The WaY2Go

Strengthening women and youth leadership within the trade union movement for decent work in Southeast Asia (2019-2021)

Women and youth have low representation in governance and operations in trade unions at regional, national and workplace level in Southeast Asia. There are serious gaps in reflecting their numbers and voice. These limit the full potential of women and youth leaders; making it more difficult to promote decent work, social and core labour rights of workers, more so women and youth's own rights. Appreciation of this issue has risen through the years, but progress in redressing deficits needs to be radically raised if women and youth would assume their rightful place and further invigorate flagging unions.

Development objective:
- To strengthen women and youth leadership within the trade union movement, achieve SDG 5 on gender equality, women empowerment and better conditions of work and life for workers and their families in Southeast Asia
- Strengthened women and youth representation in leadership, decision and policy-making bodies within the trade union movement (Internal)
- Mainstreamed women and youth policies in union activities and operations (External)

Target groups would range:
- Intermediaries – affiliated trade unions in Southeast Asia
- Key target group – women and youth representatives in participating affiliates
- Wider target group – women and youth members of trade unions
- Indirect target group – workers and related agencies and organizations
**Activities:**
- Research and knowledge building – baseline survey, development of curriculum and manual, validation workshop, project assembly and planning workshop
- Capacity building – sub-regional training of women and youth representatives, national workshops on women and youth concerns
- Advocacy and campaigns – small events, meetings, seminars, study groups – at center, federation, workplace level
- Monitoring and evaluation – national project committee meetings, project supervision committee meetings
- Women and youth camp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Project indicators</th>
<th>Indicator 3: Affiliates in six (6) countries have set up National Project Committees (NPCs) and have drafted action plans (March 2020)</th>
<th>Indicator 4: 50% (half) of trained women and youth representatives (WYRs) have new or higher positions or responsibilities in their organizations (End 2020)</th>
<th>Indicator 6: 30% of trained WYRs have participated in decision and policy making bodies of their unions or in collective bargaining (CB) and other negotiations, other activities (End 2020)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator 5:</td>
<td>The organizations of 30% of WYR have started social dialogues with relevant government agencies on selected w/y and other social and labour standards (End 2020)</td>
<td>Indicator 2: 50% of the participating affiliates have proposed improvements in gender and youth related national or local regulations they have chosen as target for advocacy (End 2021)</td>
<td>Indicator 7: 50% of the trained WYRs and five (5) organizations and ITUC-AP affiliates outside of Southeast Asia have made use of project’s best practices in pushing for women and youth and other concerns (June 2021)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What’s special about this Project?**

**How different is this from other efforts to strengthen women and youth?**

The project allowed a longer inception period, enabling the project team to devote much time preparing for the project – deep background, getting the base information on many aspects of women and youth participation, breaking down the objectives to actionable results, how to do monitoring and reports.

A serious baseline survey indicated where women and youth are in participation in governance and operations at the national center, federation and local unions; what contributes most to participation, what respondents believe could bolster gains already achieved.

The project has designed a ‘living’ Training and Curriculum Manual (TCM) adapted to union needs. Already, the Training and Curriculum Manual (TCM) for Part 1 has seen some updating.

Substantial time is spent to streamline monitoring and reporting mechanism, to ensure that activities and outputs would be timely delivered, and cross-country stakeholders are appraised and benefit from the work of others.
THE ITUC-AP/DGB BW Project off to a great start

It is usual that we share fun and exciting moments with our sisters and brothers in programs, even those whom we had just met for the first time. This bond goes as far as taking meals together, sharing rooms, buying things.

In the ITUC-AP/DGB BW Training Curriculum and Manual (TCM) Validation Workshop for Select Trainers held in Manila, Philippines on 6-8 July, 2019, the exchange of views and opinions even went into personal backgrounds and perspectives, leading to some quotable quotes. Six participants from Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia and implementing partners DGB BW and ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC) provided valuable comments and suggestions on content, methodologies, presentation and layout of the TCM.

