

Newsletter 4 - January 2011

Decisions for Life boost for female trade unionists in participating countries

The Decisions for Life-project appeals to young working women in all participating countries. Female trade union officials and activists on both union and confederation levels consider the project as an opportunity to strengthen their positions. Moreover they have seen fit to promote the project in such a way that it became part of mainstream trade union policies in South Africa, Brazil and Indonesia. The project, they say, gives them a chance to put working women's problems and needs centre stage, triggering new trade union policies and leading to solutions...

International Women's Day, 8 March 2010 – Decisions for Life events in Azerbaijan, Belarus, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, South Africa, Ukraine and Zimbabwe



Azerbaijan: 360 women attended a theatre performance organised by AHIK

"DFL aims and ideas are clear and useful. They definitely help to boost our self-esteem. However, it is not a remedy in itself. How and whether we are going to use this in our life depends on our decisiveness and eagerness." says Ainur Sultanova, manager in 'Le Meridien' hotel [>> more](#)

>> Read also [Exploitation of Azeri women will continue and at the 8th of March](#) (Эксплуатация азербайджанских женщин продолжится и восьмого марта), Vesti.az



Belarus: Congratulating self-employed young women

BKDP congratulated self-employed young women in Vitebsk region, Minsk and Minsk region, Brest region, Mogilev and Gomel region. 2,000 postcards – which included a poem about family and work, and women being active in the union - were distributed among the women. [>> more](#)



India: Events in Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore

The campaign team in [Bangalore](#) organised an informational meeting for women workers in the service sector about women's rights at work, Government supported helpline, domestic violence, and human trafficking. The team in [Hyderabad](#) held a panel discussion 'Women's role in today's workforce' with main topics work/life balance, stress management, men's participation in parenting and raising awareness about women workers rights. The team in [Delhi](#) participated with information stalls in an event held by AIRF¹ and in a women's empowerment module held by the NRMU². The team also co-organised a Sexual Harassment Forum together with ITF³ and NRMU. [>> more](#)

>> Read also [International Women's Day 2010: Equal rights, equal opportunities: Progress for all, Technopark Today](#)

>> Press release on [DNA India](#)



Indonesia: Promotion action in the center of Jakarta

When Zulfa Failasulfa, a 23-year-old account executive was asked how she thinks equality between women and men in the workplace can be improved, she said: "By giving more chances and trust to women who can work as strong as men. There are no differences between men and women except their sex. Their brain, their power are equal. So give them the support and encourage them and women will prove the can." [>> more](#)

¹ All India Railway Men's Federation

² National Railways Men's Union

³ International Transport Workers' Federation



[>> more](#)

Kazakhstan: Joint event by CFTUK and FPRK

The two Kazakh Federations, CFTUK and FPRK, together with WIF journalists and gender-related NGO representatives, held a joint roundtable in Almaty. The campaign team in CFTUK also conducted a [survey](#) in Almaty, Kostanai, Karaganda, Shymkent and Taraz where 530 young women were interviewed.



South Africa: 'Women to women dialogues' at Wits University

The campaign team set up quick conversations with young women workers and students on the Wits University campus, young women students who are either already engaged in part-time employment in the service sector or who are preparing to enter the labour market. Safety and security are of particular concern for them: "It is dangerous using public transport returning to our homes after work or lectures perhaps being part of this campaign can help us find solutions to this difficulty".

Other events included lunch time celebrations at Shopping Malls and an "open day" discussion for young women workers organized by SACCAWU on the 13 March. [>> More](#)

[>> SACCAWU press release](#)



Ukraine: Photo contest by PIT.Ua and roundtable by KVPU

PIT.Ua held an online [photo contest](#)⁴ 'Miss-PIT.Ua 2010'. The women had to fill in and submit together with their photos a labour-related questionnaire.

