



Asia fights for +50

Wage Floor Forum in Asia Concept, Lobby, Action – Campaign Plan

Global	Regional	National
ITUC, ETUC, TUAC	ITUC Asia Pacific	Cambodia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Myanmar, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Vietnam

Concept

+50 Asia needs a wage rise

Despite the tripling of global GDP in just a few decades, the current model of globalisation has failed working people with this growth relying on low wage, insecure and often unsafe work. This must change.

We must end corporate greed and exploitation if we are to reduce inequality, boost demand, and if working people are to again trust that global trade and democracy will benefit all working people not just the 1% richest.

Minimum wages must be living wages. We demand a minimum wage on which people can live, based on evidence.

+50 will establish a **wage floor** in Asia that takes minimum wages out of competition between governments and ensures a living wage.

In the poorer countries **+50** will mean an increase of around US\$50 a month. For wealthier countries it may mean US\$50 a week.

This is **wage justice** and it is affordable. It is a **minimum living wage**.

Standing in solidarity, unions across Asia will:

1. Expose the model of exploitation that is underpinning global supply chains and holding back domestic demand and growth.

In Asia inside 50 of the largest multi-national corporations up to 94% of the workforce are a hidden workforce. Companies have simply outsourced responsibility as they seek to maximise profits that are not shared in wages or benefits with the workers on whom they depend. (ITUC Scandal Report, 2016)

It is essential to take human rights and labour rights out of competition - a concept just endorsed by the G20 Labour Ministers in Germany.

Violations of decent work and fundamental principles and rights at work cannot be part of the competition. (G20 Labour Ministers Declaration, May 2017)

We need Governments to hold corporations to account.

2. Counter the argument that minimum living wages would make a country uncompetitive.

An increase in the minimum wage in order to ensuring a living wage would represent a fraction of the profits made by the major corporations, where the profits for every worker in their supply chain can be as high as \$17,000. There can be no more exploitation.

Minimum wages are a foundation for decent work and that they must be set at a level that guarantees decent standards of living for workers and their families.

Wages should take into account the needs of workers and their families, the cost of living and economic factors. In this respect, minimum wage legislation and collective bargaining in particular can set income floors to reduce income inequality, eliminate poverty wages and achieve sustainable wage growth. (G20 Labour Ministers Declaration, May 2017)

The evidence base for a minimum wage claim

The level of a minimum living wage is guided by evidence on the costs of living, and should consider the following elements to ensure that wages allow for decent living standards:

Minimum Living Wage	
Food	Educations expenses
Housing	Household bills, utilities and recreation
Transport	Essential care costs
Clothing	Contingency for emergencies
Medical expenses	

The fight is to end corporate greed - the first step is +50

3. Expand universal social protection with the foundation of the social protection floor

A social protection floor is a globally agreed ambition from the UN and the ILO and endorsed by G20 countries.

Global ambition for a social protection floor		
UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development Goal 1 – No poverty Goal 5 – Gender equality Goal 8 – Decent work and economic growth Goal 10 – Reduce Inequality	ILO Decent Work Agenda Social Justice Declaration	G20 Policy recommendations for promoting more equitable and sustainable social protection systems

Realising the foundations of a social protection floor will protect working families and help to build a fair and sustainable economy.

Lobby

Ratify ILO Convention 131

In the first instance Governments must ratify ILO Convention 131 and ensure effective laws and wage fixing systems that ensure and uphold minimum living wages and collective bargaining.

A minimum wage must be a living wage.

Minimum wages must:

- take into account the needs of workers and their families;
- apply to all workers with no exception;
- serve as a floor, allowing workers to bargain for higher wage levels to share productivity and profits;
- be set by an evidence-based process that takes into account the costs of living;
- be regularly reviewed and updated;
- be as simple and easy to understand as possible; and
- be enforced with an effective compliance system including well-resourced labour inspectorates and dissuasive penalties/sanctions.

Unions will lobby governments, campaign for political support and target corporations to see a **+50** compliant increase of minimum wages and ensure reform of minimum wage systems that do not comply with these principles.

Collective responsibility from ASEAN Governments for minimum living wages and +50

In advance of the November ASEAN meeting in the Philippines all unions with the ITUC regionally and globally will lobby their member governments.

Governments to guarantee universal social protection

Unions across Asia will expose Government policies that do not guarantee the elements of universal social protection enshrined in ILO Convention 102 and Recommendation 202.

In addition, it is essential that governments invest in child care and elderly care in recognition of women's right to work and the jobs dividend from such investments.

Social Protection Floor	
Medical care Sickness benefit Unemployment/ out-of-work benefits Old-age pension Employment injury benefit	Family benefit Maternity benefit Disability benefit Survivors' benefit Child and elderly care

Governments must look at the expenditure gaps in social protection coverage detailed in the ILO's World Social Protection Report. They must ensure that people are the first beneficiaries of taxation expenditure. Equally Governments must ensure a sustainable revenue base for the delivery of social protection systems, taking measures to end tax evasion from corporations and punish offenders.

According to the OECD, \$240 billion is lost every year in tax revenue as a result of tax avoidance by multinational companies.

Action

+50 will become a national and regional demand in the quest to end corporate greed and ensure all workers have at least a minimum living wage!

The heart of the campaign will be working people and their families. The plan is to tell the stories of workers struggling to survive on low wages and to build the hope of the possibility of improving their lives with **+50**.

August: a national icon will be born with one workers story from each country; what can't you pay for on your current wage and what could you do with **+50**?

Worker Questions: What is your name? What is your age? Who do you work for / what is your job? What can't you pay for on your current wage? What could you do with a wage increase of +50? Please supply head and shoulders photo and send to press@ituc-csi.org

September: a social media campaign to build community awareness of the injustice of low wages with workers stories and the launch of **THE GREEDY TEN** corporations who pay low wages but accumulate huge profits/assets! Take your message for a **+50** minimum living wage to the employers association(s), government (letter, photo with banner outside offices, press conference), share photos on social media for union across Asia to share with union members.

October 7, World Day for Decent Work: send the Government your demand for +50 in whatever form your wage demand takes and back it in with public events under the banner of end corporate greed **+50**, share your photos and actions.

November: Target ASEAN and the American Chambers of Commerce with campaign meeting and street action in Manila. APEC in Vietnam.

December: Corporate day of action when the **+50** demand is taken to the doors of Samsung and/or McDonalds.

January - February: Regional workers hearings, video production of workers stories to support 2018 +50 campaign action. Campaign report.

March: GEFONT Labour Film Festival +50 stories.

**End Corporate Greed: +50 = minimum living wage =
the dignity of a Wage Floor in Asia**

#Fightfor+50

In the Philippines tax revenues grew by \$8 billion after the country received \$4 million in aid for their tax programme.

Garment exports in Myanmar were \$900 million in 2012 and \$2 billion in 2017, yet companies still refuse to pay living wage.

In Nepal, \$50 gives people the choice not to leave their families to work in the Gulf States.

The four richest Indonesians are wealthier than the poorest 100 million people in the country.

If Zara paid the living wage to their factory workers in Bangladesh, a pair of jeans would cost only 25-30 cents more.

CEO Pay is up 997% since 1978.

Asia is creating one new billionaire every three days, in contrast it would take +\$50 a month to ensure a minimum living wage for workers.

Samsung makes \$11,000 profit from each worker in their supply chain. A wage increase of \$50 per month to see a minimum living wage in Asia would cost just \$600.

