

ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

ITUC International Trade Union Confederation
January 2008



ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY A TRADE UNION MANUAL

Acknowledgement

This much revised and updated edition was written by the same author, Kate Phillips, a British educator with 25 years of experience in educating people to build rights and organisation worldwide. Ms. Phillips worked closely with the ITUC Secretariat, in particular with the Equality Department in revising the material.

FOREWORD



The historical Founding Congress of the ITUC (Vienna, November 2006) recognised that deep and pervasive gender discrimination remains a universal reality in the world of work, and in society in general, and that many aspects of globalisation are making it worse. Therefore Congress pledged the ITUC to ensure that the gender perspective is fully and transversally integrated into all its policies, activities and programmes at all levels.

Despite record flows of women into the labour particularly over the last two decades, equality between women and men has not happened. In developing countries and industrialised ones too, women's employment continue to be typified by part-time, low-paid, atypical, sub-contracted, unregulated, unprotected, temporary or casual work. Virtually everywhere, women do not get equal pay for work of equal value.

While more women are joining unions than ever before, they are under-represented in decision-making structures.

To address these issues, and to help integrate gender perspective in trade union activities and policies, the ITUC has produced this Manual. It is intended to assist women and men trade unionists to face up the challenge equality presents and make changes in the unions, changes at work and changes in our attitudes to each other. This Manual is intended for use by both women and men and not only in specific activities for women. It is also designed to provide background material and discussion activities on gender issues as a supplement to general educational activities.

The manual contains ideas for group activities as well as a collection of checklists, examples and other information, which can be used in discussions and presentations.

We need the combined efforts of the trade-union leaders, educators and members themselves to make equality between the men and the women a reality.

Guy Ryder
General Secretary



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HOW TO USE THIS EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

How to use the Manual

This material is designed to be a supplement to union education courses, study material for meetings or a complete guide to gender mainstreaming. You can start at the beginning and work through the book or pick out the parts, which are most useful to you.

Why Have Group Activities?

Union learning is for development and change. It is not simply a matter of new information, however useful that might be. We have been discussing the issue of gender equality for far too long. We need to do something about it. The activities are designed to help men and women analyse, investigate and plan what to do.

The activities help people to:

- **Talk about their experience** - of the pressures of combining work with family, the union they belong to, their pay and conditions. Sharing experience, and learning from one another builds a sense of belonging.
- **Test attitudes** - deeply embedded attitudes and feelings play a role in maintaining views on the subject of gender. Attitudes guide people's actions. Changing views is never easy but change is essential to development. Explaining to others why we feel as we do is one way of checking whether we are being reasonable.
- **Investigate problems** - link learning with a current situation, check where improvements could be made.
- **Develop 'know how'** - Get practice in discussing ideas, negotiating with other people, chairing a group and making a report.
- **Make plans** - apply the lessons strategically to your union.

If you have not organised group activities before you will find the following step- by- step guide useful. You will see that the activities have AIMS and GROUP WORK. Most of the group work asks for a GROUP REPORT.

How to use the Activities



Aims

Explain what people may expect to learn from the activities. When organising or chairing group work look carefully at the aims. Use the aim to keep things on track and guide discussion.



Group Work

Small groups of four or five people should be setup. Discussion takes time; to think, to talk, and to note down some answers. One activity may take thirty or forty minutes. When you are organising group activities you should explain the aims of the group work so that people focus on this. **There may be times when you mix women and men in groups, times when women and men could be separated.** Ask yourself do I want a man's view and a separate women's view in the group reports or do I want women and men to negotiate a joint view?



Group Reports

Most of the activities ask for a group report. Reports should be brief. Make it clear that you want key points only and where possible, points from reports should be written on a flip chart or board during discussion. Then the main lessons can then be pointed out easily. If reports cover several points, you may want to take one point from each group in turn. Discourage repetition and long reiteration of all that was said by asking for different ideas from each group in turn. When you have all reports you can assess the information gathered. There will not be one right answer to many questions. There may be agreements or differences. This stage can be difficult to organise because your role is to challenge muddled logic, guide discussion towards solutions or negotiate differing views into an agreed way forward.



Planning the report back

Plan ahead, think about the aims - did the activity aim to?

- **Share experience** - guide participants to learn from one another. Try to build links between people's experience and information in the text.
- **Challenge attitudes** - the aim is always to get people to justify their feelings, think logically about the consequences of their attitudes and question prejudice.
- **Gather everyone's ideas** - if so then put together the main points from reports into one list, but try to stick to the words that the participants have used.
- **Compare the difference** - for example, a man's view/a woman's view, points for/points against - if so then emphasise the differences in the way you organise, or ask groups to organise their reports.
- **Solve problems or make plans** - assess whether further discussion is going to be needed, check what groups are saying during the process.

The report back may take thirty or forty minutes depending on the number of groups and complexity of the task.



Role Play

Taking a problem from life and making a short play about it is one way of bringing everyday life into education. A play can illustrate a complex idea and hold people's attention. The role-plays in this training book challenge those taking part to practice new roles and develop their ideas. Playing a role is one of the best ways of developing the skills needed to take on such a role in life. Doing is a good way to learn. Role-play needs careful planning. Each player needs time to prepare. Those who watch the role-play may be guided to learn too, by a brief list of points to watch for.



Forms of training

Training methods should be adapted according to the needs of different groups of members. With careful organisation most of the activities will work with very little reading or writing. In this case reports and main points can be given without the help of notes. Provided one group member has a common language in which to report and participants are grouped by language, activities will allow participation in a number of different mother tongues. Look at the following two activities. They will be useful when starting a course, helping to let everyone know who is present and start them talking. Each group should have five or six members.



Planning an educational event

When planning you should alternate activity / information / activity starting with an introductory activity which finds out who is present or what participants think. Your lesson plan should aim to start with experience, widen people's knowledge and understanding, and then discuss ways to make changes.



A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Developing a union gender perspective is partly about organising around different needs, for example, equal opportunities and childcare and partly about recognising workers in very different work situations. Women very often come into paid work through part-time, casual, contract or home work. A gender perspective therefore encourages us to develop union representation in different sorts of work situations. Experience in organising contract and home workers strengthens the union movement overall as more and more workers find themselves working in such situations. If we negotiate to provide the kind of conditions and support services that working women need the resulting fair and family friendly working practices improve the lives of both men and women.

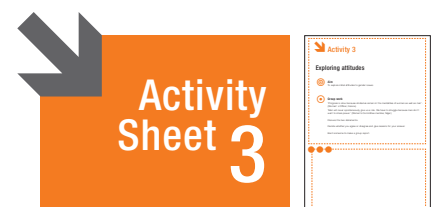
Women workers:

- Around seven out of ten women in developed countries and six out of ten in developing countries now have paid work.
- Half of all of the world's workers earn less than the equivalent of US\$2 each day. The poorly paid in every country are mostly women.
- There are 43million workers in export processing zones where rights are restricted. Eight out of every ten of these workers are women.
- Migrants who move around the world looking for paid work are equally likely to be women.

Unions were once a brotherhood of men in large-scale workplaces. That situation is changing. Many now have an active campaigning style and are working with the fundamental question of how women and men raise a family and earn a living together. The whole movement has a lot to gain if this momentum for change can be multiplied.

What Gender perspective means for the ITUC?

Incorporating gender perspectives in trade union work means more than passing special resolutions on women's issues, implementing specific programmes for women, including a women's component in projects, adding a paragraph on women in our documents, organising women conferences. It is all that and MUCH MORE. It is, first of all, accepting the reality – and **consequences** – of inequality. How many times have we heard remarks like "...but woman is the power behind the throne..." or "...women do not want to be leaders, even if we give them the chance..." or "...we cannot comply with proportional representation because women do not want to come to the meetings..."). Integrating gender perspectives mean changing attitudes, looking at things differently, having in our minds women's point 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.



UNIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD

A changing workforce

In the last fifty years the number of women in paid work has grown to become almost equal to the number of men. In 2004, 1.2 billion of the world's 2.9 billion workers were women, an increase of nearly 200 million women in 10 years, according to ILO figures.

Despite the rise in overall numbers, women still find it hard to get paid jobs. Many more are looking for jobs than find them. Women usually earn less despite having skills to offer. They need union protection but often end up in work situations with no tradition of union organisation.

Worldwide there are many more people working in small workshops, on contract or from their homes. Long chains of supply are now set up for the clothes and electrical goods that used to be made much closer to the shops that sold them. New technology allows banks and travel companies to provide services to clients many miles distant. All of this challenges union organisation. The new large scale workplaces are often in China or in free trade zones where union organising is resisted or banned altogether. Trade in food and goods is growing. Industry is on the move, shifting from one place to another, searching for cheap and unorganised labour. Driven by hopes of a better life people are adapting, coping with whatever work opportunities turn up, leaving their rural homes for jobs in manufacturing or crossing borders to gain the work they need to provide cash for family life. Funds that migrant workers send home are worth more than all the aid to the poor that richer countries can ever provide.

Exporting farm produce: Kenya

Horticultural exports from Africa have grown dramatically in recent years. Hours are long in the peak growing season, whether you are a casual farm worker or a small holder sending your produce to be packed, sorted and exported. Wages from packing are low and your job rarely permanent but the cash earned by women involved in growing and packing produce makes a difference to many African households, large numbers of which are female headed. Institute for Development Studies, UK, research report.

There are very good reasons why none of us can afford to ignore the challenge that work reorganisation presents. Unions must attract and organise workers in new situations to survive in the future. We are losing income and talent because we are struggling to adapt. Union membership and activity must better reflect the gender and the concerns of a modern, much more feminine workforce. We currently operate below capacity because we have not made sufficient progress in recruitment and representation in a changing environment. The quality of work and protection of the work force is falling because unions are struggling to keep up.

Free trade zones, Nicaragua

A free trade zone (FTZ) is allowed by government to import machines and raw materials without paying import duties as long as all production is for export. In Nicaragua, 12 free trade zones employ over 70,000 people, 80% of whom are women and over one third of whom are single mothers. The 70 companies operating in the zones are from US, Taiwan, Korea and Europe. Nicaragua attracts them because they have low labor costs. Workers Co-operative, Nicaragua.

Women are most vulnerable

Prejudice and tradition affect women's choices and chances in the labour market. Once they have a family they are less mobile. Traditionally they had less education, although this is something which is changing rapidly. An increasing number of women are raising children alone. Traditional women's skills, like sewing and cooking, tend to be paid less than the traditional work of men. Women earn less even in occupations such as nursing and teaching because their work has not been fairly evaluated and their share of management posts is low.

Domestic work, Hong Kong

The majority of domestic workers are women. Hong Kong has average incomes equal to those of Europe. Indonesian migrants pay agents to get work in Hong Kong as domestic workers. Domestic workers work long hours and live in with their employers. Employers are not obliged to give workers their own room and often keep identity documents, making workers very vulnerable.

Home working, Albania

65,000 people are employed by companies which produce shoes and clothes for firms based in Europe. The companies receive imported raw materials and process them for export. They employ mainly women who are paid by the piece and often say their families earn so little that they need their daughters to work alongside them. Home workers assemble shoes by hand and get their children to help in order to earn enough to feed the household.

Balancing work and family, UK

UK has one of the highest rates of female employment in Europe with a record 70% at work (843,000 more than there were ten years ago). Women are concentrated in service industries, most of them are mothers, and many have pre school children. All of them struggle to balance family and working life, especially when returning to work after having a baby. Equal Opportunities Commission UK.

ORGANISING FOR EQUALITY



The future strength and vitality of the trade union movement depends on women joining its ranks and becoming leaders.
ITUC Founding Congress, Vienna November 2006.

