



# Labour: Rights for Women campaign

Global Evaluation Report



ITUC CSI IGB

International Trade Union Confederation



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# 1. Campaign Summary

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The ITUC Labour Rights for Women (LRW) campaign sought to empower women to defend their rights in the workplace through organising them in the unions, strengthening women's participation and leadership in collective bargaining and social dialogue, and raising public awareness of the issues that are affecting women the most. It was targeted at women workers in both the formal and informal economy, with a strong focus on young women workers.

The four-year campaign, which ran from January 2012 to December 2015, was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs FLOW fund. It was designed to contribute to FLOW's overarching policy aim of helping to reduce structural poverty by improving gender equality in the workplace and enabling the social and economic empowerment of working women. The International

Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) provided the overall project management, in partnership with the WageIndicator Foundation and the University of Amsterdam. Activities were carried out in eight countries: India, Indonesia, Peru, Paraguay, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. Local partners in each of the countries of the campaign oversaw the national management of the campaign in coordination with the ITUC. Each country selected three key objectives for their campaign, and worked with trade unions in a wide range of sectors, targeting the women workers in those sectors.

This report looks at the principal achievements of the campaign and the most successful strategies used to reach them, based on reports provided by the local partners.



The table below lists the local partners for each country, the key objectives, and target groups.

Country	Local Partner	Key campaign areas	Target group
<b>INDIA</b>	Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS)	Labour rights for women; Combating violence against women in the workplace; Protection and safety of women at the workplace	Domestic workers; Women working in agriculture and construction
<b>INDONESIA</b>	KSBSI	Bargaining for gender equality; Women into leadership; Minimum wage	Women workers in the following sectors: garment and textile; food, tourism and hotel; banking and finance; chemical and health; metal; wood and forestry; transportation.
<b>PERU</b>	Asociación de Desarrollo Comunal in collaboration with Central Autónoma de Trabajadores del Perú (CATP) and Central Unitaria de Trabajadores del Perú (CUT)	Women into leadership; Labour rights for women; Combating violence against women in the workplace.	members in the formal and informal economy, specifically street vendors, transport workers and administrative workers in the education system; members of the informal workers' union, domestic workers' unions and self-employed workers.
<b>PARAGUAY</b>	Central Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT) and Central Unitaria de Trabajadores Auténtica (CUTA)	Awareness-raising and providing tools for the empowerment of women workers; Including gender policies in tripartite discussions; Increasing the percentage of women organised in trade unions.	Women workers, particularly young women, domestic workers; women workers in the public sector; women trade union members
<b>KENYA</b>	Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU)	Making women economically independent; Equality of opportunity in the workplace; Better maternity protection.	All COTU affiliates covering almost all sectors
<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	Labour Research Service (LRS) in collaboration with the four national trade union confederations COSATU, FEDUSA, NACTU, CONSAWU,	Combating violence against women workers in the workplace; Increasing the participation of women in unions and of women in leadership/decision-making positions in unions; Bargaining for gender equality	All sectors
<b>TANZANIA</b>	Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA)	Equal pay; Preventing discrimination against women; Maternity protection	Health, Telecoms, Domestic Workers, Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, Transport, Hotels and Domestic workers, Higher Learning Institutions. All sectors for maternity protection.
<b>UGANDA</b>	National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU)	Maternity protection; Occupational health and safety; Setting a national minimum wage	Transport, trade, agriculture for the first two objectives; all sectors for the minimum wage.

# 2. Main achievements and impact of the campaign

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## 2.1 Awareness raising on women's labour rights

Awareness raising proved to be a very significant and successful element of the LRW campaign and was a first step towards reaching the campaign's objectives, in terms of equal pay, the minimum wage, maternity protection, equal opportunities, health and safety, gender violence and sexual harassment. Across the eight countries, more than 35,000 women workers were made aware of their rights at work, and of the fact that by joining a union it is possible to press for and enforce those rights. In Uganda, Peru and South Africa thanks to the LRW campaign, young women workers gained confidence and were demanding better working conditions from their employers. Unions in Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda recorded substantial or significant levels of success: on women's awareness of their right to equal access to leadership and decision making positions.

One important strategy of the campaign was to bring to the fore issues that women often do not have confidence in dealing with, or problems they do not even know are recognised as a violation of their rights. In India a lot of women did not know they could be protected against discrimination, and still less **sexual harassment**. There was a similar situation in Indonesia, where sexual harassment had not been taken seriously as a rights issue by trade unions, and in Tanzania where workers were not aware that it was illegal. COTU Kenya reported that thanks to the LRW campaign, women workers had more confidence in dealing with sexual harassment, although not everyone was open to discussing it.

Awareness raising took many forms –workplace visits, visits outside the workplace, forums, training sessions, media campaigns, marches and demonstrations, distribution of campaign materials etc.

