

# Mondiaal.

Magazine about Mondiaal FNV's work in 2019

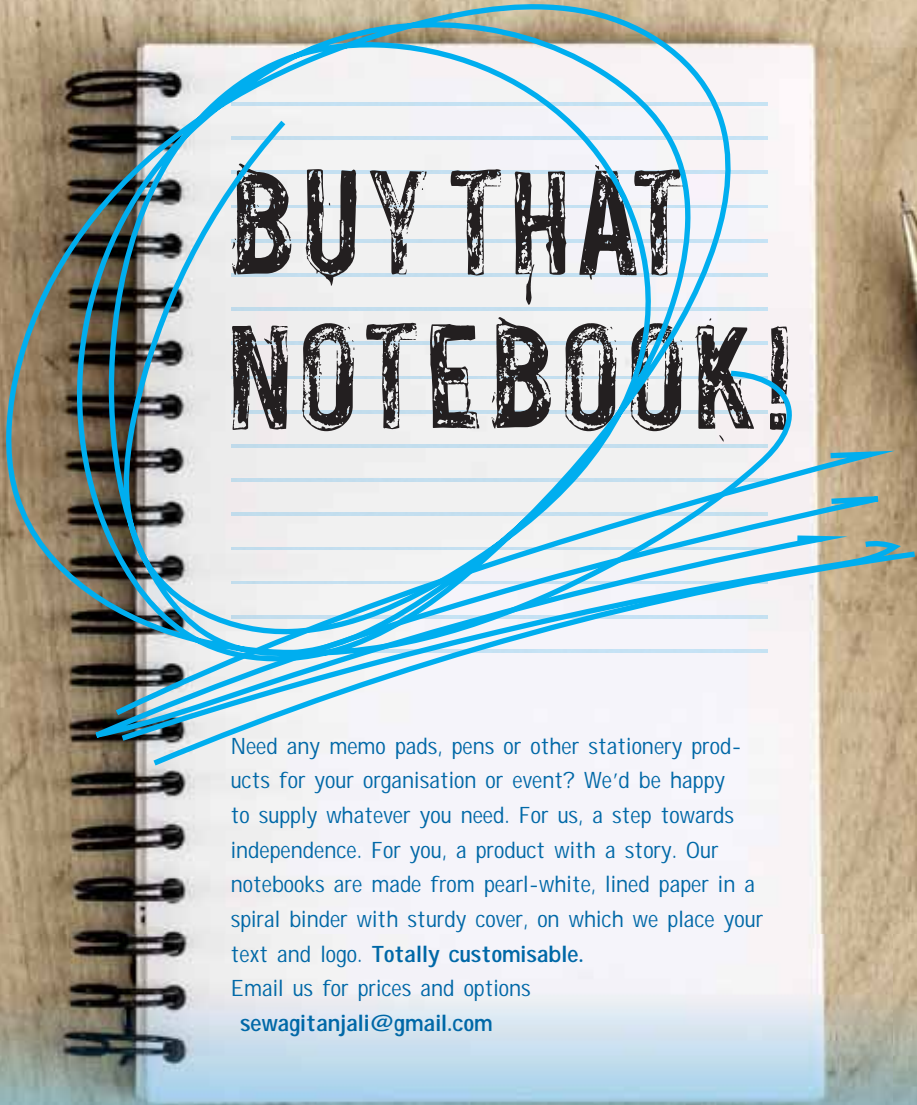
*Rwandan  
construction  
workers now  
stronger because  
of diploma*

Kitty Jong,  
FNV Vice President  
*An activist,  
disguised as  
woman*

Social dialogue:  
*'Modelo polder'  
is a hot item  
everywhere*

Made by ME  
*Clothing workers  
on the catwalk  
themselves*

Mondiaal **FNV**



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100% recycled  
100% handmade

**SEWA Gitanjali:** a cooperative of women who previously worked as waste recyclers in Ahmedabad, India. The women who used to go in search of usable material on dump sites, *now make office stationery:* writing pads, notebooks and pens from recycled paper. 100% recycled. 100% handmade by the SEWA women.



Photo: Roderick Polak

When Pali was twelve years old, she started working on the dump site. "I collected paper and plastic. When I first started, I earned 25 cents a day."