Union membership is changing

As women take up paid work union membership is changing. An International Labour Organisation (ILO) study recently showed that in about half of the countries they looked at, more women than men joined their union. In the western world, for example, in Canada, the United Kingdom and Ireland the trade union movement now has about equal numbers of men and women. In Sweden, Norway and Finland there are now more women union members than men. This rapid growth in the proportion of women in trade unions reflects the fact that:

- there are more women in the well unionised public services in all countries
- there has been a decline of union membership rates in the male-dominated manufacturing sector
- unions have become more gender aware and adopted equal opportunities policies
- unions have expanded their activity into the service sector where there are more women workers
- union campaigns to reach out to vulnerable workers in previously unorganised industries are beginning to be successful.

ITUC Action Programme on Achieving Gender Equality in Trade Unions

Organising and representing women working in the formal, traditional sectors should extend to women in the informal economy, export processing zones, young women, migrant women, women from ethnic minorities, women in rural and urban areas, tele-working and home-based workers, domestic workers, single working mothers, and women in short-term employment, temporary, casual, low paid jobs and other workers vulnerable to exploitation, by helping them to identify and meet their own needs through solidarity action.

Organising Workers

The right to form or join a union is a human right, regardless of where or how we work. Modern technology has broken up large workplaces and scattered workers across the globe. Computers and e-mail allow nearly 29 million Americans to work at least part of their working time from home. The numbers doing tele-work, using a computer and phone, now amount to tens of millions. They work on software development, data processing, banking, insurance, travel advice and selling over the phone. Lufthansa, the German airline, has a call centre in Cape Town, South Africa. HSBC, a global bank, services its UK customers from centres in India, China and Malaysia.

Formal work on one site or in the public sector, where a clear contractual relationship can be developed, is where unions have built their strength. By tradition or law, unions often excluded the informal, contract or part-time worker from membership. But unions are adapting. 'The informal economy' has been more accurately described as the 'unprotected' or 'excluded' sector. Lack of legal standards, social-protection, a collective voice and decent working conditions are what marks them out and keeps them 'informal'.



Coping with change, India

'The successes in the trade union movement have so far been confined to the large-scale industrial sector. In India women predominate in small-scale industries, export houses, shops, restaurants, canteens, construction sites, non - coal mines. Even in big public sector undertakings the trend is to employ contract and casual labour rather than regular workers.'

Union Educator, India.



Organising in different situations

South Africa has a new Code of Practice designed to protect domestic workers. Unions fought long and hard to establish agreement with government to a legal minimum for all domestic workers and a legal responsibility for their employers. The code says that domestic workers are workers with rights. They must have written terms and conditions of employment, clear duties, rates of pay, hours of work and paid holidays. It sets out the deductions that can be made from wages, for room and board and prohibits the holding of documents like passports by employers. SADWU, South Africa.

Formal work is rarely available close to home and needs a commitment to long hours. This is not possible in households where there are young children, and sick or elderly people to look after. Women, who are most of the 'unprotected' workers, may prefer the wages and other benefits of full-time work but responsibilities mean that home-based, part-time, short contract or casual work is what they can manage to do.

Part-time workers are mostly women, who reduce their hours of work when they have children. Many get stuck, unable to return to full-time work when their children grow up. Many can't survive from one kind of work so they may have several part-time jobs; factory or shop work, raising pigs or poultry, growing beans, weaving, sowing or assembling things at home, caring for children, nursing, selling over the phone. Organising for these kinds of workers needs a fundamental shift in thinking, the employer-employee relationships are diverse and the search for greater security raises many unmet needs. Livelihoods are vulnerable for many reasons: poor education and health, lack of insurance or savings, no childcare or social security as well as discrimination by gender, caste or ethnicity.



Trade unions make a difference to the lives of women. Trade unions need women members but can only deliver real benefits if they take seriously the imperative to identify women's concerns and take targeted measures to help/support women at work and in the trade union democratic structure.

ITUC Action Programme on Achieving Gender Equality in Trade Unions.

BUILDING THE UNION

A strong and active membership is the only way to make progress in improving standards at work. In order to strengthen and re-focus their activities unions are embarking on campaigns to recruit women and men, especially young women and men. They also want active members and are therefore taking steps to develop a dialogue with new and potential members. It must be remembered that the main reason that people don't join a union is that they have never been asked. In addition the public image of unions is often poor. Vulnerable people may be fearful of joining and union representatives may appear unsympathetic or out of touch with women and young people's needs. For this reason ITUC says recruitment should be more often entrusted to women and men and women should be trained to do this work.

Grassroots organising, Algeria

We opted to approach women in small groups at work raising awareness about the need to organise and promote women representatives from amongst them. We went to offices and factories getting together women's groups, listening to problems; wages, working conditions, maternity, harassment. We made them understand that if they don't get involved nothing can be done.
Campaign to organise women, Algeria.

Grassroots organising, Greece

A group of dynamic young women established the union in 2000 and through successful organising drives has built the membership amongst the young female staff. They have now negotiated a collective agreement which reduces working time and provides for maternity leave.
Mobile Telecom Company Union, Greece.

A recent survey in Scotland asked young union members why they were not more involved. They said they hadn't been encouraged, didn't have enough information and didn't understand the various meetings and procedures. They reported that meetings were dominated by middle-aged men who made them feel too inexperienced to take part. This is an all too familiar picture of union activity, which will be known to others around the world. A ICFTU global survey showed that in addition to having too little information, lack of fair sharing at home meant that women had too much to do and this prevented them from attending trade union meetings. When they did attend they had to struggle to make their voices heard and men often made them feel out of place.

Union experience, Spain

'Your money gets deducted but you never know what's going on. We don't know how to raise problems and don't have the opportunity. Meetings in the evenings are difficult when there are meals to be made and children to put to bed. When it comes to wage negotiations women get the smallest slice of the cake and none of us has ever been promoted.'
Factory Worker, Spain.

Checklist 1

The benefits of union membership

A Checklist is a series of statements or questions, against which you examine your practice.

The benefits of joining a union are that:

- ⊗ you know where to go for confidential help when you have a problem at work
- ⊗ you have someone to speak for you if you feel you are being treated unfairly
- ⊗ you regularly meet with others to talk about common issues
- ⊗ you can work together to solve problems and improve your income and working conditions
- ⊗ you can take part in choosing the person who will speak with managers, buyers or other officials on your behalf

Taking up the challenge

Many unions have taken up the challenge to bring women into the organisation with phone-ins, intensive city centre street recruitment campaigns, 'one plus one' activities where each member recruits another, training and skills building for organisers and surveys of women's views to help with the design of effective recruitment messages.



Checklist 2

Building the union

- ⊗ Map the workforce - Collect information about current and all of the possible members. Ask about and note issues of concern. Identify contacts in different places to help you communicate. Separate information for women and men.
- ⊗ Recruit new members - The main reason people don't join is not being asked. Talk to people about the benefits of joining the union. They may need help with problems at work, unfair treatment, want more support but not know or believe that a union can make a real difference.
- ⊗ Make women visible – Investigate and take up issues that matter to women workers. Consult them and start with an issue on which you think progress might be possible.
- ⊗ Keep in touch – by leaflet, email, a lunch time meeting, health advise sessions, a social. Pass on information that shows how the union benefits women.
- ⊗ Build Trust – Let people know how to take part, when and where meetings take place, what has been happening. Explain how union finances are used for the members.
- ⊗ Develop a policy – Make sure your union discusses the issues and commits itself to integrating women and other vulnerable workers including any: young, migrant, tele and home-based, domestic, short-term, temporary and casual workers working for your employer.

ORGANISING THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

Mobility encouraged by modern technology, the contracting of public services to the private sector, the widespread need for cash income where jobs do not readily exist are some of the many reasons that workers earn their living outside the formal sector. These workers also have the right to organise and bargain.

Securing a decent income, a safe workplace and a predictable livelihood is desirable but in situations where workers may be seasonal, self-employed, contracting with family help or selling to buyers large and small we need new ideas for organising.

A worker's whole livelihood may be vulnerable to lack of savings, sudden illness, the whims of buyers or pregnancy. Whatever the position of workers in the market working together can be a means to protect and improve their situation. A major cause of poverty is limited influence and bargaining power with decision makers.

Services for migrant workers, Hong Kong

International Conventions give migrant workers the same rights as other workers to join and seek assistance from trade unions. The joint organisation of unions in Hong Kong runs special programmes for migrant workers, the majority of whom are women. They have hostels and counseling to improve relations between employees and their employers, medical check ups and more recently health insurance. They also run crash courses in Cantonese and Mandarin for migrants. The joint organisation of Unions (JOU) – Hong Kong.

Home workers

Homework is particularly prevalent in the garment, shoe, leather and textile industries and is mostly done by women. They often provide their own equipment, sometimes they provide their own materials. In most countries they have no legal framework for collective bargaining.

ILO Convention on homeworkers

Countries which ratify it undertake the responsibility to implement the ILO Convention 177 on homework. The convention says that they should review the position of home workers, estimate their numbers, work towards equality with waged workers, extend health and safety laws, clarify employer/buyer responsibilities and institute a system of inspections with penalties.

Home worker's unions do not wait for the law to change but take up the issues whilst campaigning to persuade their governments to ratify and implement the convention.

Through organisation unions can:

- bring workers together to share their problems.
- build organisation around common issues to bargain with government, employers, suppliers or buyers of workers products.
- publicise existing rights and work together to prevent abuses.
- establish help lines and advice services for workers in need.
- help develop welfare services, saving and insurance schemes.
- press for legal safeguards, minimum wages, social programmes, childcare and maternity protection from government.

- CSTT, Togo**
 A multi-pronged pilot project has been set up, consisting of micro-financing, recycling and training, aimed at meeting the practical (credit, improving income) and strategic (technical and trade union training) needs of hairdressers and seamstresses in Lomé.
- SBSI, Indonesia**
 Through an income-generating project which set up a chicken farm run by the women themselves, the SBSI organized women working in the informal economy.
- CASC, Dominican Republic**
 The CASC organised hairdressers working on the beaches through negotiations with the authorities and the large hotel chains to enable them to continue their activities under good working conditions.

Contract work

Many public and service industries have been broken up into contract and casual work; cleaning, bus services, research in universities, forestry. Competition for contracts drives down wages and conditions and regular re-negotiation of contracts brings bouts of insecurity. Contracted work will be done by small companies or self-employed workers who may provide their own materials, equipment and place of work. These workers may gain greater control over the work process and marketing of what they do but on the other hand they suffer from greater insecurity of income because they have difficulty finding regular markets and buyers. Improving income is obviously crucial to all workers but it is rarely the most pressing problem people face. Diverse needs such as literacy, skills development, absent fathers who don't maintain their children and no pension or sickness benefit have all been raised by women workers as problems which they can't solve by themselves.

- Strengthening the law, Hungary**
 It is estimated that one third of domestic production in Hungary is now in the informal sector. Although unionisation of the sector is still weak trade unions in Hungary have successfully worked with government to support the application of social insurance and unemployment benefit to the sector. They have also helped to ensure that labour inspection is strengthened. They are campaigning for a minimum wage to apply to workers in this sector and want the laws on subcontracting to be reviewed.



India: organising the self-employed

Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is an organisation of poor, self-employed women workers who earn a living through their own business. They have no regular salary or benefits like workers in the formal sector. The union works towards security of income and food and socially in terms of health, pensions and childcare. They work by;

- organising women into small member groups.
- capacity building in technical areas and group management skills.
- savings formation either as individuals or collectively as a group.
- following up women's need for security; access to health care, child care, insurance, housing and old age benefits.

