Caribbean Sub-regional Women’s Advisory Committee (SUBWOC)

“Strategising for the future.
Building union power and influence.”

March 27, 2015
Algemene Bond van Overheidspersoneel (ABVO-Curaçao)
Kaya Thomas Henriquez 21
CURAÇAO

MEETING DOCUMENTS
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Caribbean Sub-regional Women’s Advisory Committee (SUBWOC) meeting “Strategising for the future. Building union power and influence.”

Friday March 27, 2015
ABVO Headquarters, Curaçao
9:15 am to 5:30 pm

Venue
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The Sub-regional Women’s Advisory Committee (SUBWOC) meets on the day preceding the Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) meeting and comprises the women representatives attending that meeting. The chair is Sis Jillian Bartlett, the Caribbean woman Titular. The SUBWOC meets annually. In accordance with PSI’s constitution, the number of representatives attending the SUBWOC meeting must be at least 50% of the number of representatives attending the SUBRAC meeting.

During the meeting, the committee deliberates on a wide range of issues and in general advises on:

1. ways to promote the full development of the potential of women in trade unions and in their workplaces;
2. activities and campaigns that would compensate for the results of discrimination against women at all organisational levels within unions;
3. ways that affiliates might work to achieve fair and equitable recognition of women’s contributions within unions and in paid employment;
4. ways to support the work of the wider trade union movement in achieving gender equality and equity.

The meeting provides a focussed opportunity for women members to deliberate and make recommendations on the achievement of gender equality and equity. Equally important, members examine and articulate their perspectives on the wide range of issues to be discussed at the SUBRAC meeting.

The meeting seeks to Inform, Educate and Motivate/Inspire committee members.
Working methods
The meeting includes presentations, small group activities, and plenary discussions.

Draft agenda and schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<td>9:15 am</td>
<td>Call to order, Opening remarks, Introductions, Announcements</td>
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<td>Minutes of the 2014 SUBWOC</td>
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<td>Matters arising</td>
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<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>NETWORKING BREAK</td>
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<td>11:00 am</td>
<td>Status of women in trade unions in Curaçao</td>
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<td>Representatives from ABVO and SEBI</td>
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<td>11:45 am</td>
<td>59th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW 59) – outcomes and follow-up for post 2015</td>
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<td>Sisters Sandra Massiah and Jillian Bartlett</td>
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<td>SUBWOC members will discuss the key outcomes from the meeting and the implications for women trade union activists in the Caribbean.</td>
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<td>12:15 pm</td>
<td>PSI's Anti-Corruption work</td>
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<td>The PSI campaign</td>
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<td>A look at Sextortion</td>
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<td>Sister Jillian Bartlett</td>
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<td>1:00 pm</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<td>2:15 pm</td>
<td>Activities and work in progress</td>
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<td>The fight against gender-based violence at work and in the community; including report on regional workshop in Chile</td>
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<td>Sister Jillian Bartlett (NUGFW TT)</td>
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<td>Surveys conducted by women’s committees</td>
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<td>Sis Rebecca Suazo, PSU of Belize; and Sis Nadia Riviere, DPSU (via Skype - tbc)</td>
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<td>Precarious work in the Caribbean public service: two case studies</td>
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<td>Other campaigns and activities led by women activists</td>
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<td>SUBWOC members will examine the various activities and projects that affiliates’ women’s committees are undertaking. By paying attention to the lessons learnt and the success stories, members will also examine how the activities can be replicated throughout the sub-region.</td>
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3:45 pm  **Small group activities/discussions**
- Leaflet on the raison d’être, role and activities of trade union women’s groups and committees - *Sis Susan Hodge, ACSA*
- What **do** women want? - *Sis Rebecca Suazo, PSU of Belize*
- Organising and bargaining for workers in precarious jobs
- Raising women’s voices at the ILO and the UN (women activists’ role in preparing shadow reports and in national and regional consultations)

*SUBWOC members will work in small groups to draft and revise checklists, guidelines and information leaflets on the above.*

5:00 pm  **Reviewing and Amending the Action Plan**
- Conclusions
- Key recommendations to SUBRAC

*This item draws on analyses and conclusions from the day’s discussions and activities*

5:30 pm  **END OF MEETING**

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**Note:**
Afternoon break is optional.
SUBWOC members are free to get coffee, tea, juice, water at their leisure.
PSI Statement of Values

1. The values, policies and actions of Public Services International are anchored in a world vision of democratic societies wherein quality public services advance and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, enabling equity, solidarity and prosperity to flourish.

