

GENDER and TRADE UNIONS

A research report [preliminary] by Global Labour University alumni

GENDER & TUs RESEARCH GROUP

Australia	Karen Douglas
Brazil	Jo Portilho
Canada	Patricia Chong
Ghana	Akua O Britwum
South Korea	Kim Mijeoung
Nigeria	Joel Odigie
Philippines	Ramon Certeza, Melisa Serrano
South Africa	Janet Munakamwe
Turkey	Gaye Yilmaz
UK	Sue Ledwith
Zimbabwe	Crispen Chinguno

Coordinated by Patricia Chong and Sue Ledwith

A Global Labour University Alumni initiative.

**REPORT compiled by
Sue Ledwith**

SLEDWITH@RUSKIN.AC.UK

Ruskin College, Oxford, UK

Sept 2010/

summary report March 2011.

***THIS IS A SUMMARY OF THE FULL REPORT, WHICH IS TO BE
EXTENDED AND FINALISED in 2011.***

INTRODUCTION

In September 2009 alumni from the Global Labour University set up a group to research the gender issues and the role and status of women in trade unions internationally.

The participants were women and men from trade unions in 12 countries who agreed to work together on a programme of 3 interrelated projects, together with the academic coordinator, Sue Ledwith of Ruskin College, Oxford UK.

The three research projects are closely interrelated and are:

1. Trade union structures & policies for gender and equality
2. Women and TU leadership.
3. Gender agendas for bargaining (BAG)

The main findings on each are summarised in this summary report.

Our aims were

1. To make gender and diversity issues more visible within our own unions and the wider international labour movement.
2. To provide examples of creative, innovative and good practice across labour movements
3. Development of alumni skills/knowledge /empowerment, and opportunities to develop strategies collectively
4. To develop an enduring network

This is the first report which draws on the work submitted by the research group members across all three projects. It compares and contrasts the situation in the countries in the research, identifying key themes which emerge from the reports, locating them within a wider analysis of labour market structuring and varieties of patriarchal, racialised and diverse cultural frameworks.

Statistical data and country reports were produced variously from colleagues about Australia, Brazil, Canada, Ghana, South Korea, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa, Turkey, UK and Zimbabwe.

Here we summarise the reporting on

- 1. Women's Position in Labour Markets**
- 2. Women and Trade Unions**
- 3. The Bargaining Agenda for Gender - BAG**

1. WOMEN'S POSITION IN LABOUR MARKETS

1.1. The overall picture.

As globalisation fragments work and workforces, women's labour force participation rates continue to increase, and in most of the countries in our study, have reached 50% of the workforce, with high proportions of women working, predominantly in informal sectors and precarious work. Often women are not replacing male workers; both are increasingly competing pushing down already meagre earnings. In addition the negative fallout from earlier Structural Adjustment Programmes [SAPs] continues to adversely affect the labour force.

These factors make forms of collective solidarity among and between women and men increasingly urgent. Here we summarise labour market gender issues in the countries in our study and the implications for organised labour.

Generally, male labour force participation rates tend to be around 75 - 90% and are more uniform, whereas women's rates vary with *women's life cycle* in relation to their family situation. Women's labour market participation increases gradually and reaches its peak around ages 25 to 29. After marriage, women's labour market participation between the decreases much of which is due to child delivery and child rearing. For men, participation is more straightforward and is not normally affected by family building and rearing.

Conflicting contractual and sectoral situations mean that many women are excluded from employment rights or cannot afford them. In all sectors, the lack of **trade union** protection is intensified through patriarchal attitudes and excluding behaviour by traditional [overwhelmingly male] trade unionists, which in turn reflects societal cultural attitudes and behaviour. This is in spite of extensive constitutional and rule book measures to improve the representation and role of women in trade unions, and considerable work by women trade unionists themselves. In several countries, the women's desk in the peak union body does considerable work with the informal sector.

