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BARGAINING AGENDA FOR EQUALITY



The International Federation of Building and Wood Workers, IFBWW, is an International Trade Secretariat that was established in 1934 by a merger of the Building Workers International and Wood Workers International. The International Secretariat of Stone Masons, the International

Secretariat of Painters and allied trades and the International Secretariat of Bricklayers all subsequently joined the Federation.

The International Federation of Building and Wood Workers seeks to unite and represent all free and democratic trade unions in the building, wood, forestry and allied industries.

The IFBWW promotes and defends the international, social, economic, political and cultural interests of its members and actively defends trade union and human rights all over the world. It initiates and co-ordinates international solidarity actions, conducts workers' education activities, carries out research on a wide range of industrial issues, represents its affiliates' interests at world meetings and conferences, defends the interests of women and young workers, advocates the elimination of child labour and runs a global forestry Programme. In pursuing its objectives the IFBWW co-operates with all free and democratic organisations world-wide.

IFBWW currently represents 11 million members organised in 285 trade unions in 124 countries. The headquarters are in Geneva (Switzerland). IFBWW regional offices are located in Malaysia, Panama and Zimbabwe, and sub-regional offices and education offices in Australia, Burkina Faso, India and Japan.

The President of the IFBWW is Roel de Vries from the Netherlands and the General Secretary is Ulf Asp from Sweden.

Please visit the IFBWW website www.ifbww.org for further information.

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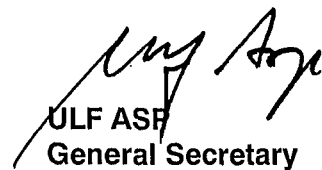


PREFACE

IFBWW has continued to consolidate its efforts to improve women's representation in our sectors. Since 1997, IFBWW has made various strides to protect and advance the interests of the women who make up almost 20% of our membership worldwide.

The IFBWW has developed this Bargaining Agenda For Equality to serve as a guide for our affiliates when they negotiate their collective bargaining agreement to take on board women concerns on the bargaining agenda.

The IFBWW is encouraging all Affiliates to adopt in their Congresses a Resolution on the Bargaining Agenda for Equality. The International Women Committee will monitor the Bargaining Agenda For Equality implementation and application of the and report to the executive Board.



ULF ASB
General Secretary

August 2001

THE IFBWW RESOLUTION ON A BARGAINING AGENDA FOR EQUALITY

Adopted by the International Women's Committee, 18 May 1999
and tabled at the meeting of the Executive Committee, 20-21 May 1999

Introduction

Women are increasingly entering the employment market but are not joining trade unions at a corresponding rate. Women represent the largest potential new trade union membership. Unions can use their bargaining power to transform women's lives. By recruiting new women members, unions can become stronger and more representative.

Inequality of treatment marks virtually all aspects of women's working lives. Women earn on average two thirds of men's wages and they are often denied access to opportunities and training leading to the best jobs.

A greater number of women than ever before are single parents and the only earners in the family, trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Women's employment is primarily concentrated in a limited range of jobs, particularly the least skilled, least well paid and with least job security. A very high percentage of women work in the informal sector and do not have a regular wage, job security and social protection.

The main reason that women hold part time jobs is that they cannot find full time jobs and because of family responsibilities.

Structural adjustment programmes are creating increased economic difficulties for women who are being forced into insecure jobs in the informal sector.

Sexual harassment is a problem, which affects all women indirectly and up to 30% of working women directly. Some studies show that

one out of every 12 women are forced to leave a job after being sexually harassed.

In order to tackle these and many other problems affecting women workers in the construction, wood and forestry industries, the IFBWW, through its International Women's Committee, calls upon IFBWW affiliated unions to carry out the following:

Charter on Affirmative Action

All affiliates are urged to adopt campaigns to defend and promote women workers' rights based on the IFBWW Charter on Affirmative Action.

Equal Pay

Women's average earnings are only two thirds of men's wages.

***** What to do? *****

- Use the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in all negotiations over basic wages.
- Call upon employers to carry out job reviews and evaluations in co-operation with the union, in order to regard jobs employing predominantly women workers and develop appropriate monitoring and complaints procedures.
- Train union officials in matters related to equal pay and job classifications;
- Negotiate increases in basic rates of pay, which will benefit low paid women rather than overtime and other extra payments.

Pregnancy and Maternity Rights

All women should be entitled to a paid maternity leave with no qualifying conditions. Women are still dismissed or selected for redundancy when pregnant or on maternity leave. They face workplace hazards and other risks during pregnancy.

***** What to do?*****

- Unions should negotiate maternity agreements, including extended leave on full pay, and the option of further leave on reduced pay or without pay.
- Unions should ensure that employers respect the minimum legal entitlement and take up cases of non-compliance as a priority.
- Pregnant women should be entitled to occupational sick pay;
- The workplace should be safe for all workers but pregnant women should receive special protection from hazardous substances and from heavy lifting and should have the right to change jobs or refuse dangerous jobs. Trade unions and workers' representatives should take up such cases as a priority.
- Unions should keep in touch with members on maternity leave.
- New mothers should have paid leave and facilities for breast feeding and the option of flexible or shorter working hours.

