

Let's make trade unions more gender just

Booklet 2: Spaces and strategies for gender just transformation in core union activities



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Foreword

Historically, trade unions have been seen as “organisations of brotherhood”. But today more than 40 per cent of the global labour force is female. It is of strategic importance for unions to seriously include women and their interests, not only to build their membership base, but also to consolidate their societal influence, especially in a changing world of work.

For us at FES, trade unions are one of our most important partners in supporting democracy and social justice worldwide. Therefore, in 2021, we set out to learn more about trade unions’ practices in supporting change towards gender equality. Consequently, we published the handbook [“Transformative Strategies towards Gender Equality in Trade Unions: A Handbook”](#) that explores strategies, ideas, and methods to address gender equality within unions.

Along the way, we felt the need to distill complex concepts of the handbook into clear actionable format that could be used by our trade union partners into their day-to-day operations and policymaking. Together with the authors, Melisa R. Serrano and Verna Dinah Q. Viajar, we developed the action-oriented booklet series, **Let’s Make Trade Unions More Gender Just**. We extend our deepest gratitude to Melisa and Verna, who have dedicated their expertise and passion to this essential work. Their commitment has been instrumental in transforming a comprehensive handbook into a practical resource.

The booklet series consists of two parts – Booklet 1: Gender Just Policies and Structures and Booklet 2: Spaces and Strategies for Gender Just Transformation in Core Union Activities. Each booklet offers practical steps, concrete world examples, and recommendations that can be seamlessly integrated into the day-to-day operations and policies of trade unions.

Booklet 2 provides practical information on transforming trade unions into a more gender just organisations through the integration of women leadership and membership in the core functions of the trade union. It highlights some useful tools to sustain gender justice gains. As you explore these booklets, we invite you to approach them with an open mind and a willingness to consider new perspectives. Embrace the strategies outlined within these pages, and allow them support your efforts in creating a more equitable and just trade union environment. The journey towards gender justice is ongoing, but with these resources in hand, we are taking significant strides towards a more inclusive future. Together, we can make our unions more gender just and contribute as a changemaker for a gender just world of work and society as a whole.

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About the booklet



This booklet is derived from an earlier publication titled [Transformative Strategies towards Gender Equality in Trade Unions: A Handbook](#). This handbook, released in 2022, includes featured conversations with women and men from international and national trade unions about their experiences in advancing gender equality in their fields, along with relevant resources shared by the interviewees.



[scan for the handbook](#)

The present booklet provides “how-to” guidance for the practical application of the contents of the handbook, catering to union-specific needs. Specifically, the booklet can be used for:

- developing and implementing policies and structures to transform unions into gender just organisations,
- formulating strategies that trade unions at all levels can use to integrate gender equality and women members into core programmes and day-to-day activities and operations, and
- mainstreaming gender equality in union policies, programmes, and activities at all levels.

The booklet consists of two parts:

Part I: Gender just policies and structures

Part II: Spaces and strategies for gender just transformation in core union activities

Both booklets are relevant for anyone working with or for unions. However, Booklet 1 is specifically designed for trade union leaders (local and national levels), labour educators, organisers, and influencers or activists within the trade unions. Booklet 2 targets sectoral unions at the local and shop floor levels that are involved in the day-to-day operations of the labour organisation.

This booklet provides practical information on transforming trade unions into a more gender just organisations through the integration of women leadership and membership in the core functions of the trade union. Specifically, the booklet provides:

Gender justice as the freedom to choose different ways of being and living based on equal distribution of resources, equal possibilities to exert influence and equal respect regardless of gender.

Key areas to integrate participation and representation of women;

Ways to **promote gender justice at workplace, community and international levels;**

Tools relevant to sustaining gender justice gains.

¹ "Shop floor" historically refers to the area of an industrial facility where production takes place; in a union context the term is used more widely to designate employees outside management levels.

1. Gender justice at the core of trade unions

Trade unions, given their historical role as proponents of social equality, have been at the forefront in integrating female workers into the labour movement. Besides advancing economic interests of their members, trade unions in various countries, to varying degrees, play broader economic, political and social roles. They are a critical actor within capitalist democracies because they represent the interests of the under-represented in pluralist societies. Therefore, trade unions play a key role in promoting democracy, equality, and social justice not just in the workplace but in larger society as well.

Yet, women remain under-represented in trade unions, despite becoming increasingly important in the world of work over the years. According to a 2017 Gender Equality Survey by the International Trade Union Congress (ITUC), women on average comprised 42.4 per cent of all its members.² The same ITUC survey found that the average representation rate for women in the highest union decision-making bodies within ITUC affiliates was 28 per cent. Women are also under-represented in national social dialogue institutions (NSDIs), such as economic and social councils, tripartite commissions, and labour advisory boards. Available data for 2018 show that female membership in NSDIs ranged from 20 to 35 per cent only.

Gender justice strengthens trade unions for the following reasons:

- Women workers and social justice proponents are more motivated to join the union and mobilise for collective action, thereby strengthening **associational and institutional power**.
- Women bring their unique experience and expertise into dialogue and debate within trade unions and their working structures. Their **inclusion makes trade unions more representative and democratic, thereby increasing their associational power**. It also strengthens the **intersectional profile of unions, hence promoting their societal power**.
- The work women do is an integral part of the exploitation that takes place within the working class as a whole in capitalism. Whenever unions fight injustices based on gender, they fight to defend the interests and rights of both male and female workers, thereby **strengthening the workers' power**.

