



## **MENTORING PROGRAMME**

### **Consolidated Activity Report - 2nd workshop**

This is a compilation of the experiences, achievements and challenges faced by different tandems in the course of the activities identified as challenges in their respective countries. In spite of these challenges, colleagues have been able to make progress towards the achievement of the objectives set during the first workshop and have had important successes.

As regards the frequency and regularity with which tandems have met up, meetings are conditioned by the responsibilities of mentor and mentee in their workplaces and daily lives. However, a frequency increase has been noted given the activities in which they have participated (described below).

#### **1. Presentation of the main activities in which the tandems have participated:**

##### **✓ Tandems in Argentina:**

- SAT participated in the negotiations to include clauses on media violence, and organised public speech courses and trade union training on media
- They also organised and participated in workshops on diversity in the union
- ASIMRA held its congress with a high participation of women
- The finance union held its congress where they shared the workplace agreement
- Colleagues in the gaming union mobilised to demand labour rights
- Colleagues in FUVA carried out activities in Mar del Plata with an active participation of young workers
- The postal sector organised mixed seminars to promote the 40x40 campaign

##### **✓ Tandems in Brazil:**

- Tandems in cleaning sector unions SIEMACO/FENASCON organised a “mock trial” with the involvement of the Ministry of Labour. The aim of this activity was to raise awareness of domestic violence and moral harassment.
- They also held national meetings where they made presentations on issues such as union unity, involvement in politics and global trade unionism, among others.

- Celebration of Street Cleaners' Day with the participation of over 3,000 workers.
  - Participation of mentors and the youth secretary in the event to set up the UGT trade union centre in Sao Paulo.
  - Participation in the national campaign to demand 36 hours for all workers in the street cleaning sector without salary cuts.
  - Participation of mentees in the youth seminar addressing the subject "Social Policies and Decent Work".
  - Presentation on moral harassment in the workplace in the workers' health centre. Involvement in wage negotiations in the street cleaning sector.
  - During May, June and July the tandem in the media sector communicated via emails and telephone calls. They also participated in events with other trade union centres to address Decent Work. In August, the mentee participated in youth seminars where the issues of union policies, social policies and decent work were addressed.
  - The tandem in the telecom sector participated in meetings and seminars, and the mentor offered support inside the union. The mentee attended collective bargaining sessions as an observer. They also communicated regularly through weekly conference calls.
  - Tandems in the commerce sector organised seminars and youth training on issues such as alcohol and drug problems among young workers. They also participated in seminars on union training and other meetings.
- ✓ **Other tandems:** Uruguay/Paraguay
- The finance tandem in Paraguay has managed to recruit other women workers for the women's network.
  - The tandem in Uruguay organised meetings in 16 out of the 19 regions in the country; they held workshops with a strong participation of women representatives; they have also kept a close communication, which has allowed them to expand and form other tandems.

## 2. Challenges and achievements

Although it is obvious that the programme has been very successful in terms of implementation and development, it is also important to be aware of the fact that in order to set and meet growth objectives, the different tandems have faced challenges and overcome them thanks to the commitment, perseverance and the awareness of mentors and mentees in relation to the union work they carry out in their workplace, union and society in general. Proof of this are the activities implemented with the support of government institutions and other trade union centres and the inclusion of more women at the collective bargaining table.

