF, PAKISTAN WORKERS' FEDERATION**

Ms. Azra Gul joined All Pakistan Federation of Labor (APFOL) in 1999 as a young member. She completed various trade union courses including training of trainers. As a result she has conducted a number of workshops and follow up seminars for women. Due to her active participation she got the main position as regional Vice Chairperson in PWF, which was established after a merger of 3 national centers. After recent training on the Local Government Act, she is now providing training on gender equality to councilors. She is working hard to change attitudes towards women and to secure gender equality in the PWF. Another active woman in the PWF, Ms. Aroma Shehzad took after her training the initiative to organise domestic workers. After a long struggle she has been able to launch the Domestic Women Workers' Union which is now registered as the first union in Pakistan for domestic workers. Ms. Shehzad is the President of the union and struggling hard to promote gender equality in the trade unions in Pakistan.

# How do we promote gender equality in the workplace?

Day 2 · Afternoon

## Introduction: ORGANISING

Organising workers and securing their right to freedom of association, to affiliate to a trade union of their own choice, to negotiate collective agreements and to secure decent work for all according to the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the Decent Work Agenda remains the most important task of trade unions across the world.

However, we see a global trend of trade unions losing members in the formal sectors and young workers turning away from the unions. In many countries trade unions only represent a small percentage of workers and in far too many places trade unions are still persecuted or even forbidden. There are still huge challenges for the unions to try to change these trends and to secure that they are representative and as a social partner can influence social, economic and political developments. Informalisation of work and the increasing number of migrant workers are other enormous challenges for the unions.

As trade unions across the world are losing members in the formal sectors, more and more unions are turning to the informal economy to organise informal economy workers and economic units, thus giving them voice and representation and also securing more representativeness and a stronger voice in social dialogue for the unions. Since women are disproportionately represented in the informal economy, more women are also becoming part of the trade union family. This underlines the need to secure fair representation of women in the unions and more focus on gender equality.

## Introduction: LABOUR MARKET

Women are still predominant in lower paid and less recognised jobs especially in the social sectors. Women are also predominant in contract, home-based and part-time jobs, in value chains as well as in hazardous and vulnerable jobs in export-processing zones, all areas where it is also difficult to organise them.

Women are more affected by unemployment, underemployment, poverty, vulnerability and informality than men in most countries. Labour market policies and employment patterns should be analysed by sex, and different needs of various social groups should be specifically addressed in the formulation of employment policies and regulations, which should contribute to reducing gender gaps rather than widening them.

Trade unions should continue their efforts to get a minimum living wage for all.

Women face higher barriers than men in access to vocational education and training, especially in non-traditional occupations. Gender stereotypes dictating women's and men's skills and occupations tend to persist, causing occupational segregation in various labour markets.

Providing equal opportunities for women and men in access to relevant and quality education, vocational training, apprenticeships and workplace learning is key to overcome gender gaps in employment. Encouraging men to take up skills for occupations that are traditionally considered "feminine" also forms a part of the strategy.

Ensuring expansive access to gender responsive career counselling and employment services is important to respond to the needs of various social groups that are most affected by unemployment and underemployment.

### ***Main challenges regarding gender equality in the labour market***

- Organising, organising, organising... and especially among women and young people including in the informal economy in order to make unions more representative and have a stronger voice in social dialogue
- Lack of gender balance among shop stewards / workers' representatives
- Lack of involvement of women workers in the preparation and negotiations of CBAs
- Lack of focus on women's specific issues in CBAs
- The need for more CBAs and increased bipartite and tripartite social dialogue
- Lack of equal pay for equal work among men and women
- Firing of pregnant women
- Lack of respect of maternity protection
- Lack of respect for the needs of lactating mothers
- Lack of equal career path opportunities for men and women
- Lack of equal training opportunities for men and women
- Sexual harassment and gender-based violence
- More focus on occupational health and safety and securing of a safe and healthy working environment
- HIV/AIDS
- Lack of child care facilities
- Lack of data as a basis for gender equality analysis

### ***Introduction:*** **FORMAL SECTORS**

In order to promote gender equality in the formal sectors, trade unions should secure more focus on:

- Having more women as shop stewards or workers' representatives
- Continue to work to secure equal pay for equal work
- Equal involvement of women and men when preparing and negotiating collective bargaining agreements (CBAs)
- CBAs which reflect the needs and priorities of both women and men
- Equal treatment and opportunities
- Equal access to career paths
- Equal access to training
- Childcare facilities at the workplaces
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) which is a crucial area where there are different needs and priorities for men and women for example with regard to night and shift work, noise, chemicals, heavy loads, working environment, special conditions for pregnant or lactant women, etc.