Child care and family responsibilities

Working parents need access to good quality and affordable child care facilities.

***** What to do? *****

- Trade unions should campaign for increased State funded care facilities and out of school provisions and develop coalitions with other community organisations,
- Lobby the Government to provide tax incentives to employers who provide child care facilities for their workers;
- Negotiate with employers for workplace nurseries or subsidised places in existing nurseries.



- Lobby the Government to condition the granting of an operating or building permit on the provision of child care facilities for the construction workers.
- Unions should lobby government to ratify and implement ILO Convention No. 156 on workers with family responsibility, 1981, and include its provisions in collective bargaining demands.

Part-time workers

Most part-time workers are women workers in the lowest grade jobs.

***** What to do? *****

- Take special initiatives to recruit part-time workers into the union;
- Review existing collective agreements to make sure that part-time workers interests are properly catered for;
- Negotiate improved terms and conditions, including pro-rata pay and equal entitlements;
- Ensure that these rights also cover temporary, casual, contract workers as well as those who work from and in the home.

Training

Women's employment choices are limited by lack of training.

***** What to do? *****

- Encourage vocational training institutes and employers to provide women with training opportunities in non-traditional jobs;
- Ensure that women workers have access to information on training opportunities;
- Ensure that all staff involved with recruitment and selection are given equal training opportunities.

- Ensure that employers recompense women who receive additional training with due increase in pay.

Trade Union Education

Women are not proportionally represented in trade union education programmes and therefore find it harder to stand for election for leadership positions.

***** What to do? *****

- Ensure that women members are fully informed about and share responsibility for the design, management, reporting and evaluation of specific programmes for women.
- Ensure that all project proposals for trade union education clearly indicate how women will participate and benefit from each of the activities and how the proposal actively encourages this participation.
- Ensure that in all education programmes, unions establish realistic target figures to earmark resources for training on gender awareness, or specifically for women workers' rights and report on such activities.
- Unions should support continuous and on-going education programmes for women only and produce education materials which address women's needs and are designed by women in the union.
- Education programmes should be held at times which do not conflict with a woman's family responsibilities and on request, trade unions should provide child care facilities for women attending education courses.
- Gender awareness programmes should be held for both men and women trade unionists.

- Sexual harassment education should be held for both men and women trade unionists.

Women's Participation in Union Activities

Women still do not have an equal voice. Union activities, policies and priorities do not always reflect their needs.

***** What to do? *****

- Unions should make a formal policy commitment to giving priority to organising women workers in both formal and informal sector.
- Unions should develop and adopt a policy on sexual harassment at the workplace and within the union itself, including appropriate monitoring and accountability procedures.
- Where this has not already been achieved, unions should establish specific structures for women which report to the union's governing bodies and create specific posts for Secretary for women workers or its equivalent.
- Ensure that specific structures for women members are adequately resourced and funded.
- Set targets and a timetable to meet a minimum quota of 30% women's representation on union executives.
- Hold meetings in accessible places and provide child care facilities.
- Encourage women to become full-time trade union officers, including negotiators and organisers.
- Establish a regular women's section in the union newsletter.
- Provide trade union literature for distribution in schools for both boys and girls.

Regional and International Coordination

Women who are currently active in trade unions do not receive enough information about IFBWW at regional and international level nor have opportunities to meet and exchange information. The numbers of women attending regional and international events supported by the IFBWW continues to be very low.

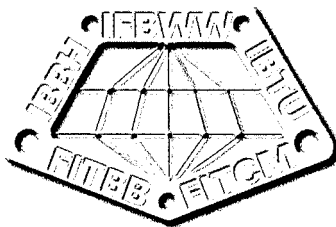
***** What to do? *****

Call upon the IFBWW through its Regional Offices to:

- establish a regular women's newsletter for the regions;
- develop a mailing list for women responsible for equality issues in each affiliated union;
- insist that there is equal gender participation in all activities supported by the IFBWW at sub regional, regional, and international level;
- include this specification of equal gender participation in letters of invitation;
- request that a training session on gender awareness be included in the seminar Programme to the Regional Conference;
- urge all unions sending more than one delegate to the Regional Conference to nominate a woman in keeping with the 1993 World Congress resolution;
- request that a statement on sexual harassment, similar to the one distributed at the IFBWW Congress, be distributed at the Regional Conference and all regional activities, and that it is read out during the opening session.

Call upon the IFBWW through the International Secretariat to:

- ensure that all affiliates fulfill their Statutory duty to complete the annual questionnaire including the sections referring to the following points:
 - a) the number of women members in the union and number of women workers in the labour force in industries covered by the union
 - b) the number of women on the governing bodies of the union.
 - c) specific measures adopted by the union to improve equality in the work place and within the union.
- ensure that the Credentials Committee at the Regional Conference examines the above information and indicates which unions have not met these obligations, and then publish this information in the regional newsletter;
- ensure that during the budgeting process, the necessary resources and finances are allocated so that the committee can operate effectively and meet at least once a year;
- appoint full-time regional women's co-ordinators for all regions and increase the post of women's officer to a full-time position at international level.



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