**A wide range of outreach activities were carried out** to make the campaign more accessible to a greater number of workers in both the formal and the informal economy. In Uganda, the campaign created awareness among informal sector workers of the need for maternity protection. In Peru, informal sector workers played an active role in the LRW campaign against gender based violence at work, and in the demonstration held to mark the International Day Against Violence Against Women.

HMS India found that its one-day **local awareness camp** allowed for direct interaction with the women workers and involved people from different walks of life. The result of that was greater trust in trade unions and greater unity. At the same time, **workplace visits** helped build confidence among workers in dealing with sexual harassment at work. Similarly, KSBSI Indonesia considers the workplace visits as one of its best practices, finding it the most effective way to reach out to women workers in many areas without any formal training needed and on a low budget. Women workers were able to discuss their problems and seek solutions using brain-storming methods. The unions in Peru cited their **decentralised forums** on the care economy and the economic empowerment of women as being one of their best practices. In Uganda, NOTU used **workplace visits** to raise awareness of maternity protection rights, while unions in South Africa also went to the workplace to talk about gender based violence at work. As a result women workers felt more confident about reporting cases of violence and could be referred to counsellors. COTU Kenya reported that at least 1,000 women workers were sensitised and trained in the key LRW objectives at their work place.

The **production and distribution of campaign materials** proved important for promoting the campaign. COTU Kenya produced and distributed over 1,000 posters and brochures on sexual harassment, discrimination and maternity protection and over 300 T-shirts. It also displayed banners during May Day and International Women's Day celebrations. CNT Paraguay used posters on public streets to call for ratification of ILO Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers, CUTA Paraguay painted murals in the streets, while unions in Peru found eye-catching graphics on their posters and brochures worked well, for example in their campaign against gender based violence. Their T-shirts and stickers were the most popular items among women workers. Materials can also take the form of more in-depth information, such as the study on the care economy, women's employment and trade unionism in Peru, which reflects the views and voices of the women concerned. Unions in Peru also distributed a folder containing information on women's labour rights and ILO Conventions. KSBSI Indonesia and NOTU Uganda

distributed their LRW manual at all their training activities. HMS India and NOTU Uganda translated posters, stickers and brochures into **local languages**. Information leaflets were kept brief with clear illustrations, and addressed subjects of immediate concern in Uganda such as the minimum wage, protecting women workers from accidents at work through the provision of protective equipment, and the law on compensation. Stickers and flyers were distributed to a wide audience at big events such as public debates.

**Building alliances** with like-minded organisations had a strong impact on the campaign, especially in Indonesia and South Africa. KSBSI invited the NGO Kalyanamitra to speak at its training workshop on workplace violence because it has more experience in dealing with cases of sexual violence against women. It also meant the NGO was able to share its materials, such as a DVD on sex education, and that the LRW campaign in Indonesia was able to widen its network. In South Africa building networks with other labour organisations, government departments, the Old Mutual insurance group, the ILO and the Solidarity Centre enabled the campaign to be expanded to all nine provinces as well as to reach out to an increasing number of unorganised women workers.

## Raising public awareness

The use of **media such as radio programmes and social media** was a particularly effective public awareness raising tool. NOTU Uganda noted that both print and electronic media played a significant role in promoting the campaign. Radio programmes, including talk shows, public debates, the internet and newspaper articles were all effectively used. Local language radio stations were targeted and programmes broadcast at a time when workers could listen to them. In Indonesia the KSBSI's press release on the gender pay gap attracted a lot of media coverage. KSBSI also found that developing good relations with online news journalists helped bring the campaign issues to public attention. The unions in South Africa found the use of social media highly effective as most young women prefer to use it, in the form of Facebook or WhatsApp. There was also a hashtag campaign focusing on "no collective agreements without gender demands". The LRW maternity protection campaign was widely covered by radio and LRW campaign teams made use of union newsletters, discussion papers and the MyWage website, which contains a lot of information (see below). In Peru the use of social media made the campaign more visible and allowed for an easier flow of communication.

**MyWage** ([www.mywage.co.za](http://www.mywage.co.za)) is part of the WageIndicator Foundation websites which store and compare lots of employment related data. Here the LRS explains how this website proved useful to the LRW campaign in South Africa:

*"The Mywage website in South Africa has featured specific content focused on women's issues in the world of work. The content includes information on sexual harassment, maternity leave, breastfeeding in the workplace, pregnancy and contracts, domestic work, the gender pay gap, discrimination and family responsibilities.*

*In addition, an online helpdesk has been established whereby web visitors, especially women, are encouraged to ask their labour-related questions. Answers and information are then provided via email.*

*Mywage also partners with the four federations and the LRS to provide support at offline meetings and mini-conferences. Content from the Mywage site has been used to generate LRW booklets on topics including sexual harassment, breastfeeding in the workplace and childcare and work."*

**Using nationally or internationally recognised public events** helped give campaigning work a higher profile. COTU Kenya estimates that approximately 8,000 people (of whom 80% were women) were made aware of sexual harassment, maternity protection, equal opportunities and decent work for women through the campaign events that took place before and during International Women's Day (IWD, 8 March) each year. One specific example was hooking the LRW campaign to the IWD campaign in Mombasa to promote Conventions 183, on maternity protection, and 189, on domestic workers, by disseminating brochures, participating in marches and rallies and making speeches. In Paraguay, May Day was successfully used to make the campaign on domestic workers more visible. Similarly, events were organised in Peru around May Day, International Women's Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. In Uganda, men rated their involvement in IWD events as an outstanding success in terms of understanding women's concerns.