'We organise all our services and activities on members doorsteps and follow the Gandhian principles of truth, non-violence, integrating all faiths and people. We are a labour union, a cooperative and a women's movement. A home-grown movement with women leaders, strong and visible'.

SEWA web news.

Developing credit schemes

Savings and loans schemes can bring people together for their greater security. Being able to borrow can help working families avoid loan sharks, save for school fees or pay medical bills. Loans also offer the small producer or home worker new possibilities to buy machinery, expand their business or survive gaps in income.

Standard credit schemes usually have inflexible credit terms. Lenders tend to require regular payments with penalties on borrowers for failure. Such schemes are not ideal when the flow of income is unsteady. Setting up a union savings and loan scheme can ensure that the rules of the scheme take account of the pattern of work and income. Schemes need very careful planning to deal with the management and collection of funds and the rules for those who default, but many unions like SEWA are successfully running such schemes to the very great benefit of members.

Helping women to establish small industries, Senegal

Women were organised into groups of 20 – 40 members. Each group received a small amount of capital. They added to this by negotiating the use of land, workshops and other community resources where they could produce, process and sell their products. The programme was supported by help with the necessary skills in management, crafts, preservation, packaging and transport of goods as well as education about the rights of members.

Union Démocratique des Travailleurs Sénégalais (UDTS).

GENDER RELATIONS IN TRADE UNIONS

Learned behaviour

The behaviour of women and men is taught and learned rather than natural or genetic. Boys learn that they must be strong and not show feelings. They are allowed more freedoms, taught to be adventurous, play roughly and stand up for themselves. They grow up with a sense of superiority because in most cultures they are preferred, valued and encouraged. As men they are urged to be strong, independent and demanding, behaviour glorified by movies, sports and the military.

As adults, men are more likely to define themselves by status outside the home. They must be competitive, are under pressure to make money, to succeed as providers. Men will experience privileges but many also experience a sense of failure when they are exploited, work in dangerous conditions, lose their jobs or don't earn enough to keep their family. As migrants they experience racism. Trade union solidarity grew out of a need for protection. But it grew up with and was coloured by male values, male language and a male perspective.

Basic Gender Concepts

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

Gender: Refers to the social differences and relations between men and women, girls and boys that are learned and vary widely within and between cultures and change over time. Gender refers to the different roles and responsibilities that are assigned to men and women in a given culture or location or time. Other variables such as ethnicity, caste, class, age and ability intersect with gender differences.

Building solidarity

Ideas about masculinity vary with age, culture and class. The working world may be ruthless and demanding and unions have had to respond to this environment. But all communities value and need male behaviour which is conciliatory, brotherly and non-violent; caring fathers, supportive husbands, peace negotiators. Trade unions have always recognised and also valued the kind of male behaviour which contributes to brotherhood and solidarity.

More women are now waged workers. They have to get out into the working world, to compete and provide. But they are more vulnerable. Girls now do better at school but as women workers they have families, face discrimination and find their traditional skills undervalued. Outside the public sector most women's work has low status, is insecure, underpaid and lacks proper regulation.

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 keep up with male standards, withstand disputes and fight for positions in ways that don't come easily.

Trade union strength is based on each member having an equal say and together building a collective voice, but even where men are in the minority you will find they predominate in union decision making. Some people are more confident than others. As long as the less confident members of a union have more or less the same views as the more confident, nothing will go far wrong. This is often the case with groups of women. The established way of doing things which a male dominated organisation has built up leads to a sense of exclusion for women.

Checklist 3

- ⊗ how do you welcome members and make both women and men feel comfortable?
- ⊗ are there any practical barriers to taking part?
- ⊗ how do you collect and decide the issues which you will work on? Are women involved in these discussions?
- ⊗ do you have elected posts or a women's group which speaks up for women?
- ⊗ do you have a strategy to encourage women to play active roles?
- ⊗ how and when do you invite feedback from members?
- ⊗ do you regularly monitor union participation?
- ⊗ do you have an equality policy which commits you to integrating women and other vulnerable groups?



DISCRIMINATION

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. We sometimes call this 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.

■ The global trade union movement sets a minimum target for overall women's participation in activities at the national, regional and international levels of 30%, or 40% for organisations with a higher number of women members, and a parity quota as a final target. Nominations by affiliates should include the names of female and male participants for regional and international level activities. ITUC Action Programme on Achieving Gender Equality in Trade Unions.

Positive action for gender parity

Union strength is based on treating workers as equals. But the higher up the union you go the more men you will find making decisions. 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. To speed up progress towards gender parity.

Making trade unions inclusive

” **Positive Action, Germany**
‘When Ver.di with 3 million workers, was created by the merger of 5 large German trade unions it was an opportunity to ensure the proper representation of women. The new constitution established that women should be represented in decision making bodies and delegations in proportion to their membership in each section, women insisted. Then we had to establish a system whereby there are methods to monitor its application. When elections are announced union officials have to indicate the minimum number of women who must be elected.’
Gender Mainstreaming Officer, Ver.di, Germany.

Checklist 4

Positive action in the union

- ⊗ 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.



THE ROLE OF WOMEN'S COMMITTEES / STRUCTURES

Problems of representation start when the less confident people have different views and needs and the confident do not consult enough. This can be the case with groups of women and men. Women workers often have different jobs, experience and needs. These differences can be overlooked. A network of support and a space for discussion amongst women has been one way of ensuring that confidence is built and voices are heard. Women's sense of exclusion within the union can be recognised and brought into the open. Women workers know best what their needs and priorities are. Voicing these needs has helped the whole movement to adapt. Women's groups, committees and conferences have given women space to debate the issues, try new ideas, research problems and they have provided a training ground in practical organisation and leadership.



Finding a voice

'At first it was difficult. I had stage fright. But as time went on I did develop confidence. At first when I was talking they would say 'we can't hear you, speak a bit louder'. Remarks like that are discouraging. You just have to go on. At first there were some who were not prepared to listen to me. But others encouraged me not to lose hope. As time went by workers saw I could help them, they are now very supportive, they ask advice like, 'what's happening and how can we do such and such a thing.'

Woman shop steward, South Africa.

The ITUC Women's Committee

Within ITUC the women's committee provides a unique voice for women, explaining women's experience, bringing out once hidden issues, developing a collective voice, building policy. The women's committee carries out policy decisions in between Congresses. It develops action programmes towards:

- gender equality at the workplace, the labour market and society
- the full integration of women into trade union organisations and their access to leadership positions
- gender perspectives in trade union work, at all levels.

It also represents the voice of working women in the ILO, the United Nations (UN) and other intergovernmental organisations. The Committee has recently launched and coordinated worldwide campaigns against violations of women's rights, for maternity protection and on organising women into unions. The Women's Committee is a statutory body, which meets once a year. Its members are women trade union leaders representing affiliated organisations, GUFs and TUAC. It nominates eighteen members for election by Congress as titular and substitute members of the General Council and six members for election at the Executive. Similar committees also exist also at regional level.



Building women's committee: Zimbabwe

'Few women were active before we started the local women's committees. When we got together women from shops, offices, banks, railways and factories for regular monthly meetings, women became very interested. At first the groups were small, but they soon grew. We discussed all kinds of problems and raised some of the issues with our local unions. We had to raise our own funds, but we have really brought women into the union.'

ZCTU Zimbabwe.

Developing integration

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.

Without these links the women's group can become a place where women get together to air grievances without any hope that their concerns are being listened too.

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.. Research shows that all too often women's committees and bureaux have been under-funded, overworked and isolated from the main decision making bodies of the union, a space where grievances can be nursed without resolution.

Women's committee: Japan

Our Women's Committee does not form a separate organisation but it is placed under the Executive Board. The Women's Committee implement the matters decided by the women's organisation; to stimulate interest among women members and encourage women to participate. The committee's main activities are to:

- listen to women's complaints and grievances and determine where in the problems lie.
- reflect women's views in the Executive Board.
- foster women activists.
- sponsor communication between women.
- participate in campaigns and other activities in the wider society.
- reflect women worker's views in local and national politics.

It is important to form Women's Committees from the ground up. The committees form a pyramid, giving the Women's Committee a solid base within the membership. Textile Worker, Japan.

Developing skills and confidence

The women's structure can act as a training ground for future women union leaders. The process of integrating women into leadership roles will be enhanced if there are ladders by which women in the women's structure can become equally active in the decision-making structures of the whole union. Designated women's seats on the governing bodies linked to the women's structure and provisions which encourage women's structure leaders to address congress have been a way of accelerating the process of developing the understanding and judgement needed for leadership which women are keen to develop. Such mechanisms also ensure that male leaders are regularly exposed to debate about issues of concern to women members. Similar mechanisms are of course equally useful at union branch level.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS FOR WOMEN

Trade has grown and more women have been drawn into paid work. Global communications connect worker with worker and also make transparency between worker and consumer possible. Cloth made in one country is fashioned into dresses by women somewhere else. These dresses may be packed, finished and sold in Europe, Japan or North America. The livelihoods of working people are dependent on decisions made in distant countries about what consumers want and where and how goods will be made.

Global communication allows manufacturers and traders to cooperate. It also challenges workers to share information and ideas and to get together to ensure that profitable companies do not exploit the most vulnerable, by offering significantly different conditions across national boundaries.

America: the clothing trade

Gap the American clothes seller buys from 3,010 factories in over 50 countries. Competition in the clothing trade has pushed the company to search for cheaper and cheaper production. Boycott campaigns by young people who buy from Gap have forced the company to introduce a code of conduct and publish a report on conditions in all of the factories which make their clothes. The report said few of the factories comply fully with Gap's code. But Gap says it hopes to avoid further campaigns by working to improve conditions. Gap website.

International regulations

The poverty of women is exacerbated by government actions. This problem was top of the list of twelve critical areas discussed by governments and NGOs at the World Conference of Women in Beijing. The conference drew attention to the fact that trade regulation, privatisation, economic management, the collecting and spending of taxes, the borrowing and pay back agreements for national debts, all have gender dimensions. The Beijing conference urged governments to consider these gender dimensions when developing policies.

Campaigning for change

Women have lots to gain from campaigns to open up and challenge the decisions made by international organisations and by challenging the government ministers who are their members. They regulate trade, the movement of companies and farmers earnings without consideration of the full effects at home. Global trade is regulated by a range of international bodies; the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and others in the United Nations (UN) family of organisations.

National Trade Union Centres are members of the International Labour Organisation where they have a voice in developing international standards for employed people. Lack of direct membership of the other international bodies should not prevent unions from lobbying national government ministers who are their members to ensure the decisions they make in other forums do not undermine what they have agreed as labour standards. Most countries have signed the convention on women's rights, which commits them to implement its clause on labour standards.

European Cooperation

As workers and business are able to move freely around Europe wage earners find themselves in sharp competition with each other. Women still earn less than men and there are widespread inequalities between different countries. By working to uphold standards across Europe, unions can ensure a better deal from profitable companies and greater fairness from one country to another. (European TUC).

Checklist 5

Building a coalition

- ⊗ put the arguments for a coalition; more power, more media attention, shared resources and expertise and more likely to get access to lobby decision makers.
- ⊗ build support; find partner organisations whose members are also affected. Their networks and influence will strengthen your campaign.
- ⊗ a compromise about what you want to achieve may need to be made between coalition members. You don't have to agree on everything but a common platform is necessary. How will you negotiate?
- ⊗ agree a clear statement of what you want.
- ⊗ get information to argue your case. Can your partners help you search for facts, expertise or case study evidence?

