

# IFWEA STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2024

IFWEA will aspire, together with others, to achieve the Vision and Mission as articulated below.

## **Vision**

A world where all working people have access to lifelong learning opportunities which enable them to claim and exercise their inalienable rights, responsibilities and freedoms as global citizens.

## **Mission Statement**

To build a global knowledge community which facilitates global cooperation between worker educators so as to advance the frontiers of knowledge education methodology and practices of democratic worker organisations promoting freedom, justice and equality for all.

## **The Context**

In recent decades changes to the labour market and work environment resulting from globalisation have had a profound effect on workers' livelihoods, communities and forms of work in the less developed countries. Goods produced cheaply in countries with lower labour costs can be sold practically anywhere in the world. Workers in traditional forms of employment have been dispossessed of livelihoods they had held onto for generations. Migration to urban centres led to greater pressures on the labour force in a time when shrinking employment accompanied these changes to the forms of labour. Illegal migration to economies that were more developed or stable has spiralled.

Technological improvements and specifically internet communication frees companies to shift multiple aspects of their work to countries with lower labour and infrastructure costs. Flexible employment arrangements such as labour-only contracting and homework are now accepted employment practices. Women find themselves at a 26% disadvantage of obtaining even vulnerable work and are twice as likely to be unemployed than their men counterparts in many regions.

Trade unions, some more successfully than others, have been at the forefront of struggles to limit the effects of labour market deregulation. Although acknowledging the need to change, most traditional unions struggled to adapt, strategically and structurally, to the new reality. After nearly three decades of labour's debate about how to respond to changes in the labour market and despite concerted attempts to influence regulatory protections on an international level through the ILO, there is still little evidence of significant change on the ground.

Rapid digitalisation and technological advances – now termed the 4th industrial revolution, is further affecting the structure and form of work. The so-called 'platform economy' is growing, and this will affect how working people organise themselves. There is a need for examining the efficacy of models of organization, as well as the potential for new regulatory protections.

Geo-politically, there is a trend towards social division rather than a shared humanity. Among other reasons, this division can be attributed to scarcity of economic resources caused by, amongst other factors, the changing nature of work and work related protections. The more economically privileged focus their efforts on maintaining their privileges. This results in the working poor feeling deprived and unsupported, and causes both the privileged and disenfranchised to retreat inwards, into their own groups, as people feel the need to protect their own or their groups' interests. At times, this can include a trade-off; people give away their rights (for example to privacy or government protection) in order for those they perceive to be threatening them to be targeted. Labour parties, the traditional political allies of trade unions have struggled to adapt to changing

realities, in many cases losing sections of their traditional base. Migrant workers in informal and vulnerable forms of work and settlements have borne the brunt of these hostilities.