- Information about HIV/AIDS (which could be part of the OHS activities)
- Gender-based violence and harassment at the workplaces

As mentioned above, it is an absolute prerequisite to have gender-disaggregated data if you have to make any gender-based analysis on the issues and achieve any results.

In this chapter we will concentrate on *gender equality with regard to shop stewards or workers' representatives and collective bargaining agreements, CBAs.*

### *Introduction:*

#### **WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES**

Generally, where statistics are available, it has been assessed that there are far too few women shop stewards or workers' representatives even when the workplace has a majority of women. There may be many reasons for this. Women have less knowledge of trade union work, due to their many tasks at home it is difficult to find the time for it, they lack the courage and confidence to stand for election, they lack training, women have a tendency to vote for a man, fear of having to negotiate with management, etc.

Trade unions should analyse what the causes are and what could be done to secure that more women commit themselves to represent their fellow workers. Training in basic trade union rights and negotiations should be offered to women who have the will and potential to represent others.

It must also be mentioned that many trade union activities including meetings and bargaining sessions have a chronic inherent problem of "gender blindness" i.e. do not take into account the special needs of women including pregnant and nursing women. Meetings often take place at odd hours and/or outside the workplace where it is difficult for women to attend if they for example have to take care of many tasks at home and of their children or for cultural or security reasons.

### *Introduction:*

#### **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS (CBAs)**

Far too often, CBAs are prepared and negotiated by men since there is a clear majority of men among shop stewards and negotiators. Women might not get properly involved in the preparation process. The CBAs of course benefit both men and women, but it often means that women's specific problems and needs are not taken properly into consideration in CBAs.

One of the ways to remedy this is of course to secure that more women become shop stewards and are actively involved in negotiations during the whole process. But it is also a matter of accepting that men and women workers have different problems and needs and that there must be genuine focus on securing

gender balance in CBAs. Women must also be listened to and their needs taken into consideration. Issues such as paid maternity leave and childcare facilities should be top priorities.

Tools could also be developed to assist companies in the development of non-discrimination and equal opportunities policies and practices for its men and women employees as part of responsible business practices.

### *Group work and discussion:*

#### **GENDER BALANCE AMONG SHOP STEWARDS AND IN CBAs**

- **Objective:** Secure more women shop stewards and gender equality in negotiating teams and in CBAs.
- **Task:** Discuss how to secure more women shop stewards and gender equality in negotiating teams and in CBAs.
- **Time:** One hour and a half for group work and one hour for reporting back from groups, discussions in plenary and summarising.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Discuss how to secure more women shop stewards and gender equality in negotiating teams and in CBAs

Discuss i.a. the following issues:

- What are the reasons why so few women become shop stewards?
- What could be done to encourage more women to become shop stewards?
- Do men accept a woman as shop steward?
- Elaboration of an action plan to secure that more women become workers' representatives (describe the various steps needed)
- How do you prepare your negotiation process and claims?
- How do you secure active involvement of all workers in the preparation and negotiation process - both men and women?
- How do you establish your claims for the negotiations?
- How do you prioritise them?
- How do you secure that both men's and women's points of view and needs are taken into consideration?
- How could this process be improved?



## ***Gender mainstreaming and collective bargaining checklist***

*ILO*

- Organise a gender equality training programme for existing, potential and future male and female negotiators
- Organise a meeting on equality before the collective bargaining committee meets
- Introduce a gender mainstreaming approach so that an equality dimension can be integrated into collective bargaining and so that priorities for action concerning gender equality can be established and discussed
- Develop methods for evaluating and following up on the implementation of decisions and agreements regarding gender equality through collective bargaining
- Put in place a system for monitoring the numbers of women and men on collective bargaining teams
- Create special seats for women on collective bargaining teams or set targets to achieve the representation of women by a certain date; this should be proportional to the representation of women and men in the industry or sector
- Ensure that where there is a male representative his alternate is a woman. This can be particularly useful in providing women with experience to participate on the collective bargaining team



