



IFWEA

International Federation of
Workers' Education Associations



BUILDING A GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY



What is IFWEA?

The International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA), formed in 1945, is a global federation of worker educators. We are governed by worker associations, and are independent of governments, state institutions, political parties and employer organisations. As the only international for worker educator associations, we are an integral part of the international labour movement. We promote and advance the education of the public with respect to the democratic labour movement, aimed at building a conscious, organised and diverse global movement. Our ethos as educators is not to concentrate solely on what is to be done, but specifically on *what must be learned* in order to formulate what is to be done.

IFWEA has observer status with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and shares mutual membership with SOLIDAR in Brussels.

Who is IFWEA?

We are worker educators, which means our affiliates provide education to trade unions (on a national, regional and global level) and member-based associations in worker communities. They are labour support NGOs; workers' colleges; adult education units based at universities which supply formal, informal continued adult education on work/social issues; and community-based organisations dealing with class and work-related social issues.

We have affiliates in a number of countries around the world including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Nepal, New Zealand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Philippines, India, Cambodia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Portugal, Iceland, Switzerland, Finland, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Belgium, Bolivia, Peru and the United States of America.

What motivates **IFWEA**?

OUR PURPOSE:

To promote and advance the education of the public with respect to the democratic labour movement; and to promote the carrying out of free and voluntary educational work, according to the principles of solidarity and cooperation, justice and equality, and democracy and freedom.

OUR VISION:

A world where all working people have access to lifelong learning opportunities, which enables them to claim and exercise their inalienable democratic rights, responsibilities and freedoms as global citizens.

OUR STRATEGY 2016 - 2019:

To Build a Global Knowledge Community which facilitates global co-operation between worker educators so as to advance the frontiers of knowledge, education methodology and practises of democratic worker organisations promoting freedom, justice and equality for all.



"Education is important to decrease the gaps in society. It is also important because it stimulates people and gives you the opportunity if you want to improve or learn more about something. Knowledge is necessary today to get the job you want, to understand your surroundings/world, or argue and stand up for your rights. Knowledge is simply power." Erik Norell, Arbetarnasbildningsförbund (ABF) – Sweden



Why is **IFWEA** important?

Working people need to stay abreast of current political trends, they need to use their political participation to maximum effect, they need to develop democratic worker organisations with active members and they need access to tools for education within these organisations. For 70 years IFWEA has provided a global space for workers to share resources and deepen their understanding of the role of trade union and community struggles in the transformation of society. We have played a major role in promoting global solidarity through worker education.

"We are not alone, all over the world have the same problems as we do. We should try more to reach out to each other to solve those problems." Miia Kelsey, Metallityöväen Liitto ry, Finland

"What inspired me most about this experience is the willpower, strength and selflessness of the people I have met during the visits we have made. These experiences echoed a word that we had been taught at the beginning of the course – UBUNTU." Gianina Milagros Echevarría Gutarra of Programa Laboral de Desarrollo (PLADES) in Peru

How is **IFWEA** building its knowledge community?

IFWEA'S PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES ARE:

Foundation Skills for Social Change Certificate Programme

The Foundation Skills for Social Change Certificate Programme (FSSC) consists of courses which build the capacity of grassroots leaders in trade unions and community organisations. In 2017, IFWEA will offer courses on women's leadership; youth civic and political mobilisation; participatory learning and research methods; and organising for the social protection of vulnerable workers. The courses are designed by IFWEA affiliates who have expertise in these fields and are accessible and user-friendly. They provide course participants with theoretical and analytical skills to enhance their educational, organising and mobilising role as grassroots leaders.

FSSC course curricula can be accessed online and certificates are issued by the IFWEA Secretariat on completion of the course, indicating that the participant has accomplished the learning objectives of the selected course and that, in the process, has contributed to the global knowledge community through their course activities. Further courses will be added on an annual basis to this programme.

