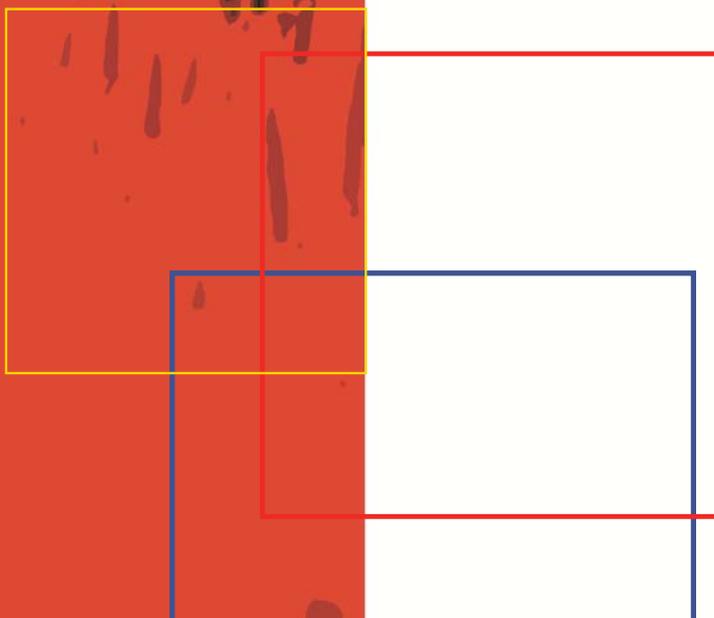




International
Labour
Organization

Report on a Survey of

**Women and
Gender Issues in
Trade Union
Organisations
in Indonesia**



Report on a Survey of
**Women and Gender
Issues in Trade Union
Organisations in Indonesia**

Report commissioned by the ILO Jakarta
Area Office and the ILO Bureau for
Workers' Activities

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Consultant

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Foreword

Within the ILO's core mandate for the promotion of social justice, the protection of women workers and the promotion of equality between men and women – in employment and in union participation – have been areas of long-standing concern.

Although the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women is widely accepted in most countries, in practice, within trade union circles, inequalities persist on a global and local basis. This is true for trade unions in Indonesia, although steps have been taken by the unions, individually and collectively, over the last six years, to address the deficit.

In Indonesia, the ILO has conducted gender mainstreaming capacity building activities with the trade unions for the last ten years through various ILO technical cooperation projects. Materials have also been developed in this regard, ranging from training resource kits to publications. These have resulted in policy changes in most unions, where there is an active assertion of women workers' rights and gender equality in trade union structures and organisation.

It is in light of this active assertion that the ILO commissioned a study on "Women and Gender Issues in Trade Union Organisations in Indonesia," to find out how far the gender mainstreaming knowledge has been applied in trade unions in Indonesia, and if any changes have occurred structurally, within workers' organisations. This report, thus, captures the actual roles played by union women – from leadership and participation in collective bargaining agreements to recruitment efforts, highlighting the important role that women play in trade unions.

The study also aimed at filling some of the gaps concerning knowledge about women in unions in Indonesia. Thus, the report presents a summary of information found in current literature, and presents the findings of a survey conducted among women and men who are leaders at various levels in the trade union movement in Indonesia.

It is the hope of the ILO that the report will be used by the trade unions to better address the needs and concerns of women members, as well as improve its strategies for mainstreaming women and/or gender concerns in the trade union organisation, to ensure the full integration of women into trade unions, and the promotion of gender parity in activities and decision-making at all levels of the trade union organisation.

Alan Boulton
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Introduction and Overview of the Report

In recent years, both international observers and women members and leaders of trade unions themselves have increasingly highlighted the importance of the role of women in trade unions. Yet, in many countries very little is known about the actual roles played by women in unions – from leadership to participation in collective bargaining agreements to recruitment efforts. This report aims to fill some of the gaps concerning knowledge about women in trade unions in Indonesia, by presenting a summary of available literature, and presenting the findings of a survey conducted among a total of 33 unionists – women and men – in Indonesian trade union organizations.

The report focuses on the present situation of women and strategies for mainstreaming women and/or gender concerns in trade union organizations. To put the findings of the Indonesian survey in perspective and to enable the reader to compare them to what is happening in other parts of the world, the first part of this report presents a short desk review of relevant international literature on women and gender in trade unions. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the report as a tool for action, this overview focuses on practical strategies for promoting gender equality in trade unions rather than theoretical discussions of gender and gender mainstreaming.

The objective of the second part of the report is to present a brief background on women workers and trade union organizations in Indonesia. Specifically, this section introduces common statistical information and research findings about female labour force participation by economic sector, women's working conditions, the national legal framework for women workers and for trade unions, and political and economic factors influencing trade unionism in Indonesia. This background information is of critical importance in assessing the findings of the survey presented in Part III of the report.

The findings presented in Part III are the result of a short survey conducted among a total of 33 unionists – women and men – who are leaders at various levels in the trade union movement in Indonesia. This section starts by explaining the scope and methodology of the survey, as well as providing basic background information about the organizations whose leaders participated in the survey. The section also presents data on women's participation and representation as leaders, and members, of trade union organizations, which are generally disproportionately low. This is followed by an assessment of the causes for women's low representation in union leadership, and strategies or good practices, to improve women's participation, such as through recruitment and better representation of gender equality issues. The last section of Part III deals with mechanisms and structures for promoting gender equality within trade union organizations. It provides an overview of the current roles, responsibilities and organizational locations of such structures, and their strengths and weaknesses as detailed by survey respondents.

The following general recommendations follow from the findings of the survey, in combination with the good practices for gender mainstreaming in trade unions reported in international research. They do not directly reflect the recommendations made by survey respondents but builds on strategies for gender mainstreaming gleaned from other sectors or technical programmes. They can be divided into internal and external (or intra-union) steps towards greater promotion of gender equality.

Internal steps

- ◆ More widespread institution of time-bound quota policies for women's participation as members and leaders, augmented by policies that make men's participation in women's or gender-related activities mandatory, and that set sanctions for violation of such quota policies and make available resources for relevant monitoring and evaluation.
- ◆ Establishment and publication of a clear justification for the existence of women-specific structures, in conjunction with a strategy towards gender mainstreaming with the active involvement of male union leaders and members.
- ◆ Standardisation and integration into training materials of family-friendly policies, and assistance, for women experiencing family-related obstacles to union participation. This includes awareness-raising, so that family issues are no longer regarded as private but as connected to work performance and union activism.
- ◆ Continued planning, implementation and evaluation of gender training activities, aimed at both women and men at leadership levels, and integrated with other union training activities, in order to increase acceptance and effectiveness. A thorough review of existing capacity and materials related to gender training may be a necessary preliminary step.
- ◆ Establishment of a mentoring programme for young women with leadership potential, possibly with involvement from NGOs and human resource specialists from private sector companies.
- ◆ Improved and sustained gender-disaggregated data collection regarding membership and leadership.
- ◆ Establishment and strengthening of effective mechanisms for accountability of women's units to women members, in conjunction with other steps towards increased internal democracy within union organisations.
- ◆ Practical English-language courses tailored to the needs of women union leaders and activists, to enable greater contacts with overseas networks, partners, and international donor organisations.

External Measures

- ◆ Greater collaboration with domestic and international women's NGOs, in order to improve conceptual clarity on gender among union women, and to stimulate the exchange of opinion and strategies on promotion of gender equality.
- ◆ Expansion of inter-union contacts and collaboration to include main industrial centres outside Jakarta, such as Medan, Bandung, Semarang, and Surabaya, and independent trade unions. For long-term planning, this could extend to women's networks in the region, such as women workers' groups in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines.
- ◆ Effective and long-term collaboration between women's units in (con)federations to promote gender mainstreaming within these organizations.
- ◆ Establishment of an effective intra-union system for learning, networking, mentoring, and sharing information among union women, and for collective planning and lobbying at national and local levels regarding policies and laws related to women workers ('one voice').

- ◆ A coordinated response, by women union leaders, to the challenge of globalisation in relation to labour and employment concerns, for example, by taking up selected cases facing women workers and building effective legal precedents, with assistance from international and domestic donors and lobby organizations.
- ◆ Collective fund-raising for gender-related activities by women union leaders.

Part I: International Context

1. Introduction

The past decade has seen a steady growth in the number of reports and studies on women and gender issues in trade unions, focusing to a varying extent on academic theories and practical measures and experiences around the world. These reports clearly indicate that trade unions persistently show themselves to be gendered organisations that reproduce gender inequalities. In both industrialised and newly industrialising countries, household tasks and lifecycle factors such as childbirth and child rearing frequently weigh heavily on working women and make it difficult for them to engage in union activities.¹ Not only do economic pressures force the majority of women workers in the industrial sector to spend most of their evenings and holidays doing overtime, learning new skills, or selling goods in order to supplement their income, but household tasks mean that they have very little time to engage in union activities. Gender stereotypes also portray women as primarily concerned with family and household issues and perpetuate the common view that trade unionism is a typically male domain in which women do not have a role to play.

The ILO-ICFTU survey on the role of trade unions in promoting gender equality puts women's role in trade unions in a wider perspective, by calling attention to women's position in the labour force and to labour issues more generally. It notes that women's labour force participation has increased during the past decade but that the quality of women's work is still lower than that of men's. Discrimination in the workplace on the basis of gender abounds, while women are often found in workplaces where freedom of association is far from guaranteed. Women's generally lower status in the labour force increases the need for action by trade unions but at the same time makes it less likely that trade unions will take such action. Many male trade union leaders have yet to realise that their organisations need to increase their membership among women, both in order to respond to women workers' needs, and to increase the sustainability of their organisations in the face of globalisation and other serious challenges. Yet, women make up one-fifth of ICFTU membership worldwide and 35 percent of the global trade union membership,² making women's membership vital to the future of the trade union movement at both global and local levels. As the report concludes, women need unions and unions need women, though both gender bias inside trade unions and the general economic and legal environment in which many women carry out their work make promotion of gender equality a difficult task.

Aside from calling attention to existing barriers to women's participation, and obstacles to gender mainstreaming, some reports and studies also point out strategies that have been applied successfully in diverse regions around the world. As this section of the current report deals with international experiences in gender mainstreaming and improving women's representation in trade unions, it will primarily focus on summarising good practices and concrete examples of what can be done.

1 Oxfam 2004a, 2004b; Franzway 2002:42-44

2 ILO-ICFTU 2002:11

2. Internal Strategies to Promote Gender Equality

In recent years, the ILO has published several useful studies and information materials on gender in trade unions. This section will focus on two of these publications, published by the ILO in collaboration with the ICFTU.

Gender Equality: A Guide to Collective Bargaining

The first is the ILO's 1998 "Gender Equality: A Guide to Collective Bargaining"³ which contains both background information on the importance of gender issues in collective bargaining, and practical examples of issues to be included in negotiations. The booklets in the Guide cover bargaining issues in the following areas:

- ♦ working conditions;
- ♦ maternity protection and family responsibilities;
- ♦ defending rights of non-permanent and vulnerable workers;
- ♦ dignity at the workplace; and
- ♦ giving women a voice.

The Guide explains in detail that gender issues are important in collective bargaining because:⁴

- ♦ "Women's issues are union issues
- ♦ Women's contributions at work have been undervalued
- ♦ Women are comprising an increasing proportion of the paid workforce
- ♦ It is important in changing attitudes towards women in employment
- ♦ It can address many of the persisting, deep-seated misconceptions about the role of women in employment
- ♦ Women's concerns have traditionally been overlooked in collective bargaining
- ♦ Legislative coverage may be inadequate
- ♦ Where there is legislation, it must be implemented in a practical manner
- ♦ It addresses some non-pay issues that may be easier to bargain in difficult economic times
- ♦ It is a means of attracting women to the union – it shows the union is committed to women."

The five booklets, each covering a specific area of bargaining, give a basic understanding of potential topics of bargaining, their importance for workers, and possible arguments to convince employers. This is followed by examples of agreements that have been achieved by some trade unions across the world. Since these examples do not focus on the process of negotiation, nor give details on the type and size of the union, or the number and position of women involved in negotiating the agreement, it is most useful for the purposes of this report to take a closer look at the booklet on 'Giving Women a Voice'. It recommends that barriers to women's participation are researched and overcome, and women's representation is improved through:

- ♦ the establishment of women's structures, quotas and educational programmes; and
- ♦ a policy statement or pledge on women's participation is issued.

3 Olney et al. 1998

4 From Booklet 1. Collective Bargaining: An Overview, p.6

Barriers include:

- ◆ gender stereotypes on women's abilities;
- ◆ discouragement or hostile reactions;
- ◆ the prominence of male-dominated networks in the quest for leadership positions;
- ◆ unequal family responsibilities;
- ◆ women's frequent part-time work;
- ◆ illiteracy, women's frequently low ranking in the workplace (e.g. unskilled jobs), and
- ◆ women's lack of self-confidence.

More detailed steps recommended for the internal promotion of gender equality include:

- ◆ Keeping sex-disaggregated statistics on representation and participation
- ◆ Election or appointment of women officers at all levels
- ◆ Guarantees of proportional representation in executive bodies
- ◆ Reserved seats for women and other minorities in unions
- ◆ Election or appointment of women to jobs with negotiating responsibilities
- ◆ Regular meetings, seminars and conferences to discuss women's issues
- ◆ Establishment of women's structures with close links to decision-making bodies
- ◆ Adequate human and financial resources for women's units or departments
- ◆ Adoption of new approaches to conducting union business
- ◆ Provision of child care facilities
- ◆ Use of non-sexist and gender-neutral language
- ◆ Provision of appropriate trade union training and workers' education for women
- ◆ Negotiation of paid time off work for participation in union activities.

The Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Gender Equality⁵

Secondly, in the late 1990s, the ILO, together with the ICFTU and the International Trade Secretariats, conducted a survey of good practices among trade union organisations worldwide. Information was obtained from 62 national centres, 186 trade unions and 71 affiliates of the International Union of Food, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF). The results, in the form of information, guidelines and examples, were published in a Resource Kit, of which the report on "The Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Gender Equality" forms a part. This report points out the multiple reasons why women workers are more vulnerable than men in the workforce, and why trade unions, in the past, have been unwilling or unable to assist women. On the other hand, it details the difficulties faced by trade unions, ranging from the challenges of political repression and labour flexibilisation to the need for reorganisation and adaptation in the face of the rapidly evolving needs of workers and decreasing membership numbers. The report argues that women need unions, and unions need women, making the promotion of gender equality an urgent necessity.

The survey found women's low representation as union members to be due to a variety of factors. When asked to list "the single most important factor", survey respondents listed the following (all listed as important factors):

- ◆ Lack of understanding of how unions can help them (19.2 per cent)
- ◆ Fear of reprisals from employers (17.2 per cent)
- ◆ Conflicting family responsibilities (16.2 per cent)

- ◆ Male-dominated culture/activities of the union (9.6 per cent)
- ◆ Religious/cultural norms and constraints (6.6 per cent)
- ◆ Women are in atypical forms of work and therefore difficult to reach and organize (6.6 per cent)
- ◆ Women lack confidence to join unions (6 per cent)
- ◆ Membership dues a problem (5.6 per cent)
- ◆ Women face objections from their spouses or families (5 per cent)
- ◆ Union not sensitive to the special needs of women workers (4.5 per cent)
- ◆ Media portrayal of unions has been negative (2.5 per cent)
- ◆ Legal constraints (1 per cent).

Furthermore, between 33 and 45 percent of respondents reported that women were less active in trade union activities than men.

More concretely, the report recommends a number of measures to promote gender equality internally within trade union organisations. To respond to women's needs and address the above situation, some 44 percent of trade unions, 52 percent of IUF affiliates and over two-thirds of the national centres reported having undertaken special measures to recruit women workers to their organisations. These usually include making women members more visible in recruitment drives and in leadership roles, and identifying and then addressing the specific needs of women. The establishment of women's units is also mentioned as being central to recruitment drives targeting women workers, as well as holding a series of events in which women are encouraged to participate, such as study circles, debates and training sessions: "Soliciting the views of the women workers themselves, listening to their concerns, expectations and fears, in fora where they feel confident to express their opinions appears to be more an effective strategy than merely informing them of their rights."⁶

Preparations for gender-sensitive recruitment may involve:

- analysis of barriers and establishment of action plans;
- polling of potential members to solicit their views;
- ensuring the participation of female leaders in recruitment drives;
- providing positive publicity about trade unionism and its benefits (e.g. gender issues included in collective bargaining agreements); and
- making promotional materials for awareness raising.

Recruitment drives targeting women may also involve enhancing the skills of organisers and conducting visits to women-dominated enterprises, or places where women workers gather after working hours. The report notes that some unions emphasise the provision of basic services, such as scholarships, medical services or childcare, as a means of recruitment, though it also notes the weaknesses associated with the service provider model of trade unionism.⁷

To increase women's representation in decision-making positions, slightly more than half of all survey respondents had implemented positive action. This most often took the form of quotas, reserved or additional seats, or targets. Quotas ranged from 10 to 50 per cent, depending on how recently positive action measures had been introduced. Other measures include statutory reforms, specific plans for achieving targets for women's representation,

6 ILO 2002:21-22

7 ILO 2002:24; see also point 5 on page 44 of this report

awareness raising, leadership training and regularly publishing statistics on progress. These are detailed in Box 1, below. Failure of such measures was reported to be due to constraints, such as family responsibilities, lack of support from women leaders, and resistance from men.

