

RESULTS SUMMARY

Enhancing female leadership and gender equality in trade unions and workplaces

Author: Insert organisation (Year)

PROJECT	<i>Title:</i> Enhancing female leadership and gender equality in trade unions and companies <i>Partner:</i> CGTFB <i>Country:</i> Bolivia and cross-cutting <i>Period:</i> 2022-2025
CHANGE	Overall, during SPA 2, the female membership of LMC trade union partners grew with 40%. Simultaneously, a total of 229 companies and 19 union organisations developed and adopted gender policies. In the Industry Workers Federation of Bolivia, this contributed to a significant increase in female share of local elected trade union leaders from 14% to 37%. This has strengthened women's voice e.g., in workplace level collective bargaining, contributed to the adoption of gender-focused institutional measures and to protection of women's labour rights
CONTEXT	Labour market participation and organising in trade unions have historically offered ways to reduce inequalities. However, in many programme countries, broader societal patterns of inequality, not least when it comes to gender, also often require cultural and structural changes. Family resistance and responsibilities constrain women's participation, while organizational practices and norms limit women's influence and treat gender concerns as secondary or as women's issues in both institutions and in collective bargaining. In CGTFB in Bolivia only 14% of elected leadership positions at local trade union level was held by women at the outset of SPA 2, while women's share of total membership was 30%.
CONTRIBUTION	Partners' gender policies were developed with the financial and technical support of the LMC and based on partners' and their members' own analysis and priorities. They were refined with input from LMC and strengthened with contribution from local internal women's networks and women's organisations. Development of policies were based on sharing of experience, gender awareness and training and later rolled out to workers/members. The LMC has added value not only by supporting and facilitating targeted initiatives, but also by working holistically with partners to develop durable change through workplace/democratic organizational development.
IMAGES	 Workshop of developing gender policy  Training of female leaders

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

In accordance with the LMC approach, in the Bolivia case activities combined experience sharing, capacity building, and institutional policy development. Topics of training included labour rights, leadership, gender roles, and negotiation processes. In Dec 2023, a national diagnostic workshop identified key gender challenges and lessons. Findings informed the development of the CGTFB Gender Policy. Drafts were validated through meetings in Tarija and La Paz in 2024. The final document was reviewed and strengthened with additional support from 3F and a local women's organisation. Bi-monthly training workshops were then rolled-out across regional federations to raise awareness about the policy and women's right and combined with leadership training to enhance the capacity of female TU representatives' for organizing and bargaining.

LESSONS

The example illustrates the impact of participatory, locally led processes and the importance of embedding practical experience with inclusion and equality in democratic governance and monitoring structures. It shows that a combination of mainstreaming gender awareness combined with targeted women's empowerment through training and experience sharing narrows the gender divide. Across programmes, increased female membership, strengthened leadership, and institutionalised gender policies have begun to reshape unions' and companies' internal governance structures and workplace conditions. The methods applied, participatory gender analysis, support to women's committees and networks, workshops on anti-sexual harassment, gender training of both men and women, targeted organizing and training of underrepresented groups, and policy integration, can be adapted to local contexts and systematically applied to other spheres of inequalities

EVIDENCE

In Bolivia, as reported by CGTFB, the development of an institutional gender policy, led to empowerment of female members and increased participation in trade union leadership because it was an inclusive process involving men & women, members & leaders in gender analysis and visions for change. The policy has led to enhanced participation of women because it was followed up with targeted training – including the aspect of gender in the curricula of shopsteward training, mentoring of female leaders and focus on including women in leadership training. The enhanced participation of female leaders at workplace level has led to better conditions for gendered demands for collective bargaining. The evidence demonstrates a clear need and demand for strengthening women's participation in the labour market. This is also reflected in the growing number of business and employer organisations that are developing sustainable Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) services and initiatives.

DOMAINS

Development strategy priorities:

Insert strategy priority

Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability

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Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights

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Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights

x-

Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights

x

Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability

x

Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work

x