## How do we promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the informal economy?

*Day 3 · Morning*

*Introduction:*

### **THE INFORMAL ECONOMY**

The informal economy has in reality always been there, but the number of people having to rely on employment in the informal economy has increased dramatically over the last decades due to the failed structural adjustment programmes, the failure of the trickle-down economic policies, the lack of jobs in the formal sectors and lack of macroeconomic policies to deal with skills development and the creation of decent jobs. It is today estimated that almost half of the working population in the world, some 2.5 billion people, have to find some kind of work in the informal economy. The large majority has to be found in developing countries. Workers who undertake economic activities in the informal economy do not do so by choice. Rather, for most this is a survival strategy they adopt because there are no decent jobs available.

Workers in the informal economy are subject to many decent work deficits. Most of them work under most precarious and insecure conditions without rights, recognition, and social protection. Women and youth are disproportionately represented in the informal economy. The scope of informal employment is huge and includes informal employees in informal enterprises, own-account workers, micro and small enterprises as well as informal employees in the formal private and public sectors. It furthermore includes many workers in sub-contracting and supply chains. Although more and more associations are being formed and trade unions are embarking on a still larger scale of organising them, the vast majority of informal workers are not organised and, thus, have no voice or representation.





### *Introduction:*

## **ORGANISING AND SERVICING THE INFORMAL ECONOMY**

Below are some recommendations for organising the informal economy, building their capacity and servicing their members from discussions and lessons learnt from trade union partners:

- Organise the IE in unions – along sectors
- Build capacity of the IE unions/associations so that they become democratic, transparent and membership-based organisations with a trade union culture and members knowing their rights and responsibilities
- Secure empowerment of women and access to women in leadership positions and leading structures
- Secure that IE pay membership fees to the union and the national centre
- Integrate the IE unions/associations into the national trade union centres and secure that they have representation in leading structures
- Build union structures to deal with the IE and revise the constitutions to incorporate IE unions/associations – maybe as an umbrella organisation covering all IE unions/associations
- Develop relevant services for IE members to meet their needs and demands. Cooperation with external experts on entrepreneurial development (or with employers). Lobbying for such public services for the IE. IE members must be willing to pay for such services.
- Lobby for social protection for IE workers and economic units
- Lobby for short-term adult vocational training courses for the IE
- Lobby for better access to micro-credits at more favorable terms
- Lobby for the establishment of a national tripartite forum to discuss the IE and promote its formalisation through a number of concrete policies and programmes – to follow up on the ILO Recommendation

*Introduction:***ILO RECOMMENDATION 204 ON  
TRANSITION FROM THE INFORMAL  
TO THE FORMAL ECONOMY**

In June 2015 the first ever ILO instrument to tackle the informal economy, ILO Recommendation 204 on transition from the informal to the formal economy, was adopted. The Recommendation stresses the need to design and implement laws and regulations, policies and other measures aiming to facilitate the transition to the formal economy. Member states need to ensure that an integrated policy framework is integrated in tripartite social dialogue with trade unions and employers' organisations which i.a. addresses:

- Promotion of strategies for sustainable development, poverty eradication and inclusive growth, and the generation of decent jobs in the formal economy
- Promotion of a conducive business and investment environment
- Respect for and promotion and realisation of the fundamental principles and rights at work
- Promotion of equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence at the workplace
- Promotion of entrepreneurship and access to business services
- Access to education, life-long learning and skills development

- Establishment of social protection floors and extension of social security coverage, including maternity leave and childcare facilities
- Effective occupational safety and health policies and efficient labour inspections
- Income security, including appropriately designed minimum wage policies

The Recommendation is indeed a great step. But it is the follow up by governments in social dialogue with trade unions and employers' organisations, which is crucial to secure that coherent and integrated strategies across a broad range of policy areas are developed and concrete action is taken. And it is up to trade unions to push governments and employers to establish a national forum where such policies can be developed. It could indeed mark the beginning of new well-functioning labour markets that secure decent work and sustainable development.

In an attempt to ensure the follow up, a Frontline publication is being prepared by the ITUC with support from the LO/FTF Council, exemplifying how the ILO Recommendation 204 can be implemented nationally.



