**5th Asia Pacific “Women Leading, Women Organising (WLWO)” Training**Penang, Malaysia   
14-18 December 2019

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) invites applications to participate in the 5th Asia Pacific “Women Leading, Women Organising (WLWO)” training in **Penang, Malaysia from 14 – 18December 2019**.

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS –31 October 2019**

**Context:**

According to ITUC 2019 index, [Asia Pacific is the second worst region](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc-global-rights-index-2018-en-final-2.pdf) in the world, after Middle Eastern and Northern Africa when it comes to workers’ rights. The region saw a dramatic increase in attacks against trade unionist and violations of workers’ rights to organise and strike, which in turn impedes workers from improving working conditions and places them in dangerous situations. Philippines, Bangladesh, and Kyrgyzstan rank in [top ten worst countries](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc-global-rights-index-2018-en-final-2.pdf) for workers. At least 10 trade unionists were murdered in the [Philippines](https://www.ituc-csi.org/RI19) in 2018.

Women’s labour rights are deteriorating and correlating with declining state of democracy and civic rights in the region. As the majority of women workers in this region are mostly in informal sector such as agriculture, domestic work, home-based work or street vendors[[1]](#footnote-1), which are usually unrecognised as workers, low-paid and low-valued, they do not have adequate rights at work and legal protection which leave women workers vulnerable to exploitation - long hours, wages below subsistence, and horrid working conditions.

Although employment in the formal sector may offer higher oversight and regulation for the workforce, the labour standards are still far from sufficient. Where there are good labour law, the lack of enforcement continues to be the main problem. Where some laws are enforced, they do not reflect the workers’ dignity such as the minimum wage law where it is far from a living wage. Pay gap between men and women continue to persist due to gender norms where women’s work tend to be low-valued and low-paying. Unpaid care work is also an underlying cause which exacerbates the pay gap.[[2]](#footnote-2) It is currently estimated that the global pay gap between men and women will take 202 years to close.[[3]](#footnote-3) On the global scale, women still earn [20 per cent less](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_662410.pdf) than men.

The region also has the [lowest unionisation](https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/EAP/region/east-asia-pacific-at-work-full-report.pdf) rate in the world. This comes from various factors such as trade union laws which can be obstacles for workers to organise, or attacks and unfair dismissals against trade unionists. Concurrently, women workers themselves find that male-dominated unions are not always responsive to issues related to women workers’ working conditions such as sexual harassment or menstrual leaves, let alone women workers’ leadership to shape workplace justice and equality.

Despite the challenges that women workers face in their workplace, there is hope that workers’ collective power will be revived and strengthened. In recent years, labour unions have gone on strike and organised collective actions that have resulted in improved working conditions for workers. The recent [ILO convention on Violence and Harassment](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C190) which was adopted during the 2019 International Labour Conference aims to address gender-based harassment and violence in the [workplace](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_711891/lang--en/index.htm). This is the crucial time when labour unions and civil society organisations demand their governments to ratify and implement laws to end all forms of violence and harassment in the world of work.

With the current context and challenges, it is crucial to have a space not only for capacity and leadership building but also for sharing challenges and building solidarity among women workers, union leaders and labour rights advocates across Asia and the Pacific. Participants will not only learn the tools to strengthen their workplace organising and challenge corporate power, but also understand the Decent Work agenda, living wage and the new ILO instrument on harassment and violence at workplace and utilise it for national campaigns.

**Training Methods & Content:**

This participatory training will draw from the experiences and existing knowledge of the participants. It will focus on trade unionism in the context of globalisation, fundamentalism, militarism and to advance Feminist Development Justice. The sessions will seek to develop feminist leadership skill and political analysis in workplace; feminist analysis of work; the decent work agenda; strategic corporate research; international human rights and labour standards, including the ILO convention on harassment and violence in workplace; and organising and mobilising tools such as workplace mapping and mobilising speech.

**Criteria:**

* Women delegates, labour organisers, trade union leaders (both registered and unregistered, informal unions or associations are eligible to apply)
* Engagement in trade union/s for minimum of one year.
* Able to fully attend the training from 14-18 December 2019 in Penang, Malaysia
* Applications from unions/organisations who have participated in previous four WLWO trainings are also welcome (but must be different applicants).

**Selection will be based on the following considerations:**

* Role of applicants in trade unions, need of the training and motivation to join the training.
* Balance in sub-regional representation (Asia and the Pacific) and labour sector representation.
* Preference may be given to individuals with recommendations from APWLD network.
* The participant group size will be limited to about 20 participants.

**Expectations and obligations of participants:**

Pre-training (guidelines and materials will be provided by APWLD):

* Collate and submit national information and relevant laws, policies or case studies.
* Accomplish reading materials, as provided, prior to participating in the training.

During training:

* Actively participate and share knowledge, expertise and experiences, including making presentations, group work, mobilising speeches etc.
* Develop a personal action plan at the end of the training.

Post-training:

* Maintain regular contact with APWLD and other training participants to exchange lessons, experiences, practices and impacts that result from the training.
* Report to APWLD on the application of action plan during the follow-up by APWLD.

**Cost of the training and sponsorship:**

APWLD will cover the full cost for the participation, including economy airfare; boarding and lodging during the training, applicable visa fees and airport/travel taxes. Other additional travel related expenses must be informed by the participant to APWLD beforehand for approval.

Participation on self-funding (full or partial) can also be considered.

**Application procedure:** All applicants MUST submit:

1. Completed Application Form;
2. Updated Curriculum Vitae (*not more than two pages long*); and
3. Endorsement/Recommendation letter from the organisation/trade union.

The recommending trade union/organisation should certify that the applicant has worked in or aspire to be involved in leadership roles and decision making positions within the organisation/trade union and is committed to applying the core learning points of the training in her future work.

To apply, please fill in [the online application form.](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScdUGn6YT8ZdBAtk8nTofeQsPBfSP3bVfqYqa2JkCWq4NbKPQ/viewform?usp=sf_link) Application must be submitted no later than **31 October 2019.**

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS (*with* either of incomplete/missing application form, CV or endorsement letter) WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

Please note that only selected applicants will be contacted.

1. In agriculture, home-based workers, street vendors, domestic workers http://asiafoundation.org/2015/04/29/womens-labor-rights-the-road-ahead/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ferrant, G., Pesando, L. M., & Nowacka, K. (2014). Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes. *Centro de Desarrollo de la OCDE*, *5*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\_GGGR\_2018.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)