Now, ten years later, Pali is coordinator of the Gitanjali cooperative production process. "As former waste recyclers, we now work *on the other side of the process: from the recycled paper we make notebooks and other stationery.*"

The Gitanjali women together share the *profits from the stationery products, which* means their salaries are at least three times higher than when they were working as waste recyclers. "This allows us to give our children a good education", says Pali.



# From the personal to the global

*In historical records, it may well be that the year 2019 will remain in the shadow of the Coronavirus that is dominating the news in 2020. Nevertheless, 2019 was memorable in a number of respects, for Mondiaal FNV as well. It was the year in which France Castro was presented with the FNV Trade Union Rights Award for her continuing commitment to the rights of workers in the Philippines. It was the year in which at national and European level we issued advice via the Social and Economic Council (SER) on a deeper, more honest internal market in Europe. The Netherlands needs the EU in order to tackle global issues, such as climate change, migration, increasing protectionism and digitalisation. And this was also the year that saw publication of the handbook **Respecting Trade Union Rights in Global Supply Chains**. Clear instructions as to how companies can assess their own and each other's performance in this area at global level. The endorsement by the ILO of a convention against violence and harassment at work was for Mondiaal FNV a highlight and a reward for all the lobbying that has taken place on this issue.*

## **Social dialogue**

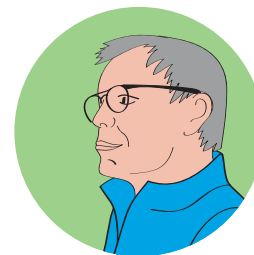
*These successes cannot conceal the fact that trade union work worldwide is under pressure. Where inequality and pressure on democratic rights are increasing, it is the people doing the work and the trade unions that are often the first to fall victim, because these are the ones who stand up for justice and workers' rights. For this reason, I am encouraged by the growing attention to social dialogue over the past year. Social dialogue is not only important for us, but also for the workers at the beginning of the global production chains, where the blueberries are picked and our jeans are sewn. This is where the discussions on working conditions, employment rights and representation also take place. France Castro has already shown us that this is also the point where the beginnings of the change to better communities emerge.*

*In October 2019, France visited us to receive the FNV Febe Elizabeth Velásquez trade union rights award, which I had the honour of presenting. I was deeply impressed by the strength and the determination that France emanated there. And most probably she also needs these qualities every single day, because in the Philippines the conditions for people like her are difficult. There, trade union activists experience threats and harassment by the state as well as by the big companies.*

*Mondiaal FNV's annual report for 2019 tells these stories and also shows the successes that have been achieved in the past year. In highly divergent situations and in a wide diversity of places. I wish all trade union members all over the world France's strength and determination, in whatever circumstances they have to do their work.*

**Han Busker**

President of Mondiaal FNV



# In this edition



Photo: Jeroen van Loon

**Emerance Nyirambarushimana (40)** from Rwanda has worked in building construction for nine years. She is a widow and therefore sole breadwinner for her four children. She learned bricklaying in everyday practice. Because she doesn't have a diploma, it has up to now been difficult to persuade employers of her skills. Via the Rwandan construction union STECOMA she took a practical exam in bricklaying, which was followed by a certificate. "This certificate lets me show my capabilities to an employer at a single glance. I expect this to get me more work, which means I'm even better able to take care of my four children."

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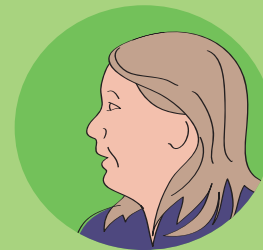
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# Away with the phantom unions

“A president, a member and a solicitor. In the Netherlands, that’s all you need to establish a trade union, which then has the authority to conclude collective bargaining agreements for an entire sector. Such a union may even be financed for up to 99 percent by employers, who in this way can set up unions that make as few demands as possible and which will never dream of striking.” This was reported in the magazine De Groene Amsterdammer in March 2020. A trade union as management strategy. This situation is not much different from that in the countries where Mondiaal FNV operates. There, too, ‘yellow’ unions flourish, unions with hardly any members and which are run by the company. But the consequence of this is that employees are in fact unable to do anything about their working conditions.