*Introduction:***FOCUS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY**

Trade unions should continue to organise workers in all kinds of employment in the informal economy and lobby for their recognition, rights and improvement of conditions. Support should be given to develop their organisations to become democratic, transparent and membership-based organisations. Women should be encouraged and trained to be actively involved in the unions and to be part of decision-making structures. Support should be given to achieve coverage by the labour law and decent working conditions, including CBAs where possible. Lobbying should be carried out for coverage of social protection with specific focus on health care coverage and maternity protection. Support should also be given to develop small economic units and the social economy including networks and cooperatives.

In the tripartite negotiations on transition from the informal to the formal economy, which will hopefully be embarked upon in the various developing countries, trade unions should secure focus on gender equality and empowerment of women. This could be specifically with regard to:

- Social protection including maternity leave and childcare facilities
- Equal access to training opportunities
- Better and equal access to micro-credits and loans
- Removal of bureaucratic barriers to start or expand small businesses/cooperatives
- Provision of services to develop economic units

*Group work and discussion:***ACTION PLAN TO SECURE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN TRIPARTITE SOCIAL DIALOGUE ON TRANSITION FROM THE INFORMAL TO THE FORMAL ECONOMY**

- **Objective:** Elaboration of action plan to secure that gender equality and women's empowerment are taken into consideration in tripartite social dialogue on transition from the informal to the formal economy.
- **Task:** Discussion and elaboration of action plan.
- **Time:** One hour and a half for group work and one hour and a half for reporting from group work, discussions in plenary and summarising.

**DISCUSSION**

Discussion and elaboration of action plan to secure that gender equality and women's empowerment are taken into consideration in tripartite social dialogue on transition from the informal to the formal economy.

Discuss i.a. the following issues:

- How do you involve both men and women in the informal economy unions when establishing your priorities for tripartite social dialogue on transition from the informal to the formal economy?
- How do you secure that the points of view and needs of both men and women are taken into account?
- How do you prioritise?
- How do you secure the involvement of women in negotiating teams?
- How do you prepare your arguments for specific needs of women workers in the informal economy?
- How do you collect data as basis for your arguments?
- How do you secure information about results obtained among informal economy workers?

# Cases from Trade Union Partners

*Relevant for session 3 and 4*

## **MATERNITY LEAVE**

Only 30 countries have ratified the ILO Convention 183 on Maternity Protection. Across the world trade unions are lobbying for better maternity leave and for the ratification of the ILO Convention 183. Legislation has been passed in a number of countries securing usually between 60 and 120 days maternity leave. A number of unions have also included it in the collective bargaining and have obtained better and longer maternity leave at workplaces. In many countries, trade unions are now requiring maternity protection for informal economy workers as well. Some unions have also started lobbying for paternity leave.

## **CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, MYANMAR**

In January 2015, two women workers at the Joint Venture Company (Myanmar Yansi), who had worked in the company for two years, were dismissed because it was discovered during a medical checkup that they were pregnant. However, the Women's Committee of the trade union intervened and managed to get them reinstated. After negotiations with the employers, the Women's Committee also succeeded in getting a child care facility established at the company.

## **PLATFORMS FOR WOMEN TRADE UNIONISTS**

In Honduras and in Nepal where cooperation has been initiated between the three main national centers, Platforms for Women Trade Unionists have also been established in order to exchange experiences, identify objectives and increase knowledge of gender equality. It has contributed to strengthening the women's networks and to put more focus on their struggle for equality in their centers and at the workplaces.

## **PAKISTAN WORKERS FEDERATION**

Sister Asima Shaheen, who had been trained as a trade union trainer, was a victim of sexual harassment at her workplace. Her complaints to the police did not bring any results or changes. She did not want to accept the continuous and widespread sexual harassment taking place at the workplaces. After receiving training on the Sexual Harassment Act from 2010, she made an action plan on sexual harassment and she started voluntarily conducting awareness sessions in schools, colleges and hospitals on decent work and sexual harassment. In Pakistan it is indeed a sensitive issue, but with her courage and boldness Sister Asima succeeded in establishing numerous committees against sexual harassment as provided by the Act. It just proves that it is worthwhile taking up the struggle.