International campaign for ratification of ILO convention 183 on the protection of maternity. In order to meet this aim World Confederation of Labour (WCL) urged national centres to target political leaders, labour ministry officials and ILO conference delegates by writing to and meeting them personally to get their support for national ratification. It also urged unions to get the support of their members by circulating information about the rights contained in the convention. The message was simple: ratification! Plans included the formation of monitoring committees to track government responses and to collaborate with the media to keep up the pressure or report on any steps forward.



Checklist 6

Building a campaign

- ⊗ what are you hoping to achieve? Find out about policies and standards which will back up your campaign plan.
- ⊗ do some investigation of the issues. How are people are affected? What do they think and feel?
- ⊗ who can change things? Target those who can influence changes, address their current beliefs. A survey could help.
- ⊗ what is your message? Use easily understood language. Be positive.
- ⊗ how will you communicate with or influence your target audience?
- ⊗ draw up a timetable and plan the main activities, resources needed, tasks to be done and who will do them.

'Unions for Women, Women for Unions'

The main objective of the Campaign is to increase in female membership rates, particularly in the Export Processing Zones (EPZ's), informal economy, migrant women workers and young women. We also want to increase women's representation in decision-making levels of trade unions. Through the Campaign, unions will advocate for women workers' rights and will work to transform the culture and structure of unions to remove the barriers preventing women from becoming active members and leaders.

The campaign has contributed to membership increases in many parts of the world. COTU, Kenya organised 10,000 workers mainly in EPZS; in Tunisia the UGTT found that a health centre for women helped them to organise women workers. Elsewhere the visibility of women in unions increased, ONSL and CGTB in Burkina Faso waved banners and wore special uniforms and women in Niger marched with the support of their women's committee. In Ghana the adoption of gender neutral language, women trained as negotiators and increased numbers on the executive board all helped to change the culture of Ghana's national centre.

Opportunities to launch a campaign:

8 March is International Women's Day – in 2007 ITUC campaigned for better maternity protection. 2008 marks one hundred years since the first International Women's Day. In 2008 the campaign will focus on Decent Work for Women.

17 October is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

25 November is the International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

1 December is World Aids Day.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Gender

Family, society and culture shapes who we are, the roles we play the responsibilities we have. Gender shapes our expectations of ourselves and others. All of which change from generation to generation and vary from place to place with ethnicity and status. Despite variations there is persistent inequality between women and men.

The Global Platform for Action

The Global Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth United Nations World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995 agreed that governments and other bodies should 'mainstream a gender perspective'.

Gender mainstreaming is an organisational strategy to achieve and maintain gender equality and women's empowerment. Achieving equality between men and women is not a 'woman's' concern, but is fundamental to the aims of all trade unionists. Dynamic measures that target women are required in order to redress existing discrimination and change attitudes and conditions in the unions and by the unions. There is also a need for measures to both increase awareness among women and to enable them to reconcile work with their personal and family life, while also allowing men to spend time with their families and share family responsibilities. ITUC Action Programme on Achieving Gender Equality in Trade Unions.

Re-balancing behaviour

Masculinity and femininity are made and remade by women and men. In an organisation committed to equality both must take responsibility for re-balancing their behaviour, organising and re-organising the way things are done until they achieve the desired social change. Mainstreaming is not just about eliminating overt discrimination and harassment. Mainstreaming is about promoting equality of opportunity by countering the significant inequalities, which result from deeply embedded habits. Mainstreaming has sometimes been given as a reason for disbanding women's organisations. However, a clear, collective women's voice is needed to guide the process of reform, without it reform will lack a sense of direction. A women's committee may therefore have a useful role to play in guiding and assisting with the monitoring of a mainstreaming strategy.

Benefits from mainstreaming equality

Women's committees/structures have challenged but not been entirely successful in changing the culture of unions, the way they work, the priorities they set, and the roles they play. Unions recognise that all of their members need to be fully involved in building equality. Instead of focusing on a need that women may have and isolating that need as a problem for women, we look at what role the whole organisation can play and the benefits to the whole organisation that will flow, from tackling that need together. Mainstreaming helps all of the members to become aware that it is not just women who will benefit from change; more membership dues, more talent in organising new sectors or industries, more family friendly work and union practices are good for everyone. We have so far highlighted the need to engage men in the change process. But women's attitudes also need to change. Changing the relationship is a two way process shared by women and men.

Gender analysis: helps to identify the practical things you can do to move towards greater equality.

How to undertake a gender analysis

The aim of a gender analysis is to collate 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 to 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

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. The sample Checklist below will help here.

2. Analysis.

Understanding why there is a gender gap can be tricky. Many different factors will be involved. There are differences between women and men 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 members and potential members and ask them, if you want to know why people join or don't 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. These are:

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

ITUC Constitution states:

To make the trade union movement inclusive, and responsive to the views and needs of all sectors of the global workforce:

- the ITUC shall advance women's rights and gender equality, guarantee the full integration of women in trade unions and promote actively full gender parity in their leadership bodies and in their activities at all levels.

To do this, The ITUC Constitution contains provisions:

- for the compositions of delegations and representatives to Congress
- for the composition of the General Council and the Executive Bureau:
(a progressive target starting at 30%, for minimum women's membership on the General Council and on the Executive Bureau).
See Resources and Contacts, page 49.

Checklist 7

Mainstreaming

- ⊗ The Organisation's Policy – Does the organisation have clear policy on all aspects of gender equality including 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?

BUILDING EQUALITY

The gender roles that women and men play at home affect their access to work in all sorts of ways. Even though women are earning a lot more of the family income, there is little sign that men are doing much more housework in return. Working women the world over still do about three times as much work around the house as men. A woman may work six hours a day on domestic tasks, on average a man will work only two. Parents will confirm that young children more than double the amount of housework to be done. But studies show that fathers do very little of this extra work, even when mothers have paid jobs. Women are the only support for an increasing number of the world's children. Men leave to find work, couples divorce and there are fewer marriages. Whether by choice or necessity a lone mother must earn a living and care for the household. Fathers lose out on time with their children because they feel under greater pressure as breadwinners. Family responsibilities may increase their sense of responsibility towards job or career. Many have no choice but to spend little time with the family they are providing for and see little of their children growing up.

Equality Begins At Home



The Office Worker

'I wake at six when the alarm rings. I get up, wash, dress and wake the children. I get them ready for school and make breakfast for them all, three children and husband. After breakfast I clear the table, stack the dishes and send the children off to school with lunches I make the night before. I get home from work before my husband because I work flexi hours. I wash the morning's dishes, and prepare a snack for the children who are home from school. Then I get the supper ready, set the table, serve the supper, clear the dishes and make lunches for the following day. I may help one of the children with homework and eventually get each one to bed. At the weekend I dust, wash, iron and vacuum. My husband helps me with shopping at the weekend and cuts the grass.'

Office Worker, Canada.



The Rural Worker

For the women in the village the day begins at dawn. The first task is to collect firewood. As soon as we reach home with the wood we have to set out for water. A woman sweeps the house, the yard, the poultry, washes the clothes then settles down to cook the first meal of the day. The children must be bathed and fed. The women workers must be at the worksite by ten. The one hour mid-day break is just long enough to return to cook a meal, wash dishes and report back for work. After a day's work, more water must be fetched and an evening meal cooked for the family. Then there are dishes and kitchen to be cleared before we can call it a day.

Agricultural Worker, Senegal.

Activity
Sheet 20



Activity
Sheet 21



THE RIGHT TO WORK

Charter of rights of working women

- Free compulsory education for boys and girls, a ban on the worst forms of child labour.
- End discrimination in employment, training, promotion and security at work.
- Implement equal pay for work of equal value.
- Health and safety at work, standards protecting women should also protect men (apart from maternity).
- Maternity protection through legislation and collective agreements, cash benefits no lower than two thirds of previous earnings during maternity leave.
- Support the sharing of family responsibilities, flexible working hours, better career development.
- Trade unions to organise increasing numbers of women workers, develop a gender perspective in all activities and respond to women's needs.

The obligations of government

Most states around the world have signed the international statement of women's rights, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). They have agreed therefore, to implement the rights of working women agreed in chapter 11 and to take practical steps to help women to claim those rights.

CEDAW says that women have an equal right to apply for any paid job and to be treated fairly when looking for training and promotion. A woman should receive maternity leave when necessary, should be paid equally for doing the same work but also receive the same pay for different work which is of equal value to her employer. CEDAW also says that states that have signed the convention have a duty to educate and encourage change in family life towards shared responsibilities in the home.

Home and work

Unpaid work at home undermines the right to paid work. Without childcare, family help or more equal sharing of domestic tasks a woman can have equal rights to go to work in principle but not in practice. She will be forced to work part-time, take homework or take a less demanding position. A man can choose whether to put the job first, work longer hours or travel away from home to take up better opportunities. He may increase his earnings or career opportunities. Women are easily trapped in low paid, part-time, home or casual work. They have to accept this because it fits in with the household responsibilities, which are given to them by tradition. Men are caught up in putting in longer hours for extra cash, in shift work or overtime. Men have a lot to gain from questioning the way that gender roles structure our work choices and opportunities.

Fairer sharing would help to realise women's rights. Men would lose some freedoms but gain too, from women being better paid. They would be under less pressure to work long hours, and would have the chance of a closer relationship with their children.

Childcare

The UN Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women recognises that 'a network of childcare facilities' is essential to making the right to work a reality for both parents. Because childcare helps a woman earn, it is the best way for any society to cut family poverty. If governments want lone parents to access work then publicly funded childcare is an effective means to do it. Employers also find it sensible to develop family friendly policies for their staff so that they can recruit and retain good workers. Sharing the costs of childcare make s economic sense for employers as well as employees.



Childcare

'When I came to Rio to find work I stayed with a relative. I left my child at home with my parents. If I did not have my parents I could not work. There is not enough money to pay for a minder it is too expensive. On my wage I cannot afford to go home at the week-end to see my child.'

Factory Worker, Brazil.



Childcare

'My daughter is looked after by my parents who are both retired. They cope because they have to. I am a single parent and I cannot afford any kind of full-time childcare on my wages.'

Shop Assistant, Scotland.

What can unions do?

Discussions with workers will soon uncover the difficulties that parents and carers have. Unions can support their workplace representatives, train and encourage them to talk to employers about paid or unpaid time off for caring responsibilities, paternity leave, flexible working hours to fit round school times and developing childcare to help retain their workers.



'We try through negotiation between employers and employees to fill the gaps in the law. One of the gaps is childcare and paid parental leave. We ask the employers to contribute to the cost of childcare and to set this down in the collective agreement. Every year we publish details of the bargains made with employers in our 'collective bargaining manual' which also shows how the bargaining process works. This book acts as a kind of 'recipe book' showing how to make the things we all need, happen.'

Union Official, Netherlands.

Active membership, Australia

'Organising, organising, organising it is our greatest challenge, not just in the sense of signing up women workers but in being activists and that means ensuring issues of concern to women are issues of concern to the trade union movement.'

ACTU Australia.

Equal pay for work of equal value

There are 550 million workers who earn less than the equivalent of \$2 per day. As a result they and their families suffer from poor nutrition and poor health despite being in paid work. Well over half of these working poor are women. Even where there is trade union organisation the collective bargaining process has often neglected gender discrimination and the poor value given to women's work. If women are to join and stay in trade unions then the whole process of deciding on priorities for action and the negotiation of compensations and conditions needs more active involvement of women. Women need to be present to ensure that issues are raised and to follow the process through to ensure that their concerns do not fall to the bottom of the agenda.