Mondiaal FNV has as its mission to support the development of democratic unions, particularly in developing countries. We always explicitly state ‘democratic’ because we will not tolerate ‘phantom’ unions that exist only on paper. We believe that positive changes and ethical jobs can only be achieved if trade unions are able to negotiate with employers in freedom. However, unions are going through difficult times: jobs in traditional industrial sectors are disappearing, the digitally-based platform economy is emerging, flex jobs will result in employees being less likely to join a union. In many countries, union membership is downright dangerous: you are intimidated or even murdered.

This edition of ‘Mondiaal’ contains a cartoon that absolutely hits the mark, about a manager with a whole battery of methods to prevent a union operating in his company. We refer to it jokingly as ‘50 ways to get rid of the union’. There aren’t as many as fifty, but in any case, a good many. We haven’t simply fabricated these methods; they are actually being employed worldwide. It always surprises us why companies go to such trouble to exclude unions. Because it has long been known that in countries with trade union freedom and good social dialogue, the economy flourishes more than in countries where that is not the case.

There are excellent examples of a successful social dialogue between countries and unions, which we have been able to contribute to. At first it appears complicated, but in time there is so much to gain: calm, stability, better terms of employment for workers and fewer conflicts and strikes, to mention but a few of the benefits.

Which is why we say: away with the phantom unions!

**Karen Brouwer**  
Managing Director Mondiaal FNV



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# Every minute fairly paid

“That nice jacket, where does it actually come from?” We should ask questions like that every time we buy clothes. These were the words of Alexander Kohnstamm, Executive Director of the Fair Wear Foundation, last Black Friday. Together with other champions of ethical clothing, he was at Plein Square in The Hague. Mondiaal FNV, with CNV International and Fair Wear, had set up a pop-up store, where the shadow side of our discount sales was displayed. Presenter Sofie van den Enk put it like this: “A low price in the shops probably means that much too high a price is paid in the form of poor working conditions.” Fortunately, there were plenty of tips for anyone who thinks beyond their own purse. Checking out the Dutch website ‘eerlijk winkelen’ (ethical shopping) for example, or downloading apps that show those nice fair trade and second hand shops. With Mondiaal FNV 3D glasses on, visitors were able to stand right in the middle of a garment factory in Bangladesh. Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, made her contribution: “Let’s make sure that people get more pay for every hour and for every minute that they work.” Mondiaal FNV is working alongside Fair Wear Foundation, CNV International and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a ‘strategic partnership’ to enable the people who make our clothes to demand better working conditions.

**Photo: Maartje Kuperus**



**Mondiaal FNV is encouraging  
social dialogue in six countries**

Modelo polder  
the polder  
model  
पोल्डर मोडेल  
model polder  
**mfano wa folda**



Astrid Kaag

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**Slow? True. Neither-fish-nor-fowl  
compromises? Occasionally, to be sure.  
But the long and the short of it is: you  
may well grumble about the Dutch Polder  
Model. But 'our' version of social dialogue is  
unquestionably preferable to the poisonous  
industrial relations that are given full reign in  
many countries. Mondiaal FNV supports local  
unions in setting up and conducting a social  
dialogue process... and Dutch employers are  
helping them achieve this.**



Alexander Frempong, Ignatius Baffour Awuah and Anthony Yaw Baah



Every so often the conversation falters for a brief moment because of the booming laughter of Ignatius Baffour Awuah, the Ghanaian Minister of Employment. His travelling companions, Anthony Yaw Baah, the Secretary General of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and Alexander Frempong, Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Employers Association, give a bit of a suppressed grin at this. The three men, sitting side-by-side in a brotherly fashion in a side room of the historic event venue at Amersfoort Railway Station, seem to be getting along fine. The Minister is enjoying interspersing his story on social dialogue in Ghana with witticisms. Trade unionist Baah contributes mainly in the form of concrete analyses of social relationships in his country. Frempong is somewhat quieter but, when asked, clarifies the relationship between Ghanaian and Dutch employers. The three had been invited by Mondiaal FNV in October 2019 during the course of the international Building Bridges conference. This was organised to bring together the actors in social dialogue from a number of countries and to learn from their experiences. Since 2016 Mondiaal FNV has been supporting social dialogue in six areas: Colombia, Peru, Ghana, East Africa, Nepal and Indonesia. Six very different environments, where encouraging social dialogue runs up against highly divergent challenges.