KVPU held a roundtable involving KVPU Women structures and WIF journalists to support the lobbying for ratification of ILO Convention 183 on Maternity Protection. [>> more](#)

[>> PIT.Ua press release](#)



Zimbabwe: More than 2,000 people participated in social service activities

ZCTU held [10 public manifestations](#) with various social service set-ups: clean-up work at shopping malls, markets, orphanage homes; visiting hospitals and clean-up, marches, speeches and entertainment: drama, songs, poems, music, and food for visitors. Also the ZCTU General Secretary, Wellington Chibembe and other ZCTU-high ranking officials participated in the activities, and notably clean-up work. 1500 DFL-T-shirts were printed and handed out. This mobilization drive was a big success.

In the aftermath of celebrations, women from the Western region demanded 8 March to be declared as a holiday and signed a petition. For this demand, the petition will be adopted by the union's General Council and will be sent to the Government. [>>more](#)



ITUC: A new report details gender inequalities in child rearing and household tasks

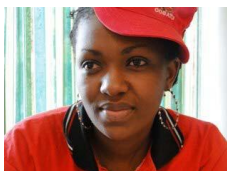
The [report](#), released by the ITUC on International Women's Day, 8 March, is entitled "Decisions for Work: An Examination of the Factors Influencing Women's Decisions for Work" and is based on an internet survey from 43 countries and analysis of legislation in an initial group of seven countries under the ITUC's "Decisions for Life" project. [>>more](#)



Maputo, Mozambique: Regional meeting, 22-26 March 2010

Representatives of the trade union and web teams from Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Brazil met to fine tune their campaign plans for 2010-2011, to receive training on commutation and campaign strategies, and to share experiences. [>>more](#)

⁴ Russian: <http://pit.org.ua/ArticleSection/News/NotableNews/4917.aspx>



“The project serves as a platform where young girls can fall back on. And it puts them centre stage within the union. As a recruiting tool it works much better than the old union approach. A little briefing on Decisions for Life, a project ‘made for you’ is enough to pave the way for drawing in new members. But maybe more important are the liberating effects the project has on young working women who had been subjected to sexual harassment. An open discussion in groups brings out the truth that it happens to everyone. They tell about the so called sugar daddies who seduced them, usually older men, uncles, friends of the family. They now openly talk about the risk of HIV/AIDS, about how to make a better life for themselves. Before Decisions for Life they told themselves: leave it. But Decisions for Life managed to break open this secretiveness. Now girls self confidently say: Enough is enough. What is it to be? Fall down or stand up?” [Tabisa Sigaba](#) was a young woman, shop steward in SACCAWU, who passed away suddenly because of a tragic accident. [>>Read the interviews](#)



Jakarta, Indonesia: Regional meeting, 3-5 May 2010

Representatives of the trade union and web teams from India and Indonesia met to fine tune their campaign plans for 2010-2011, to receive training on communication and campaign strategies, and to share experiences. [>>more](#)



“Decisions for Life has helped us in two ways. First of all the position of our Equality Committee at the confederation level has improved. Before we were not consulted in matters of policy. But now we are making policies. Decisions for Life was used to achieve this better position. Also the project issues were used in our recruitment drive. From April 2009 till April 2010 our confederation grew with approximately 50,000 new members. All combined we now have 511,000 members, 35 per cent of which are women. Decisions for Life helped to increase awareness of unions amongst our target group. These are young working women who are mostly employed temporarily. They don’t know their labour rights, but are very keen on making a career for themselves.” Sulistri Afrileston, Deputy president of KSBSI [>> Read the interviews](#)



Angola: We need to involve more women in the labour movement

UNTA-CS is organising campaign activities bringing together young women and women from the UNTA Women’s Committee, CNMS⁵. In September 2010, a roundtable ‘Angolan Youth Workers - Opportunities and Challenges in the Labour Market’ was organised to acquaint young women about their responsibilities, opportunities and challenges in the labour market. The event also included several cultural activities, including a music contest, a young women’s football match, poetry, and dance.

