



IEU AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STRATEGY PAPER – INCREASING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN UNIONS

Summary of principle goals:

- The percentage of women members in the Independent Education Union is at least equal to the percentage of women working in the sector.
- Women are represented throughout all union structures in at least equal proportion to their share of membership.
- Union priorities, programs and activities reflect women's priorities and working lives.
- The Independent Education Union becomes an exemplary equal opportunity /affirmative action employer of women.
- There is a high level of participation of women in all activities and levels of the union.
- Women are active and well-informed union members and use all union services.

Goal 1.

The percentage of women members in the Independent Education Union is at least equal to the percentage of women working in the sector.

Goal 2.

Women are represented throughout all union structures in at least equal proportion to their share of membership.

Goal 3.

Union priorities, programs and activities reflect women's priorities and working lives.

Goal 4.

The Independent Education Union becomes an exemplary equal opportunity/affirmative action employer of women.

Goal 5.

There is a high level of participation of women in all activities and levels of the union.

Goal 6.

Women are active and well-informed members and use all union services.

Goal 1.

The percentage of women members in the Independent Education Union is at least equal to the percentage of women working in the sector.

Benchmarks

- Recruitment plans exist for each strategic worksite and key occupation which target the recruitment of women.
- The union develops and conducts training programs for officials, workplace reps and members in ways of increasing the recruitment and retention of women.
- Female membership increases, including among part-time and sessional workers.
- Long-term retention of women workers is achieved.
- More women are involved as workplace union representatives and officers.

| | OBJECTIVES | | STRATEGIES |
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| 1.1 | Develop and maintain detailed membership and non-membership statistical database. | 1.1.1 | Refine membership statistics to include gender, ethnicity, occupation and whether full-time, part-time or casual and analyse for strategic purposes. |
| 1.2 | Define and attempt to break down the barriers impeding women's membership. | 1.2.1 | Analyse both physical (e.g. fee structure, physical isolation) and non-physical (peer, family, religious, cultural, ignorance, etc) barriers. |
| 1.3 | Maintain school by school and sector by sector membership profile and develop appropriately focused strategies | 1.3.1 | Target and prioritise low or non-membership areas. |
| | | 1.3.2 | Develop school/sector recruitment strategy. |

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| | | 1.3.3 | Develop and distribute appropriately focused recruitment material. |
| 1.4 | Maximise the level of union membership in strategic sectors such as school officers and private providers. | 1.4.1 | Identify whereabouts. |
| | | 1.4.2 | Identify specific issues/needs. |
| | | 1.4.3 | Use school officer organisers. |
| | | 1.4.4 | Consider specific communication problems in workplaces. |
| 1.5 | Develop a pre-recruitment strategy for various sectors and workplaces. | 1.5.1 | Develop relations with peak bodies such as CEO, AISV, Christian school groups, Lutheran school organisations, etc. |
| 1.6 | Instill a recruitment culture in all staff, COM members and workplace reps. | 1.6.1 | Provide induction and training of all staff to include a recruitment focus. |
| | | 1.6.2 | Regular progress reports on success of recruitment strategies. |
| 1.7 | Involve women officers/representatives in workplace visits and recruitment drives. | 1.7.1 | Maintain frequent contact with schools. |
| | | 1.7.2 | Ensure low organiser:member ratios. |

Goal 2.

Women are represented throughout all union structures in at least equal proportion to their share of membership.