1.2 Formal sector work

In the formal sector, in all countries there is gender segregation. Women dominate a narrow range of occupations and sectors in 'caring', and 'servicing' work and work which mimics the sort of skills women are expected to bring to the labour market from their domestic role - education, health and social work, hospitality/hotels, restaurants, retail [shop workers]. Thus women dominate in service sectors and in public sectors in all countries. The trend is for low pay for what is deemed 'un, and semi' skilled work in feminised sectors – and where men work in such sectors, their pay is correspondingly depressed¹. Nevertheless, public sector workers are still paid more than their private sector counterparts, even in feminised jobs.

1.3. Informal Sectors and Precarious work

Overwhelmingly women work in informal sectors in all developing, emergent economies and in developed countries. Increasingly they have been forced into such work as a result of globalisation, combined with the progressively weakened position of trade unions.

¹ These are all highly skilled in practice, but are given a low value by patriarchal societies. An important women's project generally is to get such work re-valued to reflect the skill levels, and to ensure commensurate pay. In Europe, the concept of equal pay for work of equal value is well embedded although achieving that aim remains elusive.

Here we use the terminology of precarious work and informal sectors together, and sometimes interchangeably as they are so intimately interrelated. For example precarious work occurs in both formal and informal sectors. In some countries domestic/household work is part of both

As already indicated, women make up the majority of **precarious** workers, and this has led to the growth of precarious employment being referred to as the "feminization of work." [Fudge and Owens 2006:11]. Fudge and Owens discuss how different types of precarious work in different countries may each offer their own challenges but they all share the same disadvantages: low wages, few benefits, lack of collective representation, and little to no job security. Precarious work is seen as a global challenge that has a wide range of consequences [Kalleberg,2009].

Leah Vosko [2002, 2006, 2009] has observed and critically commented on how changes in the nature of work in developing and developed countries have led the ILO to develop standards for atypical and precarious employment. In 1994 it produced the Convention Concerning Part-time Work, 1996 the Convention Concerning Home Work in 1996, and Decent Work in 1999 in attempts to improve the conditions of all people- waged, unwaged, those in the formal and informal market, by enlarging labor and social protections. In 2010 the ILO has started negotiations for a Convention on Labour Rights for Domestic Workers².

The IUF [International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations] lists precarious employment arrangements as

- Outsourcing, contracting–out or subcontracting
- Casualisation, contractuatisation, contingent or fixed-term contracts, leading to the creation of a large pool of *permanently* 'temporary' employees
- Use of labour agencies
- 'self employment' and independent contractors

1.4. The Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is also habitual³. The international gender pay gap remains at an overall average of 16%⁴, with the finding that collective bargaining delivers a better outcome for women. [ITUC 2008].

and women's skills

The conceptualisation of 'women's' skills – see above – as being of less value than men's has been addressed in the European Union by the concept of *equal pay for work of equal value*. This has enabled cases to be taken to law, in the **UK** for example, where women have successfully compared their work as of equal value to men's. Examples include female hospital cleaners with male hospital porters, and a female cook in a big shipyard compared with men working as painters, joiners and thermal insulation engineers⁵.

² And see GURN discussion paper "Winning Fair Labour Standards for Domestic Workers" by Claire Hobden

³ In the UK, trade unions have run an annual campaign to draw attention to the 17-18% gender pay gap. No Pay Day falls at the end of October on the basis that at that point, assuming that women and men are working full time for the same pay, the rest of the year women are working for nothing.

⁴ Across 63 countries: 30 European and 33 from the 'rest of the world'. The informal economy is excluded.

⁵ Hayward v Cammell Laird 1984. and see WWW.UNIONHISTORY.INFO/EQUALPAY

This has also led to collective agreements in the **UK** public sector whereby job evaluation schemes have to measure the significant features of all jobs, women's as well as men's. These now commonly include headings or factors to measure manual dexterity; interpersonal skills; organisational skills; responsibilities for clients, customers, patients or members of the public; emotional demands.

Nevertheless, when it comes to overall earnings; take home pay, women are still always the losers.

1.5. Class, race, women, education, religion and intersections with patriarchy

Diversity among women in the labour force and trade unions encompass class, race and caste especially, and in analysis it is necessary to identify these differences and take the intersections into account.

Education of women is an important part of our study, and intersects especially with **class**, leading to occupational differences and in some cases, to upward mobility.