The transformational process towards a gender just union organisation is a multi-faceted and long-term process that can take place at various spaces and levels of trade union work, and through a combination of strategies. This includes integrating gender issues and enhancing gender just practices in trade union work and activities such as organising, collective bargaining, education and training, networking and coalition building, and gender audits. All the strategies discussed hereafter are complementary and mutually reinforcing to the ones discussed in Part I.

² See [Tamara Gausi, 2018, Special Report: Count Us In!](#)

2. Integrating women in unions' activities



Organising

Labour organising refers to recruiting members, establishing and maintaining local unions, and mobilising union members in support of trade union actions. Organising expands and maintains the union membership. It is the lifeblood of the organisation. To sustain itself, a trade union must aim to organize women workers into its organisation.

Why is it important to target women in union organising?

- Women comprise 42 per cent of the world's total workforce as of 2024, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF).³ Their representation in unions **ensures that the specific needs and concerns of this significant portion of works are addressed**. It also enhances inclusion and diversity in the labour movement.
- Women often face unique challenges at work, such as discrimination, harassment, gender-based violence, pay inequity, and limited advancement opportunities. **Trade unions need women in order to effectively address these gender-specific issues in the workplace**, within the unions, and in the broader world of work.
- Increased participation and representation of women in the trade unions **strengthen union power**. It diversifies membership base.
- Increasing women's membership in trade unions is crucial **for forming of a critical mass that can promote gender justice within the union organisations**, the workplace, and the community.
- Increased participation of women in trade unions not only empowers unions to fight for rights of workers of all genders, but furthermore **empowers women workers to claim rights and welfare**.

³ See WEF, 2024, "Gender Gap: This is the state of work for women in 2024"

Actions on making organising more gender just

a. Targeted organising strategy

This strategy is already being implemented in trade unions, mostly in those that have resources for expansion of membership. It is used by unions to maximize limited resources with a high probability of good results. Most often, targeted organising may focus on particular workers based on: territory (i.e., region); sector/industry (i.e., public sector, garments); or type of workers (i.e., youth, women, etc.).

The initiative of the BWI (Building and Woodworkers International) union in organising women across regional affiliates is a good example of targeted organising strategy. The organising project called Women in Trades: Skilled Sisterhood Under Construction organizes women construction workers (i.e., welders, masons, bricklayers, etc.) across Asia, North America, Latin America, Europe and Africa.

In its 2021 Women In Trades (WIT) Global Research Report, BWI reflected on the difficulties and successes of the ongoing targeted organising strategy by highlighting best practices, what worked and what did not.

A targeted organising strategy needs to be approved by the union as a policy action. It is an important policy decision to target women workers for organising to expand their representation in trade unions. To attain such a policy decision, it is important to muster enough support within the organisation from decision-makers and union organisers themselves.

To implement a targeted organising strategy for women, it is imperative that the union leadership and membership are convinced regarding the importance of having a targeted organising policy for women.

How a targeted organising strategy increases women's participation in trade unions

The targeted organising strategy for women seeks to reach out to and gather women workers in the formal and informal sectors around organised structures, thereby enhancing the visibility of women's participation in trade unions. For example, this strategy organises those women who are otherwise perceived as "unorganisable" such as domestic workers located in households; women in male-dominated industries such as construction workers; or those in remote areas such as rural and agricultural women workers.

However, the union must first approve to implement this organising policy in order to access the resources (human and financial) needed for such a strategy. It is thus important to mobilise support for the implementation of this strategy especially from the head of the organising committee and local trade union presidents. This support can be generated through union visits, informal discussions, and/or formal roundtable discussions with union leaders and members.

Steps to implement a strategy on targeted organising for women:

1. The women committee or women representatives in the trade union's policy-making and executive bodies **propose the targeted organising strategy** in cooperation with the union's organising committee.
2. Discussions are held between the organising committee, union leaders and policymakers for the **prompt allocation of resources** to implement the targeted organising strategy for women.
3. Women organisers are recruited. During their organising training (i.e., campaign and advocacy, negotiation, etc.) and skills based training (i.e., para-legal, gender-sensitivity, etc.), these **women organisers are assigned to the field** through practical secondments or apprentice programmes in organising.
4. The new women organisers participate in a **mentorship programme** in organising for their initial organising assignments in the field. The organising committee of the trade union implements the organising training programme.
5. A **structured monitoring and evaluation process** is integrated into the organising training programme.



Sample: Policy proposal towards a targeted organising strategy for women

Submission Date:

Policy Sponsor: Women's Committee

Approving Office: Trade Union Board of Directors

Responsible Office: Trade Union Secretariat

POLICY PROPOSAL

"Targeted organising Strategy for Women Workers"

I. Background/Reason for Proposed Policy

Examples:

"Despite increasing participation of women in the labour market through the years, female membership in trade unions has not kept up. Trade unions, to be more representative, need to include women workers in its membership in proportion to the number of women in the company's workforce."

(Provide data relating to the women workforce in this company: i.e., per cent of women in the company workforce, membership and leadership)

(Provide background of union policies on organising and gender mainstreaming i.e., union policies on organising or increasing membership, on gender mainstreaming, and cite policies on gender from union CBL)

"Among the strategies to broaden the representation of women and enhance their participation in trade unions is the implementation of targeted organising to increase female membership. Organising women workers into union membership can substantially alleviate the decline in union membership."

(Include in the background other justifications why it is needed to implement a targeted-organizing strategy of women workers)

II. Overview of Proposed Policy

[Summarize here the principles, elements and dimensions of the proposed policy. Also, briefly outline the procedures to be used to implement it.]

