

ANNEX 1

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR EXECUTIVE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES



Purpose of this annex

This annex provides actionable recommendations for union leadership to implement gender-responsive collective bargaining. It can be extracted and shared with executive committees, governance bodies and decision-makers who require strategic guidance without reading the full manual.

HOW TO USE THIS ANNEX:

- Union leadership: Review this annex for immediate action items and strategic direction.
- Governance committees: Use this as a basis for policy decisions and resource allocation.
- Negotiators: Refer to the main manual (sections 1-4) for detailed analysis, tools and implementation guidance.
- Training facilitators: Combine this annex with your own activities and/or those included in section 3 for workshops.

Why gender-responsive bargaining matters

Gender inequality at the bargaining table limits union effectiveness, reduces membership engagement, and produces agreements that fail to address the needs of over half the workforce. Implementing gender-responsive bargaining strengthens organizational capacity, broadens representation and delivers better outcomes for all workers.

THE EVIDENCE:

- women who feel represented demonstrate higher rates of union membership, mobilization and leadership participation (section 2.3);
- diverse bargaining teams produce more comprehensive and inclusive agreements (section 2.3);
- gender-equal unions demonstrate stronger democratic processes and broader representativeness (section 2.3);
- collective bargaining consistently reduces gender wage gaps and improves working conditions (section 4.1).

The problem: how gender inequality shapes bargaining

For detailed analysis, see section 3.3 of the main manual

There are five key barriers in collective bargaining that can reflect or reinforce structural inequalities:

1. Unequal team composition

- women remain underrepresented in union leadership and bargaining teams;
- women are frequently assigned to "women's issues" rather than core strategic negotiations;
- token representation: one woman deemed sufficient while men's participation is unlimited.

2. Skewed priorities

- masculinized union cultures prioritize wages and productivity measures as isolated concerns;
- issues disproportionately affecting women receive secondary consideration: pay equity, care leave, protection against violence.

CRITICAL CLARIFICATION:

For workers in low-wage sectors facing cost-of-living and housing crises, wages remain the highest priority. Gender-responsive bargaining does not mean deprioritizing wages.

Rather, it means:

- ensuring wage improvements address pay equity between genders performing comparable work;
- treating care provisions and violence protections as essential components of decent work standards, not optional add-ons;
- recognizing that full-time workers at any wage level deserve safe workplaces, fair compensation and work-life balance.

Gender-responsive bargaining enhances wage strategies by ensuring gains benefit all workers equitably.

3. Limited bargaining capacity

- insufficient women's representation in leadership marginalizes gender equality as a strategic priority;
- gender issues are positioned as optional rather than fundamental rights.

4. Structural participation barriers

- care responsibilities constrain women's availability for extended negotiation sessions;
- organizational structures fail to accommodate diverse participation needs;
- meeting times, locations and formats exclude caregivers.

5. Agreements that fail to address underlying gender inequalities

- occupational segregation;
- unequal access to advancement and professional development;
- unpaid care burdens;
- precarious employment concentrated in feminized sectors;
- exposure to workplace violence and harassment.

Action framework for union leadership

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS (within three months)

1. Transform bargaining team composition

Action:

- establish minimum gender representation standards: 40 per cent representation of each gender on all bargaining teams (section 3.3);
- assign women to core strategic negotiations, not only "women's issues." (section 3.3);
- rotate bargaining team assignments to build capacity across membership (section 2.3);
- track and report team composition annually (section 3.3).

Implementation tools: See Section 3 activities for team-building exercises.

Expected outcome: More diverse perspectives in negotiations, increased women's leadership development and stronger bargaining capacity.

2. Reframe bargaining priorities

Action:

- integrate gender equality as a core strategic priority in all bargaining mandates (section 3.4);
- include pay equity audits and gender pay gap analysis in every bargaining round (section 4.1);
- elevate care provisions, violence protections, and work-life balance as fundamental workplace rights (sections 4.2, 4.6);
- for low-wage workers: integrate pay equity into wage improvement strategies; address care needs and violence protection as essential components of decent work (section 3.3);
- ensure bargaining logs reflect priorities of full membership, including women, caregivers, and marginalized groups (section 3.3).

Implementation tools: See Section 4 for detailed guidance on each priority area

Expected outcome: Comprehensive agreements delivering better conditions for all workers, increased member satisfaction, stronger union relevance.

3. Build organizational capacity

Action:

- mandate gender perspective training for all bargaining team members (section 2.1);
- develop internal expertise through partnerships with gender equality specialists (section 2.3);
- create mentoring programmes pairing experienced and emerging women negotiators (section 4.3);
- establish regular sessions on intersectionality and inclusive bargaining practices (section 2.1).

Expected outcome: Stronger analytical capacity, more effective negotiations, sustainable skills development.