### **Our Focus**

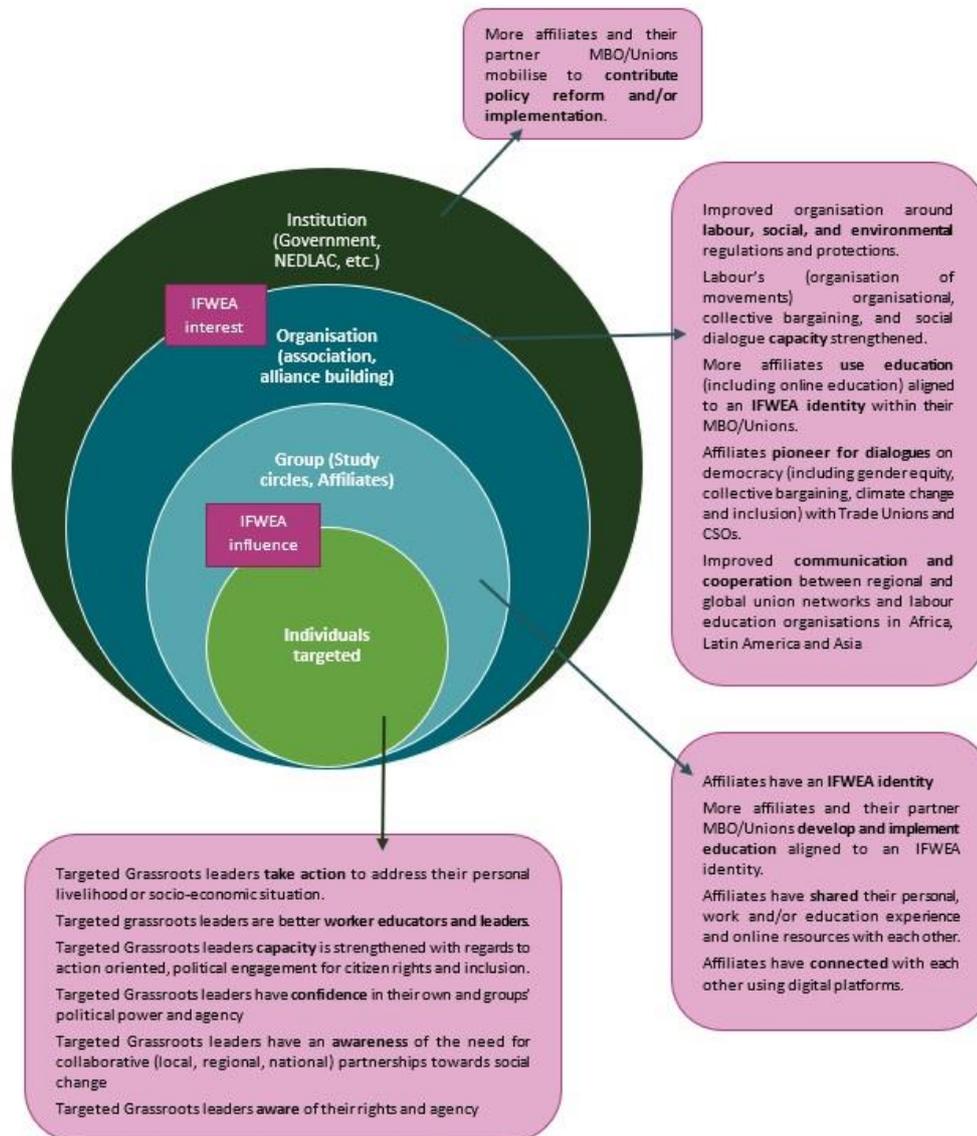
Providing educational and methodological support for trade unions, new formations and associations such as community based organisations and member based organisations who are working to improve livelihoods, socio-economic and political protections for vulnerable workers. We seek to contribute and build a concerted and successful response to the challenges they face, by unlocking our collective resources, and developing clarity on progressive responses to the current realities. This requires developing strategic partnerships between labour education NGOs, TUs and MBOs.

### **Our theory of change**

IFWEAs area of influence is at the individual and group level, as changes at these levels are fundamental for sustainable shifts to occur at any other levels of the system. Our education interventions target individuals located within affiliates, with the intention of shifting:

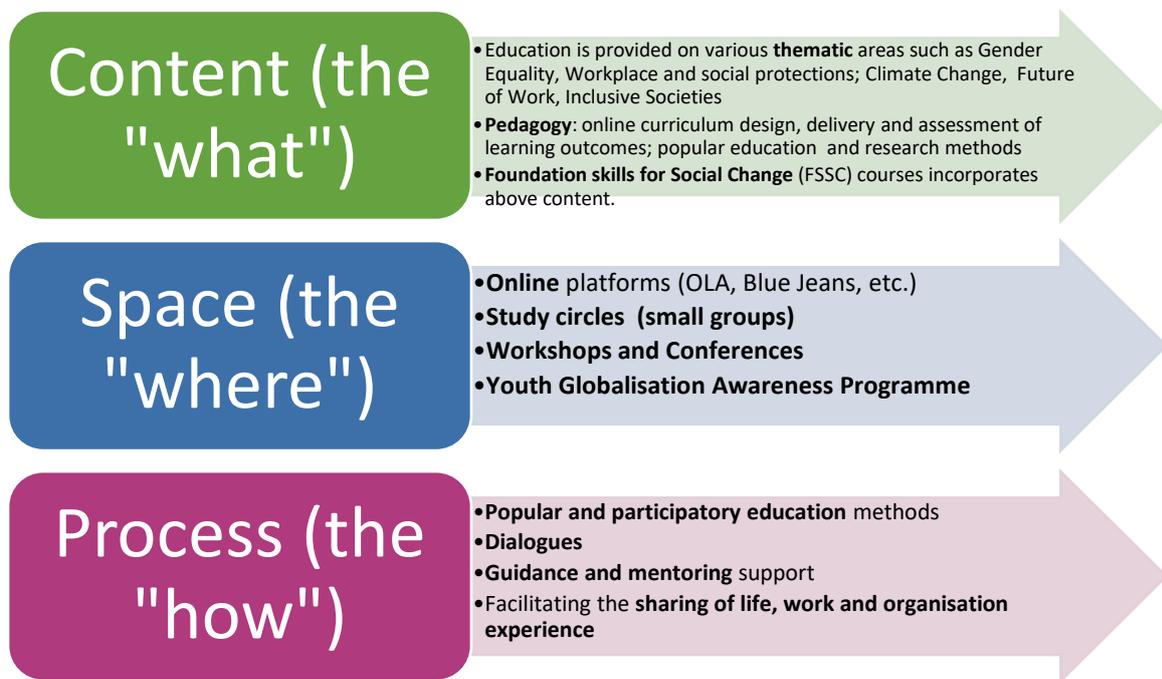
- Consciousness : as an education organisation it is crucial to measure changes in awareness, capacity and confidence as the first steps in the change process;
- education practice: improvement and optimum utilization of digital and online facilities;
- action taken : at the individual level; at the associational in relation to how affiliates relate and interact with each other, and also in relation to organising;
- and ultimately their contribution to policy reform and implementation.