### Trust

The communal trip by the Ghanaian social partners fits within the pattern of the bond that these three men have built up in the past few years. Trust is the most important aspect. They're in agreement on this point. Dialogue without trust is not possible. They confirm that trust is to a large extent founded on their personal mutual relationships. The three men respect each other. Baah: "When Alexander says he'll do something, then I know he'll deliver on it. Alongside the formal meetings, we also meet informally. This is both necessary and useful to enable us to come to agreements during the official meetings. We hear informally from each other what commitments are achievable. On a basis of these we reach compromises." In Ghana consultation between employees, employers and government is provided for



Jyoti Macwan

under the national Labour Law, Minister Baffour tells us. "Social dialogue is not something new in Ghana. We've been doing it for decades, even though we don't always give it that name. Within companies, employees and employers are in dialogue with each other. And at national level we have, for example, the National Tripartite Committee. This committee advises the government on issues such as the level of the minimum wage."

Despite the tradition of social dialogue in Ghana, the support of Mondiaal FNV was, according to union leader Baah, an important element in improving the position of the trade union movement within social dialogue: "The FNV has supported the trade unions in Ghana for over twenty years. Thanks to the FNV, we have been able to strengthen our organisation. We are now a modern union, well able to engage in dialogue with the government and the employers."

While the TUC receives support from Mondiaal FNV, the counterparts in the Ghanaian employers' organisation, are aided by the solidarity organisation of the Dutch employers DECP. Frempong explains: "DECP is important to us. For employers, formulating a common position on anything isn't easy. DECP has helped us to strengthen the relationship with the affiliated companies, so that the compromises we reach on their behalf have the backing of a large majority."

### Crash course on 'social dialogue'

Astrid Kaag is responsible for the social dialogue programme on behalf of Mondiaal FNV. The first - and most striking - successes of the programme were in Peru, she tells us. A key role was played by a joint visit to the Nether-

lands by Peruvian employees and employers for a crash course in 'social dialogue' in October 2014. As the visit progressed, the atmosphere between what were traditionally sworn enemies visibly improved. At the end of the visit, the president of the employees concluded: 'It's no longer a question of whether we want the dialogue, but about how.' Since then things have moved fast. The newly-found trust between the two social partners led to a smooth collective agreement at agro-export company Camposol. And the process reached an interim peak in 2017, when the trade union and the employers in Peru jointly founded a Peruvian Labour Foundation.

To secure the continuity of the social dialogue model, the Peruvian federation CGTP is seeking ways to appeal to the young union officials. "In the past few years, young trade union activists in Peru have followed training programmes, in which social dialogue was an important ingredient", says Kaag. "We see that these young people have captured key positions within the trade unions. Social dialogue is as a result increasingly becoming a part of the core strategy of the unions. This is in addition to action and mobilisation, because that, too, is very much needed in the current political situation in Peru."

### Universal story

Mondiaal FNV finances local unions in order to strengthen their capacities to conduct a good



Han Busker and Marcela Manubens

dialogue. Kaag: "Our partners are curious about the Dutch variant of social dialogue, our polder model. To lead workshops of this type, we invite, for example, Dirk Joesse (see text in box below, ed.). Dirk works for DECP, but it is with the greatest confidence that I send him off to our own partners too. His story is universal: suitable for employers and employees alike. For example, in Peru he gave a course to a group of young people from both the employers' and the employees' sides, so that later on they would be able to train and advise others in the art of negotiating."

Up to the present, the training sessions organised by Mondiaal FNV have tended to be ad hoc. They were given if a partner specifically asked for one, but Kaag says that this could well be done differently in the future. "We're thinking of setting up an 'expertise centre' able

to provide training courses to organisations that express a need for one."

The role of Mondiaal FNV is often to bring parties together, explains Kaag. "In Colombia for example, we organised a conference in January 2019 on dialogue in the palm oil sector, where both the Ministry of Labour and the employers' organisation Fedepalma put in an appearance. These are parties that normally do not deign to be present at a conference organised by trade unions. However, because we were on the invitation they came. That alone is an achievement." Incidentally, their presence did not immediately produce any results, Kaag acknowledges. "For example, Fedepalma gave a fantastic speech about the palm oil industry in Colombia, but made no mention of dialogue with the trade unions." ■

**Dirk Joesse, trainer in negotiations:**

**"The moment that they gain an understanding of each other's position. That is so amazing"**

*Dirk Joesse has worked for the last twelve years for DECP, the solidarity organisation of employers' organisation VNO-NCW. As trainer in social dialogue, he has now visited 34 countries.*

