



Women and ESCR working group webinar series: Toward a feminist world of work

Concept note
September 2019

Women are disproportionately impacted by the dominant economic system as well as intertwining patriarchal and racist structures in their homes, in their communities and at work. While women are part of wider workers' struggles against exploitation, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in law and practice result in more precarious working conditions and greater impoverishment for women.

To counter this reality, the Women and ESCR Working Group (WESCR WG) is aiming to elevate a feminist intersectional vision of women in the world of work, bridge movements and struggles to confront systemic injustices faced by women in the context of work and promote the recognition and redistribution of unpaid care work. Members of the WESCR WG have identified key issues to prioritize in evolving analysis and are actively engaged in mobilizations and advocacy on a global level regarding women's rights in the context of work. Some of these initiatives include the Women's Global Strike, the ratification of the ILO Convention on violence and harassment against women in the world of work, and the forthcoming binding treaty on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.

The 'Toward a feminist world of work' webinar series aims to advance the following objectives:

- Deepen and popularize an intersectional approach to relevant global advocacy focused on women's rights in the context of work;
- Collectively build knowledge and promote political education regarding women's rights in the context of work informed and guided by grassroots struggles; and
- Center and amplify the visions and analysis of women with intersecting identities and from marginalized groups across regions.
- Contribute to mobilization and inclusive movement-building to challenge the injustices being faced by women in the world of work.

Join us in the webinars!

- 1 | **Women's Strikes and the Power of Solidarity.** Confronting systemic oppression and taking action in the face of global crises. [19 September 2019]
- 2 | **Connecting struggles to address corporate abuse:** Women's stories of resistance across regions and how they must inform the binding treaty on business and human rights. [26 September 2019]
- 3 | **Unpaid care work, social protection systems and access to public services in the time of austerity.** [30 or 31 October, TBC]
- 4 | **Violence and harassment against women in the world of work .**[19 or 20 November, TBC]
- 5 | **The Future of Work is Feminist:** Visions and practices for the world of work that we want. [March 2020]

1. | Women's Strikes and the Power of Solidarity. Confronting systemic oppression and taking action in the face of global crises.

Date: 19 September, 2019

Time: 9:00 am, New York time. Find your time [here](#).

Link: Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

The purpose of the webinar is to share the [Women's Global Strike campaign](#) – its origins and its direction, and to invite speakers who have led or been part of historical strikes across the world. Via this grounding in their lived experiences, the webinar will aim to create a shared understanding of the effectiveness of strikes in amplifying important issues and bringing about change, but also, crucially, uniting people through solidarity. The webinar will introduce the call for a Women's Global Strike on **8 March 2020**, and use the 'Anger-Hope-Action' framework to share the reasons behind this strike, including the timing to coincide with the 25-year anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and some of the forms of strikes that women utilize to truly withdraw from work in all spheres. By inviting speakers to share their experiences of striking in different contexts, we hope to create space for reflective dialogue between the speakers regarding what they have learned within their movements.

Key questions:

- What is the importance of striking to advance women's rights? What can be achieved through using strikes?
- Why are we calling for a Women's Global Strike on 8 March 2020?
- What are past experiences of women-led rallies and protests this Strike is building on?
- How to engage?

Speakers: Ida le Blanc ([National Union of Domestic Employees, NUDE](#), Trinidad and Tobago), Claudia Lazzaro ([Sindicato de Obreros Curtidores de la República Argentina](#), SOCRA, Argentina), Verónica Montúfar ([Public Services International, PSI](#)), Sarojeni Rengam ([PAN Asia Pacific, PANAP](#)), Mela Chiponda (individual member), Sanam Amin ([Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, APWLD](#))

2 | Connecting struggles to address corporate abuse: Women's stories of resistance across regions and the binding treaty on enterprises and human rights.

Date: 26 September, 2019

Time: 9:00 am, New York time. Find your time [here](#).

Link: Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

This webinar constitutes an opportunity to understand and address the ways in which corporate activities perpetuate widespread discrimination against women in workplaces, contribute to precarious working conditions, and give rise to gender-specific and disproportionate human rights and environmental abuses. This discussion will connect the struggles of women trade unionists and those in the struggles for land and natural resources to put under the spotlight how corporate abuses directly impact the rights of women and their communities. Participants will also address the forthcoming UN treaty on business and human rights, foregrounding the leadership and lived experiences of women as an integral to the creation of robust human rights-based standards and mechanisms

that will advance substantive equality. The webinar will be coordinated in collaboration with the Corporate Accountability Working Group (CAWG).

