

UNI Americas Women: “40for40”, “That’s Why”, creation of networks and promotion of women leaders

1. Recent achievements

Equality makes us stronger: “40for40” Campaign

The campaign to achieve 40% women representation was launched in May 2011 and adopted in Nagasaki. Its goal is to get union leaders to commit, through the signing of the declaration, to UNI’s plan to ensure at least 40% representation of either gender in UNI’s decision-making structures and within its affiliated unions. The campaign has gone beyond its original target of gathering 40 signatures per region, and has now set the new challenge of reaching 400. The success of the campaign will depend on the level of commitment from union leaders in each region. So far, **59 union leaders from 23 organizations** in the Americas and a government official have committed to the campaign. It’s your turn.

Fighting for a better quality of life and a fairer, more equal society: “That’s Why” Campaign

The campaign, which was launched on 8 March 2012, was immediately supported. The objective is to make the voices of thousands of women worldwide who fight daily for a better world heard. Images, messages and stories are



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inspiring and encourage other women to participate because now they know they are not alone.

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Creation of networks and promotion of women leaders

Since the creation of UNI Women Interprofessional Group, building strong women’s networks in the region has been one of its responsibilities. The main objective of these networks is to ensure workers know and support each other, exchange information on new and innovative organizing strategies and build alliances to promote work on gender issues within unions. Another achievement of the Group is the training and empowerment of women leaders. The Committee and women’s networks organize workshops on leadership, communications, planning and organizing for women. The objective is to encourage them to participate actively in unions at all levels.



2. Priorities for 2013

Contribute to union growth and power through the discussion of strategies for cross-sectoral action and the promotion of collaboration between sectors and P&M and Youth interprofessional groups. The objective is to organize more women, achieve their equal participation in UNI’s decision-making structures and their unions in the region, and support the development of campaigns in UNI Americas sectors.

Work on multinationals by including equal opportunities clauses in Global Agreements where they do not exist and improving existing clauses. We will also promote model policies on equality and equal opportunities procedures at the workplace. Both model policies and the ideal clause will be adapted to each structure, organization and region so that they may also be used as clauses in collective agreements and/or Global Agreements.





3. Objectives by 2016:

Promote the active participation of women in the trade union movement at all levels. Eliminating obstacles that hinder this participation is our main objective.

The implementation of the resolution establishing 40% representation of either gender in all UNI's decision-making structures and its regional organizations will contribute, to a great extent, to reaching this goal. To this end, UNI Americas Women will promote the implementation of specific policies and programs in UNI Americas sectors to foster inclusion and representation of women workers with a view to empowering them and helping them take on leadership and decision-making positions in their unions.



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Strategic Priorities *for UNI Americas Women Interprofessional Group*

The strategic priorities below will form the basis of a strategic action plan for UNI Americas Women over the next four years. They aim at growing and strengthening robust, independent and democratic unions, as well as improving the living and working conditions of women workers in UNI Americas sectors and interprofessional groups.

1. Global and Regional Companies – Strong unions in multinationals

UNI Americas Women will work with UNI Americas sectors and UNI SCORE to increase the visibility and strength of UNI Americas unions in targeted multinationals by including gender-sensitive provisions in framework agreements.

Objectives:

a. Action-oriented research

- Ensure that research into targeted global and regional companies covers gender issues and feeds into the UNI multinationals' database.
- Ask global, regional and sub-regional companies to use data disaggregated by gender when developing their policies and ensure that these policies guarantee the inclusion of women in decision-making processes.

b. Global and regional agreements

- Support campaigns for agreements in targeted companies that include provisions with a gender perspective.
- Promote and contribute to the inclusion of equal opportunities provisions in global and regional agreements with a view to fighting precarious work and promoting equal opportunities.

2. Organizing and capacity development – Union Growth

UNI Americas Women will work with the affiliates and UNI SCORE to gain union recognition and continue to contribute to union growth with an increased participation of women, mainstreaming equal opportunities issues in UNI's sectoral work in the region.