Box 1: Measures to Increase Women's Representation in Leadership Positions⁸

Statutory Reforms:

- Union constitution is amended to provide for women's representation (reserved seats, quotas, targets, proportionality, etc.);
- The women's chair is automatically a member of the Presidium at the national level and automatically the vice-president in some provinces, thus ensuring that women participate in decision-making at the highest level;
- The women's committee has reserved seats on the executive committee;
- The chair of the women's committee participates in collective bargaining and this has helped to increase the number of women in negotiating teams.

Specific Targets and Plans:

- The union adopts and implements an equality plan;
- The general board sets as a goal proportional representation in the leading committees and consistently monitors progress;
- Bodies that cannot achieve representative gender proportions through elections must elaborate corrective mechanisms to reach this goal in stages.

Awareness Raising and Publicity:

- Targeting male-dominated unions through awareness raising campaigns on how proportional representation of women at all levels will benefit them and improve the image of the union;
- Giving increased visibility to women leaders;
- Using non-sexist language in all union documents;
- Leadership by example, "a working mother but also a leader in the union";
- The union publishes annual figures on women's participation in the membership and leadership.

Education and Leadership Training:

- Encouraging and providing funding to the women's committee to promote more active participation of women through education and training programmes;
- Six-months leadership development programme for women to encourage their leadership role in the union and society;
- The national centre has specific training for women leaders in its yearly educational programmes;
- A 30 percent women's quota for educational programmes.

Meeting the Specific Needs of Women:

- Conducting union meetings in a more informal way to encourage wider participation and taking other steps to overcome barriers to women's participation (such as holding meetings during working hours, providing childcare, having paid time off for union activities);
- Combining the electoral process (which is based on a proportionality policy with informal measures (such as women-only training) so as to achieve a critical mass of women in leadership positions and to "feminise" the face of the union.

Special structures for the promotion of gender equality also play an important role, according to the ILO-ICFTU survey report. The majority of survey respondents had established a women's or equality committee or department, or had appointed a women's or equality officer. However, their influence on the highest decision-making body varied and was reported to be significant only in one-third of all cases. Ad-hoc or advisory status of the structure, and insufficient budget allocation, are likely to be partly to blame for this situation, although the latter may, at the same time, be a result of the marginal position of women's or gender structures.

A large majority of survey respondents reported having instituted women-specific activities, positive action and/or activities to promote solidarity between women and men. Positive or affirmative measures included:

- ♦ quotas for training and education programmes and balanced representation at national and international events;
- ♦ having women candidates in all elections, a system of double candidature, a quota in leadership positions, or reserved seats for women;
- ♦ establishing a union equality plan, resolutions on positive action, or a charter;
- ♦ adjusting the timing of activities, to suit women;
- ♦ providing childcare facilities for union activities;
- ♦ a publicity campaign to encourage votes for women in political elections;
- ♦ a budget allocation for gender projects; and
- ♦ establishment of a women's caucus.

Women specific measures reported in the survey report included:

- ♦ budgeted seminars for enhancing female participation, women-specific topics;
- ♦ study circles/groups on women's issues;
- ♦ surveys and meetings on women's needs and demands;
- ♦ training days for women; women's summer school, education council for women;
- ♦ gender awareness programme;
- ♦ special organizing campaigns to recruit women;
- ♦ campaigns and training on violence and harassment at the workplace;
- ♦ skills training programmes;
- ♦ training in leadership, confidence building, time management;
- ♦ commemorative day activities and exhibitions;
- ♦ annual meetings for women leaders and on women's issues;
- ♦ committees to conduct and discuss research on women workers;

- ◆ health and safety awareness raising for women; and
- ◆ distance learning for women who cannot attend because of family responsibilities.

The promotion of solidarity between women and men involved:

- ◆ joint campaigns on issues of common concern (e.g. child care and paternity leave);
- ◆ promotion of male involvement in campaigns on women's issues;
- ◆ discussion of men's problems; and
- ◆ gender awareness and equality training for men-only, women-only and mixed-groups.

Whereas the aforementioned two reports combine findings from around the world to promote good practices, the following information is taken from a case study of gender promotion efforts in Brazil's largest trade union federation – Central Unica dos Trabalhadores (CUT) or the Central Workers Union Confederation – in the early 1990s.⁹ This case study provides useful additional information for purposes of comparison and learning, as it demonstrates some of the possible strategies to encourage acceptance of proposals for a women's quota. Strategies mentioned include:

- ◆ "talking to influential people" in the trade union movement;
- ◆ elaborating a list of arguments in favour and against the quota system, strengthening women trade unionist members in their knowledge of the matter and preparing them for debate;
- ◆ preparing information materials;
- ◆ making sure the debate and the international experience became public knowledge;
- ◆ identifying male and female allies and involving them in the process;
- ◆ organising debating forums stating favourable and unfavourable positions; and
- ◆ establishing a timeframe of activities leading up to the national forum at which the decision would be taken." .

The active debate within CUT that followed from these strategies stressed both the functioning of a quota system and the gender inequalities within the organisation that made it necessary.

The case study emphasised the important role played by the National Committee of Working Women, established in 1986 as part of the CUT. The rapid increase in female labour force participation, the emergence of an active and progressive women's movement involved in the transition towards democracy, and the progressive nature of the new trade union movement since the late 1970s all contributed to the organisation of women within the main trade union federation.

The introduction in 1991 of a thirty percent quota for women in the leftist Workers' Party, with which the CUT is affiliated, also provided encouragement for women in the trade unions to argue for a quota system. Common objections to the introduction of a quota system in the CUT included its limitation in solving the problem of women's low participation in the union, the lack of guarantee that women in leadership will care about gender equality, its emphasis on power for the sake of power rather than quality participation, its allegedly anti-democratic nature, the risk of tokenism, and the (perceived or actual) lack of qualified women.

This Brazilian case study provides useful information for those interested in implementing some of the good practices and recommendations offered in the ILO-ICFTU survey report,

and in other ILO materials on gender and trade unions. It clearly shows the need to treat gender mainstreaming in trade union organisations as a long-term process that requires careful planning, capacity building, lobbying, and negotiating on the part of advocates for gender equality. While the recommendations of the ILO-ICFTU survey report provide useful pointers for comparison and for potential future action to promote gender equality, case studies such as the Brazilian one presented here are equally necessary to guide the process of implementation and evaluation of internal measures towards gender equality.

3. External Strategies to Promote Gender Equality

While internal measures are necessary to improve the participation and representation of women, and to enable women to make their voices heard in trade unions, external measures are equally needed to convince women workers that trade unions have something to offer to them. The 1998 ILO booklet on "Giving Women a Voice"¹⁰ makes it clear that in order for women's, and gender, issues to be articulated in the workplace, women should be involved in all processes related to the defense of workers' rights. These include "at the negotiating table, on occupational health, safety and environmental committees, in grievance-handling procedures, as shop stewards, as works council or joint committee members, and on company boards where there is employee representation."¹¹ For this to happen, unions must also ensure that women have access to the training and re-training necessary to be promoted to senior positions, which will improve representation of women at all levels of the workplace. Such efforts may involve the establishment of an equal opportunities committee, and the use of positive measures. Thus, internal and external measures generally must be considered in a joint fashion.

One of the areas highlighted by the ILO-ICFTU survey is gender equality in collective bargaining. Women may have special concerns in this regard because of their reproductive functions and tasks, past discrimination, lack of implementation of legislation about women's issues, and women's position in the labour force. These concerns (which also are important for men) include:

- ◆ equal pay;
- ◆ maternity, paternity and parental leave;
- ◆ breastfeeding provisions; child care;
- ◆ sexual harassment;
- ◆ night work;
- ◆ family friendly policies; and
- ◆ positive/affirmative measures.

To encourage women's participation in collective bargaining, the survey reports that some unions have instituted quotas, or proportional representation, for women on negotiating teams, or stipulate that equality or women's officers must be involved in the negotiation process. Others offer guidelines and train female staff in negotiation techniques. One union had enabled its women committee to submit recommendations to the bargaining committee and had provided its negotiating team with a "gender checklist for bargaining" and a model

10 See Olney et al. 1998 in previous section

11 Booklet 6, p.3

equality bargaining agreement. The report advises that including gender issues in collective bargaining requires the following steps:

- ◆ promoting awareness and understanding of gender issues;
- ◆ involving women in the negotiating teams;
- ◆ consulting women and ensuring that their voices are heard;
- ◆ making special efforts to get the views of all workers;
- ◆ being well-prepared for negotiations; and
- ◆ following up by publicising and monitoring implementation and collecting sex-disaggregated statistics.

Other trade union activities to promote gender equality in the workplace focus on:

- ◆ improving equal pay through job evaluation schemes;
- ◆ learning schemes; action against sexual harassment; facilities, campaigns and tools to promote greater gender balance in family responsibilities;
- ◆ workplace improvements such as benefits and facilities; and
- ◆ awareness raising on gender equality at the workplace.

The report goes on to make of the importance of union efforts to reach unorganised, atypical and vulnerable workers, a group in which women are often disproportionately represented. Unions are reported to have initiated special outreach campaigns, adapted their structure or constitution to open up membership to these groups of workers, included their demands in collective agreements, offered special services and created special structures, built their capacity, and forged alliances with relevant non-governmental groups to better reach and represent such workers. Atypical groups of workers, such as domestic workers, migrant workers, or those employed in export-processing zones can similarly benefit from special measures to improve their access to unions, while unions have much to gain from expanding their membership to such previously unorganised groups and sectors where women predominate.

In conclusion, the ILO-ICFTU survey report contains a large number of good practices for increasing and improving unionisation among groups of women workers, while also focusing on the multiple ways in which such good practices can improve the effectiveness and legitimacy of trade unions as organisations defending all workers – men and women.

Part II: Indonesia

1. Introduction

Although the unfavourable political environment and the, at times, undemocratic organisational structure of trade unions undeniably pose obstacles to unionisation and mobilisation in general, women are differently affected by them than men because trade unions are also gendered organisations.¹² As such, trade unions transmit, as well as reproduce, ideas about gender relations for their members and for society in general. Survey interviews with women union activists and NGO staff suggest that, similar to advanced economies and other developing economies,¹³ many trade unions in Indonesia display a lack of sensitivity and receptiveness towards women and the particular concerns that many women bring to their unions. This gender bias reflects the organisational culture of trade unions, and is at the same time part and parcel of the gender division of labour. Its negative impact on women's mobilisation works in tandem with two important factors: (i) workers' weak economic and social position as a result of the global division of labour, and (ii) the political circumstances that prevent trade unions from becoming genuine and effective mobilising vehicles for large numbers of workers. As this section will show, women's reluctance, or inability, to become active in unions – as members or leaders in proportionate numbers – is thus linked to both general obstacles to effective trade unionism, as well as gender bias.

2. Labour Legislation and its Impact on Women's Unionisation

After the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, Indonesia became the first country to ratify all the core Conventions of the ILO – regarding freedom of organisation and the right to collective bargaining, forced labour, non-discrimination and equality, minimum age, and the abolition of the worst forms of child labour. Since then, the Indonesian government has also passed three new laws on labour issues:

- ◆ the Trade Union/Labour Union Act (Law No. 21 of 2000);
- ◆ the Manpower Act (Law No. 13 of 2003); and
- ◆ the Industrial Relations Dispute Settlement Act (Law No. 2 of 2004).

This section will focus on the consequences of the Trade Union, and Manpower, Acts for women workers' position, and role, in trade unions.

12 Franzway 2002

13 Rowbotham and Mitter 1994; Ledwith and Colgan 2002; Franzway 2002

Trade Union Act (Law No. 21 of 2000)

The Trade Union Act significantly widened the conditions under which workers were allowed to organise, and to practise collective bargaining. Specifically, it gave them the right to form and become members of trade unions, federations of trade unions, and confederations of trade unions, which the Act stipulates must be “free, open, independent, democratic and responsible.” The Act sets out to strengthen trade unions by guaranteeing freedom of association, and facilitating the process of establishing unions. Without doubt, women have benefited from this Act through their increased ability to form, and become members of, trade unions. However, by allowing only ten workers to set up a trade union and more than one union to participate in collective bargaining (if no union represents more than 50 per cent of the workers), the Act has inadvertently contributed to the rapid increase in the number of trade unions. This has resulted in fragmentation, internal rivalries in the labour movement, and competition for scarce foreign funding.¹⁴

The Manpower Act was, and continues to be, the subject of controversy among the Indonesian labour movement. The Act was passed only after lengthy negotiations between government, workers and employers, and some large-scale union protests. Although it includes provisions of importance to women workers (e.g. menstruation and maternity leave, family benefits and insurance, working hours), women’s participation in the negotiations was minimal (the small team of six union leaders selected to negotiate with the Ministry of Manpower and employers contained only one woman). The resultant Act minimised women’s right to menstruation leave, although provisions on maternity leave, equal pay for equal work, underground work, and night work were left untouched.

In discussions among labour groups about the Manpower Act, sub-contracting clearly emerged as the most contentious clause. Previously unregulated, sub-contracting has now come under the purview of the Act, which stipulates that employers may sub-contract non-core work but that such work must be done under conditions that are of the same standard as that enjoyed by regular employees. Seen from this perspective, the Act is a positive development insofar as it regulates an increasingly common practice that is widespread among women workers. Objections from trade unions focus on the practical obstacle that workers will not organise in unions and demand their rights if they fear that their contract will not be renewed because of such actions. Furthermore, the Act does not clearly specify the grounds on which core activities are distinguished from non-core activities, thus necessitating clarification through further government regulations. Because of the prevalence of corruption, trade union activists feared that the Act will permit employers to test the boundaries of an already overworked and inefficient justice system. Although sub-contracting affects both men and women, women workers are more vulnerable due to their frequent classification as low-skilled or unskilled labour (which can easily be outsourced), the difficulties they experience in entering an already crowded labour market, and their predominance in industrial sectors that are prone to cost-cutting measures. Sub-contracting increases the difficulty for women to become, and remain, union members, and has likely contributed to decreasing union membership over the last three years.

In response, discussions of alternative forms of regulation, such as social clauses, codes of conduct and framework agreements, has become widespread, although implementation in Indonesia is so far limited to a small number of multinational companies.¹⁵ The overwhelming majority of workers continue to rely on national labour legislation and enforcement agencies located in the Indonesian government. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that compliance with, and enforcement of, labour laws leave much to be desired, with many workers expressing

14 Quinn 2003:17

15 Wick 2003; Kuehl 2003

their dissatisfaction with the Manpower Act, specifically with its provisions on menstruation leave and sub-contracting.

3. Labour Force Participation and Women's Unionisation

The nature of local, and national, labour markets may exert significant influence on workers' decisions to pursue union activism. The nature of the sectors and jobs in which women work, and the general state of the labour market, impacts greatly on women's potential for collective organising. Although this section focuses particularly on women workers, it must be emphasised that in some cases, male workers share similar characteristics with their female counterparts, such as vulnerability to economic restructuring, low wages, and lack of protection under national labour laws.

Recent Indonesian labour and employment history has seen major shifts in labour market dynamics, and especially in women's participation, and location, in the labour market. With the growing shift between 1970 and 1985 from traditional labour-intensive (mostly food and tobacco) and import-substituting (chemical, rubber, transport equipment) industries to new export-oriented industries, large numbers of young, urban women entered formal wage labour for the first time. The Indonesian government's deregulation policies of the 1980s, and its active support for foreign investment, stimulated the growth of labour-intensive manufacturing industries, such as garment and textiles, footwear, furniture, plastics, electronics, and food and beverages production.¹⁶ Formal sector employment increased from 28 to 35.2 percent of total employment between 1990 and 1996.¹⁷ These industries provided jobs for thousands of young women and men, initially in industrial areas near Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Semarang and Medan, but in more recent years also in smaller urban areas.

While in terms of output and added-value the manufacturing sector is dominated by a small number of large firms, employment appears to remain largely concentrated in small firms and cottage industries.¹⁸ This, and the resulting isolation of workplaces, constitutes a serious obstacle to efforts to organise manufacturing workers. Table 1, below, gives an overview of recent labour market indicators.

Table 1: Key Labour Market Indicators¹⁹

	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2002
Unemployment rate (%)	2.6	4.7	5.4	6.3	6.1	
Urban			9.3	10.5	6.1	
Rural			3.2	3.7	4.1	
Underemployment rate (%)	30.5	31.6	35.1	33.4	31.5	
PerkUrban otaan			8.3	8.4	7.4	
Rural			26.4	30.2	24.0	

¹⁶ Ford 2003; Saptari 1995; Manning 1998

¹⁷ Sulistyarningsih 2003

¹⁸ Smyth and Grijns 1997:16

¹⁹ Source: Van Zorge 2002, based on data from Ministry of Manpower and Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS).

Labour force participation rate (%)	53.1	65.4	66.9	67.2	67.8	
Male	82.8	84.5	83.2	83.6	84.2	85.6
Female	44.2	46.9	51.2	51.2	51.7	50.1
Share of employment (%)						
Male	64.8	64.6	61.5	61.8	61.7	
Female	35.2	35.4	38.5	38.2	38.3	
Urban	24.5	31.8	34.5	36.4	37.9	
Rural	75.5	61.2	65.5	63.6	62.0	

Results of the 2002 National Labour Force Survey showed that 67.8 percent (or 100.9 million people) of the population were part of the work force (based on reporting of the previous week's activities), of which 61.6 percent worked (i.e. paid workers, employers, and unpaid family workers) and 6.2 percent actively sought work. Women's labour force participation rate was significantly lower than men's for all age groups (50.1 versus 85.6 percent), as 37.8 percent of all female respondents reported being housewives. While the formal economy accounts for 27.3 million workers, according to government estimates, the informal economy absorbs the remainder of those who are employed, estimated at approximately 52 million workers.²⁰ Women's prospects for unionisation are heavily influenced by the high unemployment, and underemployment, rates for workers in general. The constant supply of newly migrated, low-skilled workers willing to work for low wages discourages many workers from unionisation, and encourages some employers to push the boundaries of the legal system.