SUMMARY

It is not difficult to see from this overview, that on the one hand women have a generally high participation rate in labour markets, in work. However they mainly work in precarious work and informal sectors. As workers in these are often excluded from state rights and legal protections, they are most in need of collective solidarity. Yet it is in just these sectors that trade unionism is weak or non-existent.

2. WOMEN and TRADE UNIONS

2.1. Overview

In all countries with reported data, women are increasingly moving into work and into trade union membership, and in western developed countries, even when overall unemployment increases, women's work, increasingly being shifted to part time work, tends to hold up, along with their union membership. However, published data on trade unionism, as with that about labour markets, concentrates overwhelmingly on those within formal sectors. Within these, membership is generally much more robust in public sectors, and this is largely due to women, who dominate work in these sectors. Women's position in labour markets is reflected in their unions, for example where women work mainly part time they are less likely to be union members.

Overall union density among women and men can be summarised in Table 1 below. Clearly the gender differences are varied, as is overall density. The data reflects country cultures and attitudes towards organised labour, and the levels of formal/informal labour market participation already discussed.

Table 1. Trade Union density among women and men.

Country	Women	Men	Total union density
Australia	46%	53%	19% (2008)
Canada	30.8%	28.2%	29.5% (2008)
South Korea	7.5%	15.6%	12.2% (2009)
Philippines	34.7%	65.3%	11% (2007)
UK	29.5%	25.2%	27.4%
Zimbabwe	21.9%	78%	

2.2. Women and Equality Structures in TUs – including leadership positions

Table 2. below shows where women are situated in the structures in trade unions in 5 of our countries – four are peak union confederations and three are specific unions.

Members % women	BRAZIL CONTRA/CUT National	BRAZIL Bank workers union confed. CONTRA F/ CUT Rio de Janeiro	CANADA CUPE ⁶ [2007] Canadian Union of Public Employees	KORE A Confed. of Trade Unions [KCTU]	ZIMBABWE Congress of TUs ZCTU	Zimbabwe Teachers Union ZIMTA	GHANA Ghana Trades Union Congress GTUC
Members Women % women	25% W 75% M	16,069 8,544 53%	548 67%	703,598 191,912	242,857 20% approx	43,055 22,550 52%	350,000 30%

⁶ The largest union in Canada.

				27%			
Nos Women % women							
National Executive	3 15%	0 [2 men]	3w 13%	5 10%	2 33%	2 33%	
National Council	10 21%	1 25%		50 28%	7 17%	7 27%	75 33.3%
National Conference		11 29%		292 28%		37 27%	
Conference delegation	97 30%	36% 11	51%			37 27%	
Officers							
President	M	M		M	M	W	M
Vice pres.	M	M		2M 2W	1M 2W	W	M
Treasurer	M	W		3M 3W	M	M	
General Secretary	M	M		M	M	M	M
Assistant Sec	-	M		M	M	M	M
Lead organiser	M	M		14M 4W [22%]	M	M [CEO]	
Education	M	M		2M [50%] 2W	W		
Provincial Reps			1W			8M 1W	
Locals/branches			68% with majority female members 48% with woman president				
Other officers	M=3 W=2	M=6 W=3		15 [32%]	10M 3W [30%]	7M 2 [1 AIDS coordinator]	
Union staff					247 49%	15 27%	

Table 3. shows that **Equality Structures** for women are in place in all the unions, with three confederations having a dedicated women's officer and others having these responsibilities as well as other roles. There are national women's committees in five cases, although in the ZCTU this is termed 'advisory' as is the national women's conference.