Example:

The proposed policy strategy on 'targeted organising of women workers provides substance to the organisation's principles on the promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and gender-fair policies. This organising strategy compliment the overall labour organising framework of the trade union and shall form part of the organisation's multi-form organising strategies (i.e., territorial organising, national/local level organising, sweeping/creeping organising, etc.).

The policy strategy shall be conducted after the following:

- a. Baseline research on women workforce in the company (i.e., percentage, profile, demographic, etc.;
- b. Organising strategy planning;
- c. Identification of lead committee and organizing coordinators in the union;
- d. Identification of women organisers for the project.

III. Stakeholders

[List the stakeholders who are most knowledgeable about the subject matter of the proposed policy and/or would be most affected by the proposed policy]

Example:

- Trade union Board of Directors (proposed policies are discussed and reviewed in this level);
- Trade union executive officers and secretariat;
- Committee on Women;
- Committee on Organising;
- Shop stewards.

[These stakeholders may be consulted during the development of the proposed policy, along with other stakeholders as determined by the trade union.]

IV. Cost/Resource Requirements

[To the extent feasible, identify anticipated cost or resource requirements of the proposed policy, including any human, financial, operational, technological, or other resources that will be needed to carry out the policy.]

Example:

Anticipated costs

Since the implementation of the proposed policy on targeted organizing strategy will be mainstreamed and integrated within existing programmes of the union, the resources needed may be minimal and justifiable.

The resources needed in the future to sustain the strategy include:

- Dissemination of new policy regulations for enforcement through informing, planning and execution of the policy change;
- Hiring and deploying women organizers;
- Training and upgrading the skills of women organisers (i.e., paralegal training on labour, gender sensitivity seminars, etc.).

Signed:

Union Women's Committee Officers and Members

Union Shop Stewards

Women Union Members

b. Recruit and increase number of women organisers

Women unionists who have potential organising skills need to be recruited as organisers for the union. Organising work requires specific skills necessary to be effective organisers.

How do you identify if a unionist has the potential to be an organiser?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic thinking	Ability to quickly grasp a clear and strategic direction after examining the situation and environment for organising
<input type="checkbox"/>	Commitment	A strong zeal and commitment to achieving the set organising goals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adaptability	Quick reflexes in adjusting to different types of situations while organising on the ground
<input type="checkbox"/>	Problem-solving	Flexibility to find solutions and articulate the needs of members within workplace or community undergoing organising
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discernment	Ability to identify potential union leaders within a workplace or community, and to recognise influential women who can be assets to the trade union
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trust-building	Ability to build trust and confidence by conveying support for the specific needs of women workers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication skills	Capability to reach and understand the hearts and minds of fellow workers and the public in general through effective speaking and leadership skills

**Remember,
organising skills are
not gender-specific!**

c. Train women workers to be organisers

The skills needed to develop an organiser are also helpful in developing their skills to impart knowledge, mobilise people for a particular issue and establish linkages with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Women trade unionists who become organisers also increase their potential to be good educators, campaign mobilisers and leaders. These women become empowered and at the same time they empower others. Empowering women within trade unions goes beyond adding members. It is also about building a force for change. Therefore, training women workers to be organisers is crucial. When women are empowered to lead organising, it prepares them for a new generation of female leaders capable of assuming future leadership roles.

Provide mentorship training

Mentorship training is one of the ways to capacitate women workers to enhance their skills and to ensure established organising leaders can provide guidance to aspiring ones. These trainings should focus on both the hard and the soft skills required in organising. Soft skills include communication, teamwork, and developing critical thinking and integrity. The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes projects on soft skills for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)⁴ to prepare workers to adapt to the changing labour market. The ILO has identified the following as crucial dimensions in soft skills development: professionalism and work ethic; oral and written communication; teamwork and collaboration skills; and critical thinking or problem-solving skills. In preparing for the workplace of the future, hard skills refer to the skills needed to complete tasks and acquired through training or schooling such as programming skills, social media marketing, bookkeeping, and spoken languages.

A significant example in mentorship training would be the ITUC-Asia Pacific mentorship training for its members to further capacitate its members. The mentorship programme involves the affiliates of the Asian Trade Union Council (ATUC) in the ASEAN and the ITUC Asia Pacific (ITUC-AP) affiliates, and is supported by the DGB Bildungswerk.⁵

Leadership training

Leadership trainings empower and equip women workers with practical skills such as communication, negotiation, planning and decision-making. It fosters a supportive and inclusive environment where women can capacitate themselves to be leaders within their union. A good example of such a training is The WaY2Go Women and Youth Together for Leadership, developed jointly by the ITUC-AP, the ATUC and the ITUC Global Leadership Program.

⁴ See [Empowering Women in STEM: ILO Soft Skills Training at Nestle - YouTube](#).

⁵ See [Going the extra mile: ITUC-Asia Pacific/DGB BW/ATUC Mentorship Program shows promising results | ITUC-Asia Pacific \(ituc-ap.org\)](#)

CASE STUDY 1

ITUC-AP's The WaY2Go Women and Youth Together for Leadership Training and Curriculum Manual

The comprehensive training manual is designed for trainers and/or facilitators who are conducting face-to-face training. The trainers/facilitators may be Women and Youth Representatives (WYRs) or union member/non-member trainers and facilitators.

The training programme consists of 10 face-to-face modules of learning modules conducted on eight full days and two half-days (a total of nine days) of training. The sessions are designed to be highly interactive and provide participants with opportunities to reflect on particular topics of interest and learn from each other and the facilitator through structured discussions, paired discussions and exercises.