# How can trade unions promote gender equality and women's empowerment in society?

Day 3 · Afternoon



## Main Focus Areas

- Respect for basic human rights
- Equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men
- Generally improved living conditions and better and equal access to education, health, employment and lodging
- Promotion of women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels
- Encourage and support women to stand for election for political seats at all levels
- Guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights
- Investment in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens
- Guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Paid maternity leave for women and childcare facilities to secure real equality in the long term
- Combat abuse, sexual harassment and gender-based violence as well as trafficking
- Mainstreaming of gender equality in all legislation

## Introduction:

### MAIN FOCUS AREAS

Empowerment of women, gender equality and securing equal treatment, rights and opportunities are prerequisites for poverty reduction, democracy and sustainable development. It is therefore crucial that trade unions are indeed actively involved in securing gender equality and empowerment of women not only in the unions and at the workplaces, but in society in general. They should be pro-active regarding these issues in debates, policy formulation, negotiations, lobbying, advocacy and campaigns at national and international levels so that trade unions take a clear position and can increase their visibility in the struggle for equal rights. Far too often we have experienced that unions do not prioritise these issues and leave the scene to NGOs.

## Introduction:

### THE NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

In September 2015, the new development agenda, "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" was adopted at the UN. The aim is before 2030 to eradicate extreme poverty, promote prosperity and people's well-being, while protecting the environment. The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build on the outcome of the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which helped more than 700 million people to escape poverty over the past 15 years.

The broader SDGs go much further than the MDGs, addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people. Highlighting poverty eradication as the overarching goal of the new SDGs, they fully integrate the

**THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS,  
GOAL 5: ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND  
EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS**

- 5.1** End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
  - 5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
  - 5.3** Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
  - 5.4** Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
  - 5.5** Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- 5.6** Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
  - 5.a** Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
  - 5.b** Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
  - 5.c** Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and calls for action by all countries. The 17 sustainable goals and 169 targets aim at tackling systemic barriers to sustainable development, such as *inequality*, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, inadequate infrastructure, inequality between rich and poor countries and within countries, lack of employment and decent jobs. In the coming year negotiations will decide how to achieve and measure the 17 goals.

**DECENT WORK AS A DRIVER  
OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The vision of decent work as a driver of sustainable development runs across the whole agenda, with a specific goal to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and reproductive employment and decent work for all" (goal 8).

The strong focus on decent work marks a major breakthrough for the world of work. Together with the

new ILO Recommendation on transition from the informal to the formal economy, it must be expected that it can push governments, employers and trade unions to find common strategies and policies to put employment and decent work on the agenda as key issues to improve the conditions of millions of workers across the globe, and contribute to poverty alleviation, social justice and sustainable development.

**GENDER EQUALITY**

Achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls is another crucial goal in the new SDGs (Goal 5) and should certainly be part of the priorities of trade unions.



*Group work and discussion:*

### **GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY**

- **Objective:** Active involvement of trade unions in securing gender equality and empowerment of women in society.
- **Task:** Discussion of status and perspectives for trade unions' involvement.
- **Time:** One hour for group work and one hour for reporting from group work, discussions in plenary and summarising.

### **DISCUSSION**

Discussion of status and perspectives for trade unions' active involvement in securing gender equality and empowerment of women in society.

Points for discussion:

- What is your trade union presently doing to secure gender equality and women's empowerment in society?
- Are they involved in any negotiations at national or international level?
- Do they have a clear policy?
- Do they do any lobbying, advocacy or campaigns?
- How could this be changed?
- What should be the priorities to focus on and how could it be done?



# Cases from Trade Union Partners

*Relevant for session 5*

## **TUC, GHANA**

The Trades Union Congress in Ghana is actively involved in tripartite and bipartite negotiations at all levels, and TUC secures that there is gender balance in the trade union delegations. At national level, they have played a crucial role to promote gender equality and have been involved in the preparation of the Domestic Violence Act, the review of the Constitution, the Spousal Bill and the current draft Affirmative Action Bill. Furthermore, TUC makes inputs and recommendations to the discussions of the annual national budget, also with a gender equality perspective. The Gender Desk is actively involved in assessing the gender perspective in legislation and agreements.

## **TUNISIA**

In Tunisia, gender equality is included in the new Constitution after pressure from the national trade union confederation UGTT. UGTT is part of the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015 for their decisive contribution to the building of a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution of 2011.