## The changes we wish to influence



## Our theory of action

IFWEA works with its affiliates (comprised of worker education associations, NGOs and Member Based Organisations). These actors then educate and influence leaders within trade unions and member based worker organisations. Thus, IFWEAs role is to support the change maker or “actor”. The approach taken by IFWEA to bring about the envisaged changes is summarised in the diagram below.



## Our approach

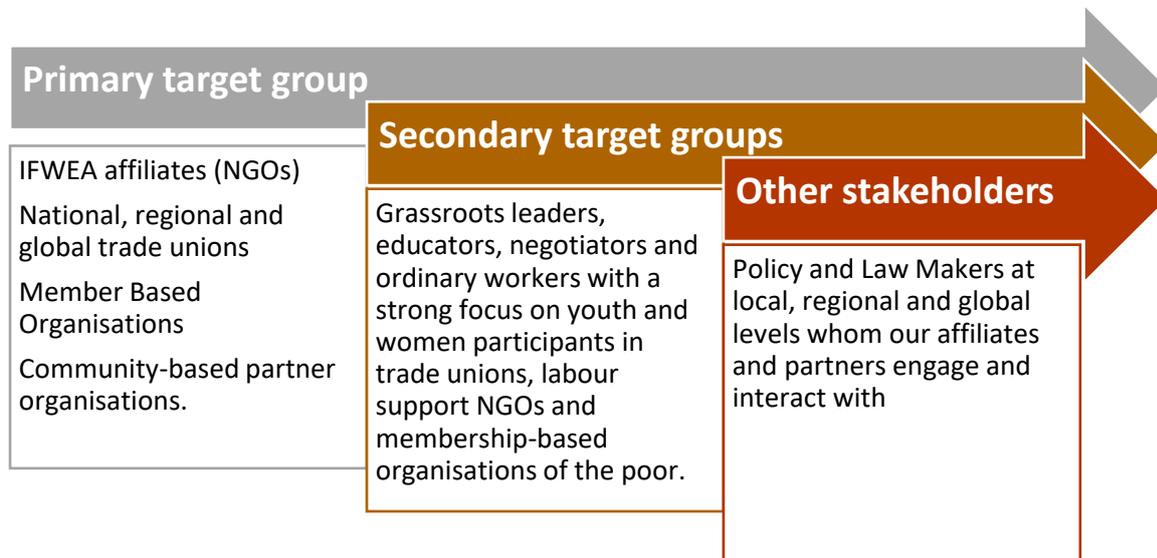
Online education reduces the power dynamics between different groups as it protects the identity and perceived status of individuals. The relative autonomy and anonymity that comes with online platforms promotes better participation. Online platforms also open up opportunities to mobilise globally, in a cost-efficient way. Although it can be argued that online education does not build group identity, the form and process used by IFWEA helps create a space of shared values, interests, ownership and experience, and this helps build connections between people and networks.

The use of **small groups (study circles)** allows for learning and sharing within an intimate space, and helps to build a group identity. **Workshops, courses and conferences** allow for peer groups of educators and organisers to develop, review and share strategies and resources.