These 10 modules of the programme are:

1

Module 1:
Trade Unionism and Me

6

Module 6:
Communication Strategy

2

Module 2:
Our World of Work

7

Module 7:
Advocacy and Campaigns

3

Module 3:
Gender Equality: Women and Youth Are All In This Together

8

Module 8:
Negotiation is Fun

4

Module 4:
Me as a Trade Union Leader

9

Module 9:
SMART Planning

5

Module 5:
Educating Unionists, Stakeholders and Other Allies

10

Module 10:
Results-Oriented Monitoring

The training manual is accompanied by a Trainer Resource Pack, which provides additional annexes containing supplementary information to support the facilitator, participant learning, and group discussions in each of the modules of the programme.

Module 3 of this Manual expounds on the training about gender equality, gender roles, sexism and activity responses. **See module programme below in this link:** <https://tinyurl.com/mrxvvykj>



Timing	Session
30 Mins	Registration
30 Mins	Defining Gender Equality Activity 3.1 A First Taste of Mindfulness Activity 3.2 Bias vs. Preference Activity 3.3 Gender Equality Word Scrabble
30 Mins	Sex and Gender Activity 3.4 Stand Like a Man/Woman
30 Mins	Sexism, Misogyny and Gender Stereotypes Activity 3.5 Act Like a Man/Lady Activity 3.6 Gender Role Box
15 Mins	Break
30 Mins	Gender Roles and Relations Activity 3.7 Silent Floor Exercise Activity 3.8 Girl and Boy
30 Mins	Consequences of Discriminatory Practices Activity 3.9 What's In It For Me? Activity 3.10 The Daffodil Riddle
1 Hour 30 Mins	Lunch Break
1 Hour 30 Mins	Taking Action Activity 3.12 Envisage a New Future
15 Mins	Break
45 Mins	Small Steps, Gaint Leap for Gender Equality Activity 3.13 Equality Now
1 Hour	Count Us In Activity 3.14 Count Us In Logo Activity 3.15 The Fox and The Crane

Campaign advocacy and mobilising skills training

Union organisers more often than not are called upon to lead campaign actions and mobilisation of memberships on specific labour issues. This training prepares them to devise campaign strategies applicable to their specific organising contexts. Campaigns and advocacy for trade unions refer to specific demands on particular labour issues with clear and intensifying actions to meet the issue demands. The choice of a campaign issue for labour requires: specific and strategic goals; membership support; and public support.⁶ An advocacy campaign for labour likewise identifies specific targets (e.g., the department of labour, employers, or other trade unions) to be able to institute change.

- **Paralegal training**

This training refers to the labour laws and policies within the specific society that affect and govern organising work for trade unions. This training involves the methods and avenues in resolving labour conflicts when they arise through labour mediation, arbitration and dispute settlement.

In April 2024, the Philippines' Department of Labour and Employment, in cooperation with the University of the Philippines Law Center's Workers and Employees Program (WEP), provided paralegal training for trade unionists.⁷ These types of training are meant to lessen industrial conflicts leading to cases filed in the labour courts.

- **Discussion of political and labour-policy issues**

Regular updates and discussions on burning labour issues of the day are important for union organisers. They need to be the first to be informed on labour issues to prepare them for recruiting union members, building unions and engaging in campaigns and mobilisations. These activities include forums, roundtable discussions, and workshops on topical labour and political issues. The main goal is to equip trade unionists with the knowledge to be able to keep up on various national, regional or international debates around labour and other policies. Political discussions may or may not lead to actions or designing a campaign advocacy programme. But the important element is the participation of workers in discussions of issues beyond the workplace and what they can do about them. The UN Foundation blog post 5 Global Issues to Watch in 2024⁸ provides further insights into possible political and labour policy debates.

⁶ See [Advocacy campaigns for labour unions: how to choose a winning issue.](#) | by Jack Milroy | Medium

⁷ See [Paralegal Training Program for Trade Unionists](#) | The Manila Times

⁸ See [5 Global Issues to Watch](#) | UN Foundation.

Collective bargaining



Collective bargaining negotiation is a core task of trade unions, yet few women are included at the negotiating table. To address women's issues in collective bargaining agreements, trade unions have been consulting with women's committees to ensure women's benefits are included, especially in workplaces where women make up more than 30 per cent of the workforce. However, participation by women in actual negotiations remains low, except for female-dominated industries such as garments. Women-specific provisions, such as menstrual leave, often get traded with economic provisions like increased meal allowances during collective bargaining negotiations. When there are few women negotiators on the union team, these specific provisions tend to be sidelined. Therefore, it is crucial to increase women's participation in the negotiation process and strengthen gender transformative collective bargaining.

Steps on how to make collective bargaining negotiations more gender just:

1. **Involve women committees**

Include women committees in planning and strategising in every round of negotiations towards a collective bargaining agreement.

2. **Research and consult**

Conduct consultations with female union members to gather input on their needs and concerns and develop research on gender-specific provisions to strengthen arguments of proposed gender just provisions during negotiation process.

3. **Increase women representation at the table**

Enhance participation of women in collective bargaining process as negotiators, researchers and documenters. Set quotas or goals to include a certain percentage of women in negotiations.

4. **Set gender transformative agenda**

Ensure that the collective bargaining negotiations address impacts, needs and concerns of all gender and advise on solutions that work for all.

5. **Organise training and capacity enhancement programmes**

Train women unionists to enhance their negotiation and leadership skills.

Empower them to take active roles in collective bargaining programmes.

Implement mentorship programmes where experienced negotiators can guide aspiring ones.

6. **Gender audits**

Make gender audits a periodical process to evaluate implementation of inclusive and intersectional practices.