*"My goal every time is that each party has to be satisfied with the result. You see, collective agreement negotiators will always run into each other again. That means that if you pull a fast one on someone one year, it'll be thrown back in your face the next. So, you need to find things that both parties want. You look for similarities instead of differences.*

*"What strikes me when I start on a workshop is the animosity. And the inability to get past that. People are afraid of making concessions. I remember the first time that the employees and the employers of the Peruvian company Camposol got round the table. These people had never really spoken to each other. There was so much distrust.*

*Through the tasks that they had to carry out together during the workshop they finally saw the man or woman behind the job. I saw them engaging in discussion with each other. I thought to myself: 'It's happening!' When all's said and done, Camposol is the finest example I know.*

*"It doesn't matter to me whether I work with employees or employers. The most rewarding thing is to get them there together. Then you get results the quickest. For example, I get them to practise negotiating with each acting the other's part. At a certain moment, you see something beginning to light up in their eyes: the moment that they gain an understanding of each other's position. That is so amazing."*



**Colombia: Palmas del Cesar and Sintrainagro Minas pioneers in social dialogue**

# Peace under the oil palm



Rafael Velazco

**87 days was how long the strike at the Colombian palm oil company Palmas del Cesar in 2015 lasted. The management and the unions were on a war footing. In desperation Manager 'Don Fabio' and union leader Rafael Velazco decided to adopt a more conciliatory approach to each other. "Shaking each other's hands was not easy at the beginning."**



Try talking to Rafael Velazco about social dialogue in a non-condescending tone. 'His' trade union Sintrainagro Minas concluded a collective labour agreement with the palm oil company Palmas del Cesar in the north of Colombia in July 2019, as crowning achievement of an extensive social dialogue. Three years earlier, the union and the company were still on a war footing.

Palmas del Cesar was known as being a pretty ghastly company. The company wanted to have as little as possible to do with the union Sintrainagro Minas. The company had a tendency above all to take on people on a basis of short-term contracts. 'Tercerizados', is what people in Colombia are called who are working via a temporary work agency or an intermediary.

Strikes and other actions were the order of the day at the company. In 2011, for example, the company was brought to a standstill for 62 days by a strike intended to offer greater security to the contract workers. In 2015 things went terribly wrong, when the strikes went on for a total of 87 days. The objective was the legal status of 225 tercerizados. Each time again, the solutions were half-hearted: the company continued to refuse all responsibility, and opted to take on people via an intermediary.

### Permanent headache

The four-yearly negotiations with the trade union Sintrainagro Minas were turning into a permanent headache for the Manager of Palmas del Cesar, Fabio Enrique González ('Don Fabio'). "After the conflict of 2015, it was clear to me that things couldn't go on like this. We were suffering too much damage. I then approached the union with a view to getting round the table together." Rafael Velazco: "When we heard that Don Fabio wanted a dialogue, we were at first not terribly enthusiastic." Round about the same time, the Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS) entered the scene. ENS is a partner of Mondiaal FNV. The organisation supports local unions. Colombia is one of the countries where Mondiaal FNV is endeavouring to encourage social dialogue. Velazco: "In 2017 we got in contact with ENS

about social dialogue. Their support gave us the confidence to get round the table with Don Fabio. Via the FNV we were given training on social dialogue. We followed a 'negotiation' workshop, on the importance of trust. And on the risks, too."

Don Fabio: "Looking each other in the eye and shaking each other's hand was not easy at the beginning." But as the dialogue progressed, things got better. "The employees' representatives are now much more cooperative. Their language has changed: no longer so hostile."

To illustrate the level of distrust, Astrid Kaag of Mondiaal FNV divulges that she used to hear union representatives say during negotiations with management, that they didn't dare drink the water. "It might be poisoned!"

Velazco: "We agreed to get round the table every month. We talked about everything that was bothering us. Management told us of their distrust of the union. It was only later on that we looked for solutions for the concerns of the company and the complaints by the employees." Don Fabio now also sees the advantages to having people taken on permanently instead of using temporary workers: "In the past, these workers felt no bond with the company. With a permanent contract, this is different: you are now part of the company and it goes without saying that you comply with the standards that are part of the company."