Women's work undervalued

Men earn more than women. In Europe they earn up to a third more than women, elsewhere in the world the gap is even wider. Despite a lot of talk about equal pay there is no steady improvement in closing the gap. The main reason we find, when we look at the pattern worldwide, is the deeply embedded tradition that women and men do different kinds of tasks. There is no consistency from place to place about who does what. What is men's work in Europe, for example, in quarries and in building, may be women's work in Asia. If you make a list of jobs done by men and another list for women, you can look at what you think the reasons for the division are. In Europe it would be argued that men are more suited to the dirty or the heavy jobs. But if we look at the world picture, women produce most of our food by heavy labour. It is sometimes argued that young women are better at monotonous work on the production line, but is that the real reason why young women are working for low wages in factories all over Asia?

It might be argued that women and men have different skills, or are more suited to learning different skills. Girls are improving their education but by tradition they learn different things at school and seem unable to translate their better education into better pay. The market for work is like any other market. If a few people have a skill it may be worth more in the market. If many have a skill it will be worth less. Trade unions have from the earliest days been able to make a better bargain over pay and conditions for scarce skills. A label on a job 'skilled' or 'unskilled' may have more to do with how many people are available to do it.

Of utmost importance is whether workers are organised and able to bargain. One thing does not change however, whatever the work is, it tends to have low pay and status when women do it. The low value placed on women's skills in the community tends to follow them into the workplace.

- Women will be attracted to membership if they see that unions work for women in practice, addressing their issues and representing them effectively.
ITUC Action Programme on Achieving Gender Equality in Trade Unions.



Measuring value

A legal right to equal pay for the same work will not make much difference for women in the situations described in the examples above. This is why the union aim is equal value. We ask which work adds more value to the product the cutter's work or the work of the seamstress, the nurse's work or that of the hospital electrician, the cook in the canteen or the assembly work on the production line. Job evaluation is supposed to measure in a more scientific way what each job is worth by looking at the demands it makes on the person. The idea is to try to measure what the person does and how much responsibility the job carries for the end product. Try this for yourself and you will probably find that it is hard to judge who puts the most value into a finished garment, cutter or seamstress.

The ILO obliges governments who have agreed the equal pay convention to draw up national legislation. Workers' organisations must step up campaigns to ensure that governments and employers implement equal value. Has your country ratified and adjusted legislation to implement ILO Convention 100 on equal value?



Different traditions

'Many women plantation workers are illiterate and tradition keeps them from going for training at work. They are casual workers and because of this lack legal protection. This allows employers to lay them off and deprive them of maternity rights. They are traditionally given the low paid work. They have no women leaders to speak for them.'

Rural Organiser, Bangladesh.



Different treatment

'The workforce is over 600 with one third women. Some 400 workers are permanent but only a few are women. The government regulates wages. Permanent workers get maize meal every month and housing. The women workers committee meets monthly with the local union branch. The issue has been raised and we have started discussions about the differences. Nothing was said before because women were not organised.'

Union Treasurer, Tanzania.



Different jobs

'The garment industry is a profitable one for manufacturers in the Philippines, demand is high and labour is cheap. The employer buys cloth which is cut by cutters, who are mostly men, working where production is modernised and on the company premises. The women collect the cloth, stitch the material at home, return the finished garments and collect the next batch of material. Women bear the cost of their workspace, transport maintenance of machines and thread. The price per piece is fixed very low with little fear of protest, because the women are scattered and unorganised.'

Union Secretary, Philippines.



International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 100 says: 'each member shall... ensure the application to all workers of the principle of equal remuneration (pay) for women and men workers for work of equal value.'

Maternity Protection

Changes in the ILO Convention 183 and its Recommendation 191 (which includes even more provisions) on maternity now apply to all employed women, including those in atypical forms of dependent work. Countries which ratify Convention 183 on maternity are obliged to amend their legislation. Maternity protection was one of the very first ILO Conventions, which has since been revised and strengthened. Legislation must include the following basic rights: maternity leave of 14 weeks minimum paid at not less than two thirds of previous pay or in accordance with national levels of sickness benefit. Women on leave and during the period after they return to work are guaranteed to come back to the same or an equivalent job. Mothers may claim reduced hours or breaks to help them breast feed their baby and are to be protected from working conditions that may be detrimental to health of mother or baby.



Maternity

‘Pregnant women working on small tea plantations tend to work right up to delivery, they go back to work soon after because they are not paid when they are off work for maternity. They become very weak and fall sick frequently’.

Organiser, National Workers Congress, Sri Lanka.

We had a case of a health care assistant working on contract in a private hospital. When she was found to be pregnant her contract was not renewed. Four months after delivery they took her back on a new contract.

Organiser USO, Spain.



DEVELOPING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

As we have noted discrimination against women can occur when we apply conditions to women that we do not apply to men. The Transport Workers Federation carried out a survey of its affiliated unions. Nearly one in four reported appearance as a test applied to women looking for work, one in three felt unfairly treated when applying for promotion and over half were asked whether they were married, in job interviews. All of these questions would not be put to men. They arise from traditional attitudes and ideas. They mean that women often face unfair tests when they apply for a job, look for promotion or want to be trained to do better paid work. It is not unusual for the people who make appointments to be an all male group guided by their personal feelings. Sometimes the problem is not unfair questions but outdated stereotypes about who can do certain jobs. The impression may be given that a woman would never get a particular job, promotions may have always gone to men in the past.

Using the law

In all those countries which have signed the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) the law should prevent this kind of practice. Equal opportunities legislation should cover job advertisements, interviews, promotions and training opportunities. It is in the interests of employers to find the best person for the job, man and woman. The law should require them to adopt open practices, where they can show that a comparison of qualifications, experience, abilities and fair questioning have led to an employee having a particular position. But trade unions need not wait for national legislation. Even when laws exist union involvement will be needed to make legislation work properly. A clause in the company agreement can commit both management and workers to 'no discrimination' and this can be backed up by agreement to publish criteria and qualifications for jobs, complaints procedures, monitoring and review.

Despite equal opportunities progress on three key and inter-related indicators for gender equality is still inadequate:

- the "glass ceiling" by this we mean the numbers of women in management in both private and public sectors
- the gender pay gap
- the "sticky floor" by this we mean is the numbers of women stuck in the lowest paid jobs and living in poverty.

Discrimination, UK

Just over half the employees in banks, building societies, insurance and pension companies are female. Within this sector men tend to get jobs as managers and administrators, whereas women are clerks and secretaries. As a result, on average women earn just over half of what men earn.

UK EOC report.

Discrimination on the railway, Norway

'We have only two women in top jobs on the Norwegian Railways. Why this is the case is a question that is asked again and again. It is claimed that women do not put themselves forward. There may be some truth in that but it is far from a full explanation. It is generally men who appoint managers and who choose men like themselves.'

National Secretary, Norwegian Railway Workers Union.



CONTROLLING HIV/AIDS

The number of people living with HIV/AIDS has risen to around forty million. The most common way to get infected is through unprotected sex. Safe sex is impossible for a woman if her partner refuses to wear condoms. Once she has the virus a woman can pass it to a child in the womb or by breastfeeding her babies. By tradition a husband has the right, a wife no right to refuse. Negotiations between women and men about when and whether to have sex, fidelity and condoms are unrealistic when a male partner has more money, more authority and the threat of possibly violence on his side. Control becomes even more difficult when men work away from home and return only sporadically. Many freely admit to indulging in unprotected sex when away from home. Risky sexual behaviour by men is clearly related to deeply embedded gender roles and is still the main cause of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS spreads less rapidly when gender roles change. Unions can therefore help with education which challenges male attitudes to gender and questions how appropriate old-fashioned ideas of male pride and dominance are in today's circumstances.



Awareness raising HIV AIDS

'A number of manufacturing companies are working together with unions because they were losing so many workers, especially young ones. They invited the union to provide education and recruited counselors to provide more information.'
Youth committee, ZCTU Zimbabwe.



Protecting workers, HIV/AIDS

'In South Africa HIV/AIDS is a very big issue. For the union it is a big challenge having to protect our members from discrimination and unfair dismissal. Most families have been touched by HIV so it is not so much a problem of education, people are experiencing it.'
COSATU activist South Africa.



SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Some men at work can be a hazard to women. There is a difference between a man and woman sharing a joke or sharing a friendship which they both enjoy and the kind of unwanted comments, unnecessary touching, or demands for sexual favours which some men indulge in at work. Sexual harassment is above all unwanted. It can simply be irritating but is often much more serious. It may be more common than you think. Do you know what the women in your workplace have to say about harassment?



Sexual Harassment, Algeria

'We had thought harassment only happened in the city, but we have discovered that it is a problem that exists throughout the country. We thought certain groups such as divorcees would be the victims. But not at all; young old, married, single, all women are affected.'

Campaign coordinator Algeria.

Sexual harassment is frequently a display of power which is intended to intimidate, coerce or degrade.'

It can include:

- unnecessary touching
- suggestive remarks
- pornographic pictures in the workplace
- demands for sexual favours
- physical assault

Harassment can result in a woman leaving her job. She may not get work, lose her job or a promotion if she does not comply. She may also suffer stress, humiliation and anxiety.

What Can Unions Do?

In a few countries legislation exists but many more women have been protected through union education and agreed procedures with employers. Both men and women need to know that harassment will not be tolerated and that the union will support action taken against harassers. Union journals, meetings and women's committee campaigns have all helped to change attitudes. Cooperation with management to agree a definition of what constitutes harassment and a discipline procedure for dealing with complaints have changed perceptions of the problem. Greater equality of opportunity can also ensure that women never have to look for favours to get a job or gain promotion.



'In some workplaces we have managed to create vigilance groups. If a woman is harassed, there is a number to call and someone to report it to and the person is exposed.'

Health and Safety Officer, Italy.



ILO AND DECENT STANDARDS AT WORK

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is also part of the UN system. It brings together workers, governments and employers to develop labour standards. It has an agreed a set of core labour standards which include provisions for women. The international trade union movement argues that these standards should be integrated into actions to develop world trade so that freer trade creates decent work, which raises living standards.

ILO Core Standards

All ILO standards are important tools for trade unionists. A list of these can be found at the end of this document.

Basic Core standards include:

- Convention 87 and 98: the right to join or organise a union and to bargain with employers.
- Convention 100 and 111: the right to equal pay, to have 'women's work' properly valued and the prevention of discrimination in recruitment, training and promotion.
- Convention 29 and 105: an end to forced labour, workers free to leave or change their job.
- Convention 138 and 182: a minimum working age and an end to the worst forms of child labour.



THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

The rights of women, including the rights of working women are contained in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Most UN member states have ratified the Convention. In doing so they agree to change practice and tradition as well as adopt new laws. The Convention calls for equality in all fields:

- political and public life, including all organisations
- access to education and training
- at work including jobs, maternity leave with pay, equal pay for work of equal value
- shared responsibilities in family life, equal participation in the upbringing of children
- eliminate prejudice and discrimination

Rights in practice

The CEDAW committee recognises that organisations including trade unions can help by educating their members and organise support to achieve these agreed rights.

Reporting on CEDAW

Each government agrees to a four yearly report to UN on its progress in implementation. CEDAW incorporates several ILO conventions on discrimination and equal pay. Government reports must also cover the twelve areas for action agreed at the Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing. Non-governmental organisations, like unions, may assist with government reports and/or report independently and confidentially. National organisations often come together to make one shadow report to the UN. The key issues for union reports are poverty and its link to low wages, inequality in the workplace and violence and sexual harassment of women at work. Shadow reports help the CEDAW committee develop a dialogue with governments. The committee makes recommendations to government about future actions towards implementation.



Canada: Campaigning around CEDAW

'On International Human Rights Day, Canada will mark the 25th anniversary of its ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Instead of celebrating this historical milestone, women in Canada are mobilising to ensure that government honours and respects their commitment.'