As a result of the 1998 economic crisis, the deteriorating security situation in parts of the country, rampant corruption and continuing inefficiencies, investor confidence in Indonesia decreased, contributing to the withdrawal of foreign direct investment that would have provided thousands of jobs (most prominently in the mining and gas sector, and in labour-intensive manufacturing). Macro-economic trends such as exchange rate fluctuations, ineffective government policies, and regional competition resulted in low export growth rates (between 4 and 5 percent in early 2004). Although the financial sector has stabilised remarkably since the days of the economic crisis, the recovery has been largely 'jobless' because of the nature of capital flows into the country.²¹

As a clear indication of the resulting problems, between 1997 and 2003, measured unemployment rates increased from 4.7 to 9.3 percent, while underemployment (those above 15 years old working 35 hours per week or less) rose to 39.3 percent (or 41.5 million people).²² This amounted to 9.1 million openly unemployed, and an additional 28.9 million underemployed in 2002.²³ Among the female population, open unemployment (including discouraged job-seekers and those waiting for work) stood at 11.8 percent in 2002, compared to 7.5 percent of men. The highest figures were recorded for the 15-19 age group, where 40 percent of women and 30.7 percent of men were unemployed. In total, open unemployment among the 15-24 age group amounted for more than half the total unemployed.²⁴ Dismissals in the manufacturing sector were frequently reported in the local press over 2004 and 2005.

20 Van Zorge 2002

21 Van Zorge 2002. See Manning (2003) for a different interpretation according to which the Indonesian government's wage and termination policies for the modern sector "have an adverse effect on productivity, and could slow the creation of 'better' jobs and higher living standards" (2003:20).

22 Ramli 2004:28

23 BPS 2003

24 BPS 2003

Especially, the garment, textile and leather sector felt the impact of the abolition of the Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA) and its preferential export quota system in January 2005. These economic difficulties could lead either to greater mobilisation and organisation to defend existing workers' rights, or to a decrease in activism in order to safeguard jobs.

Aside from higher unemployment rates, significant gender differences are also evident in employment status and wages. Whereas almost half of both women and men in urban areas are paid employees or labourers, 17.9 percent of urban women are unpaid workers (compared to only 3.2 percent of urban men).²⁵ In rural areas, these differences are even more pronounced with 47.5 percent of women being unpaid workers compared to 9.8 percent of men. Unpaid work impinges on people's ability to protect their rights in the workplace, as they are mostly found in irregular and informal jobs, in small workplaces where they have little bargaining power with their employer. The absence of viable employment opportunities for women in rural areas stands in contrast to the large percentage of urban women who are paid workers. This reflects the availability in Indonesian cities of work in the service and industrial sectors, which account for 22.4 and 65.5 percent of women's jobs respectively. In rural areas, the primary sector still provides 66.4 percent of all jobs for women.²⁶

Labour force survey statistics show that women's earnings are consistently lower than men's when disaggregated by educational attainment.²⁷ Except for the transport sector, women's average wages are lower than men's in all main occupations and industries, with women earning as little as 52 percent of men's wages in agriculture and forestry. A high percentage of permanent workers earning less than the minimum wage in 1995 were found in small and medium-sized enterprises and in the footwear sector,²⁸ where women often predominate. While this situation may encourage women workers to mobilise and organise in trade unions to demand better wages, poverty and the fear of job loss may equally prevent women from initiating or participating in collective action. At the very least, it must be kept in mind that women workers experience significant barriers to organising in unions based on their usually secondary position in the labour market.

In terms of legislation, Indonesian workers fare well in theory, as a result of government regulation of dismissals and separation payment, minimum wage levels, and collective labour agreements.²⁹ Women workers, in particular, are well protected by law, as the Manpower Act grants several special rights related to women's reproductive functions. The current provision allows for women in all workplaces to take leave during the first and second day of their menstruation, on the condition that they can show a relevant medical certificate. Although menstruation leave is a controversial issue, because it increases the cost of employing women, many union women see it as necessary because of low nutritional standards among women workers and unhygienic conditions in many workplaces. In practice, however, this provision and others have little impact in the majority of workplaces, aside from providing a disincentive for some employers to recruit women. Not only do many women fear dismissal or demotion if they take menstruation leave, but many also refuse examination by a doctor appointed by management, who is usually a man.³⁰ Furthermore, many women lose their incentive payments,

25 Manning, however, cautions that women may be more frequently described as unpaid family workers than men due to gender bias and given that ownership of a family company may be "invested in male hands" (1998:242).

26 BPS 2003

27 BPS 2003; Manning 1998:258. As in other countries in the region, the significant differences in earnings by sex are most likely due to a combination of lower levels of experience; sex segregation and undervaluation of women's traditional occupations and of newly feminised occupations; women's frequently interrupted work life (due to family responsibilities); and direct discrimination on the basis of sex.

28 Pangestu and Hendytio 1997

29 Manning 1998

30 Suryomenggolo 2002

or attendance bonus, if they take menstruation leave, which in the context of very low monthly wages is tantamount to limiting women's free choice.

Similar practical obstacles also limit the implementation of provisions on maternity protection. Women workers have the right to paid maternity leave 1.5 months before, and 1.5 months after, giving birth or suffering a miscarriage. Afterwards their employer must re-employ them in the same position, and in the same place. Pregnant and breastfeeding women may not be forced to undertake work that endangers their health, or that of their child. However, in the absence of government funding for maternity benefits, employers prefer to reduce costs by hiring single workers, or dismissing pregnant workers.³¹ Legislation passed in 1989 has made termination of employment on the basis of marriage, pregnancy, or giving birth, illegal.

A 1995 World Bank survey of 300 workers in the textile, garment, and footwear sectors (with 85 percent of the sample employed in large firms) found that 96 percent of firms complied with maternity leave provisions, 91 percent with working hours provisions, and 89 percent with maternity leave compensation.³² However, the survey found low compliance with provisions calling for breastfeeding facilities, overtime compensation, and menstruation leave. In addition, legal experts working with labour-related and women's NGOs routinely receive complaints and calls for help from women workers concerning illegal dismissal related to pregnancy or motherhood, unpaid wages, dubious factory closures (with the factory opening up a short while later under a different name and with new workers), and forced overtime without appropriate benefits.³³

While these complaints cannot be taken as an indication of the size of the overall problem, it is highly likely that such violations are especially common in smaller enterprises, where enforcement of labour legislation is often low due to the absence of international pressure, the lack of internal enterprise standards, and the pressures of sub-contracting. This was confirmed by a 1997 World Bank survey of managers and supervisors – it showed a worker's sex to be the third most frequently cited factor in recruitment decisions among a range of occupational sectors (see Table 2, below).

Table 2: Factors Affecting Recruitment in Different Occupations³⁴

	Managers	Technicians	Book keepers	Secretary	Supervisor	Skilled	Unskilled
Age	90	83	83	100	100	91	82
Education	90	83	87	89	94	64	4
Sex	80	91	60	79	78	93	93
Marital Status	70	35	50	56	56	38	51
Training	50	48	43	17	17	5	3

Note: Percentage of firms agreeing that a factor is important.

31 World Bank et al. 1999; Singarimbun and Sairin 1995

32 Pangestu and Hendytio 1997

33 see also World Bank et al. 1999

34 Source: World Bank (1997:92).

In conclusion, the current legal system offers women workers little protection from exploitation and discrimination in the workplace. Among the recurrent features of women workers' lives are low wages, long hours, and segregation into low-skilled manufacturing jobs (often contract-based), while high unemployment rates have created a large reserve labour force eager to take up formal employment. These conditions are far from conducive to unionisation or even ad-hoc collective action in the workplace. In short, since the economic crisis, downsizing, restructuring, and women's predominance in vulnerable employment have kept them from joining, and/or participating effectively in, trade unions.

4. Previous Research on Women in Trade Unions in Indonesia

This section discusses two recent surveys on women in trade unions conducted by ASPEK Indonesia, a federation of banking, finance and retail workers, and SPN, a federation that unites mostly garment and textile workers.

ASPEK Indonesia³⁵

In August 2002, ASPEK's Women's Committee collected information from female members in affiliated unions in the greater Jakarta area on conditions, needs and opinions related to gender in the workplace. Of the 41 respondents who returned questionnaires during the second National Congress of the ASPEK women's committee, the majority worked in the commerce and finance sectors, with the remainder from communications, media and property companies. The majority had received high school education, or had attended specialised academies (for a diploma), and were not yet married. Respondents noted that facilities such as a space for breastfeeding, child care, flexibility to take care of a sick child, and transport after overtime work were needed (on a scale of not needed-needed-very much needed). However, an overwhelming majority seldom took menstrual leave and considered it either not needed or only in extreme cases. Maternity leave, on the other hand, was considered very much needed, and the majority did not agree with policies restricting flexibility in this respect (e.g. maximal 1.5 months after birth). Average length of maternity leave was 3 or 4 months. Those with relatively high education levels tended not to take menstrual leave and consider 3 months maternity leave satisfying.

A large majority (65 per cent or more) had never, or seldom encountered, discrimination in recruitment, placement, training, promotion, or access to facilities or information. However, this figure still leaves 25-30 percent who had often, or always, encountered discrimination in these areas (the question did not specify what type, or definition, of discrimination, leaving open the possibility of discrimination based on grounds other than gender/sex). Even with respect to wages and benefits, 17-22 percent reported often having experienced discrimination (this may be in relation to family benefits and insurance, which is very often automatically granted only to the male breadwinner, since women are usually assumed to be single or covered by their husbands). More positively, 77-80 percent reported never having experienced sexual harassment or violence in the workplace. However, as the survey did not give a definition of sexual harassment, respondents may not have properly understood the term.

The three work-related issues most often mentioned as individual top priority (of a list of 6 issues) were eradication of discrimination towards women, good corporate governance, and wages and benefits. Similarly, the priorities of the trade union were most often defending

35 "ASPEK Indonesia" stands for Asosiasi Serikat Pekerja Indonesia

workers' rights and welfare, encouraging good corporate governance, and becoming a partner of management for the company's advancement. Empowerment of workers, improvement of workers' bargaining position, and training workers to get organised were least often prioritised.

With respect to the need for a Women's Department, two-thirds of respondents disagreed with the statement that a structure for women was not needed because male and female union members were not different. Respondents saw the priorities of the women's committee in the following order of importance:

- ◆ supporting the implementation of women's rights in the workplace;
- ◆ increasing women workers' welfare;
- ◆ working towards the realisation of women workers' aspirations; and
- ◆ encouraging women's active participation in labour-related activities.

Significantly, the survey found no correlation between respondents' willingness to engage in union activities and their perception of discrimination. On the contrary, a small negative correlation existed, with respondents who experienced discrimination less willing to engage in union activities.

SPN in West Java and Jakarta

A much larger survey (Bisman Agus Ritonga 2001) about women workers' union participation was conducted by the Bandung-based NGO, AKATIGA, among garment workers in factories in West Java and Jakarta affiliated with SP TSK³⁶ (now called SPN³⁷). Data collection, through questionnaires, was done by women workers from TSK at the factory level, with coordination by an area coordinator in each of the five main areas. The aim of the survey was to identify women workers' needs and preferences regarding trade unionization, as well as factors influencing their participation. Eighty percent of the 31,031 workers in the 30 companies surveyed were women. A total of 868 questionnaires were returned by union officials (7 percent of sample), shopstewards (commissars) (39 percent) and union members (53 percent). Single respondents represented 56 percent of the sample, while 62 percent were responsible for 1-3 other individuals in their household/family. Almost two-thirds (59 percent) had finished higher secondary school, 76 percent worked as operator, and the average age of respondents was 26 years.

This survey found the percentage of women union officials to be very low relative to the large percentage of women union members. Of the 64 female officials in the survey sample, 31 percent were treasurers and 41 percent secretaries, which are stereotypical positions for women in unions (see also Part III). Around two-thirds (67 percent) were operators, but 15 percent worked in administration and 11 percent in quality control, indicating that women officials were already somewhat advanced in terms of their career (note that most unions do not allow supervisors to hold union positions).

In general, few women worked long enough in garment factories to build a real career, with many leaving in before entering their thirties for family reasons (childbirth and childrearing). This also meant that few women workers stayed long enough in the union to reach key positions, which on average require several years experience. Time constraints form another reason for low involvement in union activities, since survey respondents worked on average 7.5 hours per day in addition to 3 hours average overtime work per day (both out of necessity

36 "FSP TSK" stands for Federasi Serikat Pekerja Tekstil, Sandang dan Kulit or the Federation of Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Union.

37 "SPN" stands for "Serikat Pekerja Nasional or the National Workers' Union

and because excessive work hours were not refused by either workers or their union).

Activities most often attended, and most preferred, by union members were recreational and sports activities (42 and 22 percent respectively), while commissars and officials are generally involved in all types of activities, with focus on informational and representational meetings with members and management. Involvement of members in recreational activities was found to be linked to the fact that such activities were usually organised on days-off, whereas training and education activities were usually held during working hours and outside the factory, necessitating permission from supervisors and/or family members, and involving transport costs.

Supervisors were often reluctant to grant permission due to the existence of target systems of production. Household tasks were also an important obstacle to union participation: 64 percent of female respondents were solely responsible for household chores which required, on average, 3 hours each day (but note that 33 percent reported that such tasks were shared by husband and wife). Only very few respondents (4 percent) reported being prohibited by their family from being active in union activities (usually by the husband, based on the belief that women are primarily responsible for household work and should “follow their husbands’ orders”). Yet, 56 percent reported a relatively indifferent attitude on the part of their family members, indicating that few women are actively encouraged by their families to become active in their union.

Survey respondents indicated that union officials were not necessarily judged by their sex or selected based on their sex, but rather based on their ability to carry out activities, their capacity for communication, and their understanding of how to organise workers. Women workers saw trade unionism as something very useful, but two-thirds reported that it was a burden for them, mostly mentally (due to intimidation and threats from management, which occurred in about 20 percent of companies surveyed) but also in terms of the extra work it represented, and the time it required. The usefulness of trade union activities stretched from increasing one’s knowledge about workers’ rights and responsibilities to increased job security, better working conditions and even making new friends. Lastly, the survey found that where women officials were involved in the formulation and negotiation of the CBA, women’s issues were much more likely to have been addressed (or correlation may be vice versa).³⁸

5. Conclusion and Gaps in Knowledge

This section has demonstrated that much statistical information and informal knowledge is available on the lives of Indonesian women workers, especially those in unions. Low average education levels, and the structure of women’s work, are in part, the cause for women’s low levels of participation in trade unions. In sectors where most workers are women with little skill or education, the existence of large numbers of women waiting to enter the labour market and work for low wages provides a disincentive for union organising. Additionally, women predominate in sectors that are not unionized, or considered difficult to unionise, because they involve large geographical distance between workplaces or part-time and subcontract work contracts that put women at risk of dismissal. In conclusion, the obstacles facing women in trade unions originate from their position in the workforce, and in the labour market in general, as well as from the gender stereotypes and gendered social structures that place women in inferior positions, both in the labour market and, in many cases, in families, households, and organisations.

38 Note that other survey results are not discussed here due to inconsistencies in sampling and data reporting in the original report.

The surveys summarized in Part I indicate a number of strategies towards gender mainstreaming, and promotion of gender equality, that have been demonstrated in specific organisational contexts throughout the world and in Indonesia. However, there cannot be a blueprint for gender mainstreaming for all trade unions. The effectiveness of such strategies, as outlined in Part I, is heavily dependent on both internal and external circumstances and characteristics. These include (but are not limited to):

- ◆ the proportion of female membership in a union, their educational qualifications and position in the labour market;
- ◆ the economic situation and prospects for growth or dismissals in a particular sector;
- ◆ the legal framework applying in a particular locality and economic sector (and its application in practice);
- ◆ the cultural circumstances of the workforce, the employers or managers involved, and
- ◆ the community surrounding the workplace.

These factors will influence in each particular case the effectiveness of women's structures in trade unions, the usefulness of policies to encourage women's participation, and the influence exerted by women leaders and members.

Part II of this report briefly outlined the general knowledge on women workers in Indonesia, to the extent that it is relevant to understanding gender mainstreaming and women's position in trade unions. How women, and men, in trade unions can become capable of, and accustomed to, implementing (or adapting) strategies aimed at gender equality requires more detailed information about the problems and issues encountered in each individual organisation and economic sector. Part III will, therefore, describe current roles played by women, the structures in place in trade union organisations for women's advancement and gender equality, and the obstacles to women's participation, followed by strategies used to overcome these obstacles.

Part III: Survey Findings on Women and Gender in Trade Unions in Indonesia

1. Survey Background and Methodology

The survey was conducted between January and May 2005, in Jakarta, and targeted female leaders and members of trade unions at various levels of their organisation. Of the 33 union activists interviewed, 24 were elected leaders at national level, 2 were leaders at regional or provincial level, 5 were members or leaders at the workplace-level, and 2 were activists currently without a position. In some cases, respondents were active at all three levels at once, making it difficult to distinguish between national, regional and local levels of activism. One man was interviewed, while in three cases, men in various leadership positions sat, or actively participated, in an interview with a female leader. However, because the information obtained from these male leaders was often contradicted, or rejected, by female survey respondents, the survey focused heavily on obtaining information and opinions from women leaders and members instead of their male colleagues.