7 Women employed by ZCTU are mainly support staff. Of 11 heads of departments 7 are men and 4 women.

Table 3. Equality Structures in unions

Equality structures	BRAZIL CONTRA/CUT National	BRAZIL Bank workers union confed. CONTRA F/CUT Rio de Janeiro	CANADA CUPE⁸ [2007] Canadian Union of Public Employees	KOREA Confed. of Trade Unions [KCTU]	ZIMBABWE Congress of TUs ZCTU	Zimbabwe Teachers Union ZIMTA	GHANA Ghana Trades Union Congress GTUC
National women's officer	N	N		Y	Y	Y	Y
Women's issues + other duties	Y	Y		Y			
National Women's Cttee			Y	Y	Y [advisory]	Y	Y
National equality cttee		2 reps					
National Women's Conference					Y [advisory]	Y	Y
Targets for women's representation				Y	Y [on NEC] On workplace bargaining teams	Y [NEC] + 30% women in all positions by end 2010	30% All union events Special seats 2nd Vice chair
Regional/local women's committees				Y (but not every branch). Some regional women's committees	Y [advisory]		Y
Union collect other data	Y	Y		Y	N	Y	N
Race	Y						
Disability				Y		Y	
Sexuality							
Age							
Other equality structures				Y			Y
Race							Informal economy workers, pensioners
Disability							
Sexuality							

⁸ The largest union in Canada.

Age Precarious workers				Y			
Effectiveness of structures for women	E ⁹	NE		E ¹⁰	NE ¹¹	NE ¹²	NE

Despite these measures, as can be seen from the final cell in the Table, in only two cases were these structures seen to be effective.

We had more detailed data from three countries, Korea, Philippines and Ghana, including information about barriers and successes. These all show that affirmative action is important in supporting and increasing women's representation. Measures such as gender quotas and special seats impact directly by making space for women to take up their rightful place in leadership roles. On their own these are not sufficient. Supporting systems and structures that enable women's development, networking and building of solidarity are also essential to both encourage women and give them confidence and skills to counteract the weight of the barriers they experience. These are also shown in Table 4, and can be seen as three interlocking aspects;

- First, patriarchy that oversees male hostility and resistance of which sexual harassment is a significant tool.
- Secondly these undermine women's confidence, especially when there are no support systems and
- Thirdly what is sometimes seen as the 'burden' of women's domestic responsibilities.

These findings reinforce others from research with and experience of women trade unionists worldwide¹³.

Table 4. Barriers and Successes for women in their unions

	KOREA KCTU	PHILIPPINES CLASS	GHANA GTUC
BARRIERS	Patriarchal culture	Time	Male hostility and resistance Sexual harassment
	Men unwilling to share power	Women's responsibilities re household work	Women's domestic burden
	No systems or course for women in TUs		Apathy and women's sense of union utility and function Distance between women and their unions
	No support systems for women as carers in Korea		
SUCCESSSES	TU gender quota system	Assuring women's representation	Gender quotas and special seats
	Monitoring & review thro		Gender desk

⁹ First national confederation to include specific clause about EO in the collective agreement.

¹⁰ Each federation of industrial unions has a women's committee.

¹¹ The structures are moribund and cannot challenge the male hegemony in the union. Most do not function nationally – no meetings are held.

¹² Women's structures have no budget.

¹³ These issues are also discussed in an international overview by Sue Ledwith: *The Future as Female? Gender, Diversity and Global Labour Solidarity*, in Phelan, C. [ed] [2009] *The Future of Organised Labour*. Peter Lang.

	general council meeting → approved resolution to set up women's committees in every affiliate, and ensure women on every education/training programme		Gender policy Women's committees
Other TU initiatives			
Unsuccessful	Temporary tents for childcare at rallies. Women not comfortable to leave children.	Women/gender proposals in local union affiliates not yet included in CL Bg agreements	Holding union meetings during work hours
Successful		Women involved in planning and implementing union programme and activities	Childcare support for women attending union events

3. BAG – BARGAINING AGENDA FOR GENDER

3.1. Introduction

In this section of the report, we are concerned almost entirely with workers in formal sectors since those in informal sectors and often those in precarious work, are outside the framework of legal rights and protections - including collective bargaining. Even in the best organised situations, the labour movement is today painfully aware of the insufficiency of legislation and is now witnessing attacks on remaining union strongholds in public sectors, and the collective bargaining process itself.