Benchmarks

Women's representation throughout the union increases to become at least equal to their share of union membership:

- amongst all types of workplace representatives,
- amongst all elected positions in the union including the senior decision making positions,
- on all external committees and peak bodies,
- on committees of management, state and federal branch committees, conferences and their equivalent.

| | OBJECTIVES | | STRATEGIES |
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| 2.1 | Ensure equitable representation of women as workplace representatives in all key areas: union reps, OH&S reps, consultative committee members etc. | 2.1.1 | Monitor workplace membership and rep profiles. |
| | | 2.1.2 | Target women to be encouraged to become union reps. |
| | | 2.1.3 | Ensure contact with newly elected reps and develop strategies to support them including local mentors, training, etc. |
| | | 2.1.4 | Encourage appointment of committees to support the work of reps. |
| | | 2.1.5 | Monitor participants in training courses and union activities to identify potential reps. |

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| 2.2 | Ensure equitable representation of women in delegations, committee structures and peak bodies. | 2.2.1 | Develop and implement a policy and action plan to increase women's participation in representative structures and regularly report on progress. |
| | | 2.2.2 | Review rules and customs to identify and remove any barriers to women's representation. |
| | | 2.2.3 | Establish strategies for sharing or rotating positions to ensure women's representation at senior levels of union decision making. |
| | | 2.2.4 | Incorporate equity issues in all union training programs. |
| | | 2.2.5 | Develop mechanisms to support women representing the union on interstate or international delegations. |
| | | 2.2.6 | Provide opportunities for union women to meet at a national level and within states eg. annual women's conference. |

Goal 3.

Union priorities, programs and activities reflect women's priorities and working lives.

Benchmarks

- Priorities identified by women members are evident in the union's strategic planning.
- Women members are routinely consulted to ensure their priorities are included in all union business.
- Increased financial and other resources are allocated to achieving women's priorities.
- Union negotiations and delegations at all levels reflect an understanding of and attention to, issues of significance to women.
- Campaigns include the priorities identified by women.
- Enterprise bargains struck by the union meet the needs of women members.
- Sexual and racial harassment complaints/cases are successfully resolved and prevented.
- Union publications cover progress on issues relevant to women.

| | OBJECTIVES | | STRATEGIES |
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| 3.1 | Be aware of women members' needs and views. | 3.1.1 | Consult with women members to identify their priorities eg. EEO/discrimination, equal pay, career paths, flexible work practices. |
| | | 3.1.2 | Develop and implement an evaluation strategy to analyse how well union activities are addressing women's priorities. |
| 3.2 | Ensure that the union's strategic plan including policy, priorities, direction, is relevant to women members. | 3.2.1 | Develop a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and an action plan to address women's priorities and a |

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| | | | method of measuring annual progress on the plan. |
| | | 3.2.2 | Nominate a union officer with responsibility for implementing and regularly reporting on progress towards the Affirmative Action policy objectives. |
| | | 3.2.3 | Establish Women's Officer position at branch and national levels to refine women's action plan, service women's networks and oversee implementation of policies. |
| 3.3 | Ensure that union policy development reflects the needs and priorities of women members in all matters. | 3.3.1 | Develop an affirmative action checklist for use in discussions/negotiations on issues such as wages policy, superannuation, school development plans, etc |
| | | 3.3.2 | All committees monitor impact of policies and actions on women members. |
| 3.4 | Ensure industrial strategies take account of the needs and priorities of women members. | 3.4.1 | Develop model clauses for inclusion in enterprise bargaining agreements on issues like family leave, work-related childcare, pay equity, sexual harassment etc |

Goal 4.

The Independent Education Union becomes an exemplary equal opportunity/affirmative action employer of women.

Benchmarks

- An audit of current employees is conducted annually. This includes classification, wages, access to training, and access to benefits.
- Employ women in all types of union positions where they are currently under-represented, especially in more senior and more highly paid positions.
- Train all union employees in EEO/AA.
- Improve union employment practices in relation to employees with family responsibilities.
- Negotiate, register and distribute an agreement of working conditions and entitlements for union employees.
- Women employee's level of job satisfaction in the union improves constantly.

| | OBJECTIVES | | STRATEGIES |
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| 4.1 | Ensure non-discriminatory employment and recruitment practices are adhered to at all levels of the organisation. | 4.1.1 | All vacancies should be internally advertised including temporary and relief positions. |
| | | 4.1.2 | Branches review external recruitment policies ensuring affirmative action objectives are reflected. Circulate such policies to staff. |
| | | 4.1.3 | Train senior union officials in EEO/AA management, supervision, interview skills and their responsibilities as employers. |
| | | 4.1.4 | Establish and implement |