The key assumptions underlying this approach is that there is an **identified need or perceived gap** in the education of constituencies and thus a willingness, on their part, to engage in the education offerings. This is mitigated by the trusted relationships built over years, between IFWEA affiliates and their partner/member organisations.

## Who we will work with to influence change in 2020 – 2024

The intention is work with grassroots leaders in national labour organisations, and second and first tier leadership in regional and global labour organisations and networks to build a bridge between these levels. Thus, our target groups include both these levels. Objective 1 and 2 are focussed more on the grassroots level, while 3 focusses on improving presence at a regional/global level.



### Timeline:

Year 2020 is to create the space for IFWEA organisations to lay the basis for dialogue and collaborative actions with their strategic trade union partners to share knowledge; dialogue on lessons thus far; and improve collaboration across borders between IFWEA affiliates, global trade unions, and their networks, in order to organise and educate for current challenges.

Year 2021 is to network towards building alliances which raise awareness for global solidarity.

Year 2022 is to then prepare for dialogues with key stakeholders.

Year 2023 is to implement dialogue and build collaboration.

Year 2024 is to consolidate and review.

### Range of activities over the period 2020 – 2024.

IFWEA will develop education opportunities for national, regional and grassroots union leaders, negotiators and educators, to share their experiences in developing alternative solutions and strategies for organising, alliance building, collective bargaining and social dialogue. We will build a consciousness that overcomes divisions, builds solidarity and is inclusive of vulnerable workers in the economy.

IFWEA will support the building of a global knowledge network of educators and activists in the labour movement to develop popular education for raising awareness and involving leaders and grassroots members of trade unions in campaigns for stronger political protections including

programmes and legislation to counter workplace violence against migrant workers and informal traders.

IFWEA will continue its Youth Globalisation Awareness Programme (YGAP) which promotes youth leadership in our affiliates and their partner organisations of labour. YGAP develops participants' understanding of the essential skills required to build global solidarity based on shared progressive values. Themes for discussion will include economic justice and social protection for vulnerable sectors of the working population; the effects of climate change on the poor; effective popular methods for countering work related violence and political extremism.

IFWEA will develop online resources and popular education that builds and supports women friendly trade unions and develops women's leadership, through a global network of gender educators and activists working towards women becoming initiators of development in their organisations and communities in which they live and rise up in the ranks of their organisations. Online learning is more conducive to women learners, as it allows for flexible time arrangements and less travel, and can facilitate the sharing of strategies for dialogue, coalition and alliance building.

IFWEA will develop online workers' education curricula, materials and methodologies. IFWEA has made strides in training educators from selected affiliates to use our online education and communication platforms to design and conduct education approaches for grassroots leaders in their contexts. The next phase is to develop a network of online trade union and membership based NGO educators who becomes self-reliant for their further learning and can cooperate to make online workers' education more accessible and relevant and mindful of their constituency's needs, challenges and potential.

### **Our Strategic Objectives**

#### **Strategic Objective 1: Advancing trade union policies on protections, regulations and livelihoods in the informal economy.**

##### **Overview of the strategic objective:**

IFWEA seeks to improve the ability of their affiliates and grassroots leaders to engage decision makers and inform policy and regulation. We focus on preparing affiliates to engage in these spaces in a way that raises the voice of vulnerable workers but also builds trusted relationships and improved cooperation with decision makers. This is a key contributor to ensuring sustainable policy change.

We will enable this through: developing content and education related to issues affecting vulnerable workers such as: equity and inclusion, work-based violence, leadership, climate change, future of work, collective bargaining and organising strategies.

We will work with our affiliates and their partner unions towards the ratification of convention 190 – to get this ratified in various countries.

##### **Behavioural indicators we are working towards in Strategic Objective One:**

###### Decision Makers:

- Young parliamentarians promote inclusive dialogue with leaders of worker and community organisations to combat xenophobia and hate speech and protect the rights of migrants and refugees.
- Young parliamentarians promote inclusive dialogue with leaders of worker and community organisations to increase the visibility of the effects of climate change on the poor.

- Young parliamentarians promote inclusive dialogue with leaders of worker and community organisations to advocate for the ratification of ILO convention 190, Violence and Harassment at work.