As we have seen already, women work mainly in public sectors, 'caring', and 'servicing' in what are known as the 5Cs – childcare, catering, cleaning, cashiering, clerical. This is work which mimics the sort of skills and experience that women are expected to bring to the labour market from their domestic role - education, health and social work, hospitality/hotels, restaurants, retail [shop workers], sewing. Much of this work is also in the public sector in the various countries in our study. However especially since the financial crises since 2007-8-9, public sector cuts impact especially harshly on women. Not only in terms of jobs, but also as the main users of services, not only their own, but their families, and especially health.

First, women lose access to 'good' jobs that are found in the public sector. Second, those who remain are often faced with an increased workload and thus have a diminished job satisfaction and quality.¹⁴ Third, the social productive needs that are no longer met by the state (i.e. having been privatized) are downloaded to the family and are (re)privatized. This work is then typically done by women for 'free' through "volunteerism." Thus, just as the demands made on the family are increasing, their ability to meet those needs is under attack.

Part time work is also common among women, and women frequently have two or more part time jobs, all low paid, and with little security.

It is also well known that there is a pay premium for trade unionists who work under collective agreements compared to those who do not.

There is much evidence that collective bargaining has been slow to respond to women's issues, and indeed in some countries the legislative framework has been ahead of trade unions this – especially in the EU which has a strong framework of equal rights. Even so without vigilant and committed unions it is all too easy for employers to avoid their obligations. And without committed women in unions and especially in lead positions in bargaining teams, labour movements are not inclined to put the bargaining agenda for gender high on their priority lists.

The purpose of this section of the research therefore was to establish what sort of collective bargaining agendas were pursued by trade unions in our study, who was doing the bargaining, and what the outcomes were.

Here we report on 3 case studies – Canada, Philippines, Turkey.

¹⁴ "Neoliberalism and Neoconservatism" entry in *Encyclopedia of Feminist Theories* (London: Routledge, 2000), 364.

3.2. CANADA

Research was carried out with **CUPE**, Canadian Union of Public Employees - the largest union in Canada.

At its National Convention in 2005 the union set up The National Women's Task Force (NWTF). This consisted of 16 members who spent two years in discussion with over 7,000 CUPE members via surveys and face-to-face consultations about the "status of women in our workplaces, society and within the union." Out of this process came the *Strengthening Our Union: Final Report of CUPE's National Women's Task Force* presented at the 2007 CUPE National Convention.¹⁵ In this report, the NWTF made 54 recommendations that fall under the following six categories:

1. **Bargaining to support women**
2. Applying equality throughout the union
3. Education and training for women
4. Leadership development for women
5. More effective union meetings and ways to involve members
6. Creating a more representative union structure

One of the outcomes was that CUPE held a National Bargaining Women's Equality Conference in Montreal, Quebec in February 2009 with the twin goals of building "bargaining strength to advance women's equality" and setting "achievable goals on bargaining issues for women."¹⁶ The report, "Recipes for Setting the Table: Getting What You Want in Bargaining" highlighted five areas considered "critical for women's equality"¹⁷:

1. Minimum living wage for all members and improved benefits for all
2. members including part-time workers
3. Retention of full-time jobs in the public sector
4. Pension plan membership for all members
5. Improved provisions to provide work/life balance
6. Elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace

As the name of the report suggests, CUPE creatively provides a recipe for achieving equality in these areas by providing an ingredient list of information (e.g. "a bowl of facts"), addressing what should be done on the particular issue at the workplace level and concludes the report with recommendations as to how to build collective strength. A valuable accompanying resource, "Recipes for Setting the Table: Collective Agreement Language" is a collection of actual union contract language collected from various locals on issues affecting women such as "child rearing and pensionable service," "violence in the workplace," "employment equity" and "flexible hours."¹⁸

¹⁵ Available at <http://cupe.ca/nwtf>.