2. Public Services International has an historical and deeply rooted commitment to working to eliminate inequality, social injustice and the imbalances aggravated by capitalism and financial profiteering.

3. Public services are at the core of democratic societies founded on human rights, the rule of law and social solidarity. Public services provide equitable redistribution of wealth; and in their delivery should ensure that people are treated with equal respect, provided equal protection, and live free of discrimination without regard to age, gender, religion, national identity, race or ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.

4. Public services are an asset for sustainable development. Public services are essential for responsible public and private wealth creation and sustainable economic growth.

5. Public sector workers have a critical role to play in the creation of democratic public policy and the practice of good governance. Direct public service and public sector unions must ensure the integrity of the public sector. High quality policy and good governance are the foundation of economic growth and development, creation of wealth, expansion of opportunities, and the widest social and economic integration of members of a society. Corruption in all its forms thwarts good governance and the people and should not be tolerated.

6. Public services are financed by all for the benefit of all. In practice, public services are paid for by public revenues. These revenues must be raised through fair taxation policies.

7. Public services are a public good, designed to work in the interest of the people. Concern for the quality of public services is a mark of a society’s self-respect and commitment to caring for all, especially its most vulnerable members.

8. Public Services International values the common good. PSI advocates for quality public services, recognizing that public services of the highest level of quality achievable are required for equitable distribution of growth and sustainable development. In accordance with its Constitution, Public Services International promotes quality public services that guarantee access, are affordable, are democratically accountable, provide for social justice, elevate the quality of life, and offer the opportunity of prosperity.

9. The highest quality public services can only be delivered by workers whose rights are fully respected. To this end, Public Services International defends and advances the fundamental rights and conditions of work including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining and the health and occupational safety of public service workers across the globe.
Public Services

“Public services are those which are universally provided to the public and available equally to all; they affect life, safety and the public welfare and are vital to commercial and economic development; they involve regulatory or policy-making functions; the service is incompatible with the profit motive or cannot be effectively or efficiently delivered through market mechanisms.”

Focus on the public services; PSI

Quality Public Services are important in all our communities:

... education ... health ... housing ... social services ... sanitation ... transport ... postal and communication services ... utilities and renewable energies ... emergency and security services ... municipal services ... public media ... public administration ... water ...
Introduction

This booklet is designed to help you prepare for and participate in the PSI Caribbean SUBWOC.

It provides useful background information and references for further reading for each agenda item. It is also a useful addition to your library of trade union information.

The booklet is intended to be used as an online and interactive document as it contains hyperlinks to other sources.

You may also wish to refer to the 2014 SUBWOC booklet which also provided useful information which is just as relevant now as it was then. The summary report of the 2014 meeting is also a useful source of information.

Connecting the dots …

The work carried out by PSI in the Caribbean during the last twelve months is all interrelated. Gender equality and equity are cross-cutting issues and are important aspects of all the work that we do. Whether it is a workshop on Communication Skills in Guyana, an online coaching session with young workers, preparations for a regional meeting in Chile or a strategy and planning workshop in Dominica, the issues are all linked and bring together the various priorities established by PSI members at the global, regional and local levels.

Who are you mentoring?

An important part of our work as trade unionists is to ensure the sustainability and relevance of the trade union movement. The members of the Caribbean SUBWOC have an important role to play in helping to mentor young trade union women, and especially those who show potential and commitment to taking on roles as activists.

In 2009 SUBWOC drafted a set of framework guidelines for mentoring young women members.

We encourage you to use them. We also welcome your input and suggestions as we seek to build on experiences and lessons learnt.

Need more background and info on the 2014 sub-regional meetings?

Click on the links:

2014 SUBWOC
Item 1 - Call to order, Opening remarks, Introductions

Item 2 - Announcements, Excuses for absence

Item 3 - Minutes of the 2014 SUBWOC

Circulated separately.

Item 4 - Matters arising (items not otherwise covered in the agenda)

Item 5 - Status of women in trade unions in Curaçao

PSI and gender equality (50/50 rule)

There must be at least 50% representation of women on all PSI’s decision-making bodies and working groups. This also applies to all PSI activities, events, programmes and projects.