How not to recreate the worst training experience ever

“In principle, I know our union’s vision and mission statements but I cannot recite them.” I think we can all relate to this, and do more to improve unions’ communication of trackable objectives expectations, programs and activities with affiliates and members.

“I have traveled in countries in five continents but this is my first time here.” The young woman was a living demonstration of a compelling story from a trade unionist who stressed that we help our trainees create their own learning experience.

The Skype session on “Advocacy and Campaigns” with a consultant in Geneva was an excellent example of long-distance interaction with a captivated audience.

The role play in “Negotiation Is Fun” was fun and powerful, with the “Leaders panel” giving the “Future Leaders panel” a resounding lesson in serious negotiation, promising exciting hours in the long training program in October 2019. “Are you saying you are not satisfied with what we now have?”– illustrating the great divide between union leaders and women and youth in perceptions of participation.
People-oriented consultants were engaged, true, and have their contributions. The validators showed what other more important things to highlight and how issues could be better presented to unions.

The series of presentations, discussions, including remote demonstration, intense group work, and engaging role play took center stage in the workshop. Selected topics were demonstrated in real time.

This process was meant to ensure ownership and that resource persons, and facilitators, would treat the topics intensively to strengthen competencies of trade unionists. After all, union people would the best people to appraise their needs and how to deal with them.

The exercise concluded that a happy balance of new and traditional approaches would be used. “There is no one size fits all. We could always think of better ways of doing things, but there are time and resource constraints in all training.”

The TCM contents at a glance

### PART I: Women and youth in the world of work

- **Day 1** Trade Unionism and Me
- **Day 1** Our National Economies and How They Affect Conditions of Work and Life
- **Day 2** Our World of Work
- **Day 3** Gender Mainstreaming/ Gender Sensitivity in Unions
- **Day 4** Me as a TU Leader
- **Day 5** Educating Unionists, Stakeholders and Other Allies
- **Day 5** Monitoring and Evaluation

### PART II: Women and youth leadership in action

- **Day 1/2** Communication and Strategy
- **Day 2/3** Research and Statistics for Trade Unionists
- **Day 2/3** Creating Good and Compelling Stories
- **Day 2/3** Advocacy and Campaigns
- **Day 4** Negotiation is Fun
- **Day 5** What’s Next?
- **Day 5** Monitoring and Evaluation
**WaY2Go: Women and youth together for leadership launches in Bangkok**

Calling it a historic step, trade unions in South East Asia, pledged to contribute to realizing the objectives of the new cooperation project between ITUC-AP and DGB-Bildungswerk.

Leaders of ITUC-AP and ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC) affiliates, meeting in Bangkok on 25-26 July 2019, formally launched the project with a signing of the Bangkok Commitment of Support.

The project, running for three years starting in 2019, marks the first collaboration between ITUC-AP and DGB BW and ATUC on strengthening women and youth leadership. Focusing in South East Asia, the project aims to strengthen women/youth representation in leadership, decision and policy-bodies within the trade union movement (internal) and mainstream women/youth policies in union activities, operations and elsewhere (external).

**What the leaders said**

Speaking at the launch, Brother Shoya, ITUC-AP General Secretary, said the project is timely as it addresses the core challenge of sustaining the relevance and sustainability of trade unions. “This project is our initial response to supporting the growth and development of women and youth as future leaders of our organizations”.

Brother Ruben Torres, General Secretary of ATUC, echoed: “The importance of youth and women in trade unions has long been recognized. The availability of a clear plan with focused, dedicated and targeted activities makes the difference between recognition and action. We are fortunate to have the ITUC-AP/DGB BW Project, which will now contribute to that aspiration.”

Other leaders chimed in their thoughts, their concerns, their prescriptions for women and youth and the future of trade unions. Watch for these in future issues of this Newsletter.

**Looking back and moving forward**

The project got off to a good start in the first half of the year, with the baseline survey on women and youth integration in trade unions and the development and validation of the training curriculum and manual. The survey had pointed to deficits in women and youth participation. The TCM is expected to address the deficits in would-be leaders’ skill sets.