Objectives:

a. Organizing capacity building

- Work with UNI Equal Opportunities Department to develop capacity building programs.
- Urge UNI Americas affiliates to develop trade union and political training programs for women. The training should inform women of their legal rights, as well as legislation, conventions or collective agreements that affect women.

b. Communication tools

- Contribute with regional articles to the news bulletin published online every four months by UNI Equal Opportunities.
- Promote the use of social networks to report on activities to organize more women, and gather support for campaigns at national, regional and global level, as well as maintain contact with other women workers' groups and build networks.
- Publicize union achievements in the media.

c. Union growth

- Encourage UNI Americas affiliates to develop organizing campaigns specifically for women, highlighting the importance of organizing in women workers' lives.
- Prioritize the development and implementation of national, sectoral strategic plans that aim at union growth and take gender issues into account.

3. Jobs, social justice and security for all

UNI Americas Women commits to work closely with UNI Americas affiliates and UNI SCORE to raise employment standards for women workers.

Objectives:

a. Campaigns to raise employment standards

- Promote together with the sectors campaigns aimed at improving public policies that help women and eradicating all forms of discrimination.
- Work to include the “extended” family leave as a fundamental right in contracts and social policies.
- Work with UNI Americas unions to lobby governments and urge them to ratify ILO Conventions related to gender and equal opportunities issues.
- Urge UNI Americas unions to support specific campaigns against discrimination, violence, and exclusion at the workplace, including:
 - » UNI’s “Stop Violence” campaign.
 - » International Women’s Day - 8 March.
 - » World Day for Decent Work - 7 October.
 - » International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - 17 October.
 - » 16 days of activism: Violence – from 25 November to 10 December.
 - » International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women - 25 November.

b. Extend the reach of collective bargaining to all workers

- Urge affiliates to address gender issues in collective bargaining and equal access to better jobs and vocational training.
- Urge affiliates to draft and include provisions in their collective agreements that help fight inequality and all forms of discrimination.

c. A commitment to human and trade union rights

- Urge UNI Americas unions to establish procedures to denounce all forms of violations of

women’s rights. Push for comprehensive investigation of cases of violence, ensuring protection for the victim against a potential dismissal or other abuses during investigation.

- Promote the development of campaigns to urge governments to support national and international laws that protect the human and trade union rights of women workers in the workplace and at home; mobilize to enforce them in companies and in society.
- Work with UNI Americas unions to eliminate discrimination by making them more inclusive organizations and urging them to review discriminatory behaviors within their organizations with a view to eradicating them.

4. Political and regulatory influence – Collective bargaining and sustainable development

UNI Americas Women will work with UNI Americas unions and UNI SCORE to mainstream gender issues in the trade union agenda; further, promote the participation of more women in collective bargaining sessions so that their demands may be taken into account in collective agreements.

Objectives:

a. Strategic alliances to achieve social justice

- Strengthen cooperation with the GUFs, the TUCA and other international organizations that defend human rights and union participation at regional and global level.
- Build alliances with other union organizations to tackle the violation of women’s rights.

b. Education as an essential element for sustainable development

- Encourage UNI Americas unions to provide the space for dialogue, training and information on the different aspects of this issue in rank-and-file unions, including raising awareness about gender issues at all levels.
- Assist UNI Americas unions in developing actions aimed at demanding that governments and international institutions assess the MDGs

–in particular those related to equality, health and education– by using gender-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators.

c. Sustainability and the environment

Encourage the involvement of more women in the decision-making processes related to policies aimed at protecting the environment and creating strategies for sustainable development.

5. A proactive, innovative and inclusive organization

UNI Americas Women will work with different sectors in the region to promote equality in all their strategic plans; furthermore, promote a better representation of women in all UNI decision-making structures in order to reach 40% representation of any one gender.

Objectives:

a. Promote networks among its affiliates

- Continue to promote the creation of women's networks in countries where they do not exist yet.

- Develop and sustain vibrant networks of women that work together, providing them with tools that will enable them to lobby and improve the gender equality situation.

b. Develop leadership training

- To urge UNI Americas unions to develop leadership training programs for women and underrepresented groups to enable them to access leadership positions.
- To urge affiliates to develop mentorship programs to train women leaders and encourage them to take on leadership and decision-making positions.

c. Better representation of women

- Work with UNI Americas unions and UNI SCORE to develop the necessary measures to reach the long-term objective of 40% representation of any one gender in all decision-making structures and meetings.
- Urge affiliates to take measures to ensure this policy is integrated into their daily operations, their culture and their strategies to organize more women.
- Urge affiliates to submit annual progress reports on equality and highlight their achievements.