- ✓ **Some of the challenges mentioned were:**

- Some of the biggest obstacles to face-to-face meetings between mentor and mentee are still distance and working hours differences. This is the case for the mentors and mentees in the commerce and telecom sectors in Brazil. The tandems also mentioned that union organisations, with few exceptions, are led mainly by men.
  - The mentor in the Uruguay group said that although unions support them, they haven't been able to raise awareness among male colleagues of the fact that gender issues are not only women's issues. Another challenge is that the participation of more women in union activities is not promoted.
  - Members of new tandems in Chile say current legislation punishes trade unionists as it grants freedom of association but at the same time sanctions the worker financially when he or she wants to participate in union meetings by deducting days of work and thus reducing his or her income. The tandem in Paraguay has mentioned the same problem as paid leave does not exist.
  - The tandem in Peru mentioned that they are denigrated for being trade unionists.
- ✓ **Some of the achievements/developments were:**
- All tandems, without exception, have created new working groups, expanding the programme to national level.
  - Members of tandems have reported progress in terms of their participation, at the international and national levels, in seminars, congresses, bargaining tables, and the organisation of and participation in union assemblies. All of this gives them more self-confidence and encourages them to continue developing personally and within the trade union movement.
  - They have managed to share more information on gender issues in union meetings (ASIMRA, Argentina).
  - As a result of the implementation of the Mentoring Programme to create more management positions for young women, the mentee has been included in the leadership structures of the unions (SAL, Argentina).
  - They have managed to push forward the creation of the Subcommittee for Women and have designated the mentee as coordinator of this Subcommittee. In the words of the new coordinator, "this course has been a transforming experience because it meant new personal challenges for me" (SAL, Argentina).
  - Innovative programmes have been implemented, e.g. "big playing areas" and "mobile libraries" where young people read books to children. This is part of the social work developed by the new Gender Subcommittee (SAL, Argentina).
  - Implementation of strategies to deal with domestic violence through the development of specific tests (postal union in Argentina).
  - Inclusion of specific clauses in collective agreements to improve working conditions for women (commerce sector, Brazil).
  - They gave visibility to the work done by the tandems and how training new young leaders benefits unions (telecom sector, Brazil).

- As a result of the work done by the tandems, mentees in the telecom sector in Brazil participated as representatives of their organization in UNI's World Women's Conference in Cape Town.
- In the case of CONTCOP, women are more actively involved in the management of their union as they are selected to participate representing their organisation in important meetings such as the meetings of UNI Americas Executive Committee and the Tripartite Council for Decent Work in Brazil.
- Creation of the women's network in the banking sector in Paraguay
- There has been progress in the participation of more women in training activities in Uruguay.

### 3. Questions to identify future challenges and activities to be developed:

The third part of the workshop consisted of group work around specific questions in order to analyse what the groups considered to be the work to be done. These are the conclusions.

- ✓ **Group consisting of colleagues from Argentina/Chile-I: Finance, Commerce, ASIMRA:**
  - **Which UNI campaigns are more suited to your unions?** We identify ourselves more with the campaign on violence in the workplace.
  - **Has your union launched any campaigns? Please give details or give examples of how it has been done:** Our union holds monthly meetings with union representatives where different kinds of conflicts are discussed (violence at the workplace being the most important one). Among other things, we have held seminars and distributed leaflets.
  - **Which topics do you expect UNI to address which haven't been addressed yet?** We need to address the issue of collective bargaining to include women in topics discussed by union leaders.
- ✓ **Group consisting of colleagues from Argentina/Chile-II: Gaming, Tourism, Banking:**
  - **Which UNI campaigns are more suited to your unions?** The campaign "That's Why" is the one closer to our reality. As women leaders, our duty is to respond to the needs of women members and protect women's rights in the workplace and in the political and social levels. Once the needs are identified, the challenge is to open spaces and take our space at the union, political and social levels.
  - **Has your union launched any campaigns?** The Argentinian union launched two campaigns. The first one was *Zapatos Rojos* (Red Shoes), a campaign to fight against violence against women that commemorates the attack of a Mexican woman by her partner. This event took place in Plaza de Mayo and was organised by La Bancaria with the participation of all members of the Argentinian UNI women's network. The other campaign was "Break the Circle". We carried out activities in a meeting in San Nicolás and the main topic was gender violence in the current legislation in the country.