7. **Advocate for policy changes**

Promote policy changes to ensure equal opportunities and representation for women and other genders in the union's collective bargaining process.

Among the common gender specific issues included in collective bargaining agreements are maternity protection measures, separate restrooms, breast-feeding or nursing rooms, protection against discrimination for pregnant workers, menstrual leave, retirement benefits that may affect women more significantly due to their informal or part-time work status, increased access to career development programmes, and training and advancement opportunities. In addition, gender transformative issues such as equal pay for equal work, parental leave, childcare support, flexible work arrangements, anti-harassment policies, or gender parity, can help trade unions work towards more inclusive and equitable workplaces for all.

Below is an example of a gender-specific collective bargaining agreement where the Philippines Metal Alliance secured maternity leave for its female workers.

Sample collective bargaining agreement provision on maternity leave

ARTICLE XVI MATERNITY LEAVE

Section 1. Duration, Under RA 11210 (An Act Increasing the Maternity Leave Period to 105 Days for Female Employees with An Option to Extend for An Additional 30 Days Without Pay, and Granting Additional 15 Days for Solo Mothers, and for Other Purposes), female employee will be entitled to:

- a. Maternity leave of 105 calendar days for live childbirth, regardless of the mode of delivery;
- b. Additional 15 days paid leave, if the female workers qualify as a solo parent, under RA 8972, or the Solo Welfare Act of 2000;
- c. 60 days paid leave for miscarriage and emergency termination of pregnancy;
- d. An option to extend an additional thirty (30) days without pay for cases of live childbirth;

During this period, she will receive her regular basic salary from the COMPANY. She will also be entitled to an advance financial assistance equivalent to her SSS maternity benefit provided she compiles with the SSS requirements stated below.

The female employee concerned may go on leave two calendar weeks before the expected date of delivery. If she fails to avail of this pre-delivery leave or any part thereof, the same may be added to her post delivery leave. Any time off in excess of the number of days, provided by SSS for her maternity leave shall be without pay. However, the female employee may charge extended leave either to her Sick Leave Fund or available leave credits upon approval of the COMPANY. In case of no more available leave credit, she may apply for SSS Sickness Benefit.

Section 2. Procedure/Notification. As soon as an employee becomes aware that she is pregnant, she shall immediately notify Human Resources Division through:

SSS Maternity Notification Form No. B300A and "Application for Leave" Form

Immediately, upon the employee's return to work, she must complete SSS "Maternity Benefit Reimbursement Application" Form B304A to enable the COMPANY to recover from SSS the maternity benefits advanced to her.

Section 3. Extension. The leave may be extended on account of illness, certified by a doctor as arising out of pregnancy, delivery or miscarriage, and rendering the female employee unfit for work. This may be charged against vacation and Sick Leave Fund.

Section 4. COMPANY grants maternity benefits of additional forty-five (45) days with pay on top of the government mandated maternity benefits and can only be availed during the first two (2) deliveries or miscarriage.

See Annex C for further details.

Things to consider before stepping into collective-bargaining negotiations:

- The negotiating team :** The formation of the negotiation team is a legal question and an issue of representation. The trade union and the employer representatives must agree on who are the members of their respective negotiating teams. The members of the negotiating team are the only ones allowed to speak at the bargaining table. The inclusion of women in the official negotiation team of trade unions requires political decisions and strength of women committees to assert their right to be represented at the negotiating table.
- Research and justification of collective-bargaining provisions :** After careful discussions and debates on union priorities in terms of collective-bargaining (CB) provisions, it is important to be able to defend such inclusion of negotiable provisions in the CB negotiations. To be able to defend and justify the demands of the union, it is important to undertake comprehensive and sound research long before the negotiations begin.
- Drafting of union collective-bargaining proposals :** This is more a process than actual writing. The drafting of CB proposals needs to involve the union members and the proposals to gain membership support. The collective bargaining proposals must be responsive to the needs of the members. Drafting of CB proposals requires decisions on priority provisions, trade-off provisions, and non-negotiable provisions.
- Collective-bargaining negotiation guidelines :** Before the actual negotiations, both parties have to agree on the coverage, venue and other guidelines governing the negotiation process. The union must study this carefully and decide on terms and conditions that will not disadvantage their negotiating team. In the discussion of guidelines, both parties may decide or debate whether the negotiations will be open or closed to the public. An open negotiation format allows members to observe and sit during the negotiations but only the negotiators can speak. The closed negotiation format remains quite prevalent in many traditional CB negotiations; however, in this format transparency and real-time participation of membership are sacrificed.
- Negotiation preparations :** The members of the negotiation team need to prepare themselves mentally, physically and psychologically. The negotiation process may be quick, roundabout, dragging or conflictual. The members need to be prepared for any eventualities. Likewise, the whole process becomes stressful, especially when the negotiation process involves finding solutions to conflicting proposals.
- Actual negotiations :** The actual negotiations may comprise different sections. Some sections may be more difficult to reach agreements on than others. Mental preparation requires patience, maintaining sharpness of intellect and a positive disposition. Discussions may be heated at times, convivial at other times, and/or unmoving at yet other ones. Mental and psychological flexibility are necessary to maintain grace under pressure, professionalism, and democratic practices.

Education and training

Continuing workers' education cultivates cohesion and shared perspectives within the trade union. Labour education strengthens trade union positions on labour policies and political-economic issues affecting workers. It develops and prepares trade unionists to defend and protect workers' rights on the shopfloor, in their communities and at the national level.