Actors in co-operation:

- Trade Unions establish alliances with civil society organisations to promote the rights of precarious and informal workers.
- Trade unions and NGOS build regional and global alliances on common issues.
- Grassroots Trade union and NGO leaders apply innovative organisational strategies to include unorganised workers in vulnerable occupations.

Rights holders:

- Workers in trade unions and membership based organisations are willing and able to defend democratic freedoms of migrant workers.

**Outcomes for this strategic objective (the changes we wish to see):**

**Outcome 1.1 IFWEA affiliates and their partner trade unions pioneer dialogue and collaboration on effective organising, collective bargaining and representation of vulnerable workers in informal forms of work.**

**Key outputs for the 2020 outcomes above:**

- **Output 1.1.1.** Support dialogue between trade unions, other stakeholders and Parliamentarians in 8 countries (across the 4 regions: Africa, Americas and Asia and Europe) hosted by IFWEA partner organisations that builds trusted relationships, raises the voice of vulnerable workers and improves collaboration. (240 participants in each local dialogue including: parliamentarians, leaders of trade unions and organisations of vulnerable workers and grassroots leaders).
- **Output 1.1.2.** Support IFWEA Affiliates to conduct participatory research and education with their strategic partners for national ratification of ILC Convention 190 (2020 – 2021)

**Outcome 1.2 Improved articulation and organisation of worker organisations for regulations and protections of vulnerable workers.**

- **Output 1.2.1.** Support grassroots leaders to create a popular and united voice on the relevance of C190 In their countries
- **Output 1.2.2.** Support IFWEA affiliates to produce media and research and to build alliances through national dialogues for the ratification of Convention 190 and the introduction of protections that reduce violence and harassment of vulnerable workers [3 affiliates annually]

**Outcome 1.3 Young Leaders of TU, political organisations, MBOs and NGOS are willing and able to defend democratic freedoms.**

- **Output 1.3.1.** Host an annual YGAP international course of young leaders selected by IFWEA affiliates and their trade unions and political partners and conduct education sessions to

build awareness and improve skills for international solidarity, collaboration, alliance building and social dialogue. Target 25 participants from political parties, trade unions and organisations of vulnerable workers. Theme for 2020: Collective Bargaining Strategies for Vulnerable Workers.

- **Output 1.3.2.** Produce online publications, audio visual materials, gamification, research and education after consultations with IFWEA affiliates and their TU and MBO partners to improve collective bargaining rights and strategies, respond to climate change, build women leadership, campaign for gender equity and resist authoritarian populism.

## **OBJECTIVE 2: Developing methodologies and tools for workers' education and social communication in the globalised era of digitalisation.**

### **Overview of the strategic objective:**

In this objective IFWEA focusses on developing and promoting worker education tools and methods that can build the confidence and capacity of educators and grassroots trade union leaders to better represent and organise workers at a grassroots level.

The tools and methods focus on improving participation and build on the principles of adult-based learning. Using these methods will increase awareness, and proactive participation in effecting social, economic and political change.

We build these skills through: Foundation Skills for Social Change (FSSC) courses, Study circles for social change, Youth globalisation awareness programme (YGAP), using IFWEA's Online Labour Academy (OLA) and popular education methods and tools (e.g. song, dance, drama, art).

### **Behavioural indicators we are working towards in Strategic Objective Two:**

#### Actors in co-operation:

- NGO and their Trade Union allies create national and regional platforms of education, self-help and organisation for protection and support of vulnerable workers in informal forms of work.
- NGO and their Trade Union allies create access to an online hub of materials, methodologies, and skills for leadership education on the future of work and labour rights.

#### Rights holders:

- Grassroots trade union leaders have both access to and ability to utilise online resources to build regional and global alliances for regulation and protections of informal workers.
- Women workers in trade unions and membership based organisations are able to articulate the content of ILO convention 190: Violence and Harassment at work.

### **Outcomes for this strategic objective (the changes we wish to see):**

**Outcome 2.1 Targeted grassroots leaders' unions are aware of and have confidence in their agency in building inclusive trade unions.**

### **Key outputs for 2020 for outcome above:**

- **Output 2.1.1.** Conduct the Online Foundation Skills for Social Change Course on Women's Leadership with IFWEA affiliates and partners involving 30 participants who are grassroots leaders from trade union, organisations of informal economy or their NGO and political allies.
- **Output 2.1.2.** Support 3 local study circles of women leaders in 3 countries (10 participants per study circle = 30 participants - who will participate in the Women's Leadership Course and share their experiences of activating women and building women's leadership in their organisations.)
- **Output 2.1.3.** Support 3 affiliates to produce popular materials and media that promotes women's leadership in local organisations.