Women trade unionist, Canada.



Women's social and economic security, Canada

Women in Canada who work full-time earn 71% of what men earn. They also do significant amounts of unpaid care-giving work. Women are more likely to have incomes below the poverty line. The Canadian government needs to: implement the recommendations of the federal Pay Equity Task Force, and increase social assistance rates above the poverty line.

Shadow report on CEDAW.

Checklist 8

Reporting on CEDAW

- ⊗ Your aim should be to highlight areas where you want government to be questioned and UN recommendations made. You may use recommendations in future campaigns. You may be asked to give evidence to UN during the process of reporting to help guide the committee in it's interrogation of government.
 - read past and current government reports.
 - note recommendations from CEDAW to government in previous reports.
 - take the issues one at a time. Use CEDAW paragraphs as your guide.
 - explain any lack of legal and practical measures to implement each concern.
 - Back up what you say with facts, figures and examples.
 - Describe the actual situation women face when trying to claim their rights.
 - Make recommendations to improve the situation.

- ⊗ You may write on paper or by email. Number your paragraphs for easy reference.

The optional protocol

The Convention did not originally contain an individual complaints mechanism. But in 1999 an optional protocol established a procedure. A state must ratify the optional protocol to allow the Committee to hear complaints. CEDAW can then receive and consider written communications from individuals or groups who claim to be victims of a violation by that state party of any of the rights set out in the Convention. About one-quarter of the states parties to the Convention have ratified the Optional Protocol.



INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Governments are members of the sister organisations of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The IMF loans money to countries in need and the World Bank helps with big development projects. Both believe that to raise living standards we need economic growth and the balancing of national accounts in turn will help growth. They recommend that balance be achieved by cuts in public spending, reducing regulations and workers protections; selling public services and industries, raising purchase taxes and charging for public services. The IFIs advise countries to freely allow foreign goods to compete with local producers and encourage overseas companies to come in. They make this, and other elements of deregulation and liberalisation, a condition for loans and assistance.

However, 'shock therapy' programs of economic restructuring in Russia and Eastern Europe have plunged millions into poverty. Africa pulled down barriers to trade with very little growth in return. Citizens want new livelihood opportunities but now expect more say in how those opportunities are developed.

Ecuador: a coalition for action

In 2000 a coalition of trade unions, grassroots organisations and indigenous peoples groups held a national strike to protest at the structural adjustment conditions required by the IMF in return for a loan.

Freeing a country from trade restrictions and encouraging the inward movement of foreign companies will threaten some workers but it can help create many new jobs. The process needs to be carefully managed. As women become better educated they can take advantage of the new jobs, or the farming and business opportunities on offer. Selling cotton, sugar, coffee, beans or flowers to overseas buyers can help rural women earn much needed cash. Employment in factories making shoes, clothes and electrical goods has helped women who never earned before, to have their own wage. Women often value the independence that a wage can bring. But unacceptably low standards should not be used to boost company profits. International producers should meet internationally agreed standards.

Nigeria: holding the World Bank to account in Nigeria

Civil society representatives wanted to see the World Bank hold a proper consultation about its policies in Nigeria. They sent a letter to the Country Director of the World Bank expressing their concern about the country's assistance strategy. They asked for plenty of notice, access to all relevant information, and adverts in newspapers and on television to ensure the widest participation. Web posting Nigeria.

How privatisation affects women

Most government employees are women. When public services are sold to the private sector, competition between companies to win contracts and the need to make a profit will mean fewer jobs, lower wages, poor conditions, less security. When services are cut women find themselves paying more for health services, water and schooling or doing more nursing and caring in the home.

Under pressure from governments and popular protests the UN system has modified its view. It is committed to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving poverty around the world by 2015. The union view is that poverty will only fall when benefits from growth in business are more equitably shared through decent standards at work.

THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION (WTO)

The WTO sets the rules of trade between nations. It works on the principal that the free movement of money and goods without subsidies, taxes or other barriers boosts jobs and prosperity. WTO negotiations between its 150 members are carried out in rounds, with final agreements made by a full meeting of all members. The WTO has been dominated by the rich and powerful nations but new entrants like China and India are beginning to line up with poorer members to put the powerful under pressure.

WTO negotiations

When the WTO met in 2001 it launched a round of talks on development. People hoped that something would be done about big subsidies paid to farmers in the richer countries, which make it hard for farmers elsewhere to compete. Overproduction by northern farmers allows international business to buy the surplus cheaply, sell it internationally and undermine smaller, poorer producers. In 1990s, African states were encouraged, as part of 'structural adjustment' to take down their trade barriers without asking richer countries for concessions in return. They are now caught in negotiations where Europe is asking for an exchange. All Africa can offer is to tear up remaining protection for local industries and open up their banking, electricity and water supply to foreign buyers.

How WTO rules affect women

European farmers are subsidised to produce far more than Europe needs. Sugar, dried milk and other products are offloaded overseas lowering the price on the world market unfairly. Most of the world farmers facing low prices and unfair competition are women.

Cancellation of debts

A coalition of peoples groups working together has forced the IFIs to agree to the cancellation of the debts of poor countries. The leaders of the world's richest countries gathered in UK in 2005. More than 400 development agencies, faith groups, trade unions, community organisations and others also gathered to give the heads of the rich countries a clear message. They demanded that the G8 leaders 'Make Poverty History'. The campaign culminated in 225,000 demonstrators encircling Edinburgh carrying three key demands. That the leaders of the G8 countries agree to:

- give more and better aid
- cancel the debts of the poorest countries
- support trade rules which would allow the poor to benefit from global trade

The G8 leaders responded, with debt relief, pledges of more aid and the removal of some barriers to trade.

IMF still insists on 'growth-friendly' economic reforms as a condition, but these are now tempered by consultation to produce a poverty reduction strategy plan that targets debt forgiveness savings, development aid and economic opportunities on the poorest.



RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

1. International Trade Union Confederation: gender provisions in the Constitution

The Constitution of the International Trade Union Confederation says: It has been the historic role of trade unionism, and remains its mission, to better the conditions of work and life of working women and men and their families, and to strive for human rights, social justice, gender equality, peace, freedom and democracy. To make the trade union movement inclusive, and responsive to the views and needs of all sectors of the global workforce. It shall advance women's rights and gender equality, guarantee the full integration of women in trade unions and promote actively full gender parity in their leadership bodies and in their activities at all levels.

Delegations and Representatives to Congresses

Member organisations shall select their delegates taking into account the aim to actively promote and achieve gender parity in their leadership bodies and activities at all levels. Women shall constitute half of the delegations of organisations having 2 or more delegates. Any organisation which has 50,000 members or less should designate a woman delegate, if women represent 50% or more of its membership.

Any delegation that is unable to comply with the Constitutional provision related to gender parity (delegates and representatives) must provide an explanation to the Credentials Committee, which shall take such explanation into account in its report to Congress and make appropriate recommendations, based on guidelines drawn up by the General Council.

Statutory Committees

On the basis of the nominations received from member organisations and applying the principle of gender balance, the General Council shall appoint: the Credentials Committee of seven members, the Standing Orders Committee of fifteen members.

General Council Composition

The General Council is composed of 70 members of which 6 based on nomination by the Women's Committee and 2 others, applying the principle of gender parity, based on nomination by the Youth Committee. Taking into account the aim to actively promote gender parity, the General Council shall set a progressive target before each Congress, starting at 30%, for minimum women's membership on the Council. The Congress shall ensure that, in addition to the members nominated by the Women's Committee, each region contributes fairly to the achievement of this target. This provision shall apply to titular and first and second substitute membership of the Council.

Executive Bureau Composition

At its meeting immediately following the Congress the General Council shall elect an Executive Bureau composed of the President, the General Secretary and up to twenty-five members of the General Council, including the Chairperson and of the Women's Committee and the Chairperson of the Youth Committee. Taking into account the aim to actively promote gender parity, the General Council shall set a progressive target before each Congress, starting at 30%, for minimum women's membership on the Executive Bureau.

Deputy General Secretaries, deputy presidents and vice presidents

In the event that there are two or more Deputy General Secretaries, at least one shall be a woman. The General Council shall, applying the principle of gender parity, elect at least seven of its members as Vice-Presidents, including the Chairperson of the Women's Committee, the Chairperson of the Youth Committee and the Presidents of the Regional Organisations. The Congress shall elect three auditors, at least one of whom shall be a woman.

All kinds of information including gender information in English, French and Spanish can be found on the website: www.ituc-csi.org/

For the equality department weblink: www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?rubrique8

2. International Labour Organisation (ILO)

The ILO sets labour standards and is the only UN body which brings governments, employers and workers organisations together. It has offices around the world and produces various publications and policies. The ILO Gender Promotion Programme (GENPROM) published on their website a Resource Kit for Trade Unions on 'Promoting Gender equality'. It provides guidelines on:

- promoting gender equality in unions,
- promoting gender equality through collective bargaining,
- organising women workers in the informal economy, young and older workers and other groups of workers,
- alliances and solidarity to promote Women Workers' Rights.

Here is a direct link to the resource kit: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eoo/tu/tu_toc.htm

On their Home Webpage, they have a link (ILO and UN Instruments) to the texts of all the gender-related Labour Conventions which are:

- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
- ILO Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177)
- ILO Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175)
- ILO Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171)
- ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)
- ILO Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117)
- ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100).

Here is a direct link:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eoo/index.htm>

There is a useful section on gender equality issues and resources on the ILO website including information on policies, structures and actions, information like statistics, working papers, and books.

And here is the link: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/gender/>

Contact details

Address: ILO

Route des Morillons

CH -1211 Geneva 22 - Switzerland

Fax: (41) 22-7996388

Phone: (41) 22-7996730

Email: e.quality@work

gender@ilo.org

3. United Nations

Women Watch on the UN Website provides access to all the relevant women and gender issues related to the work of the UN. Weblink: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is dedicated to gender equality. Every year, Member States gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York to promote and monitor progress on gender equality, worldwide. ITUC takes part in these meetings. CSW have responsibility for examining CEDAW reports, following up World Conference commitments such as the twelve critical areas for action agreed by governments in Beijing and supporting the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into UN activities. CSW publish reports/ press releases of their (annual) meetings and other useful information on the UN Website. Weblink: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/>

The Division for the Advancement of Women is the bureau which deals with **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**. Information can be found on: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), is composed of 23 experts. The Committee monitors the implementation of national measures by examining CEDAW reports at twice

yearly meetings. These reports cover national action taken to improve the situation of women, and are presented to the Committee by Government representatives. The committee invites non-governmental organisations to assist in this work by providing specific information on those States whose reports are before it, in the form of alternative or shadow reports. NGOs can submit their reports to the Committee prior to or at the session concerned or attend sessions. NGOs can obtain further information from International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP), an NGO that has made arrangements with the Committee to distribute shadow/alternative reports. Further information on reporting can be seen on: <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/iwraw/index.htm>

Optional Protocol

CEDAW gained an individual complaints mechanism in 1999 when an Optional Protocol established a procedure. A state must ratify the optional protocol to allow the Committee to investigate complaints. CEDAW can receive and consider written communications from individuals or groups who claim to be victims of a violation by the state of any of the rights set out in the Convention. About one-quarter of states have ratified the Optional Protocol. More information from: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/index.html>

Send your communication about complaints to: Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
c/o Division for the Advancement of Women, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, 2 United Nations Plaza, DC-2/12th Floor, New York, NY 10017, United States of America,
Fax: 1-212-963-3463

UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund For Women), has a wide range of information available on their website, including a list of books which you can order. Here is a short list of information you can find on their website:

- economic security and rights
- women's human rights
- governance, peace and security
- Beijing Platform of Action
- gender and HIV/AIDS

They provide region specific information in the section 'UNIFEM At Work Worldwide' on many of the above:
Weblink: <http://www.unifem.undp.org/>

A summary of a very interesting survey 'The World's Women 2000: Trends and Statistics' is available on the UN Website. Weblink: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/ww2000/index.htm>

Information on general research can be found on their website here:
<http://www.un.org/esa/research.htm>

The United Nations - Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing China - September 1995, - Action for Equality, Development and Peace

The 12 critical areas on which states agreed to take action in Beijing were as follows; persistent poverty of women, inequalities in access to education, unequal access to health care, violence against women and the effects of armed conflict on women, inequality in the economy and in access to productive resources, inequality between men and women in power and decision-making, insufficient mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, protection of the human rights of women, stereotyping in the media, inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment, violation of the rights of the girl child.