The survey included members and leaders from 3 confederations, 15 federations (both at national and regional levels), and 7 company-level unions affiliated with national federations (see Table 3, below). Confederations and federations were selected by relevant ILO officials, together with the researcher, based on their size, representativeness, and level of activity. Diversity of industrial sectors, and type of ownership, also played a role, with special efforts made to interview leaders of trade unions in state-owned enterprises. The selection of company-level unions, on the other hand, was based on referral by federation leaders during the survey implementation or on the researcher's prior knowledge of the union, or acquaintance with its leader(s). In all cases, interviews took place in the greater Jakarta area (including satellite cities of Tangerang, Bekasi, Bogor and Depok).

All three major confederations in Indonesia participated in the survey (see Table 3.1 below).

- ◆ The Confederation of Indonesian Prosperous Trade Union (KSBSI) consists of 11 affiliates covering sectors as diverse as finance/banking, health/chemicals, and education/training/civil servants. Its two affiliates covered in the survey are GARTEKS (garment/textile) and FPE (mining/energy).
- ◆ The Indonesian Trade Union Congress (KSPI) joins together 10 major sectoral federations, all but three of which (SP ISI and PPMI-R) are represented in this survey: teaching (PGRI), textile/garment (SPN), woodwork (Kahutindo), chemicals (KEP), banking/finance/services (ASPEK), metalworkers (SPMI), printing (PPMI-R), cement (SP ISI), health/pharmacy (FARKES-R), and tourism (PAR-R). The third confederation, the All-Indonesia Trade Union Confederation (KSPSI), consists of 18 affiliated federations from a wide variety of economic and industrial sectors.
- ◆ Of the KSPSI-affiliated federations, the seafarers union (KPI), the textile and garment federation (TSK SPSI) and the plantations federation (SPSI-PP) are included in the survey.

Aside from five company-level unions without national affiliation, the survey also included the independent FNPBI, PPMI (Muslim Workers) and SPSI-Reformasi.

Table 3: List of Confederations, Federations and Company-Level Unions Surveyed

Name	Type	Affiliation	Founded	Sector
KSBSI	Confederation	WLC	1992	Multi
KSPI	Confederation	ICFTU	2003	Multi
KSPSI	Confederation	—	1973	Multi
ASPEK	Federation	KSPI	1999	Banking/finance
FARKES-R	Federation	KSPI	1999	Health/pharmaceutical
FNPBI	Federation	—	1999	Multi
GARTEKS	Federation	KSBSI	1997	Textile/garment
KAHUTINDO	Federation	KSPI	1973	Wood
KPI	Federation	KSPSI	1976	Maritime
PAR-R	Federation	KSPI	1999	Tourism
PGRI	Federation	KSPI	1945	Education
PPMI	Federation	—	1998	Multi
SBSI FPE	Federation	KSBSI	1998	Mining/energy
SPMI	Federation	KSPI	1999	Metal/electronics
SPN	Federation	KSPI	1973	Multi
SPSI-PP	Federation	KSPSI	1973	Plantations
SPSI-R	Federation	—	1999	Multi
TSK SPSI	Federation	KSPSI	1973	Textile/garment
IKAGI	Union	ITF	2000	Air transport/service
SP SERPINDO	Federation/union	—	2000	Nursing
SP Angkasa Pura I	Union	SPBUMN	1999	Public/transport
SP Bank Mandiri	Union	—	2000	Banking/finance
SP Deutsche Bank	Union	ASPEK	1979	Banking/finance
SP Glaxo	Union	FARKES-R	2000	Pharmaceutical
SP PDAM Jakarta	Union	SPBUMN	1999	Public/utilities

Notes:

SERPINDO acts as a federation but cannot legally call itself thus as it has only three officially affiliated unions (federations require a membership of at least five unions).

SPN was until 2003 called TSK (Textile, Garment and Leather)

IKAGI stands for Ikatan Awak Kabin GARUDA Indonesia (Cabin Crew Association)

All interviews were carried out in Indonesian, by the researcher, and lasted between one and three hours (except for one interview which was conducted via e-mail due to the respondent's time constraints). In most cases, interviews were conducted in trade union offices, though in some cases (especially company-level union leaders) public places, such as restaurants, or the ILO office, were selected. Survey participants were made aware of the aims of the survey and the public nature of their responses, though some indicated during the interview that they preferred some of their responses to remain confidential. Such requests have been reflected in the survey findings, as reported below, by either leaving this information out where identification of the source would be unavoidable or by attributing it to an anonymous source. In most cases, no other persons (either outsiders or other union staff) were present during the interview, though this could not be guaranteed in all cases.

For each interview, the researcher used a list of questions drawn up in English by the ILO, in collaboration with the researcher. This questionnaire included open-ended, and closed, questions, and functioned as a guideline during the interview. Respondents were however invited to contribute other relevant information whenever they wanted during the course of the interview. In order to keep the atmosphere informal, interviews were not taped but the researcher took extensive notes during, and after, each interview. Information on membership, and statutes, were also obtained from official documents and publications brought to the interview by the respondent.

2. Membership Figures and Other Basic Information

In order to compare the level of participation by women in various unions, it is useful to present briefly some characteristics of the confederations and federations interviewed in the course of the survey. Several of these organisations date from well before the 1998-1999 changes in labour legislation, while others were established relatively recently, taking advantage of the lifting of restrictions on independent trade unionism. Thus, union organisations in Indonesia differ not only in the length and type of experience of their leaders (e.g. formal representation versus underground organising) but also in the extent to which their mandate calls for democratisation and innovation. While it is not the intention of this report to evaluate union organisations by their progressive or democratic nature, it is clear from the survey findings that the success of gender mainstreaming efforts in trade unions is closely linked to the extent to which members are able to make their voices heard and participate freely in their organisations.

Membership figures, as reflected below, present numerous difficulties. Because of the scarcity of verification efforts by independent observers, some confederations and federations are accused of exaggerating membership numbers in order to win seats on tripartite bodies and gain influence in decision-making fora.³⁹ A membership self-verification exercise undertaken by the trade unions in 2002 saw the three largest federations/confederations claim a membership of almost 8 million out of a total formal sector labour force of 27.3 million.⁴⁰ Quinn asserts that "it seems extremely unlikely that this figure is an accurate reflection of the level of trade union membership, particularly as many unions lost a significant number of members" since 1998.⁴¹ In mid-2005, the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration undertook a trade union membership verification exercise. In mid-2005, the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration undertook a trade union membership verification exercise, but again, as in

39 Quinn 2003

40 CBS labour force data for 2001; Quinn 2003

41 Ibid., 2003:26

the past, it is unclear whether membership figures cover only officially registered members who pay dues, or include all individuals whose unit leaders can be mobilised for union activism. Union membership figures that emerged indicated a dramatic decline in union density right in Indonesia between 2002 and 2005. In short, the statistical basis for membership claims is often unclear, and figures must be interpreted with great caution.

Only a few federations report having a reliable system for disaggregating their membership data by sex (GARTEKS, Kahutindo, PGRI, SPMI, and SPN). Of these five federations, PGRI is able to keep detailed records on its members because they are mostly civil servants and as such, sex-disaggregated records are relatively easy to obtain. It is more difficult to pinpoint the reasons why the remaining four federations have reliable and sex-disaggregated membership systems, since only Kahutindo stands out as having an especially active and influential Women's Department and women's advocates at high level. The high percentage of women members in GARTEKS and SPN may be a factor of importance here.

Reasons given by union organisations for not disaggregating membership data by sex (or the absence of reliable and comprehensive information) include the following:

- ◆ The recent establishment of a data system that requires further refinement (KSBSI);
- ◆ Difficulties in getting reliable information from branch and area offices that may not want to relinquish dues to central level (GARTEKS, PAR-R);
- ◆ General difficulties in compiling and storing membership information electronically due to theft, computer failure, internal disarray, etc. (FARKES, SPSI-R);
- ◆ The very small percentage of female membership (KPI and SBSI FPE); and
- ◆ A lack of awareness on the part of federation leadership concerning the importance of allocating sufficient funds and human resources for an up-to-date and sex-disaggregated data system (SPN, PPMI and many other respondents).

In response to these problems, several women union leaders have attempted to compile their own membership data. They indicated in the survey interviews that having reliable information readily available, and in an easy-to-use format, will probably help them demonstrate the extent of female membership, which in turn will confirm the need for women-specific activities, or efforts, at gender mainstreaming.

Table 4: Reported Membership among Federations and Confederations⁴²

Organisation	Members	Women	% W	Yr	Coverage
KSBSI	1,700,000	n.a.	ca.40-50	2002	26 provinces, 11 affiliated federations
KSPI	2,948,454	n.a.	n.a.	2003	10 affiliated federations
KSPSI	5,100,000	n.a.	n.a.	2000	18 affiliated federations
ASPEK	110,529	—	—	2002	84 affiliated unions

42 Source: Survey interviews and official reporting by affiliated federations to their confederations

FARKES-R	33,825	n.a.	ca.60-70	2004	11 provinces
FNPBI	35,000	ca.23,000	ca.66	2003	
GARTEKS	15,968	n.a.	83	2004	7 provinces, 10 branch, 91 affiliated companies
Kahutindo	136,568	> 46,742	>41	2004	12 provinces, 43 branch, 255 affiliated companies
KPI	80,000	n.a.	ca.1-2	—	
PAR-R	9,442	n.a.	ca.40	2003	9 provinces
PGRI	1,562,030	575,900	37	2002	nationwide
PPMI	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	—	
SBSI FPE	131,700	n.a.	ca.1-2	—	
SPMI	77,158	29,780	39	2003	7 provinces, 188 affiliated companies
SPN	501,321	344,445	69	2003	7 provinces, 34 branch, 539 affiliated companies
SPSI-PP	ca.400,000	n.a.	ca.30-40	—	
SPSI-R	ca.100,000	n.a.	n.a.	—	7 provinces, 8 sectoral unions
TSK SPSI	384,185	n.a.	n.a.	2004	8 provinces, 36 branch, 527 affiliated companies

Notes:

GARTEKS: Membership is sex-disaggregated for all units except companies where unionisation/affiliation is still in process or awaits DEPNAKER approval.

KAHUTINDO: Not all membership data is sex-disaggregated; percentage female membership is taken from sex-disaggregated data rather than from total available membership data.

SPMI: Large majority of female members in electronics and electrical sector (more than 60% female), while small minorities in automotive, machinery and components sector (less than 10%) and metal work sector (less than 20%). No women in space industry and dock and shipworkers sector.

SPN: data for 2002 listed membership of 545,702 of which 69 per cent female, while in 2003 this decreased to 501,321 of which still 69 per cent female. Clearly, the ongoing job-losses in the garment and textile sector have resulted in significant decreases in union membership. Membership is currently being verified again.

SPSI-Reformasi: Membership currently being verified in sex-disaggregated manner (March 2005). Estimates vary by sector (90% in textile, 60% in food and drink, 50% in banking and finance, and 10% in mining, energy and drinking water).

Table 5: Reported Membership among Company-Level Unions, 2005⁴³

Union	Members	Women	% women	Coverage
IKAGI	2,300	1,600	70	nationwide
SP Serpindo	300	n.a.	n.a.	3 affiliated companies in Jakarta
SP Angkasa Pura I	3,800	n.a.	ca.25-30	18 branches nationwide
SP Deutsche Bank	160	n.a.	67	Jakarta-based office
SP Bank Mandiri	12,596	n.a.	n.a.	nationwide
SP Glaxo	ca.200	n.a.	n.a.	Greater Jakarta area
SP PDAM Jakarta	ca.4,000	n.a.	ca.30-40	Greater Jakarta area

The above two tables suggest that women's union membership varies from nearly none in sectors traditionally dominated by men to more than two-thirds in the health and pharmaceutical sector and than 90 percent in the textile and garment sector. Unionisation of women depends, in part, on the percentage of women in a particular sector of the economy, though it appears that women are more likely to organise in unions if they can do so together with other women (as opposed to with men in their workplaces). This issue will be taken up in greater detail in section 4 of this part of the report.

But even if the above membership figures are accurate, they conceal the fact that union density among Indonesian women workers is still very low, given the high proportion of workplaces without trade unions. Of a total of 45.9 million working women (2005 World Bank data for 2004), Table 3 shows that the major national trade union federations counted fewer than two million women among their members. While this latter statistic does not include the significant number of women in factory-based, small (or regional) trade unions that are not affiliated to any national federation, this does not make up for the fact that millions more women work in small and/or home-based workplaces where unions are rarely active. In conclusion, it must be kept in mind that the findings of this survey apply only to a relatively small percentage of women workers in the formal sector in Indonesia.

3. Women's Leadership in Union Structures

While women's membership vary significantly depending on the percentage of women in a particular economic sector, the number and percentage of women union leaders remains low in all sectors. Even those federations with a majority of affiliates in sectors dominated by women workers are frequently headed by men. Only two out of the major federations listed in Table 6, below, (FNPBI and SBSI FPE) are chaired by women, while another was headed by a woman until 2004 (KAHUTINDO).

This under-representation of women in leadership is also evident in high-level negotiations in the world of work in general. For example, the trade union representatives on the tripartite team that negotiated the Manpower Bill during late 2002 and early 2003 consisted of 5 men – all chairpersons of large federations – and only 1 woman, the head of a bureau within a federation.

43 Source: Survey interviews and written materials such as statutes and congress reports.

Table 6: Female Leaders in Confederations and Federations⁴⁴

Organisation	Period	Exec Board	Other	Local
KSBSI	2003-2007	1/5	6/27 plenary mtg offcls ca.24/61 affiliate offcls 4/6 dept chairpersons	1/4 area secretaries ca. 3/26 provincial coordinators
KSPI	2003-2007	0/13	1/18 Nat'l Council	—
KSPSI	2005-2009	2/11	n.a.	—
ASPEK	2002-2005	2/8	n.a.	4/80 affil unions 0/10 region secretaries
FARKES	2000-2005	5/17	1/6 division heads 5/10 sectoral reps.	n.a.
FNPBI	TBC	4/10	TBC	TBC
GARTEKS	2003-2007	3/5	n.a.	n.a.
Kahutindo	2004-2009	1/3	3/15 plenary members	20% unit officials
KPI	2004-2009	0/3	n.a.	1/ca.12 prov branches
PAR-R	2002-2007	2/9	n.a.	n.a.
PGRI	2003-2008	3/11	4/10 dept secretaries	n.a.
PPMI	2003-2008	2/22	n.a.	n.a.
SBSI-FPE	2003-2007	1/7	n.a.	n.a.
SPMI	2001-2006	0/15	0/10 affiliated sectors	n.a.
SPN	2003-2007	3/13	n.a.	n.a.
SPSI-PP	2004-2009	3/11	0/8 area representatives	n.a.
SPSI-R	1999-2004	5/20	1/14 natl assembly	n.a.
TSK SPSI	2004-2008	2/13	n.a.	n.a.

Notes: KSBSI: Among the 11 affiliated federations, there are usually at least 1-3 women out of 5-7 executive board members. Women chair 3 affiliated federations (finance/banking, mining/energy, and seafaring/fishing), while 2 (chemical/health and banking/finance) have a female secretary-general. No information is available centrally on the number and percentage of women leaders at other levels within KSBSI and its federations.

KSPI: The executive committee consists of 7 officials plus chairpersons of 6 departments (the women's committee is not represented at this level). The national assembly consists of all general chairpersons and secretaries-general of affiliates.

KSPSI: Of the two women executives, one will most likely be replaced due to internal disagreement about her appointment.

FARKES: For 2000-2003, 2 women out of 11 executive board. At the 2003 national congress, the executive board was expanded to 17 members.

KPI: Departmental leadership to be appointed later in 2005.

44 Source: Survey interviews and written materials such as statutes and congress reports

PAR-R: The DKI Jakarta area leadership assembly counts two women out of 15 officials (one of 5 deputy chairpersons and one of 5 deputy secretaries).

SPMI: Each of 5 affiliated sectors has a board of 7-8 officials; of the 35-42 officials total, only 2 are women.

SPSI-R: The national assembly consists of the chairpersons and secretaries-general of affiliated federations. New leadership not yet elected.

Table 7: Female Leaders in Company-Level Unions⁴⁵

	Period	Executive Board
IKAGI	2004-2006	5/11
SP Serpindo	n.a.	n.a.
SP Angkasa Pura I	2002-2005	9/17
SP Bank Mandiri	2004-2007	4/30
SP Deutsche Bank	2002-2005	5/10
SP Glaxo	2003-2006	4/11
SP PDAM Jakarta	2002-2006	4/42
<i>Notes:</i>		
SP Serpindo: Leadership rotation is uncertain.		
SP Angkasa Pura I and SP Bank Mandiri: Leadership is appointed by chairperson after election of the chairperson.		

Nevertheless, some positive trends can be noted. Among the more than eighty-six trade union federations registered with the Indonesian government,⁴⁶ at least a handful of smaller federations are headed by women, especially those that work with textile and garment workers.⁴⁷ Women also head several non-affiliated regional federations, such as the Independent Trade Union of Medan and the Surabaya-based Regional Trade Union (not included in the present survey). Although most of these women leaders have worked hard to reach and hold on to their current positions, lone women on important committees such as the women noted above are often regarded by both men and women as token representatives and may have very little influence during discussions, being forced to agree with the male majority even on issues concerning women's rights.

Rather than experiencing direct and blatant discrimination based on their sex, women union leaders report being subjected to intense surveillance and scrutiny in relation to their personal behaviour. A female union leader describes being asked by male leaders of other unions, and politicians, about her appearance and personal life. Similarly, another woman union leader recounts how her actions and decisions have frequently been judged based on her sex rather than her competence as a leader. Survey respondents generally reported that women are being held back by family responsibilities, stereotypes about women's lack of leadership qualities and qualifications, time constraints, the negative image of trade unions, and the lack of democracy within trade unions. Women in the trade unions of state-owned enterprises report the specific obstacle of women performing mostly administrative work, which does not prepare them for the managerial positions that usually provide an entry-point into trade

45 Sources: Survey interviews and written materials such as statutes and congress reports.

46 DEPNEKERTRANS; 2003.

47 Serikat Buruh Indonesia-Perjuangan and Gerakan Serikat Buruh Indonesia are two examples, with membership ranging from a few hundred to 6000 workers

union leadership. The survey found that, in state-owned enterprises, union leadership usually appears to be based on a person's position and seniority. The recommendations and strategies of these and other women for increasing the number of women in leadership positions are discussed in more detail in Section 4 of Part III.