Key questions:

- How are corporate abuses manifesting in communities and what impacts are women and their communities confronting? How are the working conditions and livelihoods of women being impacted by corporate abuses?
- Where, along value chains, violations and exploitation of women occur and, therefore, how women workers in different countries can work together to confront systemic sources of abuse in different industries?
- Why is a UN binding treaty on business and human rights important? What is it about? How the main areas of concern being addressed in the treaty might positively impact women's life and their communities'?
- What are challenges and gaps that we are facing regarding the content, approach, and process of the UN treaty currently being negotiated?

Speakers: Toribia Lero Quispe ([Coodinadora Andina de Pueblos Indígenas, CAOI](#)), Channsitha Mark ([United Sisterhood Alliance](#), Cambodia), Mehwhish Ali ([Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, PFF](#)), Elizabeth Kariuki ([Kenya Human Rights Commission](#)), Alejandra Scampini (TBC) ([Project on Organizing, Development, Education, and Research, PODER](#))

3 | Unpaid care work, social protection systems and access to public services in the time of austerity

[30 or 31 October, TBC]

Care work – consistently undervalued, unrecognized, and unpaid – is vital for the sustainability of life and the survival of economies. Worldwide, women and girls perform more than three-quarters of the total amount of unpaid care work, representing an unfair social distribution of care. Fulfilling the right to social security for unpaid workers and access to public and affordable care services are critical components of recognizing and redistributing care work; however, there are multiple challenges. On the one hand, social security systems are commonly structured around full-time participation in the workforce. As such, millions of women engaged exclusively in unpaid care work are denied this right in practice, and those who are paid workers are often forced to interrupt their contributions or move into the informal economy. On the other hand, unpaid care work has also absorbed the consequences of crises at various levels, given that responses to crises that result in cuts to public spending and care-related sectors are likely to have an important impact on the burden of unpaid care work. This webinar will address these issues, aiming to point out obligations of States, challenges and recommendations.

Key questions

- What is unpaid care work? How is it essential for the sustainability of life? How does it impact the lived realities of women worldwide? Why is the recognition, reduction and redistribution of care work important for women's rights?
- Why is access to social security and public and affordable care services crucial for unpaid care workers and all women? What is the currently reality in different countries and regions? How do austerity measures impact the provision of public and affordable care services?
- What are key obligations of States regarding unpaid care work and the right to social security vis-à-vis austerity measures in times of crisis?

- What are recommendations in terms of public policy?

Potential Speakers. The webinar would ideally have representation from different regions, aiming at about 5 speakers.

4 | Violence and harassment against women in the world of work

[19 or 20 November, TBC]

This webinar will bring together women workers with women's rights organizations to discuss the recently-adopted ILO Convention 190 and Recommendation 206 on Ending Violence and Harassment against Men and Women in the World of Work. The webinar will summarize the provisions and obligations detailed in these instruments, with a particular focus on what they could mean in practice for women workers, attentive to those with intersecting identities and from groups in situations of vulnerability. In addition, we will discuss openings for collective work, including next steps around these instruments (ratification and implementation), as well as existing and upcoming opportunities for organizing and collective advocacy and campaigning, including the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' global campaign and the Women's Global Strike.

Key questions

- What are ILO Convention 190 and Recommendation 206 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
- Why are these instruments important to women's rights? How may it be utilized to protect women with intersecting identities and marginalized groups? How can we ensure that implementation meets feminist standards?
- What are next steps and challenges following the adoption of these instruments?
- What are openings for engagement and further collective action?

Potential Speakers. The webinar would ideally have representation from different regions, aiming at about 5 speakers.

5 | The Future of Work is Feminist: Visions and practices for the world of work that we want

[March 2020]

The future of work is feminist and it is already being imagined and created via the many ways in which people, communities and movements live, struggle and build solidarity. In this webinar we will imagine how a world of work free from exploitation and discrimination against women would be, what a feminist world of work would look like. We will build on the prior webinars to re-imagine women's realities and build our shared vision of a feminist future of work for women. We will discuss visions and practices of women in the world of work; be inspired by the organizing of different struggles and their gains around the world; and identify key challenges ahead, including rising corporate power, the digital economy, unpaid care work, climate justice/feminist just transitions, and much more. This webinar will be part of both the WESCR WG webinar series and AWID's "Join us in this journey towards the AWID Forum 2020", to focus on The Power of Feminist Realities.

Potential Speakers. The webinar would ideally have representation from different regions, aiming at about 5 speakers.