More information is available from: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm>

APPENDIX

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION ACTION PROGRAMME ON ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY IN TRADE UNIONS

Trade unions have a history in the struggle for social and economic rights, equal opportunities and human dignity. We believe in parity between women and men in every workplace, at all levels of society, and in trade unions themselves.

Since its establishment, the global trade union movement has achieved huge progress in developing standards for gender equality.

But there is still much to be done to ensure stronger mainstreaming of gender issues, greater consistency across policy areas, improved awareness of gender perspectives, and fairer distribution of resources.

Gender mainstreaming is an organisational strategy to achieve and maintain gender equality and women's empowerment.

Achieving equality between men and women is not a "woman's" concern, but is fundamental to the aims of all trade unionists.

Dynamic measures that target women are required in order to redress existing discrimination and change attitudes and conditions in the unions and by the unions. There is also a need for measures to both increase awareness among women and to enable them to reconcile work with their personal and family life, while also allowing men to spend time with their families and share family responsibilities

There are six major areas where women's rights must be defended and enhanced worldwide: education and training; employment and equal pay; social protection with particular focus on maternity protection and access to health care; family responsibilities; freedom of association; and integration into trade unions.

This Action Programme sets down specific measures that we recommend trade unions take to eliminate gender discrimination and promote full participation of women in trade unions.

Organising women workers

1. Making the trade union movement strong means organising! Strategies should be developed to organise and represent women. Increasing numbers of women are entering the labour market and joining unions. Organising and representing women working in the formal, traditional sectors should extend to women in the informal economy, export processing zones, young women, migrant women, women from ethnic minorities, women in rural and urban areas, teleworking and home-based workers, domestic workers, single working mothers, and women in short-term employment, temporary, casual, low paid jobs and other workers vulnerable to exploitation, by helping them to identify and meet their own needs through solidarity action. By addressing the needs of all working people, unions become stronger and truly representative.

2. Organising women requires making women's issues top priority on the trade union agenda, including gender in all policies, programmes and activities and ensuring equal access for women to decision-making positions. Women will be attracted to membership if they see that unions work for women in practice, addressing their issues and representing them effectively.

3. Trade union organisations should use organising methods suited to the needs of women, and their local conditions. For example, meeting places should be safe and convenient; the timing, agenda and duration of meetings should take account of workers' family responsibilities; and, if necessary, care arranged for young children.

Women - equal members

4. Women's organising programmes should be supported by trade union leaders and trade union action policies promoting equal rights for women in all areas, in particular in the economic, social and trade union fields.

5. Special bodies/structures (such as women's committees, women's departments or task forces, women's groups and women's networks) are needed at different levels of trade unions to examine the problems facing women workers and make proposals for eliminating discrimination, encouraging women's participation, promoting equal opportunities and monitoring the advancement of gender equality in trade unions. These bodies/structures should have the power to take initiatives, liaise with other groups of members, and input directly into decision-making. Joint action in cooperation with women's organisations should be a means to achieve common objectives.

Participation of women in trade union decision-making and responsibilities

6. Women, whether organised or not, will make their own judgement about trade unions based on their performance, including the extent to which women participate in trade union decision-making. The number of women holding union office should at least correspond to the percentage of women members (proportionality).

7. Positive action is needed to overcome direct and indirect discrimination against women taking up leadership positions in trade unions. This requires:

- strong commitment from trade union leaders;
- transparent budgets for gender initiatives in trade unions;
- implementing intensive training programmes to prepare women for leadership positions;
- collection of separate statistics on male and female membership, on their participation in all trade union activities and on the representation of women and men in decision making bodies;
- reporting on progress in policies and measures, supported by facts and figures, be made to Congresses;

- examining structures and removing obstacles that prevent women taking leadership roles, and ensuring they are at least proportionately represented at all levels, if necessary through the creation of additional seats (which should carry equal rights and responsibilities) or co-option;
- giving statutory status to women's structures; providing special budgets and adequate working conditions and logistical support;
- establishing a standing committee within unions to promote the gender equality and recruitment policy;
- inclusion of women unionists in trade union delegations to meetings, conferences and missions at national, regional and international levels; including to international financial and economic institutions and bodies;
- introducing minimum target, starting at 30% for women's participation, and a parity target, at all trade union levels;
- introducing, reserved seats, quotas or other transitional measures in trade union decision-making bodies where parity has not been achieved;
- transparency in nominating women to consultative and decision-making bodies;
- supporting women by extra training, childcare or the sharing of family responsibilities;
- making full use of women trade unionists' skills in all areas of activity;
- inclusion of women in negotiating committees/teams at all levels and gender dimension in all items of the bargaining agenda.

Training, Communication and Research

8. Men and women in trade unions should accept, practise and disseminate the principle of equal rights and opportunities between men and women, including women who return to work after a career break. Gender awareness training as well as practical training on gender mainstreaming should be part and parcel of all trade union education programmes and activities, at all levels. All general trade union training should include an element on equal opportunities and gender issues, especially equal pay.

9. All trade union literature and educational material should present the image of women workers and their economic role in a positive manner.

10. Trade unions should carry out research into the working conditions of women, to help them respond more effectively to women workers' needs. Trade union research should be disseminated to policy makers and other stakeholders to ensure a wider understanding of the gender and decent work agenda.

11. Training programmes catering especially for women are needed in many trade union organisations to encourage women members and help them to express themselves and their own demands. It is very important that more women should receive training without loss of pay. Trade unions should fight for educational leave where it has not yet become a right, and encourage women to take it up. Educational activities should be tailored to the time women have available and, where necessary, childcare should be provided.

Internal procedures

12. Trade unions should:

- Develop equal employment, recruitment and training guidelines to ensure that they are not inadvertently discriminatory and that they reflect the diversity of their membership with the aim of gender parity;
- Elaborate equality plans for the unions;
- Undertake gender-impact assessment of all internal policies and programmes in order to ensure gender mainstreaming;
- Carry out gender audit of the trade union organisation, including gender-budgeting.

Women in Development Cooperation

13. In development cooperation activities, the global trade union movement sets a minimum target for overall women's participation in activities at the national, regional and international levels of 30%, or 40% for organisations with a higher percentage of women members, and a parity quota as a final target. Nominations by affiliates should include the names of female and male participants for regional and international level activities.

14. In implementing development cooperation projects, trade unions should make equality a high priority in project proposals, and include specific data and gender-impact assessments. All staff and departments should be familiar with the principles of positive action, not leaving women to apply it by themselves. Project evaluation teams should be at least one-third female, and should assess specifically whether the activity has improved the situation of women.

15. Good relationships with international development gender experts in international organisations policy and academic communities should be fostered with the aim of sharing expertise and ensuring that international development programmes put proper emphasis on decent work for women.

Role of Trade Unions

16. We believe that trade unions make a difference to the lives of women. Trade unions need women members but can only deliver real benefits if they take seriously the imperative to identify women's concerns and take targeted measures to help/support women at work and in the trade union democratic structure

Checklist

Gender Checklist for Projects and Programmes

1. Are women a main target of the project? If not, are women specifically identified as part of the project/programme?
2. Have women's representatives been consulted on all aspects of the project/programme – its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?
3. Are barriers to women's participation identified and have ways of overcoming them been considered? (attending meetings outside working hours, childcare, safe transport at night, different traditions and cultures which don't allow women to go to meetings, etc.);
4. Are women included in the target group for the project/programme and if not, what is being done to make sure that women participate as well?
5. How will the project/programme strengthen women's position compared to that of men?
6. How will the project/programme improve awareness of issues concerning equality in trade unions?
7. When issuing invitations and announcements of meetings and events, does the wording itself appear to be speaking to men only? Carefully look at what language is being used;
8. Women's representatives are to be actively involved in all decision-making at every stage of the project cycle: planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and resource-management;
9. Gender perspectives are to be fully integrated in projects and programmes;
10. All those involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects/programmes will be made aware of this agreement.



Activity 1

Introductory Activity



Aim

To find out about each other.



Group work

Choose someone you do not know and find out a bit about her/him.

You may want to make notes, while you are talking, to help you to introduce your partner to everyone else.

She/he will introduce you in turn.

Here are some questions to guide you.

- name
- activity in their union
- work
- why he/she has come to this meeting.

Each person will have two or three minutes to introduce his or her partner.





Activity 2

Introductory Activity



Aim

To agree rules to make sure everyone is heard and listened to.



Group work

Some people tend to dominate groups by talking more and listening less. Some tend to listen more but are less confident to speak.

What rules should we set up to make sure everyone in the group gets a fair hearing?

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 3

Exploring attitudes



Aim

To explore initial attitudes to gender issues



Group work

'Progress is slow because obstacles remain in the mentalities of women as well as men'.
(Women's Officer, France)

'Men will never spontaneously give us a role. We have to struggle because men don't want to share power.'
(Women's Committee member, Niger)

Discuss the two statements.

Decide whether you agree or disagree and give reasons for your answer.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 4

Building the union



Aim

To create an accurate picture of your current union organisation.



Mapping the workforce

Collect information about all of the current and possible members.

Ask about and note any issues of concern.

Identify contacts in different places to help you communicate.

Keep your information for women and men separate, check the information for differences and gaps.

Put your main findings into a report to your union group.

Discuss the issues in your union group and develop a policy commitment the union to recruit both men and women, no matter what kind of work situation/contract they have.





Activity 5

Building the union



Aim

Share ideas about why people don't join a union.



Group work

Use all of your experience at work to collect group members ideas about why people don't join the union.

Think about different groups, men, women, young, part-time, casual.

When you have completed your list of ideas, go through them one at a time and consider what your response might be to some of these non-members, if you were trying to recruit them.





Activity 6

Building the union



Aim

Practice discussing the benefits of joining the union.



Role Play

Use the checklist 1- the benefits of joining a union for this exercise and ideas from activity 5.

To be done in groups of three as a follow up to the previous exercise.

In each group of three, one person will play a non-member, one a person encouraging them to join the union. A third person will observe the discussion and note down strong points made on either side which they will briefly report to a plenary session.

(All groups will work at the same time. The one to one role play should last for 10 minutes)





Activity 7

Organising in the informal economy



Aim

To learn from experience of building up an organisation.



Group work

Use the information about the SEWA method of organising above.

- organising women into small member groups.
- capacity building in technical areas and group management skills.
- savings formation either as individuals or collectively as a group.
- following up women's need for security; access to health care, child care, insurance, housing and old age benefits.

Make a note of what you consider are the strengths and weaknesses of their method of organisation.

In what way is this organisation different or similar to your own union.





Activity 8

Organising in the union



Aim

To monitor workers needs.



Group work

Decide on the area of concern that you want to know a bit more about.

Prepare some questions to capture women and men's views.