Common forms of gender education programmes include gender sensitivity training courses for men and women and education modules on reproductive health, gender orientation, and special women's issues. In some unions, integrating and embedding women's issues into the workers' education programmes is the first step in instituting gender equality policies (e.g., anti-sexual harassment, revising union's constitution and by-laws to include gender equality) in the workplace and within trade unions. Other trade-union education programmes include 'stories of change' in their training courses, which focus on women's key role in the historical development and achievements of the labour movement, the rise of women-led unions, and good practices in integrating gender equality into trade union work.

Steps on how to make labour education and training more gender just:

- Integrate gender equality into all trade union education curricula, such as on basic trade union orientation, political education, union leadership and administration, grievance handling training, campaign advocacy training, etc.
- Review labour education programmes and revise them to integrate gender equality issues into the training and seminar modules.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive gender equality trade union education programme.
- Train more women educators to handle the education programmes of the trade union from designing the curriculum, preparing training materials and women as trainers themselves.

Sample PowerPoint slides on women and unionism training module (in Tagalog with translation):

Ano ang kalagayan ng kababaihan sa loob ng ating unyon?

(What is the situation of women within the trade unions?)

KALAGAYAN NG MGA PROGRAMA AT SERBISYO NG UNYON PARA SA KABABAIHAN
(SITUATION OF UNION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR WOMEN)

- ◀ **Hindi naisasama sa pagpapalano ang mga programa para sa mga babaeng kasapi ng union**
(Women are excluded in the programme planning for women union members)
- ◀ **Walang badyet na nakalaan para sa mga gawaing pangkababaihan**
(No budget allotted for women programmes)
- ◀ **Hindi nakasaad sa Constitution and By-Laws ang kahalagahan ng pormasyon ng kababaihan**
(The union CBL do not state the importance of organizing women)
- ◀ **Kulang sa mga Gender-Specific provisions ang mga CBA**
(Most union CBAs lack gender-specific provisions)

PANGUNAHING MTHIN NG MGA KABABAIHANG UNYONISTA
(THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF WOMEN UNIONISTS)

- ◀ **May Women Committee**
(Having women committees)
- ◀ **Bahagi ng iba-ibang antas ng balangkas ng unyon;**
(To be included in all union structures)
- ◀ **Ang ating programa ay suportado ng union**
(Women programmes are supported by the union)
- ◀ **May gender-specific issues sa CBA**
(There are gender-specific provisions in the CBA)
- ◀ **Ang mga batas ba partikular sa isyung pangkasarian ay itinuturing na isyu ng unyon; at**
(Laws relating to gender are considered union issues)
- ◀ **Nakapaloob sa lahat ng aspeto ng pag-uunyon ang isyu ng kababaihan**
(Inclusion in all union aspects the issues of women i.e. vision/mission/goal/plans)

Source: LEARN Module training on Women and Unionism (2022)

To further integrate gender equality into education programmes, trade unions target the involvement of women in designing curricula, preparing training materials, and developing female trainers. In male-dominated industries such as construction, metal, and transportation, gender orientation seminars are integrated into the curricula through the advocacy of female trade unionists. Likewise, women design capacity-building training activities to build up women capacities in leadership, negotiation, organising, and/or project management skills.

Education and training, combined with other interventions (e.g., participation in collective bargaining, campaigns, lobbying for legislative reforms), for women's leadership development also form part of a union leadership succession plan.

Making trade union research and publications more gender equal

Trade union research pertains to studies and activities, such as project studies on labour issues and problems, data gathering for bargaining purposes, surveys, gender gap analysis, compilation of labour situation statistics, and many others. Research involves the re-examination of available data and generating new data to accumulate and expand knowledge beneficial for the purposes and interests of the union organisation.

Union research is conducted for different purposes that contribute to the implementation of core union activities.

The purposes of union research include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Update and expand knowledge on core union issues such as employment and unemployment, wages, benefits, labour laws, and women in the labour market;
- Update and expand knowledge on industry profiles, processes and systems;
- Gather data for collective bargaining negotiations;
- Examine policies and best practices to justify new policies and union resolutions or decisions;
- Analyse company situations and employment practices to expand union membership; and
- Gather and analyse data to produce information, education and communication materials (IECs) for the organisation's campaigns aimed at raising awareness of union issues within the company and the public at large.

Findings and results of labour research may be disseminated and popularized into infographics through publications.

Ensuring a gender-equal research programme

- **Research programming** : This involves the planning of the content and themes for research. It is important to ensure that union research projects include topics on gender and mainstreaming of the gender lens in all topics of research. In making decisions on which research projects to undertake, the inclusion of the gender dimension in the research design should be normalized.
- **Gender-segregated data** : This refers to the inclusion of as much gender-segregated data as possible in all research projects. If gender-segregated data is not available, the generation of primary data must ensure the element of gender-segregated data in the data collection process.
- **Research review and validation** : This involves the reviewing and validating of the research based on evidence, logical argumentation, and academic rigor in all union research. It is important to normalise the participation and representation of women and other genders in the review and validation processes. They provide different perspectives based on their experiences and, in turn, acquire insights on other labour issues.
- **Research presentation and dissemination** : The presentation of the research (i.e., layout, illustrations, marketing blurb, etc.) in a way that is cognizant and sensitive to target women and other genders as part of the audience. The illustrations and layout need to represent women and other genders, and the styling to be reader-friendly especially for women who have no time to read due to multiple burdens. Research dissemination should target women as critical audience of the research through linkages with women's organisations and mass movements.

Publications



Publications include activities of knowledge dissemination and the production of IECs for public consumption. Trade union publications may be online or in print, written or broadcast, and can take various formats such as books, newsletters, infographics, monographs, videos, or podcasts.