## **NICARAGUA**

The reconciliation government which came into power in 2007 has adopted various laws to promote gender equality and empowerment of women such as the Law on Equality of Rights and Opportunities, the Family Law and a Law against gender-based violence. In the Parliament, more than 50% of the Parliamentarians are women. And many of the women Parliamentarians are coming from the trade unions. Programmes with training and micro-credits to women in the informal economy have been initiated to promote their small businesses. According to the World Economic Forum, Nicaragua is in the 5th place worldwide regarding promotion of gender equality.

## **BENIN, NATIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

Many countries are now lobbying to secure social protection for all workers including workers in the informal economy. In Benin the national trade union center, UNSTB, has been lobbying hard for years to have a national health care coverage. The RAMU, the national health care scheme, was introduced in 2011. The aim is to secure that every citizen in Benin has access to a minimum package of quality health care. It is an insurance scheme to which people must subscribe and pay a monthly contribution. The system is free for the poorest people.

## **MOZAMBIQUE**

The national trade union confederation, OTM, was against a controversial proposal concerning forced marriage without the consent of the woman in case of rape in the draft Penal Code. They initiated a mass campaign against the proposal together with a number of civil society organisations, the Women's Forum, lawyers and journalists. A march to the Parliament culminated with the delivery of their message to the President of the Parliament. As a result, the article in question was removed from the new Penal Law.

## **KENYA**

The Central Organization of Trade Unions in Kenya, COTU, had substantial influence on the elaboration of the new Bill of Rights in 2010. The women in COTU are trying hard to influence Parliamentarians to focus on women's issues and gender equality for example regarding maternity leave.



# Proposal for partner organisations

## *Local adaptation of the training programmes*

As it has been proposed by all the partner organisations who have participated in the workshops on gender equality, carried out in a number of countries by the LO/FTF Council, it is suggested that your trade union organisation includes the following in the training materials in order to adapt them to your own reality and the conditions in your organisation and country:

### **GENDER DATA FROM YOUR OWN TRADE UNION AS FOR EXAMPLE:**

- Gender equality policy
- Gender mainstreaming and gender analysis carried out
- Gender Department
- Women's Committees
- Quota systems
- Number of men and women in leadership positions, etc.
- Problems and perspectives

### **DATA FROM THE LABOUR MARKET ON GENDER EQUALITY:**

- Men and women in employment
- Salaries
- CBAs
- Sexual harassment and gender-based violence
- The informal economy
- Main barriers and problems

### **DATA FROM SOCIETY I.A.:**

- Men and women in leading positions in Parliament, municipalities, etc-
- Legislation on gender equality - is it applied in reality?

For more assistance or support contact the LO/FTF Council's regional coordinators or the SROs (sub-regional offices) in Asia, Central America, West Africa, East Africa or Tunisia.

# References

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

DANIDA: Gender Equality Toolbox.

ETUC: From Membership to Leadership: Advancing women in trade unions. A Resource Guide.

ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-2015

ILO: Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in the Employment Sector 2010-2015.

ILO: A Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators.

ILO: Making the Strongest Links. A practical guide to mainstreaming gender analysis in value chain development.

ILO Recommendation 204 on transition from the informal to the formal economy.

ITUC: Achieving Gender Equality: A Trade Union Manual.

ITUC: Action Programme on achieving gender equality in trade unions.

ITUC-Africa: Proceedings of the workshop on gender mainstreaming in Lomé, Togo, Nov. 2010.

LO, Denmark: Gender Audit.

LO/FTF Council: Training of Trainers Manuals.

LO/FTF Council: Paving the Way for transition from the informal to the formal economy.

Marianne Bruun, 3F, Denmark: A Gender Mainstreaming Workshop in the regional office of 3F in Southern Africa.

UN: Transforming Our World. Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

UNDP: Gender in Development Programmes. Learning & Information Package.

***“We have come a long way on the road to gender equality, but a lot still needs to be done – in the trade unions, at the workplaces and in society in general. As trade unionists we have a crucial role to play to secure global action to achieve gender equality and to ensure that the new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its specific focus on gender equality and decent work for all can be achieved.”***

LIZETTE RISGAARD AND BENTE SORGENFREY,  
CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON  
OF THE LO/FTF COUNCIL