The new way to go (WaY2Go) -- harnessing the potentials and dynamism of the youth and women with a sense of urgency – has everyone excited and invested in project activities. Two years and half more to go, affiliates are rising to the challenge put forward by the project.

The meeting brought together 25 leaders and representatives of ITUC-AP and ATUC affiliates in South East Asia, including from the ATUC Women and Youth Committee and DGB BW.
Great results start with commitments: What were committed

ITUC-AP Commitments

1) Establish and follow processes and procedures for effective implementation of activities;
2) Fully support the Project Management Team;
3) Support the participation in the Project of non-Development Assistance Committee (DAC) ODA recipients.

ATUC Commitments

1) The ATUC Secretariat to coordinate with ITUC-AP and affiliates to effect implementation of the Project and tracking progress;
2) Affirm the participation of the Co-Chairs of the ATUC Youth and Women Committee (YWC) in the Project Steering Committee;
3) Assist affiliates in planning, implementing and evaluating activities and campaigns;
4) Help create venues for discussing women and youth concerns at the national level while assisting them in targeting and pushing for their national priorities;
5) Increase/improve the participation of women and youth in ATUC structures, activities and programs.

Affiliates’ Commitments

1) Provide an environment for educating women and youth members, such as leadership programs for them and directed exposure to union activities;
2) Build policies and structures to increase women and youth participation and leadership in unions at various levels;
3) Designate focal points for women and youth concerns who will help implement the Project;
4) Give women and youth trainees additional responsibilities or enable them to participate in discussions, negotiations, or in policy or decision-making bodies;
5) Track and report the progress of action plans/chosen advocacy targets and of trained W/Y participants.

Singapore NTUC Commitments

Share expertise and programs on nurturing women and youth participation in unions by sending resource persons to certain activities.
The baseline that starts it off

The baseline survey, conducted in February-April 2019, showed how much more needs to be done in raising women and youth participation.

National centers in ASEAN have women and youth in their governing bodies of trade unions. However, their numbers are low and are not proportionate to the numbers of women and youth in unions. More aspects of this disparity would be obtained during the activities leading to the formation of national project committees (NPCs) and countries’ plans of action.

The baseline study establishes a starting point against which the ITUC-AP/DGB BW will measure the progress and impact of the project. Much revealing data were obtained. More information, including at the level of federations/national unions and at the local level, will be obtained in subsequent project activities.

Membership in numbers
The total membership of 15 responding centers is 19,770,654. Female membership ranged from 90% down to 36%. The average female membership is 54%. Youth membership ranged from 80% down to 20%. The average youth membership is 37%.

These averages in membership are not reflected in youth and women in governing bodies. Participation is lower among youth. Participation of women and youth are lower in federations and at the workplace unions’ level. Participation is lower among youth than among women.

Participation within unions and elsewhere
Most frameworks of participation exist in the union Constitutions and By-Laws, as well as union resolutions. These frameworks are variably implemented through women and youth structures, e.g., committees, commissions, departments, divisions, units, offices.

Union participation in political/ tripartite bodies have large national differences. There are almost no explicit requirements for women and youth participation in these bodies, except in those areas which are specifically for them.

Not just communication
Much could be done in communication. There could be more direction in bringing more actionable information to members, and attracting them to access communication channels and act on posts.

In the sidelines, the survey highlighted the need for investing in addressing the language issue in sub-regional programs and developing a glossary of ASEAN terms used in ASEAN unions’ manuals and papers. There are some differences in language, as well as interpretation and understanding. For example, Indonesians use ‘socialization’ while Filipinos use ‘localization’ to mean echoing or popularization of things. Other countries use ‘calculate’ to mean ‘compute’.

Collective negotiation and bargaining is key
There are diverse provisions on women and youth in current collective agreements (CBAs), which could be replicated among themselves given more dissemination and templates. Among more common provisions are: Maternity leave, Paternity leave; Women-friendly facilities (separate toilets, rest areas, breast feeding stations, shuttle buses); Family welfare programs; Drugs, Alcohol, HIV AIDS; Other special leaves for women (e.g. pregnancy-related, single parents).

Much more could be learned and replicated as unions interact.