“I feel inspired to carry out new activities in a systematic way. In August, October and December 2009 we held seminars to educate women workers on Decisions for Life-issues. This culminated in an agreement within the union leadership to direct efforts towards young working women, with the dual aims of raising their awareness and to recruit them as trade union members. Luzia Tungaica, vice-president of the CNMS. [>>more](#)

[>> Read also the press release](#)⁶

[>> More DFL news in Angola](#)

⁵ Comité Nacional da Mulher Sindicalizada

⁶ Portuguese: http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/18/0/lancada_campanha_de_incentivo_a_empregos_decentes_as_mulheres



South Africa: Young women bringing new life into the trade union movement

'The young women participating in this Campaign are defining the Decisions for Life as a means of ensuring that unions assist young women in making their dreams a reality. As part of the Campaign we have established coordinating teams made up of young women worker leaders and relatively older gender activists. The older activists have defined their role as *mentors*, mentors who can reflect on their own private and public challenges of being part of the trade union but mentors who listen and are respectful of the experiences of younger women – giving advice where necessary but also learning for the younger activists. The Campaign Coordinating team meetings are important as spaces for "role-modeling" approaches to working together across federations, across age differences, across different life experiences – in a respectful and empowering way.', [LRS Bargaining Monitor, April 2010, page 9](#)

SACCAWU: Tapping into the existing network – do not reinvent the wheel

'To mainstream the campaign, we integrated the campaign into the existing processes and policies in place, for example: electing women, young workers and casuals as shopstewards; developing a youth programme and developing a second layer of leadership.(...).To get young women actively involved in the campaign and the union, we used our existing and extensive network (gender structures, company shopsteward councils, workplaces, gender/company co-ordinators, gender activists) to spread the word, and also to appoint/elect/select young women who could lead the campaign in their respective area of influence, for example in the company or in the SACCAWU region or local.', [Organizing Young Workers, SACCAWU website](#)

[>> Read SACCAWU's DFL report](#)

[>> Read SACCAWU's Gender Conference Declaration](#)

[>> More DFL news in South Africa](#)



Zambia: Offering a real platform for young women to express themselves

'Participants appreciated the special and unique focus the project has on young women by allowing them to take charge of the project as opposed to many other projects around that just "use" them as "guinea pigs" (their own words!!) without any real impact on their lives; or better still offering a real platform for them to express themselves.' Chimpampwe Silvia M, UNI/DFL Country Coordinator

[>> More DFL news in Zambia](#)



Mozambique: Increase in women memberships

OTM and 5 UNI affiliates, SINECOSSE, SINTAC, SNEB, SINTESP, SINTIQUIAF, are actively involved in campaign activities, holding seminars on capacity-building for young women, and on the topics: women's workers rights, HIV/AIDS and violence against women. Through their recruitment activities they managed to organise 516 new young women members.

[>>More DFL news in Mozambique](#)



Zimbabwe: Sexual harassment and domestic violence on the spotlight

[Sexual harassment](#) and [domestic violence](#) are two of the most important issues addressed by the DFL campaign in Zimbabwe. To support its activities on these topics, the campaign team has developed special brochures, has conducted a special research on domestic violence and has created a directory of professional counseling services. The results of the research will be used to educate young women about domestic violence and how to protect themselves by the Domestic Violence Act. A campaign

team consisting of 10 young women has conducted workplace visits in 11 companies, to discuss the working conditions and the challenges faced by young women, and has already succeeded in organising 617 new young women members. [>>more](#)
[>> More DFL news in Zimbabwe](#)



Brazil: Young women issues in collective agreements

The Brazilian confederations, CGTB, CTB, CUT, Força Sindical, NCST and UGT, have put the reconciliation of personal and working very high on the trade union agendas. This has been translated into collective bargaining issues, such as parental leave for fathers and mothers, six months paid maternity leave and child care provisions. Additional issues which have been addressed and put in the negotiating agendas are: better salaries, training for women about safety at the workplace and extra lunch time for women in call centers. In addition, the campaign team aims to increase women participation in the collective bargaining table by training trade union women as negotiators for gender clauses. By the end of the campaign they expect to have negotiated 50 new collective agreements with gender sensitive clauses.

>> Watch the interviews with [UNI-Brazil coordinators](#), [DIEESE coordinators](#), [SINTETEL](#), [women workers](#).

[>>More DFL news in Brazil](#)



Indonesia: Facebook and twitter as new organising tools/ 15,000 young women new members

The campaign, run by KSBSI and ASPEK, has brought into the trade union movement 15,000 young women new members! The recipe for this success is the use of more appealing to young women reaching-out methods, including informal small-group or individual meetings - where young women feel special to be approached personally - as well as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). The campaign is equally popularized through women's magazines, a national newspaper and a radio station.