4. Address participation barriers (section 3.3)

Action:

- schedule bargaining sessions during standard working hours when possible;
- provide childcare support for negotiation meetings and union activities;
- offer hybrid/remote participation options for caregivers;
- ensure meeting locations are accessible (transportation, physical access);
- provide meal allowances and transportation support;
- establish clear, predictable schedules to enable care arrangement planning.

Expected outcome: Increased participation from women and caregivers, more representative decision-making, broader engagement

Medium-term actions (within 6-12 months)

5. Expand the scope of bargaining

Adopt comprehensive bargaining frameworks addressing the full spectrum of gender equality issues.

Priority areas: For detailed implementation guidance and case studies, see section 4

A. Equal pay and compensation

- conduct gender pay gap audits;
- establish pay transparency mechanisms;
- negotiate equal pay for work of equal value frameworks;
- address wage penalties in feminized sectors and occupations.

B. Care and work-life balance

- negotiate paid parental leave (maternity, paternity, adoption);
- establish care leave provisions (elder care, sick family members, emergencies);
- create flexible working arrangements;
- secure employer support for childcare and dependent care.

C. Violence and harassment

- implement ILO Convention 190 provisions;
- establish clear reporting, investigation and sanction procedures;
- negotiate paid leave for domestic violence survivors;
- address technology-facilitated gender-based violence;
- create safe workplace protocols and training programs.

D. Career development and advancement

- mandate gender-balanced promotion processes;
- establish mentoring and leadership development programs;
- address occupational segregation and job evaluation bias;
- negotiate training access and professional development opportunities.

E. Health and safety

- include gender-specific occupational health considerations;
- address menstruation, pregnancy and menopause at work;
- negotiate appropriate workplace accommodations;
- ensure safety equipment and facilities meet diverse needs.

F. Precarious work

- address gender dimensions of informal, temporary, and part-time work;
- secure equal treatment regardless of employment status;
- negotiate pathways to permanent employment;
- protect rights of platform and gig workers.

G. Digitalization and technology

- ensure algorithmic fairness in hiring, promotion, and performance evaluation;
- negotiate protections against technology-facilitated surveillance;
- address digital skills development and access;
- secure rights in platform and remote work arrangements.

Expected outcome: Agreements reflecting the full range of workers' needs and rights, increased union relevance, stronger workplace protections.

Long-term institutional changes (ongoing)

6. Transform union culture and power structures

Action:

- adopt constitutional gender quotas for leadership positions (recommend 40-50 per cent minimum);
- establish gender equality committees with decision-making authority and budget allocation;
- integrate gender budgeting in union resource allocation;
- create accountability mechanisms: regular gender audits, progress reporting, corrective action plans;
- develop gender-responsive collective bargaining guidelines and template clauses;
- build alliances with women's rights organizations and social movements;
- mainstream gender perspective across all union activities.

Expected outcome: Sustained organizational commitment, permanent structural change, enhanced union capacity and legitimacy.

Success indicators: measuring progress

Effective implementation requires systematic monitoring. Track progress through:

PARTICIPATION METRICS

- percentage of women in bargaining teams: target 40-50 per cent representation;
- percentage of women in union leadership: track across all levels (executive, regional, workplace);
- attendance rates by gender: monitor participation in bargaining-related meetings, training sessions, and union activities;
- leadership pipeline: track women's progression through union structures.

AGREEMENT CONTENT

- number of gender equality clauses negotiated: count and categorize by type (pay equity, care, violence, etc.);
- coverage of provisions: track which priority areas are addressed (pay equity, care, violence, advancement, health/safety, precarious work, digitalization);
- inclusion of implementation mechanisms: verify agreements include monitoring, enforcement and dispute resolution procedures;
- specificity of provisions: assess whether clauses are actionable or aspirational.

WORKPLACE OUTCOMES

- reduction in gender pay gaps: measure over time within covered workplaces;
- uptake of parental and care leave by all genders: track usage rates to assess effectiveness;
- violence and harassment incidents: monitor reported incidents and resolution rates;
- women's representation in management/leadership: track workplace advancement;
- worker satisfaction rates by gender: survey members on perceived equality and inclusion;
- retention rates by gender: monitor whether provisions reduce women's turnover.

ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

- member recruitment and retention: track overall membership growth and composition;
- bargaining outcomes: compare agreements with and without gender provisions;
- mobilization capacity: assess participation in campaigns and collective actions;
- external recognition: monitor awards, partnerships and sector leadership.

Recommendation: Establish baseline measurements before implementation, then conduct annual assessments to track progress and adjust strategies.

KEY MESSAGES FOR GOVERNANCE DISCUSSIONS

When presenting gender-responsive bargaining to governance bodies, emphasize:

"GENDER EQUALITY STRENGTHENS UNIONS."