¹⁶ Canadian Union of Public Employees, "Setting the Table : Bargaining Women's Equality Conference" webpage, <http://cupe.ca/bargaining/nbc>

¹⁷ Canadian Union of Public Employees, "Recipes for Setting the Table: Getting What you Want in Bargaining," (National Bargaining Women's Equality Conference, February 2009)

HTTP://CUPE.CA/UPDIR/RECIPES_FOR_SETTING_THE_TABLE.PDF

¹⁸ Canadian Union of Public Employees, Recipes for Setting the Table: Appendix: Collective Agreement Language (National Bargaining Women's Equality Conference, February 2009) <http://cupe.ca/updir/AppendixA-Contractlanguage.pdf>

CUPE has produced a whole series of “Bargaining Equality: A Workplace For All” materials to assist members in addressing equality issues in their workplace that includes the ‘Duty to Accommodate’ (issues of disability), employment equity, harassment and violence issues (very important to groups of women such as Aboriginal and LGBT workers who are more likely to experience this), etc.¹⁹

3.3. PHILIPPINES

In 2009-10 the GLU project team carried out a questionnaire survey and interviews with seven officers of national federations and 12 local union leaders. Of the total 20 respondents, 11 (55%) were male and 9 (45%) were female.

The key findings were that the top three items on women’s list of demands were maternity leave, pay equality and menstrual leave. The downside was that these three priorities were also among the top six items which were most likely to be traded off for other bargaining proposals. Unions tend to focus more on wage increases and other direct economic proposals in the collective agreement. Also, those involved in the negotiation are mostly male and not quite aware of the importance of the gender/women-related proposals.

Employers were highly likely to resist agreeing to provisions that they saw as costs, such as menstrual leave, special leave for women, day care services and facilities, pay equality, breastfeeding facilities and maternity leave beyond what is provided by law. Protection against sexual harassment and to a lesser extent reproductive health and equality of opportunities for training and education, are likely to be less costly and offer opportunities for direct payback. It will also therefore be in management’s interests to resist or at least not encourage, women onto bargaining teams.

Except for reproductive health and protection against sexual harassment, all other gender/women-related proposals in collective bargaining are always traded off by the union for other bargaining proposals.

The findings indicated that women comprise only 20% of bargaining teams, and this was reinforced by the 70% who said that there was no union policy about an allocation of women on bargaining teams. Yet the survey findings also indicated that whether or not women are on bargaining teams, where they are involved in organizing drives, ie are active in the union, there is an increased likelihood that women’s demands are on their union’s bargaining agenda, especially women’s reproductive health. Since this activism is also associated with a high likelihood of there being a women’s committee, it could be said that the more women are involved the more likely there is of this sort of multiplier effect.

In the Philippines, the promotion and protection of women’s rights is quite advanced as a result of several factors, namely: a strong women’s movement, numerous legislations promoting gender equality and rights of women (e.g. law on anti-sexual harassment), and a strong ILO gender and women’s rights program. The Global Gender Gap Report 2009 of the World Economic Forum ranks the Philippines among the top ten (ranking 9th) of 115 countries with the lowest gender gap index. This ranking was however a slide down from 6th in the rank in 2008. There are many unions too that have strong gender equality programs pursued at the workplace. Reproductive health is one of the issues that some unions are pursuing among their national agenda.

¹⁹ <http://cupe.ca/bargeq>

3.4. TURKEY

In Turkey, there is a framework of legal rights which covers protection for pregnant women, maternity leave for female workers, nursing/breastfeeding paid time off, workplaces with over 100 women must have provision for babies, and for older children up to the age of 6. However these are often not up to acceptable standards and it is important for the union to keep vigilant and demand women's rights. In particular, KESK, the only one of the three main confederations which is gender sensitive, and which is also seen as a militant organization, has succeeded in improving on some of these legal rights. For example, it has doubled the time off for nursing for babies up to four months old, and increased the time for infants for the following six months.

An interview-based study of gender in the collective bargaining process was carried out in the health sector, where women predominate.

Female workers in developing countries have entered into labour market very fast and as such are totally deprived of welfare provisions such as breastfeeding rights or reproductive health. For Turkey, only protection against sexual harassment may be related with being Muslim, since firstly Islam defines women as the private property of men, and secondly, the legislative framework includes very little protection against sexual harassment.

All but five of the women reported that there were no women represented on negotiating teams, however there was strong support to change this.

Table 5 below summarises the BAG demands and achievements in the three countries and also which items get traded off or left off the bargaining agenda.

Table 5. BAG demands and achievements in 3 countries.