**Outcome 2.2 Targeted Grassroots leaders capacity is strengthened with regards to action oriented, political engagement for citizen rights and inclusion.**

**Key outputs for 2020 for outcome above:**

- **Output 2.2.1.** Expand utilization of OLA for online study circles for leaders of associations of vulnerable workers (in 2020 will draft a "Online Study Circle Guide" that can be used by online study circles from 2021 onwards)
- **Output 2.2.2.** Build capacity of affiliates to design popular education for grassroots through collaboration with each other. In 2020 we will consult organisations and build partnerships between them to design and run online courses.
- **Output 2.2.3.** Enable study circle facilitators to share their experiences of education methodology and curricula development online [10 participants in each webinar share their experiences and lessons].
- **Output 2.2.4.** Improve utilization and efficacy of OLA for IFWEA educators and update and run the "How to Design an online course" with affiliates and partner organisations online, and offer continuous support in designing their own courses in 2020. Consult and recruit towards improving two "How To" Courses in 2021, viz, (1) How to Participate in Online Education (2) How to Facilitate an Online course.

**Outcome 2.3 IFWEA is stronger organizationally through improving collaboration between affiliate organisations and their strategic partners.**

**Key outputs for 2020 for outcome above:**

- **Output 2.3.1.** Strengthening the support relation between the secretariat and affiliates to improve collaboration, reach and quality of affiliate education contributions. In 2020 we will visit LEARN (Philippines); FSPMI (Indonesia) and if possible CLASS in Nepal where we will engage leaders and also train 20 educators to design and implement Online courses in home languages).
- **Output 2.3.2.** Increased allocation of resources for expanded and more representative executive committee.
- **Output 2.3.3.** Executive committee and secretariat assists affiliates observe and promote good governance, transparency and ethical practices.

- **Output 2.3.4.** Explore the potential for liaison with SOLIDAR to bring the experiences of grassroots worker leaders to progressive forces in Europe; and to initiate expansion of European liaison between worker education associations.
- **Output 2.3.5.** Secretariat and affiliates share innovative education, topics and approaches towards regional and global cooperation through online audio-visual communication and webinars.
- **Output 2.3.6** Online communication of IFWEA program activities and affiliate activities is shared within the global knowledge community through 4 E-bulletins annually, regular Facebook posts and maintaining and updating the website and YouTube channel.

**Objective 3: Improving IFWEA’s global voice, presence and work with global organisations, such as the GUFs, ITUC, UNESCO, ILO, and other regional and global networks.**

**Overview of the strategic objective:**

As the only international federation of worker educators, IFWEA needs to play a role at a regional and global level. IFWEA will put more resources into consolidating de-facto partnerships between regional and local education organisations with their partners, and raising the profile of this at a global level. To increase IFWEA’s reach and effectiveness, and build organisation, we will work with affiliates to raise the challenges faced by grassroots union members and leaders locally, on a regional and global level. It is acknowledged that meaningful participating in these spaces will take time and effort.

**Behavioural indicators we are working towards in Strategic Objective Three:**

Actors in co-operation:

- Young NGO educators, Trade Union and Political leaders develop a common value base and platform for progressive democratic politics, social justice and global citizenship.
- Labour education NGOs, Trade Union and Political leaders create a global learning network for building inclusive and climate aware organisations and societies.

**Outcomes for this strategic objective (the changes we wish to see):**

**Outcome 3.1 Stronger IFWEA presence in UNESCO, ITUC, ILO targeted activities and events**

**Key outputs for 2020 for outcome above:**

- **Output 3.1.1.** Explore IFWEA Collaboration with regional & global trade union education events. In 2020 will open dialogue on collaboration by focussing on the ILC through contributing to the Nordic Geneva School; on exploring IFWEA support for the ITUC Women's Leadership Programme; and on improving support for UNI Africa’s trade union retail alliances.
- **Output 3.1.2.** Explore collaboration with partners in the UNESCO Knowledge for Change (K4C) group to expand participants in the education for empowerment database, which measures the impact of collective learning on individual and organisational behaviour for social change.