### Gertrude Mtshweni, National Gender Coordinator for COSATU, South Africa, explains the impact of awareness raising:

*"LRW has opened up things that we hadn't thought about before. LRW has also given us space to dialogue and discuss so that when we go back to our federations, we have answers to questions. We had a challenge that the sector dismissed, in the form of sexual harassment. We needed space for us to get involved. ...Now we're not only talking about the issue, it's a policy."*



## 2.2 Women organising women

Building women's workers power through organising them in the unions is essential to enforcing and improving their rights at work, and most of the unions reported an increase in the number of women organisers and women joining unions. Across the eight countries, more than 3,000 women enhanced their organising skills by participating in training and conducting workplace visits and other outreach activities. As a result, more than 25,000 women workers joined a union. The highest numbers of women joining unions were achieved in Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, and India.

The importance for the unions of **women organising women** was underlined by COTU Kenya who explained quite simply that women leaders understood the challenges women faced in the workplace. Key to their success was stressing the role of solidarity among women, which provides them “with the opportunity to organise, present their views (voice power), and to demand their rights”.

TUCTA Tanzania reported that 11,397 women had been organised during the 4-year campaign period, while in Uganda some 1,850 women were organised, 50 per cent of whom were under 36.

In South Africa, 4,079 women joined a union. New trade union members included women farm workers, domestic workers, women workers in call centres, young women, women in community formations, and the LGBT community. The representative of CONSAWU South Africa noted that it was thanks to the LRW campaign that “the federation has started realising that it is important for the unions to empower women to bring them on board, and to deal with issues together as partners”.

HMS India found that thanks to the LRW campaign “workers know that the real strength exists in unions” and as a result either formed new unions or increased the membership of existing ones. There also needs to be greater awareness within the unions. They reported that more than 6,300 women workers in the informal economy or in precarious jobs (contract workers) joined a union.

The unions in Peru said that thanks to raising the profile of the LRW campaign through activities linked to key international days such International Women's Day (8 March), the World Day for Decent Work (7 October) and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November), the Network of Women Workers in the Informal Economy (Red de Mujeres Trabajadoras de la Economía Informal) increased its membership from 50 to 195 women in the provinces

of La Victoria and Huara. The Huara Domestic Workers' Union increased its membership by 20, and the Lima Este Domestic Workers' Union saw an increase of 30.

Meeting women and **organising outside the workplace** was considered highly successful. The South African unions said participants found the activities enjoyable and they were easy to organise. KSBSI Indonesia always chose to conduct meetings near the workplace at the end of the working day as that was an effective time to organise and to meet women workers.

**Adapting strategies to meet the needs of each target group** is an effective way of reaching more women workers. One of the target groups for the LRW campaign in South Africa was domestic workers, who can be hard to reach because they work in private homes, and because of their working hours. They found that these workers are easier to reach on Sundays, and that a useful starting point was to get union members who employ domestic workers to help organise them. The representative for NACTU noted that thanks to the LRW workshops she had learnt that “the different sectors don't all operate at the same level, so the challenges are not treated in the same way”, and that this was very helpful for her union, the Professional Educator's Union (PEU).

**Careful planning and monitoring worked** as a successful strategy in India. At the beginning of the campaign, HMS held a two day “Training for Trainers” workshop, which set out their four-year action plan. The campaign activists and organisers who took part in the workshop then reached out to women workers in identified establishments, developed pre-campaign survey forms to collect data on issues and problems experienced at work, prepared their data base and conducted awareness programmes for workers on their rights and obligations. Activities were carried out at the local, district, state and national level. The state-level women organisers met with the campaign group every two months for monitoring and guidance. Women felt more empowered as a result, the number of women organisers increased and union membership increased.



## Meet Tati – a courageous Indonesian organiser

Tati Suharti is a 34-year-old union organiser at PT. Greentex. Tati first joined the KSBSI in 2009 while working for a manufacturer named PT. Elok Indo Pratama in the Marunda-North Jakarta zone near her home. She became involved in a bitter but successful struggle over meal allowances. A subsequent campaign among the company buyers to boycott the manufacturer led to it being closed down however, and Tati was discouraged for a while from further involvement in union activity. Things changed after she joined Greentex and became angered at strong-arm tactics by the employer to get workers to accept delays in the payment of the minimum wage. She established a union in the company by organising her colleagues. Most were women but two male workers joined, as chairperson and secretary. They were threatened and beaten by hired thugs however, and withdrew from the union. It was left with an all-woman leadership that the thugs did not attack. Gradually the threats disappeared too, thanks to discussions to explain the purpose of the union. The union officials made it clear they would not respond to threats and would deal only with the employer when discussing their demands. They took their fight for the implementation of the 2012 minimum wage to the Industrial Relations Court and they succeeded. From 2013 onwards the company has always paid the minimum wage and adjusted it annually.