3.1 Type of Positions held by Women

Because women often hold positions believed to be especially suitable for women's qualities and capacity, the survey included specific questions in this regard. A significant proportion of the respondents⁴⁸ confirmed the existence, in their organisation, of stereotypes that women are especially suitable for administrative and financial positions. Women were said to be more thorough, better at handling details and numbers, and more industrious than men. This resulted in their appointment or election as treasurer or secretary rather than decision-making functions such as chairperson or secretary-general. Respondents from PGRI added that women were purposely selected for positions in which they assisted men in such tasks, because women's planning capacity was believed to be insufficient to carry out the extensive responsibilities as treasurer. Alternatively, women were simply assigned to relatively insignificant positions to show 'lip service' to gender equality, often allegedly to satisfy demands or requirements from foreign donor organisations.

On a more positive note, the FNPBI reported that it had deliberately appointed a man as head of the administrative department in order to dispel stereotypes about administrative tasks as women's domain. Yet, several women commented that women officials often allow their influence to be limited by the men around them, and do not take sufficient initiative. In other words, it is perhaps the individual's character and willpower rather than her official position that determine her influence in the union and her effectiveness as a leader. The survey also found a handful of examples in which women had deliberately not sought positions as chairperson or secretary-general, in order to have more influence behind the scenes and/or to be able to carry out union activities without risking sanctions and resistance by their management.

In conclusion, the survey findings show that women are well aware of the continuing existence of stereotypes confining women to administrative, and assistant, positions and are starting to resist being limited in their ambitions by such stereotypes.

Women hold the following positions in the following trade union organisations in Indonesia:

- KSBSI Of the five executive board members, only the treasurer is a woman.
- KSPSI The executive board counts 11 members, of whom 2 women (treasurer and deputy treasurer).
- ASPEK The treasurer and internal auditor are the only women in the 8-member + executive board.
- FARKES Of the five women on the 17-person executive board, two women are in the women's department, one is a departmental secretary and two are treasurers.
- FNPBI Of the four women on the 10-person executive board, one is the general chairperson, one heads the international department, one heads the department for women and culture and one heads the finance department.
- GARTEKS Of the 5-person executive board, women hold both positions of deputy chairperson, while a third woman is treasurer. Although the majority of members are women, the chairperson and secretary-general are both men.

48 6 out of 15 federations, i.e. respondents from GARTEKS, PAR-R, PGRI, SPN, SPSI-R, and SPSI-PP

- Kahutindo The treasurer is the only woman on the three-member executive committee. Of the plenary members, both women's committee staff members are women as well as the deputy chairperson of the international relations department. None of the area representatives are women.
- PAR-R Of the nine members on the executive board, women hold positions as deputy secretary and deputy treasurer.
- PGRI Of the 11-member daily executive board, women hold positions as one of 5 deputy chairpersons, as one of two deputy secretaries-general and as deputy treasurer. Among the departmental secretaries, they are in charge of information and communication; women's empowerment; education; and arts, culture and sports.
- PPMI Of the 22 national executives, two are women, as head of the women's empowerment department and deputy head of the advocacy department.
- SBSI FPE Of the seven executive board members, only the general chairperson is a woman.
- SPN Of the 13-person executive board, the chairperson and secretary of the women's empowerment department and the chairperson of the organising and education department are women.
- TSK SPSI Of the 13-person executive board, women hold the treasury and deputy treasury positions.

At company-level, women also disproportionately hold positions as treasurer, secretary or head of relatively minor departments, such as external or public relations (perhaps on account of their language skills).

- IKAGI Of the 11-person executive board, 5 are women: two treasurers, two women in public relations and one woman in the welfare department.
- SP Angkasa Pura I 9 out of 17 officials are women, but only the chairperson (a woman) is elected by members. The chairperson appoints the other officials in order to ensure effective working relationships with them
- SP Bank Mandiri 4 out of 30 appointed officials are women: general chairperson (elected), one of the deputy chairpersons, one secretary and the treasurer.
- SP Deutsche Bank 5 out of 10 elected union officials are women: chairperson, secretary and one of two treasurers, plus 2 out of the 5 human resource development officials. Half of the 16 members of the members' representative board are women.
- SP Glaxo Women hold 4 out of 11 positions, including that of secretary.
- SP PDAM Women hold 4 out of 42 positions, including that of secretary-general.
- SP Sempino Information not available to due uncertain structure of leadership.

The figures presented above, of women's leadership and membership in trade union organisations, suggest that women have fewer incentives to become union members and/or experience obstacles in attempts to gain and fulfill leadership positions.

4. Obstacles and Strategies regarding Women's Participation

This section outlines the variety of problems experienced by women members and leaders, and indicates the strategies that have been implemented by union organisations to advance women's roles and representation. The problems uncovered by the survey range from low self-confidence, family-related obstacles, and time constraints to unequal access to pathways to leadership and other forms of discrimination, based on gender, age and location. It should be noted that these problems are likely to vary, provincially, in their extent and severity due to the different histories and cultures in each locality, and the presence or absence of a women's movement or women's organisation(s) that (can) support women union leaders.

Problem 1: Double Burden and Family Role

Women union leaders and members frequently experience resistance to their union activism from their family or their social environment. Such resistance is at times explicit, in the form of a husband or parents forbidding a woman from engaging in union activities, but is often more subtle. Women may face cultural obstacles and time constraints due to their domestic role, and may be hindered by their family's lack of familiarity with union work. Union women may step down from their positions after getting married, because of the (perceived) pressure for them to put their families and domestic duties first. Almost all survey respondents indicated that women are less active as participants in union activities than men, and that fewer women participate, unless the activity specifically concerns gender or women's issues.

Women workers themselves may regard their work as a temporary pursuit until they marry, which perhaps gives them less incentive to struggle for better working conditions. Such complaints are often heard from women union activists, perhaps as a result of the generally young age of women workers in large, export-oriented factories where unionising is more common. Many report that women assume, or are assumed, to give up their job if their husband is capable of earning sufficient income for the family, or will, at most, work merely to help their husband earn money. For example, a respondent from KSPSI believes that women have less ambition than men to participate in union activities and to pursue leadership positions. The persistence of such perceptions is probably the result of widespread diffusion of basic religious teachings, Javanese and other cultural ideals, as well as state ideology. All of these prescribe that a husband's responsibility is to provide a livelihood and protect his family, whereas a wife is supposed to take care of her household and raise the couple's children. Young women's responsibility for child care and household tasks is reflected in the finding from the Indonesian Labour Force Survey (2002), which indicates that women's labour force participation is highest among the 45-49 age group (60.6 percent) whose children have already grown up and moved out or could help to take care of the household.

Because of cultural expectations that women become mothers, and because of union women's frequent inability to afford paid domestic help, men often inadvertently use women's childbearing and child-rearing responsibilities as an excuse to keep them out of union leadership. Unions may be reluctant to change the timing and location of their meetings to suit women (though some women complain that it is employers who do not give permission for the union to meet during working hours or for women to join such meetings). Several survey respondents reported that unions select male shop stewards because the male leadership considers women too preoccupied with domestic duties, incapable of taking on leadership positions, or this is perceived as inappropriate for women. A respondent from Kahutindo stated that women are seen by their managers as incapable of undertaking advocacy or negotiating activities. The impact of such forms of prejudicial perception is compounded

because union women can easily become discouraged by such attitudes and may, as a result, perceive union work as a typically male task and the union as a male world (a sentiment echoed by respondents from GARTEKS, SP Angkasa Pura I, and ASPEK).

The bad image of trade unions also keeps many women from becoming union members, because it is contrasted with women's family role and peaceful nature. The popular media and politicians often equate trade unions with trouble, violence, and anarchy (mentioned by respondents from ASPEK, GARTEKS, KPI, SBSI FPE, and SPN). The image of the trade union is often bad among white-collar workers, especially in the finance/banking sector where few are used to the idea of unionising and where CBAs are still relatively rare. Trade unions are still seen as political, and sometimes communist, and are associated with troublemakers. A woman leader from the Seafarers union, KPI, recounts:

Many people see demonstrations as the main image of trade unions but demonstrations are also seen as something [only] for factory workers ... Women have seen me on television in a demonstration, being hit by the police, so they get scared and also some are forbidden to join by their husbands.

A related problem is the image of women factory workers as "immoral women" in the eyes of the surrounding communities.⁴⁹ Some survey respondents say that young women are scared by the prospect of not being able to find a boyfriend, or husband, if they are perceived as smart, independent and/or outspoken. Outspoken and active women union leaders also face threats of sexual violence from thugs allegedly hired by employers and managers, especially on the island of Batam, where women predominate in the manufacturing sector. This is likely to provide a strong obstacle to recruitment of new female union members.

From a cultural perspective, women are also hindered by the perception that it is considered inappropriate for (young) women to go out on their own, late at night, to public places. Meetings or educational activities out of town, and with a duration of several days, pose particular problems for women whose families are concerned about their safety. It is, therefore, not surprising that many women – not only in factory jobs but also in office jobs – are reported to have difficulty obtaining permission from their parents or husbands to join union activities, or are criticised by them for their union activism. Many of those who live away from their parents and immediate family purposely conceal their union activism, or are careful about how much and which information to share during their visits home. Among women in the public sector and in the service sector, however, this is rarely the case, suggesting that women from higher-educated families tend to have fewer problems gaining support from their families. On the other hand, a few women union leaders reported that women from high-income families experience more obstruction from their husbands in their efforts to find work outside the home, because of the husband's fear that his wife may find a more prestigious position or better paid employment than he has.

Thus, in general, the role of husband, parents, and family is important in explaining many women's reluctance to become active in trade unions, and the difficulties experienced by those women who insist on becoming union members and leaders. Federations and individual unions have responded to these problems in the following ways, with varying degrees of success. For more detailed information on recruitment strategies related to women workers, see also Strategy 5.1.

49 Tjandraningsih 2000:266

Strategy 1.1: Informal lobbying and adjustment

About half of the respondents indicated a strong awareness of obstacles stemming from family or household roles, and the need to respond to these obstacles in recruitment and mentoring of female union members. However, few have come up with practical solutions that go *beyond personal efforts* to make women feel welcome in trade unions. Out of all the unions interviewed, the only union that claimed to have addressed the double burden of women is Kahutindo, whose former President reported having conducted time management courses for women members or leaders. Little, however, is known about its effectiveness and impact. On the other hand, many women leaders have initiated individual efforts to convince husbands and parents of the need for unionization, and of the legitimacy of women's involvement in union activities. They may do so by explaining the purpose of the activity, eliminating fears about contact with strangers and staying overnight in 'public places' such as hotels, and inviting husbands to join the activity or check in some other way. Threats of sexual violence have been taken seriously by some unions but a sustained and integrated response to the issue is yet to be developed.

In short, efforts to make women feel more welcome and safe in trade unions have not yet become part of the standard operating procedures of any union organisation, or of training materials for union leaders. The more information is available on the need for such interventions, the more likely it is that male union officials realise that women workers should be approached not only as workers but also as women. Similarly, trade unions should consider social problems more holistically, addressing not only problems at the workplace but also family and wider environmental issues. There is also the need for lobbying and individual encouragement to educate women members and make them aware of the need to defend themselves and to fight for their own destiny. Increased male support and awareness appear equally essential in order for women officials to formulate and implement union policies that stipulate sensitivity and proactive union responses to family obstacles and cultural resistance.

Strategy 1.2: Education and training on trade unionism

Many women union leaders at unit and branch level pointed out the importance of educating women about trade unionism and the functions of union leaders. For example, it is more useful to educate women at grassroots level and fight at local union level for better CBAs than to try to influence policy at the national level, because implementation of policies and laws are very uneven.

In order to be effective in reaching women, education and training materials must reflect the above-mentioned concerns about the propriety of women's engagement in public or leadership functions, and the need for awareness-raising among family-members. However, few union organisations report having such materials, and using them in their educational activities. Since this survey did not explicitly investigate the gender sensitivity of general union training materials, a separate and more detailed enquiry into this issue might be necessary. What the survey found was that some unions (like SPN) allow members of its Study Circles to select their own training materials so as to reflect the group's needs and characteristics (see strategy 3.1. KSPI and KSBSI explicitly mentioned having gender-sensitive generic training materials. The Public Services International (PSI) representative for Indonesia reported that the shortage of training materials is a general weakness amongst trade unions in Indonesia. PSI, thus, offers its affiliates general training on trade unionism with manuals and handbooks that include gender equality messages.⁵⁰

50 Indonesian unions affiliated with PSI are: FARKES-R, SP PLN Persero (national electricity company), SP Angkasa Pura I, and SP PJB (electricity services). Several unions are in the process of becoming affiliates, including SP PDAM Jaya. PSI generally works with public-sector and health-sector related trade unions.

Strategy 1.3: Scheduling meetings at times convenient for women

KSBSI makes special attempts to ensure that meetings are held in locations accessible for women, and at times when they are most likely to be able to attend. However, none of the other union organisations surveyed mentioned making similar efforts to encourage women's participation in union activities. In contrast, a few admitted that meetings were traditionally scheduled during evenings, even though this was generally known to make it difficult for women to attend.

Problem 2: Differential Access to Pathways to Leadership

Women have less access than men to both official, and unofficial, leadership training, resulting in the existence of only a small number of experienced female union leaders. Not surprisingly, fewer women than men are elected, or appointed, to leadership positions in unions. Even where women dominate an industrial sector, it is still men who lead the national trade union federations in such sectors. While both men and women report having difficulty getting dispensation from their employer or manager, the problem of women's low representation as leaders also has several gender-specific causes.

One is discrimination based on gender. The survey found that several women union activists blame the persistence of male leadership on men's exploitation of unequal gender relations to discourage, or outright forbid, women from contesting leadership positions. There are extensive similarities here to Franzway's discussion of 'male clubs' and the culture of masculinity in Australian trade unions.⁵¹ Survey interviews revealed suspicions by union women that many men feel threatened by women's entry into unions and by their growing knowledge and skills. These perceived threats encourage men to try to prevent challenges to the leadership positions they have held for many years. According to Pocock, "for many [Australian union] men, their masculinity is constituted by their position of union leadership."⁵²

In Indonesia, this may happen through the deliberate misinterpretation of religious teachings about women's leadership, and the perpetuation of stereotypes of women as naturally less capable of leadership. Women's skills are valued differently from men's, and women are assumed *a priori* to be less capable than men to take up leadership positions due to their supposedly more emotional nature and lesser knowledge. A woman union leader reported that she has often experienced being judged based on her sex rather than her abilities, something that would not happen to men in leadership positions. Many men are alleged to hesitate in giving women the necessary trust and opportunity to carry out important activities or decisions.

As a clear sign of such gender-based rivalries, several respondents highlighted during the interviews the lack of recognition they receive, and their lack of access to independent and reliable information. For example, a respondent on the central decision-making body of her federation recounted the frequency with which invitations addressed to her – in her capacity as committee member – somehow never reached her. Another, in a similar executive position, indicated that male union officials at times did not inform their female colleagues at the company level of union meetings that were being convened. Several more raised scenarios where male leaders prohibited them from participating in some internal union activities, in an apparent sign of fearfulness of the challenge women leaders represent to them. Women also appear to have less access to educational opportunities that are vital to contest leadership positions.

51 Franzway; 2002:45-47; see also Pocock ;1997.

52 Pocock; 1997: 21.

Although union women in the survey interviews commonly reported the persistence of such a culture of masculinity and the denigration of femininity, many women union leaders actively challenge these facets of trade unionism and have sought to reshape gender relations in trade unions. They do so by contesting leadership positions not only in large federations but also in regional trade unions and in smaller enterprise and industrial unions. Trade union activists at the factory level are frequently critical of the manipulation of the labour movement by national-level leaders, and these two levels must therefore be clearly distinguished. Thus, it is possible that the absence of women in national union leadership positions reflects not only women's numerical under-representation in unions but also their greater interest in staying close to workers and their rejection of self-interested politics at the national level. In other words, women union leaders may prefer to distance themselves from mainstream politics and politicians because of the negative connotations these hold among women workers in their areas or workplaces. If this is indeed true, then it can be said that union structure and culture at once exclude women from the top jobs and provide them with incentives to organise at different levels and using different methods, as well as to pursue linkages with other women who face similar disenchantment with the labour movement.

Secondly, few women get invited to decision-making fora, such as congresses and working meetings, where they could gain valuable experience. It is common practice among federations to invite only the chairpersons and secretary-generals of their affiliates or area/branch offices to national meetings which are, as a result, dominated by male delegates. For example, in PAR-R only 10 percent of delegates at the regional meeting for Jakarta were women, because those invited were the heads of affiliated unions, and participants had to pay for their own transport and arrange for dispensation. Only 5 percent of participants at the 2003 National Congress of SPN were women (whereas in 1999, ACILS had made 30 percent participation a requirement for offering funding for the national congress). In KSBSI, monthly plenary meetings are attended only by chairpersons and secretary-generals of its affiliates, which means that women leaders are in a small minority and find it difficult to put gender issues on the agenda. Until recently, female members of SPN faced efforts by their male colleagues to deny them their voting rights at the National Congress. Even respondents from SPSI-R, whose 1999 national congress was attended by 25 percent women, believe that women's participation should be at least 30 percent in order to have a significant influence.