PSI and young workers

There must be at least 30% representation of young workers on all PSI’s decision-making bodies and working groups. This also applies to all PSI activities, events, programmes and projects. The 50/50 rule also applies.

The Role of Trade Union Women’s Groups/Committees

✓ If unions are to attract and retain women members, then unions must campaign and negotiate on the things that women care about and which reflect their priorities.

✓ We must find ways to help women to participate fully and meaningfully in union structures so that union policies reflect women’s concerns.

✓ The long-term success of a recruitment campaign will depend on how successful a union is in involving women in the union and its responsiveness to their needs.

✓ If unions are to reverse the declines in union membership, unions must attract women to join and ensure that they feel part of the union.

✓ To do this, we must take a critical look at what women want from unions and how unions recruit and organise. We must find ways to help women participate in union structures so that union policies reflect women’s concerns.
Some Aims and Objectives for Trade Union Women's Groups

The overall aim/objective is to help women participate in union structures so that union policies reflect women's concerns. Other aims/objectives are:

- To provide a 'space' for women members
- To educate and empower women members of the union
- To increase women members' knowledge of trade unionism and trade union issues
- To ensure that women's voices and concerns are heard on issues which specifically or directly affect them
- To participate fully in the union’s collective bargaining activities
- To ensure that women's concerns are reflected in the union’s collective bargaining agenda
- To act as a support system or group for other women members
- To organise and celebrate national, regional and international events relating to women
- To promote the involvement of women in trade union education and training programmes
- To organise education and training programmes for women members
- To identify, encourage and prepare women members for leadership positions in the Union
- To recognise and reward the contribution of women members to the development of trade unionism

Specifically, the Women's Group/Committee will/can focus on:

- identifying strategies to get women members more involved in union activities and programmes
- being a direct link between the Executive Committee (or decision making bodies) and women members
- planning activities to recruit more women into the union
- sensitising women members on key issues (national, regional and international)
- advising the Executive Committee on issues for Collective Bargaining/Negotiations

Women activists in Curaçao

PSI’s work towards achieving gender equality and equity in trade unions and in the society. The work that we do in these areas has been pioneering. And there have been many developments over the years. There is still more work to do.

In this agenda item, representatives from ABVO and the union representing workers in housing development – SEBI - will share their experiences.

SEBI – Sindikato di Empleadonan Den Bibienda.
We invite members of SUBWOC to note the experiences and discuss ways in which SUBWOC can assist in building the activism of women trade unionists.

Notes

PSI is an accredited organisation for the UN Commission on the Status of Women and participated with a delegation of 20 activists from our affiliated unions. A large part of our activities took place during the first week, with some activists staying on for the second week of activities.

The main focus of the session was on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including current challenges that affect its implementation and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission undertook a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The session also addressed opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda.

Highlights of the trade union delegation’s activities are on our Blog, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.

More information and details are available on the UNCSW59 website

Country reports to the UNCSW

The CSW called on states to submit reports on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

2015 marks the end of the period for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the start of a programme of work on a Post-2015 Development Agenda, titled the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Caribbean states have made progress in the MDGs and in the quest for gender equality. So too have all our unions. But there is still much more to be done.

Critical areas of concern under the Beijing Platform are:

- Women and the environment
- Women in power and decision-making
The girl child
Women and the economy
Women and poverty
Violence against women
Human rights of women
Education and training of women
Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Women and health
Women and the media
Women and armed conflict

In preparation for the Beijing +20 review, states were requested to “undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. ....National reviews should cover trends, achievements and remaining gaps and challenges, as well as future plans to accelerate implementation at the national level.” The deadline was May 1, 2014.

The national reviews will contribute to the global review and appraisal that UN Women will prepare and submit to the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59).


Some questions ...

1. If your country did not submit a report, try to find out the reason.
2. If your country submitted a report were you involved in the discussions that led to the final report? If not, why not?

Sisters Jillian Bartlett (NUGFW); Ginou Jean Baptiste (CTSP Haïti), a young worker; and the sub-regional, Sandra Massiah, attended the first week of the UNCSW59.