Other successes that Tati and her fellow union members have achieved include making the company provide a breastfeeding corner, and restoring the attendance allowance to its former level. Out of the 1,500 workers at the plant, predominantly women, Tati has managed to organise approximately 500, with around 300 paying the membership dues. They are currently negotiating a collective agreement with the company. Tati also sits on the branch level of her federation, and is set to be nominated for a position on the federation's national board at the May 2016 Congress.



## 2.3 Collective Bargaining

Significant results were achieved in terms of collective bargaining in South Africa, Indonesia, Tanzania, and Uganda, both in terms of the number of women negotiators trained and included in negotiation teams and the number of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) with gender clauses concluded. Across the eight countries, 310 women are now participating in CBA negotiations within their unions. Above all, important lessons were learnt about what needs to be done to improve the bargaining strength of women workers, and that including women in negotiating teams has an obvious impact on the inclusion of gender specific clauses in CBAs.

**Training workshops** on collective bargaining, and specifically on the inclusion of gender clauses in CBAs, proved to be an effective strategy in **South Africa**. These workshops resulted in assessments of CBAs and workplace policies, in formulating gender demands related to sexual harassment, maternity protection and childcare facilities and in strengthening the process for placing those demands on the bargaining agendas of the unions. The women who participated were empowered on handling issues of discrimination at the workplace and on organising women workers around those issues.

**The training on gender and equal pay** has given shop stewards and gender coordinators' the knowledge and skills to put the issue of equal pay for work of equal value on the agenda. They have been working closely with employment equity forums, focusing on job evaluation, and have been carrying out equal pay audits in the workplace. Gender coordinators who attended the workshops were later able to influence collective bargaining. One activity involved looking at existing agreements and identifying areas that were missing. Because the agreements had been negotiated by men, they had failed to take on board gender specific issues.

As a result of the workshops and public debates South Africa's trade union federations are developing discussion papers on maternity protection. Childcare has been identified as a critical issue for all working parents, men and women. One successful example was the SA Services Union which signed an agreement with MACRO for paternity leave of 14 days, breastfeeding facilities, fridges and pumps. The federations have identified **women who will be mentored by senior negotiators** to become negotiators. The South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU) encourages its branch unions to elect women as shop stewards. These shop stewards are also capacitated to sit in wage negotiations in the different companies.

They start as observers and join negotiations when they feel ready to do so. South Africa has 15 women negotiators, and that number should now rise.

In **Indonesia KSI** succeeded in getting four women included in negotiating teams. Four CBAs that contained **gender specific clauses**, notably on equal pay, were concluded in 2012, four in 2013, one in 2014 and three in 2015 (with a fourth that included better transportation and meal allowances for all workers not just women). Although there were fewer women negotiators and fewer collective agreements than initially targeted, those **clauses covered 26,329 women**, and more were still in the process of negotiation. There was much greater awareness of the need for gender specific clauses, but the capacity is still lacking. A useful lesson for the future therefore is the need for **more training for women on how to negotiate a collective agreement**.

In **Tanzania** most CBAs now have a clause on maternity protection. **34 CBAs** that contained gender specific clauses were concluded **covering 22,500 women**. In addition, six draft Workplace Gender Policies were developed – mostly covering discrimination and sexual harassment – to promote equality and address sexual harassment issues. There is constant follow up to ensure unions' negotiating teams have women representatives so that women's issues are tabled for negotiation and collective bargaining.

**Uganda** has 80 women negotiators, and there are now agreements covering gender specific clauses in a wide range of sectors. In the plantations sector women now have 60 days of maternity leave while men have paternity leave of four working days. There are day-care centres in the horticulture union and a policy on sexual harassment has been put in place. The high number of workers with HIV and AIDS including those sexually harassed is being reduced. Railway industry workers who used to suffer as a result of sub-standard protective clothing and having to carry heavy loads are now provided with very good protective equipment, are given lunch and tea breaks, which was not the case before, and machines have been brought in to help in lifting heavy loads. There are fewer cases of occupational diseases among workers in the hospitality industry. Workers suffered from having to stand for long hours and providing massages that exposed them to sexual harassment. The situation has improved and workers are working in shifts of five hours as opposed to the previous eight hours. Education union women secured a room where they can breast feed and check on their babies.