Some survey respondents reported a slight increase in the number of women leaders during the past five to ten years, but could not point to any specific explanation for this increase other than the general environment for trade unions since 1998, and ongoing efforts at gender mainstreaming by trade unions. Among the solutions proposed and practiced by some federations are quotas for participation or funding, preparatory pre-meetings for women, and extra women participants at national congress and other gatherings.

Strategy 2.1: Quotas

Many federations and confederations are under increasing pressure from both their female members and their international counterparts to institute quotas for women's participation and representation. Table 8, below, shows which federations have officially adopted quotas for women in national congresses, educational activities, and international delegations. At its 2003 national congress, KSBSI adopted an internal resolution calling for 30 per cent participation by women in the official structure, delegations and internal and external decision-making fora of the confederation. A similar quota for funding for women's activities was discussed and *appears* to have been accepted, but has never been implemented. Some of these federations have not yet formalised the quota in their statutes because they are interim decisions awaiting formalisation at the next congress (e.g. FARKES and SPSI-R). In the case

of FARKES, this step has been attributed to the federation's collaboration with PSI, an international union organisation known for its progressive policies and strategies concerning gender equality. This collaboration also meant that FARKES had to institute a target of doubling the number of women leaders in the coming years. Kahutindo similarly has benefited from collaboration with its international federation which has consistently encouraged implementation of concrete steps to gender mainstreaming such as quotas.

Table 8: Existence of Quota Policies in Union Organisations⁵³

Organisation	Quota	Official status	Sanctions
KSBSI	Yes (30%)	Yes (2003)	No
KSPI	No	—	—
KSPSI	No	—	—
ASPEK	No	—	—
FARKES-R	Yes (30%)	Not yet	No
FNPBI	No	—	—
GARTEKS	No	—	—
Kahutindo	Yes (30%)	Yes	Possible
KPI	Yes (30%)	Yes	No
PAR-R	No	—	—
PGRI	30% Target	No	No
PPMI	No	—	—
SBSI FPE	No	—	—
SPMI	No	—	—
SPN	30% Target	No	No
SPSI-PP	No	—	—
SPSI-R	30% Target	Not yet	No
TSK SPSI	No	—	—

But the effectiveness of such quota policies is questionable due to the absence of sanctions against those who violate the policy or are unable to fulfill it. The KSBSI resolution "recommends" 30 percent participation by women, and does not specify any sanctions when this minimum is not reached or applied. There was a suggestion (e.g. from the KSPI) that branches and regional offices that fail to fulfill the quota are subject to moral sanction, yet it remains to be seen how strong such sentiments are and whether they exist throughout the entire organisation. In other cases (e.g. KPI), the existence of a women's quota has not been socialised to union members or leaders, and the quota itself is therefore little known and remains to be implemented. Furthermore, KPI applies a target of 30 percent for women's

53 Sources: Survey interviews and written materials such as statutes and congress reports.

participation, but this appears to be ineffective, as the number of women in the federation is not sufficiently large to fulfill the quota (see problem 4 in this section). Lastly, the wording of the quota may also cause confusion and may lead to a weakening of the intentions behind it. For example, KSPI's Constitution calls for women workers to be "properly represented" in the delegation of affiliates who attend the national convention, yet leaves it up to its officials to interpret the meaning of 'properly'.

It is at times unclear how, and by whom, these women's quota policies are monitored. In KSBSI, the women's division keeps an eye on participation lists of all educational activities and overseas delegations, and objects when the percentage of female participants is far below the minimum. In other union organisations, a similar, unofficial system has taken hold, whereby women's divisions or departments must constantly monitor those in charge of the selection of participants for educational activities, be they the central board or the education department. This puts a heavy burden on women activists who often have multiple tasks and may not have full access to the necessary information to conduct such monitoring.

Women union leaders and activists are also not unanimously in favour of quotas for women's participation or representation. Some women object to quotas based on their fear that women will be elected or appointed as leaders without regard for minimum leadership qualifications or democratic election procedures. When implemented in such fashion, a quota can easily backfire by making all women leaders appear to have been elected based on their sex alone. Quality of women leaders is, thus, as important as their quantity, according to several respondents. Equally important is the objection that these women leaders cannot be expected to care about women's issues, hence the question arises whether (and why) men cannot represent women members. In some federations, the possibility of instituting a quota for women is simply not discussed because leaders believe that both men and women can defend women's interests.

To increase support for women's quotas, some federations attempt to ensure that men are not "left out" or feel discriminated against, through the establishment of similar quotas for men. In KSBSI, for example, neither men nor women can form a minority of less than 30 per cent in any meetings or activities. FARKES also makes efforts to enroll at least 10 to 20 per cent men in activities oriented towards women or gender issues, such as gender training and seminars about maternity protection. In several union organisations where no quota exists, survey respondents indicate that they have lobbied unsuccessfully for a quota. For example, the SPN women's empowerment department believes that it could undertake effective lobbying and socialisation of gender issues if funding was available for such activities.

In conclusion, quota policies provide a good starting point for facilitating women's entry into decision-making positions but require follow-up measures that provide for monitoring and sanctions, as well as general measures to strengthen the position of the individuals involved in applying the quota.

Strategy 2.2: Special policies and meetings for women

If women's participation at leadership level is low, this often results in women becoming a small minority with little, or no, influence at union meetings and other decision-making fora. Some union organisations have therefore implemented special measures to increase women's collective influence at such occasions.

KSBSI and its affiliated federations have instituted a policy to organise preparatory meetings for women delegates before the national congress and other official gatherings where important decisions are taken. Thanks to such preparatory work, women activists in KSBSI were able to

gain sufficient support for a 30 percent participation quota for women in meetings and activities at the 2003 national congress. FARKES-R and other federations affiliated with PSI also enable women leaders to meet before important meetings in order to formulate their position and lobby other participants. This strategy is highly encouraged among PSI affiliates, though not all affiliates make available the necessary funds for such preparatory meetings. Lastly, SPMI women activists organise an annual meeting of 3-4 days for around 30 women officers from around the country. The aim of this meeting⁵⁴ is to exchange experiences, formulate common strategies, and discuss the annual workplan for women's activities.

Such extra meetings for women members and leaders can stimulate women to become active, and can prepare them for active participation in decision-making fora, despite being a minority. This is similar to current ICFTU-APRO practice,, where the ICFTU-APRO has a constitutional amendment stipulating a women's meeting prior to the regional conference, as a way to ensure that more women participate, and with more impact.

Official preparations for decision-making fora also must involve women, as can be seen from the following example from SPSI-R. The members of the steering committee preparing for the national SPSI-R congress are selected by the plenary, which consists only of men. Thus, to make any change in statutes during the congress, women need to influence the Steering Committee which has the power to determine the congress agenda and the particular issues that will be discussed. If placed on the agenda, issues are discussed by the Commission on Organisation, and if approved, also by the plenary of the congress. Women must, thus, socialise their issues widely before the start of the congress, including the provincial offices, which sends representatives and have a reserved seat in the Commission on Organisation. This example shows the need for women's expertise in lobbying, and knowledge of organisational processes, in order to exert influence at the national level. Similarly, FARKES-R women activists intend to ensure at least 40 percent women on the Steering Committee preparing for the next National Congress, compared to barely 14 percent (one out of seven) in 2000.

Strategy 2.3: Extra women delegates

Aiming for balanced representation, several federations have instituted policies for additional women to attend the national congress and other decision-making fora. For example, Kahutindo has specified in its constitution that at each congress or annual meeting at national, regional or branch level, extra women delegates must be sent to ensure the proportional representation of women. To ensure that women participate, each structure can send one or two female delegates to membership meetings, depending on the size of its membership (e.g. each branch can send two female delegates to the area meeting, while each company union with fewer than 500 members can send one female delegate). These extra delegates have the same voting rights as regular participants and are not treated as 'observers only'. Such measures can significantly increase the quality and quantity of participation by women union leaders in decision-making activities, while an increased number of female decision-makers may facilitate gender-sensitive policy-making.

Strategy 2.4: Leadership training for women

Several of the union organisations surveyed have implemented training programmes aimed at increasing women's skills to take on leadership positions, such as Kahutindo and KSPI. PGRI conducts leadership courses for women to enter school leadership positions, while SP Angkasa Pura I conducts general training for women and men. Leadership preparation courses

54 Currently funded by the International Metalworkers Federation

for women-only are also offered under the umbrella of the Indonesian Forum of Women Leaders and Activists, thus making it superfluous for women leaders from individual federations to secure funding for such courses (see Section 6 of this report on the Forum). Little is known about the quality and outcomes of these training courses, as few of the leaders or organisations involved (either implementing the courses, or as donors) have conducted detailed evaluations, or have tracked the progress of women leaders over time.

Strategy 2.5: Appointed leadership

Where women face difficulties in being elected to leadership positions, the direct appointment of women as leaders may be a useful temporary measure. This survey encountered only one instance in which union leadership was appointed rather than elected: in SP Angkasa Pura I, the elected chairperson has the power to appoint all other central executive board officials (secretary-general, treasurers, heads of departments and sub-departments). In this way, the union tries to ensure that the executive body works effectively and is not hindered by personal conflicts between officials. Yet, many women and men in union organisations would object to such a strategy because it goes against principles of democracy, and because the risk is great that a male chairperson would only appoint male officials on the executive board.

Problem 3: Low Awareness of Gender Equality Issues

Due to the recent introduction of the term 'gender', it is highly likely that few women and men in trade unions have a thorough understanding of the meaning of "gender" or "gender equality". In the media and in popular discourse, 'gender' is still frequently equated with 'women' which unfairly leaves women with the full responsibility for attempting to change unequal gender relations at work and in society more broadly. This also means that gender issues in trade unions are reduced, and limited, to those issues that are clearly relevant to women – such as maternity leave and sexual harassment – thus obscuring the gender dimensions of general trade union issues, such as wages, working conditions, labour markets, and organisational development and management. For example, it has been alleged that unions often ignore gender issues, especially at the factory-level. Even women's issues are not prioritised, leading union leaders to ignore, or even deny, the existence of gender aspects of a case or a problem. For example, wages and working conditions have important gender aspects, but the local culture and legal system discourages union leaders from investigating these.

Similarly, when asked about gender issues in collective bargaining agreements (CBAs), most respondents answered that only maternity and menstruation leave were included, in accordance with Indonesian labour law. None of the respondents (with the exception of one) mentioned issues of equal opportunity (e.g. discrimination in hiring, or promotion). Meanwhile, equal wages for equal work appeared to be guaranteed by law, as few factory workers earn more than the minimum wage. However, many respondents readily acknowledged that women are discriminated against by not receiving a family allowance or medical insurance for their family (both paid to husbands only, unless a woman can prove that her husband is unemployed or does not receive such benefits from his employer). However, CBA negotiations seldom consider such issues.⁵⁵ For more information on women's involvement in CBA negotiations, see Strategy 7.2.

Low awareness of gender equality is not a problem in all union federations. In the service and banking sectors, women's low participation is not due to lack of gender awareness,

⁵⁵ SP Deutsche Bank provides a welcome exception in this regard, having fought for equal medical benefit schemes for men and women, regardless of their marital status.

because women are generally aware of their equal rights and the need for equal opportunities in the workplace. It is rather that they have little willingness and inclination to become active because of family-related reasons and their belief, or perception, that union work is more suitable for men.

Strategy 3.1: Gender training and education

Several of the trade union organisations included in the survey reported that they have conducted gender training or gender education activities – meaning educational sessions focused on gender issues, to increase awareness of gender equality. Among these are KSBSI, FNPBI, Kahutindo, SPMI, and SPSI-PP. Some have implemented gender training and education through projects funded by overseas donors (e.g. SPSI-PP through a Danish-funded ILO project, and Kahutindo through its international federation), while others make available funds from the general budget (e.g. SPMI). SPN conducted gender training activities in the past through the DFID-funded ILO Workers' Education Project but is no longer doing so, as members do not believe it to be a priority in the face of serious job cuts and growing job insecurity in the textile and garment sector. Those who have not yet conducted such activities include KSPI and KPI, although plans are being put in place.

In most cases, gender training has been directed towards both men and women. KSBSI, through its 30 percent quota for both men and women, ensures that men also attend such activities that have often been perceived as only relevant to women. Gender training generates more lively discussions if both women and men participate together. SPSI-R, PPMI, and SPN women leaders believe that "it is no good if only women understand gender issues, because change has to come from both sides". They further added that gender training should be conducted in conjunction with, and integrated into, other educational activities (as also proposed by ACILS). This is more effective, because gender is then related directly to the topic at hand which makes for a more holistic approach. While separate training focused exclusively on gender is also useful to increase general understanding about the concept, if gender is not applied to a specific topic "it is easy to make enemies by concluding that 'everything' – the whole structure – must be changed". Gender, therefore, needs to be correlated to specific topics to be relevant to trade unions, and for it to be more effectively used.

Separate mention should be made of the Study Circles promoted by SPN and ACILS, since 2000, as a way to increase awareness and knowledge of union members regarding gender equality and trade union issues. These Study Circles are a cheap and easy format of learning, as the members themselves determine where, and what, they want to study, and what materials they want to use. The focus is on empowerment, the ultimate aim being for workers to solve their problems by themselves. At most, 15 people are involved in each circle, though 10 is ideal. Groups can be either mixed, or women-only, though some respondents believed a mixed circle is better "because it encourages healthy competition between men and women". In general, though, participants are mostly women, and they participate more actively than men. The methodology is participatory, and each member has to talk during the weekly meetings (of two-hour duration each). Each circle is facilitated by an experienced trade unionist from SPN, and at the end (after 10 weeks), each participant is asked to set up a similar circle themselves with existing, new, or potential union members in their workplace, or with workers from a nearby company. This ensures sustainability and continuation of the learning process, while the voluntary nature of participation in study circles encourages group leaders to be creative in their facilitation.

Many women facilitators from Study Circles have subsequently become union leaders in SPN and other federations, while the number of union members has grown exponentially through this approach. In addition, many new factory-based trade unions have started from this point

(in Bekasi and Tangerang in particular). Study Circles also appear to contribute to the establishment and implementation of a CBA. The ultimate aim is the establishment of a new trade union, or the creation of a more effective union (if the union already existed), but each group has its own agenda, and is free to draw its own conclusions from the process. This method can also be used for community-based organising outside the factory environment, for example, to establish the basis for a cooperative in a low-income neighbourhood.

Some respondents also mention an interest in conducting training activities that are not focused explicitly on gender equality but instead raise issues of interest to members that are related to gender equality. For example, KPI received funding from the International Transport Federation (ITF) to hold a seminar on HIV/AIDS for women in the transport sector in Jakarta. The problem of HIV/AIDS provides a good entry-point for discussions on gender equality, though this requires careful preparation, and discussions with resource persons, to be successful. Technical assistance to women union leaders on selection of training topics, and materials, could be beneficial in stimulating them to combine gender equality awareness raising with 'technical' topics of particular interest to their members.

Strategy 3.2: Collaboration across departments

A few respondents indicated success in establishing collaboration across departments in their union or federation with regard to gender mainstreaming. This requires persistence, good communication skills and functioning departments with which to collaborate. For example, SPSI-R reports having been able to ensure inclusion of gender-sensitive questions in the living standards survey conducted periodically by the research department of SPSI-R for determining the minimum wage standard. Research departments can play a significant role in uncovering and publicising new and existing gender issues. Collaboration of this nature should therefore be encouraged, and be made a priority for women union leaders.

Problem 4: Few Women in a Particular Economic/Industrial Sector

In some of the economic sectors where trade unions have gained a foothold, women constitute only a small percentage of the labour force. In such male-dominated sectors as transport, maritime enterprises and mining, women may find it extremely difficult to challenge gender bias in trade unions. For example, when asked about the biggest obstacle to women's union membership and leadership in seafarer sector, a KPI respondent recounted difficulties in finding sufficient numbers of women who want to organise collectively, because women are still denied employment opportunities in this sector. This is mainly due to traditional beliefs that women's rightful place is in the household, or in workplaces considered feminine, rather than on board large ships or working at ports. As a result, women will not likely gain a substantial percentage of membership in the seafarers union, whereas United Nations agencies and women's NGOs argue that women need to form a critical mass of at least 30 percent to be able to make their voices heard.⁵⁶

Strategy 4.1: Preparatory measures for women's future involvement

Although it is difficult for women, or men, to raise gender issues when women are a small minority of the union's membership (because 'gender' is still equated with 'women'), it is not impossible for leaders to raise awareness and propose minor changes in attitudes. It is happening in KPI, where efforts are being made to convince the federation to focus resources

towards issues of family welfare affecting the wives and children of seafarers. The same goes for SBSI Mining and Energy federation, where its woman leader speaks out on family and women's issues whenever she has a chance. She also checks draft CBAs to ensure that they contain no provisions that exclude women, or deny gender equality. In this way, she hopes to ensure that the federation and its affiliates will be receptive to women members when the number of women working in the mining and energy sector (may) increase in the future.

Problem 5: Reluctance to Engage in Union Activities

Women are reluctant to become members, considering union activities something best left to men (see also reasons above). Women are also reported to be fearful of intimidation by managers and employers and to be less inclined than men to participate in union activities due to the pressure of production targets. The head of the Bank Mandiri union states that women prefer to "play it safe" with regard to their chances for promotion, keeping in mind management objections to union activism. Many employers and managers are reluctant to let women attend union activities, because they do not want women to learn about such things as labour rights, or do not consider this necessary for women. Because women seldom hold positions as chairperson or secretary, they often experience difficulties in obtaining permission from their managers to attend union activities, which severely restricts their opportunity to learn and to influence union proceedings. A majority of respondents also report that women have lower levels of self-confidence and ambition than men, making it difficult, or unlikely, for them to take an active part in union activities that require a public role. In short, as pointed out by some respondents, "it is like the fight to get more women into politics: you can't force women to become active but you have to change the general environment as well." The evident reluctance of women to become active in their union demonstrates the urgent need for special recruitment strategies for women workers.