CANADA CUPE Women's Task Force demands	PHILIPPINES GLU q/aire survey & interviews	TURKEY – GLU interview survey in health sector
		What women have
Minimum living wage for all members and improved benefits for all members including part-time workers	Protection against sexual harassment	Breastfeeding facilities at work
Retention of full-time jobs in the public sector	<i>Maternity leave beyond what is provided by law</i>	
Pension plan membership for all members	<i>Menstrual leave</i>	Parental Leave
Improved provisions to provide work/life balance	Reproductive health	
Elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace	Equality of opportunities for training and education	
	<i>Pay equality</i>	What women want
	Special leaves for women	Sexual harassment
	Day care services and facilities	Equal pay
	Breastfeeding facilities	Equal rights to education
	Protection against sexual harassment	Daily care for elders and children

		Breastfeeding
		Parental Leave
		Reproductive health
		Sexual harassment
		Menstrual leave <i>[NB. This exists only in industries categorized in law as 'the most dangerous work']</i>
	What falls off/are traded off the agenda	
	<i>Protection against sexual harassment</i>	
	<i>Maternity leave beyond what is provided by law</i>	
	<i>Menstrual leave</i>	
	Special leave for women	
	Pay equality	
	Equality of opportunities for training and education	

In the **Philippines** the top three provisions can be enacted at the workplace through collective bargaining. These top three gender provisions are over and above what are provided in the law while company policies often tend to complement existing laws.

3.5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

It was striking, if unsurprising, that women were reported to be mainly absent from the bargaining table, with the result that their main demands tended to be traded off or fell off the bargaining agenda.

However one of the outcomes of the GLU research work carried out in the three countries, was an important raising of awareness of women union leaders.

In **Canada**, where in some cases, women have dominated the bargaining committee, women nevertheless commented in interviews to Patricia Chong:

“Better participation of women members contributes to a more balanced approach – not the macho table thumping or bullying tactics of some old boy union members”

“We have always had women dominate our bargaining committee. We push for women’s issues.”

However, it was pointed out that even though women’s representation is important, it can be difficult to recruit / elect women bargaining team representatives:

“We have three different work groups in our local and trying to manage that and get people to volunteer for the positions is hard enough without trying to implement the female factor at this time.”

This can be made even more difficult when elected women bargaining team representatives are not taken seriously by the employer:

“Our trustees are very ‘old school’ – they tend to treat us like ‘little women’ trying to act important – however, they’re finding out that we’re much more educated and business minded than they give us credit for.”

“Management accepts gender/women-related proposals when they reflect what already exists in other collective agreements on campus (essentially, changes that are easy and inexpensive to implement). They are, however, more reluctant to accept proposals (especially around childcare facilities) for workers they consider temporary . . . “

In the **Philippines**, it was through the survey by Ramon Certeza and Melisa Serrano that some of the women respondents found out that there was a union policy mandating the participation of women in the collective bargaining team. In some cases, where such a policy is absent, a number of union leader respondents clarified that such policy was not needed as there is a union policy allocating a certain proportion of union leadership to women who automatically form part of the bargaining team. Nevertheless, it was also through the survey that women as well as men respondents had the opportunity to assess the advantages and disadvantages of having women in the bargaining team.

From **Turkey** Gaye Yilmaz reported that it was apparent from the interviews, that none of the women had thought about the possible impact of having women in negotiating teams, nor were they aware that such teams might be gender balanced. The women had commented that research such as this was helpful; the questions had helped them think about gender issues more than they had ever done previously.

4. NEXT STEPS

At the Research Group meeting at the GLU summer school in Berlin in 2010 the following work was agreed for 2011:

Further research

- Follow up work in some of the existing countries – Brazil, Nigeria, Turkey, Zimbabwe
- New work from new RG members in new countries – India, Zambia
- Leadership and gender research especially in Brazil, South Africa and India, to synchronise with Sue Ledwith’s Leverhulme research programme 2011-12.

Presenting findings

- Country reports to own unions
- Final overall report
- GLU working paper/s
- GLU Conference paper
- AARS Summer school panel paper

Further writing

- Academic journal article/s
- Book

*GLU Gender and Trade Unions Research Group
March 2011.*