In both India and Kenya more women are now involved in negotiations, which promises well for the future, and even though there have been no significant achievements to date in terms of new CBAs with gender specific clauses, unions were successful in developing a number of workplace policies or achieving improvements on women's labour rights. In India, 600 domestic workers were registered in the Maharashtra

Welfare Board with the support of the LRW organiser in the Maharashtra region. COTU Kenya reported in 2012 that 50 women workers from the car and motor industry were now getting equal pay with their male counterparts, following the pay equity training, while in 2014 more than 20 women were included in negotiating teams in the commercial, domestic workers, plantation, amalgamated, electrical and communication unions.



## 2.4 Leadership development

More women are taking up leadership positions in their unions in several of the countries involved in the LRW campaign. Across the eight countries, more than 60 women were elected in leadership positions at different levels.

**Training and mentorship** are crucial in helping women to take on a greater role, and can have a multiplier effect. The LRW Women in Leadership programme in **South Africa** was a capacity building exercise that gave women the confidence to take up leadership in the trade unions and in the workplace. Following the training programme, the federations recognised the need for mentorship and creating opportunities to put young women leaders in key leadership positions in the union and in the workplace. The training also highlighted the need to focus on the world of work, and the programme brought together young women entrepreneurs, women employed in the private sector and community activists, as well as young women leaders from the unions. For the participants, the campaign provided a safe space to dialogue, debate and engage in the key drivers that influence the increased participation of women in unions and women in leadership.

In addition, unions in South Africa found that the provision of childcare, together with a reduction in weekend and late evening meetings encouraged more women to serve as shop stewards and this increases women's activism in the unions. In their evaluation meeting, women testified that having more women in leadership positions influences the organisational culture: the meetings start on time, they are shorter and women leaders understand why childcare must be provided.

As a result, FEDUSA seconded two young women to sit on their National Executive Committee, and two of its five vice-presidents are women. NACTU elected a young woman to serve on the development chamber of the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) and elected a young woman as its vice president for gender. CONSAWU reported that in their affiliated unions women were coming on board as negotiators and shop stewards, and that one union has a female president. These developments give women, particularly young women, a voice in their unions and the confidence to do more. COSATU, for example launched its young worker's forum with a debate on whether South Africa is ready for a woman president.

**NOTU Uganda** trained a total of 210 young women workers as part of the LRW campaign. It found in the early stages of the training that one of the biggest problems was lack of confidence, and so it developed **mentorship programmes**. This instilled confidence in the women,

who are now experts in the Minimum Wage, Sexual Harassment, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and Maternity Protection, and are passing their knowledge on to thousands of workers. Thanks to this growing confidence and the courage to challenge the established order, these women have found themselves subsequently occupying positions in leadership, where they have an influence over the matters that concern them.

**Confidence building techniques** are an important part of leadership training. At every session of the LRW trainers' training in Uganda, facilitators assigned activities to the participants. Participants were in small groups where they chose a secretary and a chairperson. The roles were distributed in a way that gave everyone an opportunity to contribute, ensuring participation as well as confidence building. One of the participants shared her experience: *"Those who saw me at the beginning of LRW campaign in Jinja, cannot believe that I am the same person who can now stand before participants and confidently train them. I faced a difficult time when I was asked to introduce myself on the first day of the training. I could neither stand upright, nor speak in an audible voice for even those whom I was close to hear. LRW gave me exposure to steadily build up my confidence and become a good trainer"*.

As a result, in Uganda the percentage of young women in leadership positions rose from 22 per cent to 45 per cent in 2015.

### Estela from the CNT Paraguay talks of the outcome of their efforts to get women into leadership:

*"At the CNT's last congress (October 2015) we worked to ensure that nine women joined the Executive Committee of 26, and we got one woman onto the leadership of seven, which is where I am. It is important, not for myself but for winning a place in this closed circle. We were told "remember, there is no money there". These are the things that we are achieving with this campaign, and we are continuing to make achievements with every one of our sisters. I am more reassured about the work now, because there are sisters who are leading from the front, who can keep going, who took on the responsibility of building the organisation."*

Women who already hold leadership positions can **lead by example**, showing others what can be achieved and **inspiring** them to do the same. In **Indonesia** a number of women who took part in the LRW campaign spoke of their plans for the future, which included becoming part of the leadership structure of their union, not only at plant level but at the branch or even national level of their union federation. This came about after women already in leadership posts were invited to speak at LRW campaign events, and shared their experience of becoming activists and union leaders.

**COTU Kenya** noted that women who were in a leadership position understood that the challenges they faced were due to patriarchal systems, and recognised the importance of being champions for women's rights.

The Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (KPAWU), held several training workshops that led to the establishment of a Women's Committee comprised of 16 women, which in turn led to a 5 per cent increase in women in leadership. In addition, a woman was elected as the chief shop steward in the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union.

**In India**, a number of women now occupy leadership positions on the executive committees of unions and for the first time a woman was elected as vice-President in the construction workers' union.