Course outlines are available on the IFWEA Online Labour Academy (www.ifweaonline.org). If your organisation is interested in delivering these courses to your members or if your organisation would like to contribute a course to the FSSC certificate programme contact ifweasecretariat@lrs.org.za

Youth Globalisation Awareness Programme (YGAP)

IFWEA's Youth Globalisation Awareness Programme (YGAP) is an annual event which takes place in the last quarter of the year at the IFWEA Secretariat's offices in Community House in Cape Town. The school targets young educators, trade union and youth leaders between the ages of 18 – 35 years. YGAP has been convened annually since 2012 and has thus far developed 92 young internationalists from 13 different countries. YGAP is a transformational learning experience, designed to build a global knowledge community of worker educators and labour organisers who share a common understanding of global challenges and solidarity.

For two weeks they are immersed in a programme of interactive workshops, seminars and short exposure placements in organisations working on labour, social justice and democracy issues. Many of the host organisations are pioneering innovative campaigns and solutions to meet 21st century challenges to organised labour formations. The programme creates awareness and produces worker educators and organisers who can confidently design and deliver education on global solidarity in their home countries. All YGAP participants conclude the programme by developing and presenting a "postcard". This is a brief but colourful message to send back home, or to the global labour community, on what they have learned, which combines images and words in a message which is both educative and attracting attention.

To view feedback from YGAP participants, go to the "Programmes" Page on our website, and click on **Youth Globalisation Awareness Programme (YGAP)**. If you are interested in sending a young educator or labour leader to YGAP, or perhaps you are a young leader who would like to attend, please contact ifweasecretariat@lrs.org.za.

"What I want to highlight about YGAP is the coming together of the different nations, the richness of the learning that has been shared here. The exchange of ideas on how to overcome oppression collectively, how to bring about education for liberation... The future of the world is looking very bright." Anele Selekwana of International Labour Research and Information Group (ILRIG) - South Africa

FSSC's Online Workers' Education Learnership

The IFWEA Workers' Education Learnership is a course to develop young educators in the labour movement and allows for international dialogue on curriculum design, pedagogy and materials. The learnership provides young worker educators with the skills to design and introduce study circles and online education courses aimed at promoting the interests of young workers in trade unions and community organisations. The course outline is available on the IFWEA Online Labour Academy (www.ifweaonline.org). If you are interested in the taking the learnership or applying the learnership for young educators in your organisation contact ifweasecretariat@lrs.org.za

"I have been presented with a variety of interesting and engaging teaching methods. I have learnt more about challenges for the working class all over the world. I have not only learned – but used in practice some of the teaching methods taught at the course. I have also been challenged to focus more on the process of learning instead on only the outcome." Marie Louise Schaumburg-Müller, Dansk Kommunikation – Denmark

Study Circles for Social Change Programme

The Study Circles for Social Change Programme (SCSC) supports the development of study circles among grassroots leaders of trade unions and community organisations through training and mentoring study circle facilitators. Participants in this programme are able to act for positive social advancement based on their own interest and needs through democratic, participatory informal learning in study circles. The purpose of the programme is to build confidence, encourage critical thinking and promote active participation. This approach is essential for building vibrant, democratic organisations with an active membership. The programme also supports online interaction between study circle facilitators in different countries to share experiences on curricula, materials and pedagogy of study circles and build a global knowledge community.

For more information on how your organisation can participate in this programme contact ifweasecretariat@lrs.org.za



"We have the luxury of choice; as such we don't have any excuse not to do labour education. This brings us to the concept of study circles. It is a good tool for me to use in unions, whether for union development, or for training the members themselves." LAU yau ping Nicholas of Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) - Hong Kong

SCSC Project #ICANTKEEPQUIET, in Solidarity with Women's Movement in the USA

This global study circle was inspired by the anthem #ICANTKEEPQUIET sung by a choir of women at the Women's March on Washington in the United States of America on 21st January 2017. The choir women came together in Washington from three different states, after practising together online for two days. After the lyrics, music and choral arrangement was made public by the artist MILCK.

