

# **A new commitment from ESSF: Support to women workers in industrial areas in northern Jakarta who face sexual violence and non-recognition of their rights**

Thursday 12 October 2017, by [ESSF](#), [ROUSSET Pierre](#) (Date first published: 12 October 2017).

**In 2016, our association initiated an activity of solidarity with the association Perempuan Mahardhika which intervenes, in particular, in the industrial zone of Nusantara.**

This solidarity work done by our partner Perempuan Mahardhika (Free Women) is currently being carried out with the Inter-factory Workers Federation (FBLP), especially in the Nusantara industrial zone (KBN - Nusantara Bonded Zones) in Cakung. This specific program is called Zero Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. This program is run by inviting various trade unions and institutions to fight for KBN as an industrial area that free from sexual harassment. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of November the workers alliance successfully demanding to the General Manager of KBN to putting "Free Sexual Violence" noticeboard in KBN and followed up with a shelter for women within the zones. These shelters will serve as prevention and response to sexual violence in the workplace, but more than that this shelters will be an information center to increase the capacity of women workers.

**€ 2,000** transferred on December 16

*First transfer for this organization*

Total in 2016: 2000 €

## **Information About Perempuan Mahardhika**

Perempuan Mahardhika is a women organisation founded in Jakarta, in 2003. It aims at ending all discriminations toward and gender-based violence against women, as well as striving for the equality and welfare of women in Indonesia.

Since its foundation, Perempuan Mahardhika have engaged in many programs which focus on women workers and trade union. Programs related to women worker issues as well as trade unionism are:

### **a. Trainings for Women Workers**

- "Feminist School" for women workers. The School is an education program run by Perempuan Mahardhika which aims to reflect the daily problems and experiences as a women and as a worker into the structural problems (patriarchy and capitalism) that occur in society. Feminist School for

women workers has started since 2012 and has been going on annually.

- “Rainbow Training” for the LBT workers. It is a program addressed for lesbian, bisexual, and trans-women workers. The struggle of sexual identity became part of Perempuan Mahardhika’s struggle for women’s equality and liberation.
- Building cooperation with the trade unions such as organising frequent discussions on women worker issues at the factories as well as in the trade unions.
- Organising public discussions and seminars.

#### ***b. Initiating dialogues with the trade unions concerning gender-based violence issues (GBV)***

Trade union is an important instrument in the women worker’s struggle. Therefore, we see trade union as a strategic partner. The purpose of this program is reinforcing the trade union to have deep concern on all kinds of discrimination and violence faced by women workers at their workplaces.

We recognize that the running of women’s programs within the trade unions is heavily dependent on the female members leadership in it. Therefore, Perempuan Mahardhika also initiates to develop network as well as communication forums amongst women workers coming from various union. This network aims to create a space for women union activists to share ideas and build strengths to encourage acceptance of women’s programs in trade unions.

#### ***c. Doing Advocacy, Campaign, and Socialisation on Gender-based Violence (GBV)***

Perempuan Mahardhika is advocating cases of discrimination and violence experienced by women workers whether they are being directly or indirectly reported.

The target of advocacy as intended is the government. From our learnt experiences, this is carried out by arranging press conference showing unrevealed data as comparison, and then followed by campaign action to the central governmental offices. We found these to be the effective methods in getting the public attention to the issues and significant pressure to government so that they would make such immediate response or follow-ups towards any particular issue.

In order to gain public support and to reveal cases of GBV at workplace, Perempuan Mahardhika is also doing campaigns through mass media, demonstration, production of leaflets, the making of YouTube videos, and press conference.

#### ***d. Consolidating women workers***

In 2014 Perempuan Mahardhika and FBLP held the 1<sup>st</sup> Women Workers’ Conference under the theme “Sexual Violence at the Workplace” which was attended by 40 participants from 4 trade unions. Later, in 2015, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Women Workers Conference was organised under the theme “Reproductive Rights’ Violation at the Workplace” which was attended by 100 participants from 8 trade unions.

Moreover, there had always been consolidating efforts to articulate women workers’ demands at every important event such as the International Women’s Day and International Commemoration of Anti-Violence against Women.

The field of works of Perempuan Mahardhika in dealing with the issues of women workers is mainly at around Industrial Area of (KBN) Cakung in Northern Jakarta together with FBLP as a strategic

partner.

This solidarity work done by our partner Perempuan Mahardhika (Free Women) is currently being carried out with the trade union federation FLB, especially in the Nusantara industrial zone (KBN - Nusantara Bonded Zones) in Cakung. This specific program is called the Workers' Committee of KBN, supported by an alliance formed with the Legal Aid Office (LBH) of Jakarta and the union FSUI.

Mahardhika is also implementing a program against the violation of the maternity rights of female workers. She initiated Working Groups of Women Workers; namely places where women trade unionists can collectivize information.

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