**In Peru** there are six women on the Executive of the CATP national centre. Nine women hold leadership positions in the CNT Paraguay.

## Meet Barbara Fourie, Gender Representative for the FEDUSA Provincial Executive Committee, South Africa:

*"I have been elected a shop steward and branch chairperson by my constituencies for a second term where I competed against "old" white male shop stewards in a male dominated sector. I believe that it is my integrity and hard work that won me the respect of those male members.*

*I have been fortunate to use my voice as a coordinator for the Labour Rights for Women in the Western Cape representing FEDUSA at grass root levels. During our campaigns we were able to discuss issues that affect women in the work force such as sexual harassment, maternity protection, which sparked the launch of our Child Care Facilities in the Workplace booklet, and understanding the new amendments to the labour laws. We were successful in the number of attendees and media coverage.*

*I utilise my position in the union to push for gender equality when meeting with members, both males and females. When I became part of the Young Women in Leadership under the ILO banner it taught me the value of fruitful engagements with members and managers alike.*

*I canvassed to become the Gender representative for Prasa Metrorail on the Employment Equity Skills Development committee, because I feel that is where I can make a valuable contribution to advocate for gender equity by ensuring that women are considered for skills up grade and awarding of bursaries. My belief was confirmed by the teaching of the Young Women in Leadership's slogan of 'Nothing about us, without us'.*

*This is my platform where I can influence the empowerment of women through education and equal opportunity. The results are evident as more women are entering the Engineering environment than before. Furthermore I have been privileged to be elected as the Gender Representative for the FEDUSA Provincial Executive Committee in my absence, of which I am personally proud. It shows that what I've learned through the Young Women in Leadership and have put into practice has really paid off. I have become a formidable force in advocating for Gender Equity."*

## 2.5 Lobbying and social dialogue

**Bi-partite negotiations at the company level** were the most common and effective form of dialogue. If agreement cannot be reached, the company level union can seek to strengthen its negotiation position by calling upon its federation and confederation to step in. The local office of the Ministry of Labour can also be called in for tripartite negotiations.

Careful **preparation and training** make a big difference. It became clear that the company level union's **knowledge of labour rights**, the legal framework as well as the procedures for organising and maintaining industrial action such as strikes is crucial for its ability to engage successfully in social dialogue. Soft skills, namely **how to approach and engage with management** and how to communicate with union members and mobilise them should union action prove necessary, are equally important.

In-depth studies developed by the unions, such as the study on the care economy, women's employment and trade unionism in Peru, and the maternity protection and equal pay studies in Tanzania proved very useful advocacy tools

The LRW campaign teams in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Indonesia are urging their governments to ratify Convention 183 on Maternity Protection, while in Paraguay the LRW campaign team is urging the government to ratify ILO Convention 102 on Social Protection and to approve the bill of rights for domestic workers which, among other provisions, gives domestic workers the right to a minimum wage, an eight hour working day, and access to social security. India is urging the government to ratify ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers, while the trade union partners in South Africa and Paraguay, where Convention 189 was ratified in 2013, have enhanced their efforts to ensure the active implementation of the Convention. In Indonesia, KSB-SI is actively involved in the Committee for Domestic Worker Protection, a coalition with two other trade union confederations and domestic workers' organisations.

Positive results from social dialogue were reported by the **KSBSI Indonesia**. Specific examples of improved employment conditions included the respect of the minimum wage, addressing the issue of short term contracts, provision of allowances (e.g. length of service, over time, meals, transportation), freedom of association in multinational companies (MNC), improved working conditions for women (day care and lactation arrangements, menstruation leave, specific adjustments in health insurance for women) and improved relationships between the union and management. Since 2013

women workers play an active role in pressuring the tripartite board to increase minimum wage by 20 per cent.

**TUCTA Tanzania** has established a team of 25 experts on pay equity, thanks to training and awareness raising, and 148 women took part in a public debate on pay equity, which involved employers, governments and civil society organisations (CSOs). It also now has an expert campaign team on sexual harassment. TUCTA submitted to the Minister of Labour and Employment a call to support a new ILO instrument on Gender Based Violence. The Ministry of Gender is now reviewing the Maternity Protection section of the country's labour law, notably with regard to including time allowed for breastfeeding after maternity leave.

**In Uganda, public debates at the workplace** strengthened the role and confidence of the trade union representatives. They provided a useful forum for identifying and raising awareness of the problems faced by women workers, leading to better results from negotiations. Specialists from different areas of interest were invited to be panellists, enriching the debates and raising public awareness of labour rights for women. Some of these debates were designed to enable tri-partite dialogue, by including government representatives as well as workers and employers, helping to solve some problems amicably. Debates also minimised the gap between employers and workers, as they created a situation in which they sat and discussed as equal partners.