IFWEA has initiated a study circle activity among its affiliates to learn the song, to share experiences and lessons, and produce different language versions. In South Africa, the study circle has formed under the name "Community House Choir" with members of IFWEA affiliates based in Cape Town.

They are joined by affiliates in Bolivia, Pakistan, Sweden and Zimbabwe. The song has already been translated to Shona (Zimbabwe) and Spanish (Bolivia). The powerful lyrics urging those who are quiet to stand up and be heard - continues to appeal to girls and women especially, and inspire unity. Choirs are planning on recording their songs and uploading onto the IFWEA You Tube channel by International Mayday 2017.

Making Your Mark: IFWEA's global project for advancing democratic political engagement of young, grassroots leaders.

This year IFWEA launches the Making your Mark project. Targeting young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years, the project aims to make equality and human rights real for young people through equipping them to promote political participation for youth social justice and inclusion. Activities are designed to empower young people to develop their own political understanding and agency to preserve, protect and promote equality and human rights.

The project captures the creativity and dynamism of young people as a strategic resource. They act as the drivers for social change, not as passengers. Support and encouragement to develop awareness and capacity to engage in peer to peer networks is provided locally and globally by IFWEA affiliates. This enables the participants in the project to transcend the local and develop an international consciousness regarding human rights, global citizenship and the importance of the youth voice as a vehicle for change. Over the next three years this project will allow for the integration of education, engaged research and community collaboration, building capacity, resources, tool and techniques – made by young people and designed for young people – to promote political participation and political agency for rights and inclusion.

In 2017, IFWEA is conducting a pilot of the project in two countries. The pilot phase seeks to establish a confident, empowered and enthusiastic group of young people who meet regularly and champion political engagement to promote human rights activism amongst Young people, including NEET individuals and those from marginalised communities.



Youth Human Rights Ambassadors: “Limerick Be Heard”:

Supported by a collaboration of Limerick Youth Services and IFWEA affiliate ENGAGE at the University of Limerick in Ireland, a panel of young people who will operate as ‘Human Rights Ambassadors’ will develop their role through study circle activity. Forums for political engagement where young people will feel confident and comfortable to have their say about what matters to them have been created, supported by educational resources and activities. Using youth work facilitation methods, the project will then connect young people between the ages of 16 to 25 years across Limerick City and County to build a collective and authentic voice for change.

Youth Human Rights Ambassadors: “Cape Town Be Heard”:

A mirror group to Limerick will be created from young study circle leaders from community organisations in Cape Town, South Africa, between the ages of 16 to 25, supported by the IFWEA Secretariat. Using study circle methodology they will learn to dialogue about their hopes and aspirations for human rights (inclusive of economic, social and political), and then work out a strategy for how they will expand the dialogue with organisations in their communities and design their engagement with the mainstream political institutions.

In both cities, these Youth Ambassadors will then go on to design popular communication materials to share their findings. They will receive guidance and assistance in their preferred medium, from the project’s resource people. When completed the materials will be distributed through the key community broadcast media outlets e.g. television, radio, or social platforms online.

The project will expand to include more partners in 2018 & 2019. Research on the impact of this form of “engaged political education” will be conducted alongside the study circle, communication and media activities.

HOW DO WE GET INVOLVED IN IFWEA’S PROGRAMME?

All IFWEA affiliates and their beneficiary organisations can participate in IFWEA activities. You can enrol for online courses, contribute to IFWEA programmes (online and offline), help build up our shared resources, start a study circle, design participatory learning and research initiatives or create learning spaces. Using IFWEA’s resources, you can tailor-make educational courses to suit your own trade union, NGO or worker’s association.

HOW DO WE JOIN IFWEA?

Applications for membership are welcomed from any organisation with an interest in workers’ education, provided it meets criteria and accepts the principles established in the constitution, and pays affiliation fees as agreed at General Conference. All applications (forms are available from the IFWEA website www.ifwea.org) must be accompanied by a copy of the organisation’s constitution and a recent report of activities. Membership is subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

For further details go to www.ifwea.org/About IFWEA/Become an affiliate/



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