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| | | | <p>procedures for inducting new employees about the practices, conventions and procedures of the union and the union movement in general.</p> |
| 4.2 | <p>Ensure work organisation is not discriminatory, that it allows flexibility and encourages skill diversification.</p> | 4.2.1 | <p>Investigate and identify barriers to women's employment opportunities within the union and set targets to increase women's participation at every level.</p> |
| | | 4.2.2 | <p>Identify and facilitate opportunities for female staff and elected officials to obtain increased skills through secondment, shadowing, temporary higher duties, job rotation, study leave and so on.</p> |
| | | 4.2.3 | <p>Be supportive of flexible work options like part-time work and job-share.</p> |
| | | 4.2.4 | <p>Examine allocation of responsibilities and duties with a view to encouraging movement of staff between areas particularly from administrative to industrial.</p> |

Goal 5.

There is a high level of participation of women in all activities and levels of the union.

Benchmarks

- Women's attendance and participation at union meetings and forums is at least equal to their share of union membership.
- Women's participation in all forms of training increases to at least equal their share of union membership.
- Forums for membership participation incorporate a broader range of issues, forms, times and locations.

| | OBJECTIVES | | STRATEGIES |
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| 5.1 | Ensure women's participation at all levels of the union. | 5.1.1 | Identify current levels of participation of women members, including that of particular groups of women, and regularly report on progress towards higher levels. |
| | | 5.1.2 | Publicise widely the unions attitude to women's involvement and relevant policies and initiatives. |
| | | 5.1.3 | Develop and implement Childcare at Meetings policy. |
| | | 5.1.4 | Develop training programs for developing women's confidence, skills and knowledge. |
| | | 5.1.5 | Set target participation levels and develop recruitment strategies to meet these. |

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| | | 5.1.6 | Ensure training programs are available to regional members. |
| 5.2 | Develop a supportive environment for women's activism and involvement. | 5.2.1 | Develop a register of active and potentially active women members. |
| | | 5.2.2 | Develop specific strategies to support women members in workplaces where employers are anti-union or discourage workers from participating in union activities. |
| | | 5.2.3 | Develop a range of ways to assist women to participate in meetings including assistance with transport, teleconferencing etc. |
| | | 5.2.4 | Develop key contacts for women in small or isolated workplaces to establish information networks to keep them in touch with union information. |
| | | 5.2.5 | Convene Women's Forums. |

Goal 6.

Women are active and well-informed members and use all union services.

Benchmarks

- Women's use of union services (including contact with union officials, requests for assistance, legal and other union benefits) increases to at least equal to their share of membership.
- Union publications and public relations reflect the priorities and experiences of women members.

| | OBJECTIVES | | STRATEGIES |
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| 6.1 | Maximise the level of women members' knowledge and use of services. | 6.1.1 | Identify women's current level of use of union services, including that of particular groups of women, set targets for improvement and regularly monitor progress. |
| | | 6.1.2 | Train union officials and staff to improve the provision and promotion of union services to women, in particular at first point of contact with union. |
| 6.2 | Develop a supportive environment for women's activism and involvement. | 6.2.1 | Ensure regular contact and high visibility of union in workplaces. |
| | | 6.2.2 | Provide union assistance, activities and services during women's working hours. |
| | | 6.2.3 | Train organisers to be responsive to social and cultural needs of women. |

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| 6.3 | Ensure that union publications reflect the priorities and experience of women members. | 6.3.1 | Audit the unions publications to ensure their relevance to women members, increase the number of profiles of women reps and officials, and increase the visual content to portray women in an active and positive manner. |
| | | 6.3.2 | Develop a newsletter or magazine specifically for women members. |
| | | 6.3.3 | Develop regular and occasional publications dealing with the priorities of women members. |