Aside from gender-specific obstacles to recruitment, there are also general problems that remain to be addressed coherently by unions. Due to changes in the nature of jobs, in many cases neither men nor women respond readily to traditional arguments for unionisation and organisation. Many federations realise that they can no longer depend (if they ever did) on recruitment through 'solving a case' in the workplace. While workers still tend to join unions when they observe the practical benefits of protection from mass dismissal and a better CBA, survey respondents indicate that many non-unionised workplaces ask for their help only at the point when their case can no longer be solved through union intervention. In such cases, many workers lose confidence in unionisation as a result of seeing the inability of unions to offer concrete and successful help.

Others find that the rewards of union activism do not outweigh the possible benefits, either because of the high risk of dismissal or because of the personal investment (time and money) required. Some survey respondents therefore doubt whether the 'service model' of trade unionism is sustainable in the long run and prefer to ensure that union members contribute to their organisation rather than wait passively to receive benefits and legal assistance. This distinction between the service provider model and that of unions as organisations that require the active involvement of their members has important consequences for both women and men that go beyond the scope of this report.⁵⁷ Here the focus will be, instead, on practical strategies for recruitment of female members.

57 For further analysis, see ILO 2002:24.

Strategy 5.1: Different recruitment strategies

While employees in state-owned companies often automatically become union members or are easy to mobilise because they operate in a limited number of workplaces and have a centralised system for payment of dues, this is not the case in privately owned companies where unions must fight hard to recruit and hold on to their membership. Many respondents believe that recruitment strategies should be different for men and women due to the different constraints they experience in life in general, and in the workplace. Yet, some disagree, saying that men and women follow the same pattern as union members and need not be treated differently in recruitment efforts. This latter group recommends that recruitment focus more generally on basic education about trade unionism and the successful handling of workers' complaints and legal cases against employers and managers, to show that the union really cares about workers. Women workers want to see results before they join the union, increasing the need for unions to take on cases and complaints as a recruitment strategy. In this way, a union can clearly show the need for solidarity and collective action.

The most common strategy for recruiting women is to use a more personal approach than is usually the case with prospective male union members. Women require face-to-face meetings and information sessions, and often require more time with a union organiser to speak about doubts and fears. Practical issues of distance and time also play an important role in the recruitment of women members. SPSI-R recruits new members by setting up a halfway house in industrial areas. Union staff working from these locations attempt to 'become close' to workers by offering practical activities, such as nutritional information. For women, these organisers must keep in mind the need to help them confront resistance from husbands, or parents, and other obstacles related to their families (see above). Women, thus, require a practical approach. Some unions hold "lunch and learn sessions" in which women use their lunch (or other) break to learn about trade unionism. Sport activities and social outings are additional popular means to familiarise women workers with trade unionism. Serpindo asks union members to bring a new friend to each monthly meeting or other union activity who is then invited to join further activities and become a member. All of these activities involve introduction to the trade union through friends and word-of-mouth. In this way, women union leaders attempt to make inroads in workplaces that are not yet unionised and where it is difficult to identify one single contact person who can introduce and facilitate the idea of unionisation.

Alternatively, some respondents believe that women are simply better at initiating and sustaining personal, face-to-face contacts, and convincing other women of the need for collective action. According to this view, women can therefore more easily recruit other women, as can be seen from their success in leading SPN study circles (see strategy 3.1). This depends, however, on the gender sensitivity of the (women) leaders involved, as shared by a respondent. Whether women get involved in union activities is determined by the attitude towards gender equality displayed by the head of the company union: if this person is not sensitive to issues of gender equality, ASPEK's Women's Committee, for example, tries to encourage key persons in a particular company to recruit, and give encouragement to, female employees.

Strategy 5.2: Targeted recruitment of women

Some union organisations have initiated special measures to recruit women members. For example:

- ◆ GARTEKS has started a campaign to recruit sales promotion girls at malls, because their working conditions are considered very problematic (e.g. very insecure contract work that is only granted based on appearance).

- ◆ ASPEK works to unionise women and men in the service sector, especially in department stores and supermarkets where many women similarly face insecure and short-term contracts.

However, most federations are either preoccupied with maintaining membership levels, or do not have the skills, or inclination, to expand their organising efforts to 'new' sectors where women predominate but are not yet unionised. Targeted recruitment holds much potential for union federations, as a measure to increase or maintain membership, but probably will require costly and time-consuming research to be successful.

Problem 6: Contract Work and Production Targets

Gender bias in trade unions is intrinsically connected to both gender bias in the labour market and to economic inequalities among workers at local, national, and global levels. The combined effect of these forces is a double disadvantage for women, many of whom work in the most vulnerable positions in the labour force. These women are neither protected by trade unions (or legislation), nor recognised as workers worthy of protection. This is especially the case for workers in the informal economy, which trade unions may regard as competition, or a threat, to hard-won rights. Such refusal to defend the rights of informal workers implies a refusal to acknowledge the gendered nature of the workforce, and results in the exclusion of large numbers of women from the mainstream union movement. While trade unions such as the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India have shown that women in the informal economy can be and want to be organised in unions, the survey found no evidence that union organisations in Indonesia are ready to incorporate non-traditional workers in their membership and are willing to defend the rights of those in other than full-time, permanent employment.

Respondents from e.g. GARTEKS and SPSI-R report that women are (more often than men) working under tight production targets and/or as temporary contract workers. This creates time pressures, forces women to choose between income-earning and union activities, and makes them fearful of employment termination should they become union members. The prevailing view, therefore, is that such working conditions are not conducive to unionisation, and that union membership will decrease significantly in coming years if the trend towards sub-contracting and informalisation is not countered by governments or trade unions, or through international Conventions or agreements.

Strategy: So far, no coherent strategy has emerged among Indonesian trade union organisations to address this problem.

Problem 7: Lack of Democracy within Trade Unions

Gender equality is often linked to internal democracy and participation in decision-making at all levels. Several of the women interviewed mentioned that the lack of democracy in their federation presented an obstacle, or a disincentive, for women to become engaged in union activities on an equal basis with men. In some cases, the problem was identified as lack of fair and open leadership elections, in which not having the necessary funds, or influence, prevented women from running for union leadership election. Other respondents, especially some women at lower levels of union leadership, highlighted that CBAs are negotiated exclusively by male union leaders without the necessary involvement of workers (most of whom are often women). Furthermore, in workplaces where (usually male) leaders are

allegedly more interested in defending and maintaining their own position of influence than in representing union members, women may see little reason to join a trade union, pay dues and attend union meetings. While donors such as international organisations, NGOs and international federations may exert pressure on unions to improve their democratic record, women leaders have shown that they also have a role to play in advancing internal democracy.

Strategy 7.1: Link gender issues to general effectiveness of union

Some women union leaders have taken the initiative to introduce, or further strengthen democratic practices in their union organisations. For example, some women leaders in SPN encourage frequent visits by union leaders to affiliated workplaces. In their opinion, the more in-touch a leader (or union official in general) is with the membership through regular interaction, the more effective the union operations will be. These women leaders, therefore, try to have SPN branches organise membership meetings between national executive board members and union members at the unit/plant level in various provinces and districts. These meetings are a means to get input from members, and to show the commitment of the national leaders to ordinary workers. These meetings have, at times, discussed gender issues, especially those held exclusively for women members.

In another example, PAR-R branch leaders in Jakarta indicated that they conduct visits, every six months, to affiliated company-level unions to hold a dialogue with members about the problems members face, possible solutions, and the establishment of a workplan for the union in question. These meetings sometimes also involve representatives from the company's management, if it is amenable to interacting with the union. Such interaction between leaders and members stimulates discussion and serves as an exchange of information about current needs and demands to which leaders are expected to respond. At the same time, such meetings can provide an effective platform for women members to assert their demands concerning gender equality, and to hold their leadership accountable for promises and policy-initiatives related to gender issues.

Strategy 7.2: Women's involvement in CBAs

Few respondents mentioned that their federations or unions encourage women's involvement in CBAs. Yet, some individuals and organisations have made efforts to ensure that CBAs are gender-sensitive and reflect women's needs and concerns. SPSI-R's bureau for women and children requests at least one woman per five negotiators in each of its member unions. Some unions individually check each draft CBA before the federation gives approval to a local union to finalise its negotiations with employers. Still others encourage women's involvement in CBA negotiations and asks its legal officers to ensure that CBAs address issues such as the unequal family allowance, paternity leave, and wage issues for both men and women. Due to the low bargaining power of their members, many other federations, however, are not yet able to rise above normative issues in their CBA negotiations, even though women are active in the negotiations (e.g. GARTEKS and SPN). It would, therefore, be helpful if federations could establish clear policies to encourage women's participation in CBA negotiations, and to stimulate the inclusion of gender issues on the list of demands of trade unions. Training activities and the provision of information on what (types of) gender-related issues could be included in CBAs would also be useful, since some women union leaders consider gender issues limited to menstruation and maternity leave, which are already covered in the Indonesian labour law and as such (technically speaking), do not require to be included in CBAs. KSBSI has published a booklet on "Women's Rights in the CBA" which may be useful in this respect.

Problem 8: Sector-Specific Problems

Some economic sectors display particular characteristics that make unionisation unlikely, or difficult, for both men and women. For example, seafarers work in widely dispersed workplaces, where they have little contact with each other. Due to their work schedules, they also face constraints in meeting regularly, and prefer to spend time with their families during breaks rather than becoming involved in union activities. Including gender, or women's issues, in the CBA is a challenge, because the workplace of seafarers is so different from that of other groups of workers. Maternity, or menstruation, leave in the CBA would make employers want to avoid women seafarers due to their higher cost, while even granting sick leave requires employers to replace the worker at high cost.

Strategy: So far, no coherent strategy has emerged among the Indonesian trade union organisations to address sector-specific problems.

5. Structures for Women

Almost all national union organisations involved in this survey reported having a separate structure for women that aims to promote women's welfare and rights, and/or gender equality (see Table 9, below). Exceptions found by the survey were GARTEKS, PAR-R, SBSI FPE, and SPSI-PP. In some organisations, the establishment of a women's structure has been discussed in recent years but the executive board has yet to reach a final decision (PAR-R), or human resources are too scarce (TSK SPSI). In SBSI FPE, the number of women is said to be too small to warrant a Women's Committee, while in GARTEKS, financial obstacles were raised as the main reason. TSK-SPSI believes that the number of capable and trained women leaders in its sector is too small to be able to set up an effective and sustainable women's structure.

In company-level unions, women's structures usually do not exist, except possibly where part of a federation's structure, and where women's membership is large but women do not form a majority. For example, SP Serpindo highlighted that a women's structure was not needed because the majority of its members are women. In IKAGI, women's issues are handled by the Social Welfare Department, while SP Glaxo received assistance through the FARKES-R Women's Department. In contrast, SP PDAM Jakarta has discussed internally the need for a Women's Department but has not yet decided at what level such a department should be established., while SP Angkasa Pura I officials did not see the need for a separate structure for women.

Table 9: Women's Structures in Trade Union Organisations⁵⁸

Federation	Structure	Voting right	Levels	Central budget allocation
KSBSI	Yes	No	central +provincial	for annual workplan + external
KSPI	Yes	No	central	for admin expenses + external
KSPSI	Yes	No	central	for admin expenses only
ASPEK	Yes	No	central	self-supported (dues/ contributions)
FARKESR	Yes	Yes	central	external funding only
FNPBI	Yes	—	central +areas	limited internal + external funding
GARTEKS	No	—	—	—
Kahutindo	Yes	Yes	central +provincial	for annual workplan
KPI	Yes	No	central	mainly funding from ITF
PAR-R	No	—	—	—
PGRI	Yes	Yes	central +other	for annual workplan
PPMI	Yes	No	central +branch	none
SBSI FPE	No	—	—	—
SPMI	Yes	No	central +sectoral	for annual workplan
SPN	Yes	Yes	central	none
SPSI-PP	No	—	—	—
SPSI-R	Yes	No	central	external funding only
TSK SPSI	No	—	—	—

In those union organisations where a women's structure exists, this is usually called the Women's Department, Bureau or Committee. Despite this variation in official terms, women's structures in trade unions share a number of characteristics, i.e. their function is most often to empower women, increase women's participation and leadership, ensure balanced participation, and/or organise activities for women. For example, KSBSI's Women and Children's Division has as its tasks the following:

58 Sources: Survey interviews and written materials such as statutes and congress reports

- ♦ the implementation of a system for the education and protection of women and child workers;
- ♦ the development of networks with relevant organisations; and
- ♦ the convening of activities that strengthens the capacity of women and child workers.

PGRI's workplan for 2003 – 2008 demonstrates that women's structures can also be active beyond traditional union issues. PGRI's Women's Department counts among its tasks the following:

- ♦ to fight for women's access to decision-making positions in education;
- ♦ to use the media to empower women; and
- ♦ to increase members' awareness about, and help them deal with, discrimination, violence against women, and sexual harassment.

In ASPEK, the women's committee is tasked with women's empowerment and organising, and in particular, focuses on women's recruitment.

However, only Kahutindo reported that the objective of its Women's Department was to formulate programmes for gender justice, and to recommend policies on gender, and women, to the plenary meeting. Secondly, the spmi'S Action Programme mentions the Women's Directorate's involvement in "promoting women workers' participation in organising efforts" and "awareness-raising and campaigning on gender issues". The roles of these, and other, women's structures are relatively limited if compared to the role and function of the ICFTU-APRO Women's Committee, which has the responsibility of:

- ♦ Examining economic, social, legal and political issues affecting women workers in the region;
- ♦ Expressing opinions about policies and activities of the ICFTU-APRO;
- ♦ Planning a programme of action;
- ♦ Monitoring the application of gender policies; and
- ♦ Representing the Women's Committee on the Executive Board.⁵⁹

In light of this comparison, women's departments and committees may want to re-examine their tasks, and lobby for an expansion of their responsibilities, where human and financial resources permit.

None of the other federations surveyed defined the task of the women's structure as dealing with *gender issues*, as opposed to women's empowerment or women's affairs. Although the individual officers interviewed for the survey spoke of promoting gender equality and gender justice, hardly any of the documents accessed mentioned the term 'gender'. As will be discussed later in this section, the overwhelming use of the word 'women' in the official name, and in the description of responsibilities, is generally indicative of the function, and focus, of the structure on women, as opposed to gender (covering the relations between men and women).

As Table 9 showed, in most federations, women's structures exist only at the national level and are tasked to coordinate activities for, and by, women. Some, however, have Women's Committees at all levels. For example, KAHUTINDO has Women's Committees at central, area and branch levels if leaders and members show sufficient interest, and women's membership is sufficiently large to warrant the establishment of a committee at branch level.

59 Information from a presentation by Song Kyungjin of ICFTU-APRO at ILO East-Asian Regional Workshop on Capacity Building and Advocacy on Gender Equality in Trade Unions, Bangkok 13-15 November 2001.

PGRI has a central Women's Committee, while its statutes allow members to establish Women's Departments at branch and provincial level, if there is sufficient interest, and need, among members. SPMI has a Women's Directorate at the central level, appointed by the Executive Board, as well as Women's Bureaus at the sectoral level (in the three sectors where women work). KSBSI has a Women's Department at central level, and Women's Divisions at provincial level. FNPBI has a Women and Cultural Department at central level and, if members at the area level are sufficiently interested and capable, they can (and have) established Women's Departments as well.

The geographic and organisational reach of women's departments influences their effectiveness. A KSBSI respondent mentioned that one of KSBSI's weakness was that the KSBSI's Women's Department at the confederation level has no membership of its own that can be mobilised, to show its strength in the face of objections from male leaders (especially at federation level). Coordination between the national level Women's Department and the provincial Women's Divisions (which coordinate all gender-related activities) is difficult, as the only means of communication is through telephone and at the national congress. There are no funds for frequent meetings between the Women's Department and the Women's Divisions. The PPMI Women's Department, on the other hand, has found it difficult to initiate activities and draw members to its planning meetings, because its membership is not yet prepared for the need for women- or gender-specific activities, due to a lack of prior awareness-raising. Clearly, effective and timely communication between leadership and members is needed in order for a women's unit to operate optimally and democratically.

Separate structures for women, or the promotion of gender equality, are most frequently staffed by officials appointed by the Executive Board, though a few federations report that such staff members are elected by the National Congress (e.g. ASPEK). Whether assigned or elected, staff members serving on the Women's Committee or Department are generally unpaid, unless they also hold another position in the federation or confederation which is paid (e.g. KSBSI). This means that most staff members of women's structures are volunteers, who still work full-time in their enterprise, and at the same time represent a company-level union, or who survive on funding from NGO-related, or other, activities. These union leaders usually only receive reimbursement for transport-related expenses (if at all).

In most federations, women staff the Women's Committee or Department at central level, as indicated in the list below:

- ◆ KSBSI: one woman, one man
- ◆ KSPI: three women
- ◆ KSPSI: seven women (but in the process of reorganisation)
- ◆ ASPEK: six women
- ◆ FARKES-R: one woman
- ◆ FNPBI: one woman
- ◆ Kahutindo: two women
- ◆ KPI: three women (until end of 2004)
- ◆ SPMI: three women
- ◆ SPN: two women
- ◆ SPSI-R: three women

The overwhelming representation of women in separate structures for women is not surprising, given that – as noted above – these structures are usually designed to focus on women's, rather than gender, issues. However, if these committees and departments are to increase

their influence and broaden their focus and responsibilities in the future, they may require more men on their staff. But because separate structures for union women are useful to strengthen women's voice, and often serve as a training ground for women officials, it may be difficult to persuade union women to share these 'safe havens' with male colleagues in their unions.