Suggested strategies in making union research and publications more gender just:

1. **Integrate a gender lens in all aspects of research and publications** using one or more of the following analytical frameworks in mainstreaming gendered perspectives:
 - Gender roles framework or the Harvard analytical framework – examines the gender roles, access/control of resources and influencing factors that cause the differences in gender roles.⁹
 - Gender roles and needs framework or the Moser framework – identifies specific gender needs in daily life to transform subordination and inequalities.¹⁰
 - Social relations framework – approaches gender analysis from the perspective of existing patriarchal relations along the levels of the state, market, community and family.¹¹
2. **Equal representation of women in the research and publications work of the trade union.** This means equal opportunity in recruitment of women researchers and specialists in information and communication technology.
3. **Institutionalise a gender just review process** on all research and publication outputs. This could include tapping internal and external gender specialists as reviewers.
4. **Institutionalise gathering of gender-segregated data and profiles** in all union research studies.
5. **Provide resources equally** to gender-related research and publications of the union.

⁹ For additional information, see: [ING-Info-Sheet \(2016_09\) 2 Harvard Analytical Framework \(Ludgate\).pdf \(agrilinks.org\)](#).

¹⁰ For more information, see: [ING-Info-Sheet-2016_09-3-Moser-Triple-Role-Framework-Ludgate.pdf \(illinois.edu\)](#).

¹¹ For more information, see: [Gender Analysis Framework - Social Rela | equilo](#).

Networking/campaign advocacy



Building and strengthening linkages is integral to trade union work in developing solidarity across sectors and beyond geographical boundaries. Trade unionism has always been internationalist because its power rests on building solidarity through coalitions, increasing membership and linkages with other labour movements and civil society groups.

In order to strengthen their societal power, it is important for trade unions to network and build coalitions by engaging with their immediate communities and relevant institutions in society.

Principled coalition-building initiatives develop solidaristic relationships between trade unions and social movements. Trade union networking likewise facilitates the sharing of resources and the exchange of capacities.

Networking and coalition-building reach not only the national level but also the regional (Asia), international, and global levels. The sectors may not be limited to linkages with like-minded workers' organisations, but also include trade unions across different ideological persuasions, as well as other civil society groups (i.e., human-rights groups, political parties, business groups, homeowners' associations, LGBTQI+ groups, etc.), public agencies (i.e., schools, embassies, government agencies, etc.), international organisations (i.e., UN, ILO, etc.) and the media.

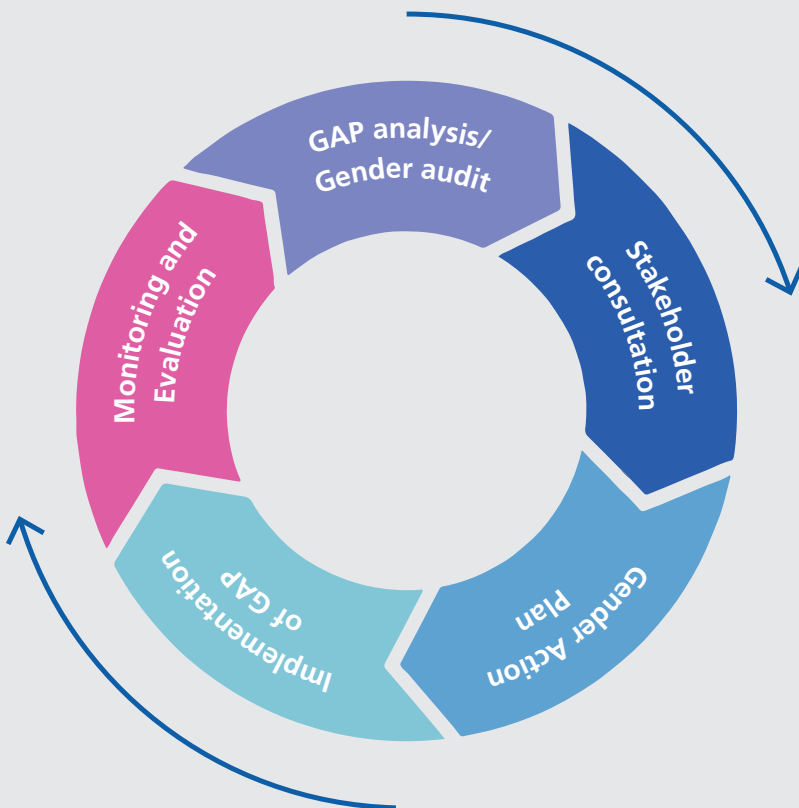
Steps on how to make networking and campaign advocacy more gender just:

- **Build linkages** with other civil society groups, such as feminist organisations, human-rights groups, LGBTQI+ groups, migrants, and other groups within the progressive and radical political movements.
- **Make networking opportunities accessible for women**, consider planning events and programmes in a gender just environment. See Booklet 1 for more details and information.
- **Integrate gender issues** into all campaign advocacy projects (i.e., press statements that include a gender lens in content and media tools).
- **Institutionalise the equal representation of women union leaders** in national and international networking and coalition-building activities.

3. Sustaining efforts towards gender justice

More often than not, gender equality programmes of trade unions are considered special activities or projects that are external to union issues and actions. However, that is a false perception. Women’s issues are workers’ issues, and promoting gender equality can be a decisive element in building powerful and innovative unions.