- **Which topics do you expect UNI to address which haven't been addressed yet?** It is important to address the issue of domestic violence and its impact at the workplace. Women who are victims of violence are physically and psychologically affected and their work performance is also affected. The other issue to be addressed is flexible working time arrangements, which is a fundamental measure for more women to come back to work enjoying a work-life balance; this can be done through the creation of nurseries, places with cribs in an adequate location which will allow mothers to work in peace. We need to demand that current legislation be concrete and effective.
- ✓ **Group consisting of colleagues from the postal sector in Argentina:**
  - **Which UNI campaigns are more suited to your unions?** The 40x40 campaign is the one that responds best to the needs of our unions' members. FOECYT has unions in all Argentinian provinces. In most of our union organisations women do not hold decision-making positions.
  - **Has your union launched any campaigns?** In our union we have adopted campaigns such as Break the Circle, That's Why and the Mentoring Programme. Thanks to the Mentoring Programme we were able to implement the campaigns Break the Circle and That's Why. In order to achieve the objectives, we planned and held in three provinces (Córdoba, La Plata and Santa Fe) debates on gender violence, forms of prevention and how to deal with domestic violence and child abuse. Furthermore, legal advice was provided in order to inform women victims of violence of how to react and where to go for help. This was all done by experts in the matter. In addition, a test was run to assess and quantify the different types of violence experienced by female workers in the postal sector. This assessment was individual and anonymous. The results were surprising because they reflected a high rate of violence in the workplace. This is why it is important to continue fighting together with UNI against this problem to reach more women and inform and train them.
  - **Which topics do you expect UNI to address which haven't been addressed yet?** It would be important to organise jointly with UNI seminars and discussions with female and male participants to address the issue of gender violence, violence in the workplace and their consequences in the workplace. It would also be good to have campaigns aimed at promoting a greater involvement of women in decision-making positions.
- ✓ **Group consisting of colleagues from SAL:**
  - **Which UNI campaigns are more suited to your union?** "That's Why" is the campaign that better responds to the objectives of our work because we have managed to include other colleagues in the work groups. We make good use of the strengths of our new colleagues, their enthusiasm and will to participate, and we love their positive energy.
  - **Has your union launched any campaigns?** We have launched the "40x40" campaign. After the first mentoring meeting the Gender Subcommission was created. It has organised courses and workshops to address media and workplace violence and has managed to set up the "big playing areas", which deal with children's problems through the development of special games. We have also used this strategy to hold workshops for adults on media violence.

- **Which topics do you expect UNI to address which haven't been addressed yet?** It would be interesting to address the issue of equal pay and launch a campaign to raise awareness of the need to establish equal pay standards for men and women and not by region or country areas. It is important to have inclusion and professionalism.
- ✓ **Group consisting of colleagues from Brazil-I: Gaming and Commerce:**
- **Which UNI campaigns are more suited to your unions?** Mentoring campaigns to encourage young women to participate, training them and raising their awareness of trade unionism and politics as both are linked and young people are the core of the future trade unionism and politics.
- **Has your union launched any campaigns?** We have organized meetings for women attended by over 1,000 women from the commerce sector to discuss issues such as recognition, self-esteem, equality, health and others. Thanks to this activity the secretariat for women was created. There is also ongoing training for young people to introduce them to politics. There have also been seminars organised specifically for young workers and campaigns to fight breast cancer. As women are overwhelmed by daily life, working double shifts they often forget to take care of their own health so the number of women dying of this illness has increased.
- **Which topics do you expect UNI to address which haven't been addressed yet?** It would be interesting to launch campaigns on women's health, e.g. breast cancer.
- ✓ **Group consisting of colleagues from Brazil - II: Telecom sector:**
- **Which UNI campaigns are more suited to your unions?** Campaigns on equal pay and equal opportunities.
- **Has your union launched any campaigns?** We have implemented the "40x40" campaign, which has led to women being in decision-making positions in the union. We have also developed campaigns to fight against gender violence and we have included specific clauses in collective agreements to guarantee sexual harassment cases are dealt with in the legal system.
- **Which topics do you expect UNI to address which haven't been addressed yet?** It would be interesting to launch campaigns on LGBT workers' treatment and to raise awareness on the issue of teleworking.