Women's structures are generally placed below the central Executive Board and report to the Executive Board rather than to the organisation's membership at large. Except for special meetings for women and the National Congress, women's structures often are accountable only to the Executive Board and National Assembly (in the case of confederations). This results in several weaknesses. First, where staff members of the women's unit cease to be active, only the Executive Board can reprimand them or replace them by decree, thus limiting the voice of ordinary members in steering the women's unit and holding it accountable. Secondly, the influence exerted by Women's Departments or Divisions is generally low, as many do not sit in the Executive Committee or plenary meetings, and have no voting rights (see Table 9). For example, a survey respondent from SPMI believes that the women's directorate and bureaus could have much more influence if it were officially part of the Executive Board rather than being an auxiliary body:

"they would be easier for the board to control and it would be easier to ensure collaboration and coordination between all structures involved."

The only measure of integration in SPMI that is currently achieved is that staff members of the women's directorate and bureaus are at the same time officials in the Central Board and in Branch Offices. Exceptions in this regard are FARKES-R, Kahutindo, and SPN, whose women's units are part of the Executive Board, and having voting rights.

Limited authority is also reflected in the reach of women's structures, and their official designation. In the case of KSPI, its Women's Committee is accountable to the Executive Board, but only has the power to coordinate and implement activities. All officials in the Women's Committee attend the plenary meeting held every 4 months, together with the National Executive Board, and the joint meeting of the Executive Board and the National Assembly every 6 months, but they do not have voting rights in these meetings.

In most federations, the exact position and influence of the Women's Department or Committee is not specified in the statutes, leaving it up to the relevant staff and the Executive Board to decide on the scope and content of activities. For example, KSPI's Constitution states that "the arrangements, obligations and responsibility of the Committees are regulated in more detail by the Organisational Rules that are arranged by the National Executive Board." Only in Kahutindo does the Women's Committee explicitly form part of the plenary, having full voting rights.

In response to this limitation, SPSI-R's women and children department attempts to have its staff and other women leaders participate unofficially in monthly plenary meetings, in order to learn about current issues and become familiar with decision-making procedures. Their participation, however, is not formalised, and these women do not have voting rights in the meetings. In general, the weak institutional position of women's structures appears to limit their influence, giving them little independence within the organisation.

Dependence on personal ties and communication skills, rather than institutional position, is also evident when considering sources of funding. Women's structures usually depend on their federation's annual general budget (drawn from dues and overseas funding) for financial support. Most federations determine spending priorities through the establishment of an annual workplan. It is, thus, imperative that Women's Department officials are actively engaged

in this process, so as to secure funding for women-specific activities. But because many federations and unions experience financial difficulties as a result of very low membership dues, and inefficient due collection systems, Women's Departments are often forced to search for external sources of funding. These include international federations, international NGOs (such as ACILS and FES), partner trade union abroad, and the ILO. Yet, assistance from such organisations often takes the form of inviting union leaders and members to activities organised directly by the donor organisation, leaving the union organisations little direct influence in determining priorities.

Where federations manage to get funding for their own projects, it may mean that part of the funds is directed to the federation's reserves. The KSBSI Women's Department is unique among its sister departments (and among the women's structures covered in this survey) in that it has been given the approval, by the Executive Board, to conduct independent fundraising activities. It may receive funding for its activities from other organisations and overseas trade unions without having to use part of these funds to support the confederation as a whole. SPSI-R's Women's and Children's Department also reports that it is able to 'bypass' the organisation's central leadership and bureaucracy in carrying out activities, since it has built up a name for itself in recent years among donors and NGO partners. For the majority of women's structures, however, direct external funding is difficult to obtain. Among the obstacles mentioned by respondents were inexperience in proposal writing, and lack of knowledge about potential donors, while it is suspected that the small scale of funds requested by women's structures, and donors' relative unfamiliarity with these organisations, also contribute to the lack of success.

Implicit in these remarks is the sense that the Women's Department is limited to dealing with women's issues, which are often defined as distinct from general union issues and therefore not a priority. A male survey respondent from KSPI emphasised that women should become more active in decision-making so that they could take better care of women's issues. The respondent from SPSI-R confirms that the Women's and Children's Bureau in her organisation is asked for advice on women's issues and has some measure of influence on these issues, but does not have the power to propose a gender perspective on general issues. While many women leaders regard having a separate women's structure as a stepping stone to building the capacity of women members and putting gender issues on the union agenda, there is also a fear that such structures contribute to women being sidelined from major discussions and decision-making processes.

Some union women are acutely aware of the need to expand their influence beyond the women's department or bureau. One experienced leader from a women's department believes that she could be more effective if elected as head of the education department. In that position, she would have increased influence over the content of training materials and the selection of participants to training and education activities, and would control her own budget. This would allow her to participate directly in processes that shape opinions and set future directions for her union.

To avoid becoming an exclusive club of women, PAR-R therefore emphasises the need to encourage solidarity on the part of men in their union. According to SP Glaxo and FARKES-R, a Women's Department must carefully balance its role as a network for union women, with the need to avoid being seen as anti-men and exclusively for women only. The challenge for Kahutindo, similarly, has also been to ensure that gender mainstreaming does not become exclusive but remains seen as something for everyone. Thus, the 'women's committee' is increasingly portrayed as not just for women but for the union/federation in general. Aside from its formal structure and the extent of its power and influence, the composition and quality of staff in a 'women's department' is therefore of major importance. Indeed, many

union officers on women's departments report that they act beyond their official duties or job description, and frequently sidestep the official union bureaucracy in their quest to "get things done".

In conclusion, women's structures play a useful role in advocating for women's rights, organising activities to increase women's participation, and giving advice to the central leadership on women's issues. These structures are generally not effective, however, in persuading central leadership to examine issues from a gender perspective, especially where the link to women/gender is not immediately obvious. Greater autonomy and funding could help to increase the clout of such women's structures, by increasing their membership numbers, increasing women's level of participation, and raising the profile of the department or committee in question. When asked about future needs of their department or committee, most respondents mentioned increased funding for women-specific activities such as gender training, leadership and trade union education for women. Others, however, pointed to more structural changes, which were mentioned above as strategies, and which will be further discussed in the conclusion.

6. Coordination among Women Union Leaders

Activists from women's departments and bureaus in trade union federations have taken advantage of overseas support, the climate of political change in the late 1990s, and the greater freedom for trade unions and political organisations, to establish in 2001 the Indonesian Forum of Women Leaders and Activists (hereafter called the Forum). With assistance from the American Centre for International Labour Solidarity (ACILS), the international arm of the AFL-CIO trade union federation in the United States, this Forum has evolved to become the main organisation by, and for, women workers in Indonesia. Most of the women leaders interviewed for this survey are members of the Forum.

The group consists of over 200 women, of whom some 30 meet regularly in Jakarta and are engaged in training, education, and lobbying activities as well as public protests. The remainder of the official members live mostly in and around Jakarta, although the group is trying to expand its base beyond the capital, with associate members in Semarang Yogyakarta, Solo (Central Java), and Surabaya (East Java). Although most members come from large national federations, several dozens come from the education and advocacy departments of smaller local unions. As evident from pamphlets and public speeches, the Forum sees its role as advocating for gender equality in trade unions and stimulating women's leadership. Its members state that their main activities concern training and education programmes for women union members, ranging from new members to heads of women's departments and officials in central union committees. Training activities include topics such as: paralegal skills, economic literacy, basic trade unionism, and gender equality issues. The group also engages in advocacy, for example writing letters to relevant international organisations and Indonesian ministries, to promote policy change in the fields of labour and women's issues.

The results of an informal survey carried out by the author in 2003 confirmed that a clear majority of Forum members and sympathisers (those women workers who were invited to the conference but who were not yet officially members or have not paid their dues) have become active in trade unions since 1998.⁶⁰ The largest proportion of Forum members comes from the textile, garment, and footwear sector, which is also the largest industrial sector in

⁶⁰ This informal survey consisted of 25 questions concerning personal background, trade union experience, opinion about women's rights and roles, and opinion about the roles and priorities of trade unions. Of the 200 participants at the second Forum conference in Puncak who received the questionnaire, 64 returned it fully answered.

terms of women's employment in Indonesia. Many other members are from the pharmaceutical and health industry, the metal and electronics sector, and the service sector, with the remainder from the chemical, seafarers' and construction sectors. The absence from the Forum of the banking sector is notable and is caused mainly by the perceived differences in needs and circumstances between factory, and office, workers.

The informal survey revealed that the majority of Forum members who are workers have higher vocational or technical education while several have specialised (post-high school) diplomas. Those who are full-time union organisers are frequently well-educated, middle-class women who have a university degree. The majority of Forum members are between 25 and 35 years old, while about half are married; this may be because the obstacles faced by married women are too great (as reported in Section 4) or because Forum members perhaps have less interest in marriage, or have not found a suitable partner who will allow them to continue their activism after marriage.

Forum members occupy diverse positions in their trade unions. According to the survey, the largest proportion are shop stewards at the workplace level who work full-time but take on regular union tasks, such as negotiating the collective bargaining agreement, handling cases and complaints, and sustaining the organisation at the factory or office level. A number of these shop stewards also hold positions in the central or provincial leadership committees of their federation, while a small proportion are full-time union workers at the central leadership level. Between 20 and 25 percent of Forum members are regular trade union members without any leadership position. It is important to take note of the fact that a large number of Forum members are in workplaces where women constitute a majority, but where the trade union committee is dominated numerically by men. For most Forum members, the head of their enterprise union or federation is a man. It is in this context of male-dominated trade unions that the Forum has been carrying out its education and advocacy work since around 2000.

Through funding from ACILS and FES, the Forum has provided an opportunity for union women to meet and discuss common problems, and to conduct training activities geared exclusively towards women. All members speak highly of the support they receive from fellow Forum-members, though this support is personal and mental rather than practical due to the nature of the problems experienced and the Forum's lack of resources. Advocacy efforts, however, have been ad-hoc, having arisen mainly in relation to specific policy and legal changes proposed by the Indonesian government, such as the 2003 Manpower Act. Thus, the Forum appears to be reactive rather than proactive in its advocacy efforts, which is likely the result of a shortage of funding, time, and expertise.

The Forum not only offers individual union women a chance to share their experiences and to support each other, but also provides donors with an opportunity to strengthen women's voice in trade union organisations without having to support individual unions. Aside from its regular organising activities, the Forum has the ability to conduct further advocacy and training activities, given its cadre of women activists and its participation in networks related to women's empowerment. Forum leaders have indicated an interest in conducting training and awareness-raising in the fields of violence against women in the workplace and leadership skills for women union leaders.

Conclusion

This report into the position and role of women and gender issues in Indonesian trade union organisations has confirmed the uneven nature of gender mainstreaming in trade unions and has emphasised the continuing need for measures to strengthen the position and increase the number of women union leaders. Although several national federations and confederations have initiated serious efforts at promoting gender equality in their organisations, much remains to be done, especially in the field of improving the participation of women as members, and the representation of women's needs and demands at policy level. This report has shown the various efforts of trade union organisations *vis-à-vis* their membership and at the decision-making level, but also has pointed out the need for more systematic efforts at introducing gender sensitive policies and practices. Implementing such policies and practices would not only strengthen the position of current women leaders and members, but would also benefit trade unions in the long run. This is especially important, considering the urgent challenges facing trade unions in Indonesia, as pointed out in Part II of this report. These include rapid changes in economic policies leading to increased subcontracting, and a greater reliance on labour flexibility, as well as increased regional competition which has the potential to further weaken the bargaining position of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

Several of the good practices at gender mainstreaming known internationally and summarised in Part I have yet to be tried by trade unions in Jakarta, and to a large extent, nationally. Women union leaders and activists have much to learn from their colleagues overseas, but are often hindered by language barriers, time constraints, inexperience, and a lack of funding for travel and communication facilities. At the same time, it should be emphasised that national federations can also learn much from the philosophy and practices of independent regional trade unions in Indonesia. The recommendations in this section address these and other constraints to learning, communication and collaboration between, and across, trade union organisations. The Indonesian Forum of Women Leaders and Activists described in the last part of this report provides an effective starting point for anyone interested in promoting gender equality in trade unions in a coherent and systematic fashion. However, it clearly requires institutional, organisational and technical assistance in the years to come to reach its full potential as an umbrella organisation supporting women union leaders and members.

As a starting point, where this has not yet been done, both male and female union leaders and activists must be encouraged to examine the causes of women's under-representation in individual unions, or federations, and to formulate a strategic plan based on practical and achievable measures to increase women's participation and representation. Such a plan should ideally include practical measures geared towards actual and potential members, as well as proposals for strategic changes at policy and decision-making levels.

More needs to be done to ensure that gender sensitivity is translated into practical measures to make women feel more welcome in trade unions. This must include systematic implementation of policies regarding meetings time and places, dealing with family-related

obstacles, overcoming resistance from family or community, and taking away stereotypes that negatively influence women's perceptions of trade union activism (as addressed in detail in Section 4).

To ensure that such gender-sensitive practices are standardised requires intervention at decision-making levels, which has proven to be difficult but not impossible to achieve. Union leaders and activists in favour of gender equality should seek support in the form of funding and technical assistance, although much can be achieved from collective lobbying by women union leaders and activists in the lead-up to national events and tripartite negotiations with employers and government officials.

Strategic plans for the promotion of gender equality are especially important in preparation for national congress meetings, when policy-level changes can be proposed to federation or confederation leadership. Donors have a role to play in facilitating preparations by women union leaders for such events, as the example of ACILS in relation to SPN, in 1999 and 2003, has shown.

The survey findings also show that women's structures in trade unions generally are effective vehicles for women union leaders to promote gender equality but could be significantly strengthened through financial assistance and changes in their structural position. In particular, most survey respondents recommend the following with regard to women's structures:

- ♦ Women's structures should have voting rights in the executive board and become an integral part of the board rather than auxiliary bodies;
- ♦ Their staff should be democratically elected rather than appointed and should be accountable to women members;
- ♦ Women's structures should receive a set percentage of membership dues or a predetermined percentage of the overall budget to plan their own activities;
- ♦ They should be free to collaborate with other relevant organisations and institutions whether inside or outside the trade union.

Recommendations

The following general recommendations follow from the findings of the survey in combination with the good practices for gender mainstreaming in trade unions reported in international research. They do not necessarily reflect the recommendations made by survey respondents but instead build on strategies for gender mainstreaming from other sectors or technical programmes. They can be divided into internal and external, or intra-union, steps towards greater promotion of gender equality.

Internal Steps

- ♦ More widespread institution of time-bound quota policies for women's participation as members and leaders, augmented by policies that make men's participation in women's or gender-related activities mandatory, and that set sanctions for violation of such quota policies and make available resources for relevant monitoring and evaluation.
- ♦ Establishment and publication of a clear justification for the existence of women-specific structures, in conjunction with a strategy towards gender mainstreaming with the active involvement of male union leaders and members.
- ♦ Standardisation and integration into training materials of family-friendly policies, and

assistance, for women experiencing family-related obstacles to union participation. This includes awareness-raising, so that family issues are no longer regarded as private but as connected to work performance and union activism.

- ◆ Continued planning, implementation and evaluation of gender training activities, aimed at both women and men at leadership levels, and integrated with other union training activities, in order to increase acceptance and effectiveness. A thorough review of existing capacity and materials related to gender training may be a necessary preliminary step.
- ◆ Establishment of a mentoring programme for young women with leadership potential, possibly with involvement from NGOs and human resource specialists from private sector companies.
- ◆ Improved and sustained gender-disaggregated data collection regarding membership and leadership.
- ◆ Establishment and strengthening of effective mechanisms for accountability of women's units to women members, in conjunction with other steps towards increased internal democracy within union organisations.
- ◆ Practical English-language courses tailored to the needs of women union leaders and activists, to enable greater contacts with overseas networks, partners, and international donor organisations.

External Measures

- ◆ Greater collaboration with domestic and international women's NGOs, in order to improve conceptual clarity on gender among union women, and to stimulate the exchange of opinion and strategies on promotion of gender equality.
- ◆ Expansion of inter-union contacts and collaboration to include main industrial centres outside Jakarta, such as Medan, Bandung, Semarang, and Surabaya, and independent trade unions. For long-term planning, this could extend to women's networks in the region, such as women workers' groups in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines.
- ◆ Effective and long-term collaboration between women's units in (con)federations to promote gender mainstreaming within these organizations.
- ◆ Establishment of an effective intra-union system for learning, networking, mentoring, and sharing information among union women, and for collective planning and lobbying at national and local levels regarding policies and laws related to women workers ('one voice').
- ◆ A coordinated response, by women union leaders, to the challenge of globalisation in relation to labour and employment concerns, for example, by taking up selected cases facing women workers and building effective legal precedents, with assistance from international and domestic donors and lobby organizations.
- ◆ Collective fund-raising for gender-related activities by women union leaders.

While it is difficult for women union leaders and activists to challenge and directly change the weak position of many women in the labour market, or to influence international and national economic policies, they have an important role to play in preparing their organisations for the necessary adjustments in recruitment and leadership practices. Because sustainability of trade unions depends in large part on their continued ability to attract new membership and provide services to members, it is imperative that Indonesian trade union organisations are made aware of the need to address gender equality issues. Both female and male trade union members and leaders would do well to address gender equality as an integral aspect of democratisation and good management in their organisations, and vice versa, and to take immediate action on this basis.

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