

Helping Women Workers (Indonesia): 2022 Annual Report of activities and thank you letter to ESSF for its support

Tuesday 7 March 2023, by [Perempuan Mahardhika](#) (Date first published: 7 March 2023).

Organizing women workers in the garment sector is one of the main programs owned by Perempuan Mahardhika. Although it is not easy, considering that the garment sector is one of the sectors where violations of workers' normative rights occur very massively and are carried out through intimidation and practices of violence against workers, the garment sector is a sector where the majority of workers are women.

Since 2021, the Perempuan Mahardhika Sukabumi - West Java structure [1] has been formed which is driven by female garment workers in the region as a form of organizational development. Using the issues of violence against women and domestic violence, the collective invites women garment workers to join and become members.

Based on research on domestic violence against women workers (Mahardhika, 2019 [2]), the violence experienced by women workers at home has a direct impact on work in factories. For example, domestic violence can cause female workers to be absent from work, to be unable to work or to work slowly, to cry often, to have work accidents and to lose their jobs or to decide to quit.

In 2022, we were focus on increasing the capacity of female garment workers who are members of the Perempuan Mahardhika in Sukabumi through educational activities, public discussions and women's protests. Some of the activities we carry out are as follows:

1. Gender Training for Women Workers

During 2022, there were one education session intended for female workers who are members of the Perempuan Mahardhika Sukabumi. The training was carried out for two days, was held on Saturday - Sunday, 5 and 6 November 2022, and was attended by 25 female workers.



In the basic training of these members, female workers learn about the concept and definition of gender, an introduction to forms of gender-based violence and discrimination, as well as their rights as women and as workers. The training ended with a discussion about the importance of building an organization as a means of struggle to change the destiny of women.



2. Riung Pagawe / Workers' Forum

Riung Pagawe is an activity that aims to introduce Perempuan Mahardhika and invitations to become members through public discussions on the theme of women's rights. Riung Pagawe itself is taken from Sundanese (local language) which means Gathering of Workers. During 2022, there were 2 Riung Pagawe activities.



The first Riung Pagawe was held on Sunday, 3 July 2022 with the theme Reproductive Health for Women Workers and was attended by 25 female garment workers. The theme was chosen with the aim of building awareness among women workers to understand more about their reproductive health and to know about their rights as women workers related to reproductive rights, such as the right to menstruation leave, maternity leave, the right to breastfeed, and others.



The second Riung Pagawe was held on Sunday, September 25 2022 with the theme 18 Years of the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (UU PKDRT) and was attended by 100 women garment workers. Indonesia has had this law since 23 September 2004. However, until now domestic violence still ranks first in reported cases of violence against women. The theme of the Domestic Violence Law was taken with the aim of building awareness of women garment workers about domestic violence through an introduction to the forms and impacts of this violence.

3. Cross-Sector Women's Conference

The Women's Conference is a form of activity carried out by Perempuan Mahardhika to gather women's strengths through discussions and formulating joint work plans. On Saturday - Sunday, 22 and 23 October 2022, Perempuan Mahardhika held a Women's Conference by presenting 30 members from various cities such as Jakarta, Samarinda, Sukabumi, Makassar and across sectors, namely women workers, female students and LBT workers.

The conference discussed the global crisis situation and its impact on the situation of work uncertainty experienced by workers and the increasing burden of life that must be borne by women.

In this women's conference it was also agreed to carry out Women's Action as a form of commemoration of the 16 Days of Non-Violence against Women by taking the context of the global crisis.

4. Women's Protest

Welcoming the 16 Days of Non-Violence against Women, Perempuan Mahardhika carried out National Actions in several cities on Sunday, November 27 2022 and one of them was in Jakarta with members of the Perempuan Mahardhika in the Jakarta and Sukabumi areas participating.



With the theme "The Country Causes Poverty, in a Crisis Situation, Women Carry a Heavier Burden" the action took place from 9 am to 1 pm with the participation of 75 women.

5. December 22 Women's Day Commemoration Action

At the end of the year, there was a historic event for the women's movement in Indonesia, namely the day the First Women's Congress was held on December 22, 1928, which became known as Women's Movement Day.



Perempuan Mahardhika Sukabumi responded to this momentum by distributing leaflets and sanitary pads in the factory area in Sukabumi. The leaflets contain calls for the importance of building an organization and introduction to women's reproductive health. Through this action, it is hoped that women garment workers will get to know Perempuan Mahardhika and be interested in becoming members.

We use assistance from ESSF to operate 4 of the five activities above, namely Gender Training for Women Workers, Riung Pagawe / Workers' Forum, Women's Protest, and December 22 Women's Day Commemoration Action.

We are very grateful to ESSF and to all those who donated for the assistance provided during the period from January to December 2022 [3]. This assistance is very meaningful for the work we do and for the empowerment of women garment workers.

Perempuan Mahardhika (Free Women)

Among the activities supported by ESSF: Riung Pagawe is a women workers community mostly

garment sector in Sukabumi, West Java organized by Perempuan Mahardhika.

This activity was held in May and the topic discussed was the reproductive health of women workers. For detailed information please see the link below:

<https://mahardhika.org/riung-pagawe-kesehatan-reproduksi-pada-pekerja-perempuan/>



Footnotes

[1] Sukabumi is a city located in the province of West Java, 115 km south of Jakarta, the capital.

[2] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tq1KBPzVKDs4V_DcpUC5ZOprpros6Dlo/view

[3] In 2022, 4,300 euros were transferred by ESSF to Perempuan Mahardhika.