The week was filled with various sessions, meetings and workshops. A key part of the work was advocacy.
In alliance with likeminded women’s organisations, networks and coalitions the trade union delegation called on governments to do more to live up to their commitments to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, especially with regards to:

- Expanding women’s access to paid employment, decent work and social protection, and;
- Building a care economy in which paid and unpaid care is valued and shared.

Download a PDF of the Women Power Unions brochure.

Visit the Blog, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube for more information on activities.

Trade unions demand that the SDGs promote women’s equality and human rights

Trade union organisations through their Global Union Federations (GUFs) have added their voices to these discussions on behalf of working people worldwide. The GUFs have been active in discussions, consultations and planning for the SDGs.

“The process leading up to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) will be completed in September, when states are expected to adopt the 17 goals and 168 targets that have been identified. They will also be adopting indicators to measure the success and the achievement of these goals by 2030.

We welcome the inclusion of a proposed Goal No. 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all; Goal No. 5 as a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment; and Goal 8 on the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

We call on our governments to:

- Support the inclusion of these three goals within the new framework;
- Ensure that the indicators under Goal 8 refer to the ILO core conventions, and that decent work’ is defined in line with the ILO definition and its comprehensive rights based approach;
- Include a target for all learners to be taught by qualified, professionally-trained, motivated and well-supported teachers, in accordance with the Muscat Agreement under Goal 4.”

In late 2014, the ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV) called a meeting with the Workers Group to discuss the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. PSI was represented at the meeting. The report of the meeting is available for review.
The 17 SDGs

1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere

2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all

9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation

10) Reduce inequality within and among countries

11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (taking note of agreements made by the UNFCCC forum)

14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss

16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development
There are also 168 targets. States and organisations are now discussing and negating the indicators under each of the goals and targets.

We invite SUBWOC members to carefully note the report from PSI Caribbean representatives.

We also invite SUBWOC members to:

1. discuss the key outcomes from the meeting;
2. identify the implications for women trade union activists in the Caribbean;
3. suggest the next steps for action.

Notes
Item 7 - PSI’s Anti-Corruption Work

The PSI campaign

Corruption is one of the sicknesses of our society. PSI believes that one of the best alternatives to austerity and cuts to public spending is to seriously fight against corruption. We also link this new PSI campaign against corruption to the fight for global tax justice.

Starting in June 2013, PSI developed its work on anti-corruption issues. The campaign activities focus on understanding the complexity of the issue as well as identifying priority regions and countries and strategies. Key in the process is identifying like-minded partners in the various countries and regions.

Corruption is the abuse of public resources to enrich or give unfair advantage to individuals, their family or their friends.

Common forms of corruption:

- A business or individual pays a bribe to a government official in order to be given a government contract or licence
- The use of government-owned resources, such as motor vehicles, for private purposes
- A government official takes advantage of his or her position to favour a family member or business associate for a job or tender contract. This is commonly called nepotism
- A police officer solicits a bribe or a member of the public offers one in order to escape lawful punishment

More information is available on the website of Corruption Watch.

Also in 2013, PSI and ULATOC – Latin American Union of Control Workers’ Bodies - sent a declaration to the ILO Director General and the Director of Standards calling on the ILO to analyse the challenges affecting workers in state control bodies to “serve as a basis for the development of standards intended to protect and guaranty the independence of employees of the mentioned bodies and to ensure good governance via efficient and high quality institutional public control.”

This item on the agenda provides an opportunity for members of SUBWOC to examine the issues with a focus on their respective countries.

There will be workshops and discussions on anti-corruption and tax justice issues prior to and during the IAMRECON in April in Mexico City. The discussions during this agenda item will serve as valuable input – especially in relation to a gender focus - for those attending the conference and participating in the workshops.
Corruption ad women’s empowerment – a look at Sextortion

Corruption has different impacts on both women and men. In a society riddled with corruption, and in a constant battle for gender equality, any measures taken to fight corruption must be gender responsive.

Empowered women, who are able to participate in decision-making, are effective and powerful actors who can contribute to the fight against corruption.

There are some studies available on corruption and gender in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as how corruption affects women’s access to public services and the impacts on their well-being and social status.

Sextortion is the abuse of power to obtain a sexual benefit or advantage.

The issue is also linked to sexual harassment, gender-based violence and sex discrimination, A toolkit published by the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) gives further information.