Evidence:

- women who feel represented demonstrate higher rates of union membership, mobilization and leadership participation (section 2.3);
- diverse bargaining teams produce more comprehensive and inclusive agreements (section 2.3);
- gender-equal unions demonstrate stronger democratic processes, greater transparency, broader representativeness, enhanced capacity to build alliances and increased organizational legitimacy (section 2.3).

This creates a reinforcing cycle: More membership → more strength → more representativeness → more democracy

"This is about all workers, not just women."

Key points:

- gender-responsive bargaining addresses intersecting inequalities: age, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background;
- care provisions benefit all genders and family structures (fathers, single parents, eldercare providers, chosen families);
- violence protections create safer workplaces for everyone;
- pay equity principles establish fairer compensation systems across the workforce;
- flexible work arrangements support all workers with caring responsibilities;
- health and safety provisions that consider diverse needs protect all workers.

"We have proof this works."

Evidence from practice:

Global agreements with multinational corporations demonstrate that comprehensive gender equality provisions are achievable across diverse sectors and cultural contexts. National and sectoral examples demonstrate successful negotiations on paid parental leave, domestic violence protections, pay equity frameworks, and care provisions.

For detailed case studies and examples, see section 2.4 (Global Framework Agreements) and section 4 (sectoral and national bargaining achievements)

Research evidence:

- collective bargaining consistently reduces gender wage gaps (section 4.1);
- unionized workplaces show better gender equality outcomes (section 1.3);
- women's union membership correlates with improved workplace protections (section 2.3).

"For low-wage workers, wages remain the priority - AND we can address gender equality."

Critical message for unions representing workers in economic crisis:

Gender-responsive bargaining does not mean deprioritizing wages. It means:

1. **Ensuring wage improvements address pay equity:** When negotiating wage increases, ensure gains close gender pay gaps and address wage penalties in feminized work.
2. **Recognizing care and safety as fundamental rights:** Violence protections and care provisions are essential components of decent work, not luxuries deferred until higher wage levels are achieved.
3. **Strengthening overall bargaining outcomes:** Gender-responsive approaches produce more comprehensive agreements that benefit all workers.
4. **Building stronger unions:** Inclusive bargaining increases membership, participation and bargaining power.

Example: A retail union negotiating wages during a cost-of-living crisis can simultaneously:

- secure across-the-board wage increases;
- address pay gaps between male-dominated and female-dominated job classifications;
- negotiate paid domestic violence leave (zero cost to employer, high value to workers);
- establish flexible scheduling provisions to support workers with care responsibilities.

Gender-responsive bargaining enhances wage strategies by ensuring all workers benefit equitably.

Resources and support

The UNI Global Union Equal Opportunities Department provides comprehensive support for implementing gender-responsive collective bargaining, including training programmes, template clauses, technical assistance and campaign materials.

For a complete listing of resources, publications and support services, see the Bibliography section of the main manual.

Next steps: getting started

FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Within one month:

1. Review this annex with the full executive committee.
2. Assign responsibility for gender equality to specific executive member(s).
3. Allocate budget for initial training and capacity building.
4. Request baseline data on current gender representation in bargaining teams and leadership.

Within three months:

1. Adopt a policy on minimum gender representation in bargaining teams.
2. Schedule gender perspective training for all current negotiators.
3. Review upcoming bargaining priorities to integrate gender equality.
4. Establish a gender equality committee or working group.

Within six months:

1. Conduct the first gender audit of union structures and agreements.
2. Develop gender-responsive bargaining guidelines for negotiators.
3. Establish success indicators and measurement systems.
4. Report progress to membership.

For governance bodies

Immediate actions:

1. Adopt constitutional amendments establishing gender quotas if not already in place.
2. Integrate gender equality into the strategic plan and performance indicators.
3. Allocate dedicated resources for gender equality work.
4. Establish reporting and accountability mechanisms.

Medium-term actions:

1. Review and revise all organizational policies through a gender lens.
2. Integrate gender budgeting into resource allocation processes.
3. Build partnerships with gender equality organizations.
4. Develop a communications strategy to promote gender-responsive bargaining to the membership.

Conclusion

Gender-responsive collective bargaining is not separate from unions' core work. It is essential to build worker power, improve working conditions and ensure decent work.

The evidence is clear: **gender equality strengthens unions. Stronger unions deliver better outcomes for all workers.**

Implementation requires leadership commitment, resource allocation and sustained organizational transformation. This annex provides the framework. The main manual provides the detailed tools. UNI Equal Opportunities provides ongoing support.

The question is not whether to act, but how quickly we can implement these changes.

*This annex prepared by UNI Global Union Equal Opportunities Department
Based on the Manual on Collective Bargaining with a Gender Perspective*



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