To help collation form some of your questions to require yes/no answers or give people a limited choice of answers to agree or disagree.

Have one or two open ended questions which ask why or collect suggestions.
Examples; why have you not been to any union meetings? What do you think would make union meetings more interesting?

If you are talking to a group make sure that one or two people don't dominate the discussion.

Make a brief record of what the members have to say.





Activity 9

Organising in the union



Reporting the results of your survey

This activity follows on from the previous activity 8.
Use the following headings to form your report.

What did you want to find out about?

What questions did you ask?

What did you find out?

What do you think should be done now?

What do you need to do to make your plan work?

How will you involve your union members in the plan?





Activity 10

Improving union participation



Aim

Share experience of barriers to participation.



Group work

Use the above checklist to help you to consider what are the main barriers to full participation in your union?

Do long established practices, lack of information or meetings dominated by small cliques ever make members feel out of place?

Do you have experience that you would like to share with your group?

Elect someone to give a brief report.





Activity 11

Improving union participation



Aim

Improve involvement and participation.



Group work

Discuss:

- the way that members are welcomed into your union meetings.
- any practical barriers to taking part.
- whether people feel free to speak up at meetings.
- whether women attend and are involved in discussions in proportion to their numbers in membership.
- whether other groups such as young people or migrant workers play active roles.

Develop a plan to help all members to feel more involved.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 12

Watch your language



Aim

Understand the role that unthinking attitudes play in maintaining gender inequalities.



Group work

We sometimes talk or behave as if what women do is of less value.

Without thinking we say 'women stay at home' while others 'go out to work', women gossip while men talk.

Brainstorm as many examples as you can of the things we do and say everyday which devalue a woman's contribution.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 13

Discrimination



Aim

Understand gender discrimination.



Group work

Gender 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.

Women describe one experience of gender discrimination taken from your own life.

Men describe examples of discrimination you have observed around you.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 14

Women's Committee



Aim

Discuss the role of a women's committee.



Group work

Draw up a detailed proposal for the creation of a women's committee.

Your proposal should say what the role of the committee should be:

- how the members of the committee will be chosen.
- to whom the committee will be accountable .
- the remit of the committee.
- how the ideas and issues which it agrees will be raised with the wider union membership.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 15

Gender analysis, assessing your commitment



Aim

To assess how gender aware your organisation is in its day to day practice.
To look at your role in the organisation and assess how gender aware you are.



Group work

Each participant should answer points 1-7 before beginning the group discussion.

1. get the impression gender equality is a priority for everyone in this organisation.
rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always
2. try, but I really have too many things to do. I have to leave the gender questions to others.
rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always
3. feel I haven't got the expertise, the knowledge needed to take up gender questions.
rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always
4. get plenty of information about gender policy and the activities of women in my organisation.
rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always
5. keep in touch by reading and discussing the activities and policy, material I receive.
rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always
6. get a lot of support and encouragement to integrate gender perspectives into my work.
rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always
7. gender issues are a high priority for me. rarely/ sometimes/ usually/ always.

Compare notes on each question. Decide where improvements could be made.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 16

Gender analysis, case study



Aim

Understanding how to undertake a gender analysis.

Case study

The women workers all join the union but don't really take part. They don't seem to be interested in the way that the men are. Union meetings are held after work and women don't come to them. Many of them work part time and don't really take an interest in what goes on in the factory. The men are much more vocal. They do all the heavy and supervisory work and you can rely on them to pay their union dues and stand up for themselves. The women get all the pay rises the union negotiates but there would be no union if it was left to the women.



Group work

Discuss the case study above and use the gender analysis checklist for understanding gender gaps to help you discuss the gender gap described above;

- **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.

Make a plan for improvements and elect someone to make a report.





Activity 17

Making your own gender analysis



Group work

Use the checklist below, either the whole list or relevant questions to help you to analyse your organisation. Develop a report based on your answers. Decide how to raise these points with the relevant decision making meetings in your union.

- **The Organisation's Policy** - Does the organisation have clear policy on all aspects of gender equality including 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?





Activity 18

Putting the case for change



Role-play

Women are not very active in the union. The proposal to be put before the meeting is that the union needs to make a gender analysis and plan.

Participants should be divided two groups.



The task for group preparation

One group will prepare arguments for this proposal.

The other group will prepare the typical things that might be argued against this course of action.



Organising the follow-up role play activity

Both groups will take part.

Each group will be given a little time to prepare for a short meeting.

Each group should elect someone to speak first on their behalf.

The meeting will then be opened up. All participants will take part in debate before a vote is taken.





Activity 19

Making a gender mainstreaming plan work.



Group work

Four key factors have been identified as crucial to making changes work. These are:

- leadership
- clear responsibilities
- building expertise and training
- membership involvement in monitoring and reviewing your gender plan

Using the case above how would you ensure that your gender plan actually worked?

If you are making a gender plan for your union say how you will support your plan and make it work.

Elect someone to make a report.





Activity 20

Work and Leisure



Aim

Discuss the way that work and leisure at home affects paid work.



Group work

First make a note of what you do each day before you go to work, in your midday break and when you get home in the evening. Record how much spare time you have to yourself.

Compare notes and check the differences between men and women.

Can you agree one improvement that you would like the union to campaign for that would be of real benefit to workers in trying to combine work and family life?





Activity 21

Family Friendly Work



Aim

Discuss the arguments which need to be made to support our claims for a more family friendly workplace.



Group work

How would you convince an employer that paid or unpaid time off for caring responsibilities, paternity leave or more flexible working hours would have benefits in the workplace?

Note down all your ideas. Elect someone to make a report.





Activity 22

Improving income



Aim

Plan a campaign for a better income.



Group work

Draw up a step-by-step plan to improve low pay in your workplace.

Your plan should include:

- how you will consult with / build support for your plan amongst your membership.
- your aim.
- the arguments you will use with members and management to advance your demands.
- any problems you foresee and how they might be tackled.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 23

Equal Value



Aim

To review the jobs that men and women do.



Group work

Think about the jobs men and women do for your employer. Make columns on a sheet and record; mainly men's jobs, mainly women's jobs, pay and conditions. Compare your list with those drawn up by others.

Discuss whether women have the opportunities to apply for the jobs done by men and if not, why not?

Do men apply for the jobs done by women, if not why not?





Activity 24

Equal value



Aim

To understand 'equal value'.



Group work

Choose one job, which is considered to be mainly a man's job, one which is considered to be mainly a woman's job.

Make a note of all the tasks each worker does. Make a note of the skills, responsibilities and effort involved for each set of tasks.

Compare the demands made on the employee in terms of the range and depth of tasks by saying whether each is high or low.

- many or few decisions?
- training needed?
- high or low responsibility?
- heavy or light?

Now try to decide which job is of most value to the employer.

Do you think that they are paid fairly?





Activity 25

Maternity Convention



Aim

To check compliance with ILO maternity Convention.



Group work

Changes in the ILO Convention on maternity apply to all paid workers whatever their work contract. Countries, which ratify Convention 183 on maternity, are obliged to amend their legislation to include the following basic standards.

- maternity leave of at least 14 weeks minimum paid at not less than two thirds of previous pay or in accordance with national levels of sickness benefit.
- women on leave and during the period after they return to work are guaranteed to come back to the same or an equivalent job.
- mothers may claim reduced hours or breaks to help them breast feed their baby and are to be protected from working conditions that may be detrimental to health of mother or baby.

Discuss whether all workers in your workplace can claim ILO standards.





Activity 26

Equal opportunities



Aim

Sharing experience of equal opportunities.



Group work

Discrimination against women occurs when we apply unfair conditions to women that we do not apply to men.

How does your employer ensure that both women and men are treated fairly in:

- advertising vacancies
- filling jobs
- training
- promotions

Can you suggest new procedures which would help to ensure fairness?

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 27

HIV/AIDS



Aim

To develop strategies to change attitudes to HIV/AIDS.



Group work

Use your own experience to collect group members ideas about why men who are well informed about the issue continue to behave in ways which seriously affect their own and their partners health and well-being.

Go through your points one at a time and build up some ideas about how you might tackle a friend or partner about this issue.





Activity 28

HIV/AIDS



Aim

Practice negotiating around the risk of HIV/AIDS.



Role Play

To be done in groups of three as a follow up to the previous exercise.

One person (possibly a woman) will play the man who needs to change his behaviour, one person (possibly a man) will play a woman expressing her right to insist on safe sex.

A third person will observe the discussion and note down strong points made on either side which they will briefly report to a plenary session (role play for 10 minutes).





Activity 29

Sexual Harassment



Aim

Develop a plan to deal with sexual harassment.



Group work

You intend to tackle sexual harassment. Put together a plan, which should include;

- how you will inform both men and women that harassment should not be tolerated.
- gather union support for action to be taken against harassers.
- approach management to agree a definition of what constitutes harassment and a discipline procedure for dealing with complaints.

Elect someone to make a group report.





Activity 30

Decent standards at work



Aim

Developing support for ILO core standards.



Group work

ILO Core Standards include the right to join or organise a union, the right to equal pay and to have 'women's work' properly valued, the prevention of discrimination in recruitment, training and promotion.

In order to build support for a campaign you need find other organisations whose members are affected by the issue. You don't have to agree on everything but a common platform would be necessary.

Brainstorm a list of all the organisations which might be approached to take part in a coalition. People's organisations would be most useful because they could use their own networks to reach out to their members.

What might you ask other organisations to do?

Can you think of a campaign slogan?





Activity 31

CEDAW reporting



Aim

Practice making a shadow report on CEDAW.



Group work

A copy of CEDAW will help with this exercise.

Choose either 'the sharing family responsibilities' or the 'rights of women' workers. Use the CEDAW paragraphs as your guide.

Discuss whether your country has the legal, practical and educational measures in place to implement this responsibility.

Record examples of the actual situation of women where possible. Make recommendations to improve the situation.





Activity 32

CEDAW Optional protocol



Aim

Practice using the optional protocol to make a complaint.



Group work

Use a copy of CEDAW and the checklist n° 8 about reporting on CEDAW to decide what kind of violations of CEDAW exist in your country.

Groups should concentrate their discussion on one or two articles.

Choose one example of a violation and use the guidelines below to practice writing a complaint to CEDAW. Use brief bullet points to put down your main points.

- describe the alleged violation, the alleged perpetrator and exactly what happened.
- say which articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women were violated.
- describe any action taken to exhaust domestic remedies; for example, attempts to obtain legal remedies, including who initiated the action.
- list the kind of documents you could attach as proof.

Elect one of your group to make a report.





Activity 33

Globalisation



Aim

Understand how women are affected by globalisation.



Case study

In this country most of the poor are in rural areas. They live off the land and earn cash from agriculture. Women also earn money for medicines and school expenses from sewing, food sales and making handicrafts.

The country is paying off debts, which means less money for education, health, roads and water.

The government could get debt relief. But to qualify it must open its markets to trade and investment. Under more open trading arrangements a flood of imports could undermine local production. But farmers with capital might develop new exports. If the economy opens up new manufacturing industries could be attracted to create more jobs.

Any debt forgiveness money would be spent on services to the poorest.

More spending by government services would create employment in the public sector; schools and health services, water and roads.

Suggest policies which ensure that women will gain new opportunities from economic restructuring in this case.

Elect someone to make a group report.



ITUC International Trade Union Confederation
5 Bld du Roi Albert II, Bte 1, 1210 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 2240211, Fax: +32 2 2015815
E-Mail: info@ituc-csi.org • Web Site: <http://www.ituc-csi.org>

January 2008

Publisher responsible in law: Guy Ryder, General Secretary ITUC