**Outcome: 3.2 Improved communication and cooperation between regional & global union networks, and labour education organisations in Africa, America's, Asia & Europe**

**Key outputs for 2020 for outcome above:**

- **Output 3.2.1** Open dialogue on proposals for collaboration with ILO, SATUCC and STREETNET Africa on developing trade union education countering xenophobia.
- **Output 3.2.2** Engage with selected GUFs in Africa for a proposal for a young trade union negotiators education programme modelled on YGAP (GUF YGAP) to submit to an agreed donor.
- **Output 3.2.3.** Participate in selected regional and global events relevant for promoting IFWEA; consolidating partnerships and/or building new partnerships (in 2020 will participate in the Industri-ALL Global Conference in Cape Town).

**Organisational approach over the period 2020 – 2024.**

IFWEA affiliates will pioneer education, dialogue and collaboration on effective organising, collective bargaining and representation of vulnerable workers in informal forms of work.

IFWEA affiliates will contribute to developing young leaders in worker organisations who have an awareness of the need for collaborative (local, regional, national and global) partnerships and alliances to effect social change.

IFWEA affiliates will target women leaders in unions to empower their awareness, confidence and agency in building inclusive trade unions.

IFWEA will facilitate communication and co-operation between regional and global union networks and labour education organisations in Europe, Africa south of the Sahara, MENA, the Americas and Asia.

IFWEA affiliates will target grassroots worker leaders and strengthen their capacity towards action-oriented, political engagement for citizen rights and inclusion.

IFWEA affiliates will collaborate to strengthen IFWEA organizationally, build and share resources.

**Our methods and ethos**

IFWEA will promote online and face to face popular education methods that can be used to raise the voices of precarious workers and to counter the growing support of and adherence to populist and authoritarian tendencies within the labour movement. Through utilizing grassroots authenticity and popular appeal, it is possible to achieve respect and understanding for the needs of the most vulnerable sectors of society. Collaborative effort provides motivation and builds capacity of trade unions, NGOs and social organisations to work together, laying the foundation towards dialogue and strategic alliances.

IFWEA will maintaining transparent, open and participative governance and improve communication and cooperation with labour education organisations (both existing and potential affiliates) in Africa, America, Europe and Asia.

IFWEA will expand the number of Executive Committee members and increase the allocation of resources for recruitment and networking and collaboration in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

IFWEA will ensure that all our programmes and activities are conducted in a manner that is cognisant of gender power relations and also evaluated on this basis so as to continuously improve our ability to be inclusive and raise the profile of women and instil gender equity within organisations that make up the broader workers' movement.

All education activities of IFWEA explicitly promote our values of equality and justice; the need for dialogue and inclusive participation, which mitigates against violence and promotes non-violent methods to resolve socio, economic and political differences and divisions.

Corruption is counter to our objectives and is a big risk when working with grassroots activists due to ignorance of transparent and accountable methods as well as because of the desperate conditions faced by members of the organisations. For this reason the Executive Committee and Secretariat have in place procedures for accountability that are transparent and easy to monitor ensuring that there is no room for corruption.

IFWEA operates like a global network, but has membership control, as it is a federation. The structured relationship between the IFWEA Executive Committee, Secretariat and affiliates allows for the successful delivery of activities, and facilitates communication and co-operation. All IFWEA affiliates share a common aim to promote and advance education within a democratic labour movement. This facilitates the strengthening of relationships between the participating IFWEA organisations and one step downstream, the development of further relationships trust and alliance between the IFWEA affiliates and their trade union target groups.

The IFWEA General Conference recognised the advances made in 2015 – 2019 towards the creation of a Global Knowledge Community to support the development of the labour movement facing challenges of flexibility, the growth of vulnerable employment and living conditions and the need for solidarity, coordination and cooperation between organisations at a local, regional and global level. The General Conference reaffirmed IFWEA's strategy to continue developing our Global Knowledge Community. We recognise and acknowledge an additional challenge facing us, namely, to extend our Knowledge Community by incorporating the Global Unions and their global and regional networks.

**Written by Sahra Ryklief<sup>1</sup>**

**Presented to and adopted by the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Conference of the IFWEA.**

**Cape Town, South Africa 2 – 4 December 2019**

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<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge with thanks the efforts of Wilma Wessels-Ziervogel of Southern Hemisphere consultants for assisting us in our strategic and operational review and planning processes.