The team is currently running an [essay completion](#)!

[>>More DFL news in Indonesia](#)



India: Indian campaign team makes the most of Special Commemoration Days

[UNITEs](#) is promoting the campaign through major events on international and national commemoration days, coordinated together with NGOs, and Universities. Target group young women (call centers, banking sector, IT) use ICT extensively, so social networking sites have proved to be very effective: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and an intra-organizational communication tool, called Pebbletalk. The campaign team has reached on the ground 3,500 young women through survey questionnaires and brochures dissemination.

[>>More DFL news in India](#)



Ukraine: Creative ways to attract young women activists

[KVPU](#) has succeeded in setting up 3 primary trade union organisations have been set up at the chainstore Epicentre and the campaign team is working on setting up 3 more. The overall aim is to set up a branch TU for all trade and service sector workers in a number of chain stores. KVPU is also collection signatures for a petition to urge the Government to ratify the ILO Convention 183, on Maternity Protection.

[PIT.Ua](#) has used its expertise on ICT and web technologies to reach young women from different regions in Ukraine. The campaign team is carrying out both face to face meetings as well as webinars/web-events to reach out as many young women as possible and to inform them about their rights at work and how to take action. On [A special women's section](#) on PIT.Ua's website women can get on-line advice, read articles and participate in online contests, like the recent [essay contest](#)⁷ on leadership. Through the campaign activities, a number of young female leaders have established a [Women's Committee](#). The team is currently preparing [a photo contest](#) for the 8 March.

[>>More DFL news in Ukraine](#)



Belarus: 1,000 self-employed workers have registered their own NGO

BKDP is targeting self-employed female shop-holders as they are faced with very challenging conditions: long hours, tough work conditions, lack of social security and of legal protection of their rights, and in some cases the spread of HIV/AIDS. Failed attempts to register for a trade union of 1,000 self-employed women resulted in finding new ways to organize these young women. They set up an NGO with the ultimate aim to turn the NGO into a trade union. A group of 10 young women activists has been formed. This group is willing to mobilize more and more self-employed young women in the markets.

[>>More DFL news in Belarus](#)



Kazakhstan: 4,000 signatures to ratify ILO Convention 183

FPRK focuses on reaching young women in small and medium enterprises in trade and catering sectors. The campaign team is carrying out training sessions on leadership, negotiation and communications skills, as well as outdoor group activities. The aim of the campaign team is to identify potential leaders among the women with whom they can work further in the future. Two primary trade unions have been set up to represent young women workers in small business.

CFTUK carried out a research on six regions of Kazakhstan in order target their campaign activities carefully. Results are also available on [mojazarplata.kz](#). After the DFL press conference in September 2009, young women journalists were so inspired that decided to form their own union. 25 active young women have since joined the initiative group which aims to create a regional union of journalists. CFTUK is popularizing the campaign through TV coverage and through a strong network of 5-6 NGOs. CFTUK has also collected 4,000 signatures for a petition to urge the Government to ratify the ILO Convention 183, on Maternity Protection.

>> [Read the press release](#) and [watch the video](#) (17 September 2009)

>> [Read the press release](#) and [watch the video](#) (21 September 2010)

[>>More DFL news in Kazakhstan](#)



Azerbaijan: Gain confidence through story-telling sessions

AHIK in close cooperation with a Khidmat-Ish, a UNI-affiliate are targeting young women working in banking, hotel, retail, communication, public service/health, commercial, & cleaning. The campaign team is using story-telling sessions to inspire young women by bringing them in contact with of Azeri female role-models from various fields (such as arts, academics, celebrities etc.). Through the campaign activities, 664 young women workers have become trade union members.

[>>More DFL news in Azerbaijan](#)

⁷ Russian: <http://female.pit.org.ua/News/5438.aspx>



Check the Decisions for Life activities for:

World Day for Decent Work

7 October 2010

International Day to eliminate Violence against women

25 November 2010

<http://dfl.wageindicator.org/home/special-events>



[Join the campaign on Facebook](#)