One of the women leaders from the Uganda Employees' Union spoke of her experience: *"I sat with officials from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), in the debate. This was my first time to have that experience. At first I hesitated to talk for fear of losing my job, but eventually after listening to my male colleague talking with confidence, I also made statements on the poor working conditions we faced, citing lack of and sub-standard protective gear. I was so surprised that after only three months the situation improved."*

In the Ugandan experience therefore, such forums led to social dialogue, and because the debates were conducted at the work place it provided an opportunity to identify the real problems, which in turn led to employers improving working conditions. Furthermore, the participation of government officials such as labour inspectors was a very public reminder of their responsibilities.

**In South Africa**, the LRW campaign is calling for government and employers to do more to increase maternity benefits and provide child care facilities. This call attracted a great deal of media attention. Under the banner of the LRW campaign, the four federations also developed an advocacy campaign focusing on the rights of LGBTI workers in the workplace. In addition, the campaign team developed a relationship with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) and now unions feel comfortable to approach the CCMA for help and training. The CCMA invited the trade union partners to make submissions to the labour law amendments. They have also invited unions to attend workshops on these amendments. The Basic Conditions and Employment Act and the Labour Relations Act were amended in 2014.

**In Paraguay**, debates were also seen a useful contribution to social dialogue, by informing people and raising awareness. Preparation and **lobbying**, with many **visits to parliament**, led to improvements in the bill, which became law, on maternity protection, such as the increase in maternity leave from two months to four. The CNT plans to build on this lesson, and will begin to lobby both the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry for Women ahead of the 2018 discussion in the ILO on a convention against violence in the workplace. After a general strike organised on 26 March 2014, the National Tripartite Committee on Equal Opportunities resumed its work and had its first meeting which was attended by the trade union representatives.

In 2014 **CATP Peru** submitted a proposal to the government on measures to protect women administrators against wage discrimination.



**CAMPAÑA**

# Por los Derechos Laborales para las Mujeres del Perú

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UN PAÍS CON POSIBILIDADES**

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# 3. Challenges

**Building women's confidence** remains a big challenge. In Indonesia the KSBSI cited a lack of confidence among women as being one of the reasons that they did not have as many women negotiators as planned. In Kenya too it was noted that women still suffer an inferiority complex and do not aspire to leadership. Similarly, in South Africa it was said that some women are still “nervous” to get involved in women's rights issues as they fear a backlash from men, both at their work and at home. Women are also fearful of losing their jobs, and as a result they shy away from speaking up in meetings in front of their more confident male counterparts. Some issues, such as sexual harassment and discrimination, are often not even addressed by women, either because they don't know that these are workplace and trade union issues, or because they are too timid to address 'taboo' subjects, especially those related to sexuality, be it harassment or for example LGBT rights.

**Trade union culture** still needs to change. In Indonesia it was found that in addition to their lack of confidence, women were not given the opportunity to be negotiators by their (male) leaders. In both Peru and Paraguay, women involved in the LRW campaign pointed to the need for trade unions to reform their own culture to attract more women and young people, because as the Peruvians pointed out, they do not feel listened to by union leaders. The CAT Peru explained that for most women taking part in unions led by men was a big challenge owing to the prevailing masculine culture and practices within the unions, social prejudice and preconceived ideas about the role of women. They pointed to a lack of information, support and training for women, and the daily struggle of balancing family responsibilities with work and trade union activities. Unions need to put gender issues higher on their agenda, show women and young people that they can and are working to address their needs, hold union meetings at times and places that make it easier for everyone to participate (in or near the workplace, in lunch breaks or immediately after work, keeping meetings short), provide childcare, and promote women's leadership through training, etc.

**Traditional male attitudes in the home** was one of the big challenges identified in Peru, where men were not supportive of their wives' involvement in union activities. They still felt women should be at home to look after them, their house and the children.

**Reaching out to women** can still prove challenging, because often they work in rural areas that are difficult to reach, or in sectors not traditionally represented by unions, such as the informal economy, the care sector

or export processing zones. Local level campaigns with workplace visits have already proved useful tactics, as well as positive achievements that show women that they have rights at work and that they can be enforced, attracting women to unions.

**Employers' attitudes** still need to change. In Uganda for example women workers involved in the LRW campaign reported that employers remained stubborn and still violated workers' rights. Often employers would not cooperate willingly in the LRW campaign. In Indonesia, employers' representatives rarely attended the public debates, while in Uganda many were resistant to granting their workers permission to attend LRW activities, such as in the tea estates in Fortportal. In Peru too the CATP Women's Secretary could not get leave from work to carry out her activities. On a more general level, COTU Kenya noted that most company policies and rules are still formulated without worker involvement, employees often do not know what those rules are, and women still face a lot of discrimination in employment. A lot of lobbying and awareness raising, directed at employers, still needs to be done.

**Political will by the government** was a challenge identified by the KSBSI Indonesia, in terms of enforcing existing regulations to protect women's labour rights, and ensuring the implementation of the legal framework, notably through labour inspection. Trade unions need to ensure they have the capacity to make their voice heard in tri-partite dialogue.