We invite members of SUBWOC to:

1. carefully note the points raised in the agenda item;
2. suggest key points that must be raised during the workshops and discussions at IAMRECON

Notes
Item 8 - Activities and work in progress

- The fight against gender-based violence at work and in the community; including report on regional workshop in Chile
  Sister Jillian Bartlett (NUGFW TT)
- Surveys conducted by women’s committees
  Sis Rebecca Suazo, PSU of Belize; and Sis Nadia Riviere, DPSU (via Skype - tbc)
- Precarious work in the Caribbean public service: two case studies
- Other campaigns and activities led by women activists

Arts in Action®

In 2014, the Women’s Executive Council (WEC) of the National Union of Government and Federated Workers (NUGFW TT) launched Arts in Action®, a national project aimed at providing a means for children to express their perceptions of violence against women and girls and gender-based violence. The phased project/campaign seeks to inspire change and break the cycle.

Inter-Americas regional workshop on violence against women at work

Representatives from the sub-region attended the regional workshop on violence against women held in Chile in October, 2014. A key outcome was a call from Chile’s president to PSI to fight for an ILO standard on the elimination of violence against women at work.

We invite members of the SUBWOC to note the developments thus far and the plans for future work.

What women want

Following on from the 2014 SUBWOC, some affiliates indicated that they wanted to conduct surveys among their women members to determine how best to transform the work and functions of the women’s committees. In addition, given the significant number of women members, the views of women members and potential members are key in ensuring the relevance and sustainability of the unions.

The Public Service Union of Belize (PSU of Belize) and the Dominica Public Service Union (DPSU) drafted surveys and after a pilot test, each sent the surveys to members.

1. What do women want? A survey from the Women’s Committee of the DPSU
2. What do women want? A survey from the Women’s Committee of the PSU of Belize

We invite members of the SUBWOC to:

1. carefully note the reports from the two affiliates;
2. examine the lessons learnt;
3. suggest next steps.
Precarious jobs in the public service sector

In the public service sector, precarious work is mostly present among temporary workers (workers in temporary posts; temporary workers in permanent posts; contract workers; workers in special projects). It is also possible to have workers who have been temporary for 10 years or more. Both blue- and white-collared workers are in this category of work. The evidence suggests that the majority of these workers are women. And there is no specific evidence to indicate a predominant age group.

In the 2014 SUBWOC, the committee noted some recommendations from a preliminary study conducted in the National Union of Public Workers (Barbados). The Jamaica Civil Service Association also conducted some research on the issue.

References

- Organising precarious transport workers - http://www.itfglobal.org/files/publications/41809/precarious_workers_book_eng.pdf (The section on 10 key questions for organisers is especially useful to help you think through the issue and how your union will respond.)

We invite the committee to note the growing trend and the specific case studies presented.

We also invite the committee to further discuss this issue in small groups during agenda item #9.

Other activities and projects

SUBWOC members will examine other activities and projects that affiliates’ women’s committees are undertaking.

SUBWOC is invited to discuss the examples presented, paying particular attention to the lessons learnt and the success stories.

Notes
Item 9 - Small group activities/discussions

- Leaflet on the raison d’être, role and activities of trade union women’s groups and committees – Sis Susan Hodge, Anguilla Civil Service Association
- What do women want? Sis Rebecca Suazo, PSU of Belize
- Organising and bargaining for workers in precarious jobs
- Raising women’s voices at the ILO and the UN (women activists’ role in preparing shadow reports and in national and regional consultations)

SUBWOC members will work in small groups to draft and revise checklists, guidelines and information leaflets or other materials on the above.

We will distribute the Activities during the meeting.

Notes
Item 10 – Reviewing and amending the Action Plan

SUBWOC’s final task is to develop a set of recommendations that it will present to the SUBRAC for its approval.

In defining the recommendations, we suggest that you focus on the 5Ws and an H:

**Who**
- Who will get things done?
- Who is responsible?
- From whom do you need help?

**What**
- What exactly do you want to achieve?
- What specifically do you want to do? What steps do you need to take?
- What resources do you have?

**When**
- Do you have a specific time frame for action?
- When will you do what?

**Where**
- Specifically where will you implement these actions? (Workplace, union secretariat, community?)

**Why**
- Why are these actions/activities important?

**How**
- How are you going to achieve these tasks? (*be specific*)
Notes