How do you sustain gender just efforts in terms of policies, programmes, and structures? Sustaining changes for gender justices needs institutionalized processes to maintain policies, programmes and structures. The **sustainability cycle** can be of help as it proposes the integration of gender-justice programmes through gender audit and analysis, consultations, planning, implementation and monitoring within trade union activities, until it becomes **endemic and normalised as a part of union functioning.**



Source: Serrano and Viajar, 2022.¹²

¹² For more information, see <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nepal/19249.pdf>

Working with the sustainability cycle

Gender audit and gender analysis

A gender audit and gender gap analysis are commonly used tools to assess how much the union has achieved in gender mainstreaming with the objective of creating a more gender just union. They examine the effectiveness of internal organisational systems and processes on gender mainstreaming, identify the gaps and challenges to achieving gender equality, and recommend strategies to address these gaps.

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 are 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 do not join the union.

A small sample taken from an informal group discussion, a questionnaire, or face-to-face chat with a small cross section of members may help you to understand.

4. Make a plan

When you know what is happening and why, you can work out and agree on 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 distribute 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

Worksheet 1: Gender Gap Analysis

- **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 roles 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?

Resources for reference:

ITUC-AP Achieving Gender Equality:

A Trade Union Manual (2008)

Link: https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/manuel_ENGOK.pdf

ILO Manual on Participatory Gender Audit (2012)

Link: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@gender/documents/publication/wcms_187411.pdf

The Gender Audit Handbook: A Tool for Organisational Self-Assessment and Transformation (2010).

Link <https://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Gender-Audit-Handbook-2010-Copy.pdf>

Stakeholder consultations

The results and recommendations of the gender audit and gap analysis need to be discussed among relevant stakeholders in the effort to build a holistic gender action plan to address the results of the audit. Stakeholders may be the trade union leadership and membership, union women's committees, network organisations, and donor partners. Stakeholder consultations may take the form of focus-group discussions, workshops, caucuses and stakeholder conferences. Possible outputs of the stakeholder consultations include but are not limited to one or more of the following:

- Policy resolutions and decision points in relation to the gender gap analysis report;
- Recommendations or approval of the recommendations from the gender gap report;
- Recommendations for the next steps after the gender gap analysis; and
- Agreements and action points in response to the gender gap report.

Gender action plan

The gender action plan (GAP) is a roadmap advancing gender equality in the organisation involving its members, leadership and stakeholders. Coming up with a GAP involves setting key objectives, designing a workplan, identifying actions required to meet objectives, deciding how to evaluate the activity, producing a realistic timeframe, identifying resources (human, financial, and technical), finalising the plan and evaluating the results. Below is an example of a workplan.

Worksheet 2: Creating a gender action plan

Key Objective 1	Indicators	Activities	Expected outcomes	Timeline	Resources needed	Person / Committee responsible
Intermediate Objectives						

Resources for reference:

UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2022–2025

Link <https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality/gender-action-plan-2022-2025>

Asian Development Bank Gender Action Plan

Link: <https://www.adb.org/projects/documents/mld-54373-001-gap>

ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality

Link: https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/WCMS_856240/lang--en/index.htm

Implementation of the gender action plan

The implementation of the gender action plan needs to be agreed upon by all the stakeholders with an understanding of the changes needed along each step of the way. Stakeholders and implementers provide inputs with identified actions to meet the objectives. An implementation guide may be drafted by means of a stakeholder workshop that clarifies and identifies relationships between activities, expected outputs, and outcomes. Below is an example of a framework for implementation.

Sample Framework in GAP implementation

Input	Action	Output	Outcomes	Impact
The resources include financial support, human resources, technical expertise, and other organisational assets, such as office space.	Actions could include activities such as workshops, training sessions, research projects, meetings, conferences, and practicums.	Outputs are the concrete results of activities, such as proceedings, training manuals, Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, videos, publications, and more.	Outcomes are results reflected in policy and/or structural changes, such as committee formation, resolutions on gender mainstreaming, and similar initiatives.	Impacts are long-term results from the action plan, such as the institutionalisation of quota systems in the union CBL.

Resources for reference:

ILO Guidebook on Results-Based Management

Link: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@program/documents/genericdocument/wcms_567503.pdf

SIDA Guide to Results-Based Management

Link: <https://cdn.sida.se/publications/files/sida61994en-a-guide-to-results-based-management-rbm-efficient-project-planning-with-the-aid-of-the-logical-framework-approach-lfa.pdf>

Monitoring and evaluation

A framework for monitoring and evaluation (M&S) can be embedded within the GAP, but a separate M&E plan is useful especially for strategic actions plans, such as three- to five-year action plans. M&E processes may take place every six months to effectively monitor implementation and provide recommendations as needed to adjust the workplan. An example of an M&E report is provided below.

Resources for reference:

ILO Evaluation Manager Handbook

Link: <https://www.ungm.org/UNUser/Documents/DownloadPublicDocument?docId=359768>

Evaluation Toolbox

Link: <https://evaluationtoolbox.net.au/>

ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation

Link: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf

Worksheet 3: M&E Reporting Plan

Indicator	Baseline	Expected Outputs	% of the target achieved	Remarks

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The **FES Regional Office for Gender Justice** coordinates FES' work on gender justice in the Asia and Pacific region. Together with colleagues, feminists and partners we create spaces for exchange and mutual learning, and develop transformative strategies for a more gender just future.

Imprint

© 2024 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Nepal Office
Lalitpur Metropolitan City, Ward 2, Sanepa
P. O. Box: 11840
Kathmandu, Nepal

Responsible:

Natalia Figge | Director

 <https://asia.fes.de/>

 [FES Asia](#)

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Designs: Kathaharu Productions

Copyediting: Chris Dickson

Proofreading: Bikram Timalsina

To order publication: geha@fes.de

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