## Aurelia, NACTU Gender Coordinator, South Africa:

*“Nowadays we see a lot of women occupying leadership positions in the workplace, some are managers, school principals, and on different levels. We're given that opportunity. It's only with the trade unions that you find that women are still lagging behind when it comes to leadership positions. We are trying. In almost all the unions, and the big federations, the president is a man, the deputy is a man, and 90 per cent of the executive committee are men. In the unions, we are not there yet. This is something the LRW campaign should address. We need to be empowered and women need to hold leadership positions. I think the federations need to say let's wake up and start engaging.”*

# 4. Conclusions

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Achieving labour rights for women (LRW) is a process. The LRW campaign has already had a positive impact on the lives of thousands of women, thanks to a greater knowledge of their rights, discovering the benefits of being a trade union member, and to gender specific clauses in collective agreements. Some have also been inspired to influence decisions themselves through taking up leadership positions.

**Awareness-raising** gives women the confidence they need to voice their opinions, and the knowledge they need to take part in dialogue, or even to take on leadership roles. Unions used many different tactics for this. Overall it became clear that workplace visits to women in or near their workplace were particularly effective, especially when backed up by campaign materials such as information leaflets, as well as stickers and T-shirts with eye-catching graphics, as mentioned by the Peruvian unions. Perhaps the greatest impact of the awareness raising activities was to bring to the fore subjects that women did not even recognise as workplace issues, or did not have the confidence to tackle. In some cases those issues, such as preventing sexual harassment and gender based violence at work, are not only being talked about, they have become policy.

Awareness-raising must also target employers and government representatives however, so that they have a better understanding of the issues raised by the unions in social dialogue, and realise that they cannot be avoided. Here the wider campaigns, using the media and major public events, such as May Day or International Women's Day, had a greater impact, as did public debates.

Reaching out to women at the grass roots level proved the most effective means of **organising**, together with adapting activities to the needs of the target groups. In most cases that meant visiting women in or near the workplace, or at times that did not affect their family responsibilities. Having women organisers was crucial, as they fully understand the challenges women face at the workplace, and can stress the importance of solidarity among women. Male leaders need to be convinced too however, and it was thanks to the LRW campaign that unions in South Africa, for example, realised why it was important to empower women and bring them on board as partners. Training, including careful planning and follow-up, can boost organising by making women feel supported and empowered, as HMS India proved.

Significant progress was achieved especially in Indonesia, Tanzania, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya, in terms of achieving **gender specific clauses** - such as provisions on equal pay, maternity leave, child care and sexual harassment at the workplace – in **collective agreements**. However, more time is needed for the process to feed through from awareness raising, to organising, to involving women in bargaining, to convincing employers of the need for such changes. In addition to women being informed of their rights, capacity building is important in the form of specific training in both collective bargaining and the subject matter concerned, such as the issues mentioned above (equal pay, maternity leave, sexual harassment...). At the same time some male union leaders still need to be convinced of the need to include women in their negotiating teams and gender issues on their bargaining agendas, although important changes have been set in place towards achieving that goal.

Creating the right conditions and changing trade union culture makes it easier for women to take a more active role in trade union activities, leading in some cases to taking on a **leadership role**. The campaign has clearly had some success in bringing more women into leadership positions, although like collective bargaining, this is part of a process that will take time. More women are taking up leadership positions in their unions in several of the countries involved in the LRW campaign, including South Africa, Peru and Paraguay, and in Indonesia a number of women who participated in LRW campaign activities spoke of their plans for standing for leadership, at the plant, branch or even national level of their union. As these women reach those posts, more successes can be expected in terms of organising women, bargaining for gender specific clauses, and changing government policy and laws. Mentorship and leading by example clearly have a strong impact, as noted by the unions in both Kenya and Uganda, for example. Knowledge is of course empowering, and training women in specific issues appears to have brought dividends, giving them confidence to talk about and lead on the subjects that matter to them. As more women come to the fore, showing other women what they can achieve, changing trade union culture, and persuading male leaders that women have an important contribution to make, many others will be inspired to follow their example.

A real test of how far Labour Rights for Women have been achieved was perhaps best described by the KSBSI Indonesia who noted that “the implementation of women’s rights through regulation needs political will from government to enforce the existing regulation”. In Indonesia itself, no progress was reported in terms of policy adoption, although Uganda, South Africa and Peru all reported a significant level of achievement. It is probably the longest term goal of the campaign, and will depend largely on how far the other goals, in terms of organising, collective bargaining, and women’s leadership, have been achieved. The LRW campaign has already empowered many women and had a direct impact on their employment situation.

More needs to be done in terms of organising, training, changing trade union culture, negotiating more collective agreements with gender-specific clauses, and changing government policy, but a process has already been set in train towards achieving those goals. Much will depend now on how much the unions involved in the campaign are able to build on their early successes and lessons learned to drive that process forward.

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