### Job guarantee

In July 2019, a collective labour agreement was concluded at Palmas del Cesar with no conflict whatsoever taking place. As well as a wage rise, agreements were made on job guarantees. The union did well out of the social dialogue process. Between 2015 and 2019 membership rose from 120 to a total of 360. Slightly more than half the employees are now unionised, a very high percentage by Colombian standards. Velazco emphasised that the agreements he makes with the company cover all the employees, which means including the tercerizados. The good relationship with the employees has generated little goodwill for Don Fabio within his own circle. The manager of Palmas del Cesar is a board member of the palm oil companies employers' organisation, where

nowadays he is given the cold shoulder. The working conditions in the palm oil industry in Colombia continue to be poor. Only 20 percent of the employees in the de palm oil sector in Colombia have a fixed contract. Rafael Velazco: "Many employers in Colombia will have nothing to do with trade unions and try to stop employees unionising. To the extent, even, that union leaders are being murdered, with great regularity. We are trying to sell our model of social dialogue, but that's not easy. Social dialogue in Colombia is very difficult." ■



Fabio Enrique González

### 'Three years ago, a joint trip like this would have been unthinkable'

*The remarkable, though unfortunately isolated success at Palmas del Cesar, led to Rafael Velazco and Fabio Enrique González being invited by Mondiaal FNV to the Netherlands to tell their story during an international conference on social dialogue in October 2019. Velazco: "We sat next to each other in the plane, both economy class - I think Don Fabio normally flies business class. Three years ago, a joint trip like this would have been unthinkable. But in a short time, a high level of trust has developed. I know that Don Fabio thinks differently from me on a number of things, but I do trust him. If he promises something, then I can count on him to keep his word."*

Prinsess Laurentien of the Netherlands

# “Win-win? Only a man could come up with that”



“What your Princess said, that was interesting!” The speech delivered by Prinsess Laurentien at the conference ‘Building bridges was a much-talked-about item in the corridors. How social dialogue benefits people and business.’ She had been invited by Mondiaal FNV to say a few words to the international gathering on the subject of dialogue and communication. During her speech the Princess caused a certain amount of unease in the room several times. For example: “Win-win options ... that is typically something that a man would come up with.” After the conference, Princess Laurentien spoke with Mondiaal FNV about dialogue and about the importance of taking steps back.

**You said in your speech that we often say that we are in dialogue whereas we are actually in a negotiation process. What is the difference?**

“Negotiating is the trading off of interests. Dialogue is: working from each one’s point of view, together reaching new ideas. In a dialogue you acknowledge the fact that you are contributing only a portion of the truth. Together with others, you try to find what it’s really about, the fundamentals. What are the real interests at play? So, in fact you begin by taking a number of steps back.”

**Dialogue precedes negotiating, then?**

“In a certain sense, yes. If from within a dialogue you have together established what it’s really all about, then of course you can later negotiate on the sub-issues as to who does what and who gets what. Basically, it’s a circular process. It’s important to over and over again go back to the broader picture.”

**In your speech you talked about ‘win-win outcomes’. You said: ‘only a man could come up with that.’**

Prinsess Laurentien smiles: “Yes, I did.”

**But for most people in the room – often involved in social dialogue between employees, employers and governments in their country – ‘win-win’ is the highest ideal. It means that all the parties are satisfied.**

“Yes, that’s true, but that doesn’t have so much to do with dialogue. Not with the kind of dialogue that I believe in. In my speech I mentioned three fundamental elements of a real dialogue. The first one is that you must together figure out which problem it is that is the one you want to solve. There has to be a willingness to delve deeper than for example the conflict that has brought people to the table. Often you see that parties want to take steps that are too big too quickly. Then, things are bound to go wrong. The second fundamental is: from your individual viewpoints, come to a joint approach to a shared interest. Dialogue is not a power struggle. You can’t hold your cards close to your chest. And the



third is: dialogue is a creative and collective process. Everyone takes part and everyone has a part of the solution within him or herself. The idea is that you move beyond a trading off of interests, beyond win-win. First take a couple of steps back: Why do you want to be at the table? What really is the objective? If you begin by talking about the wrong things, if you go too fast, then you're bound to get stuck later in the process. What is also important: make sure that you have all the parties at the table. Not only the employees and employers, but for example the community as well. Or environmental groups. That immediately gives rise to a totally different conversation. If that process of together establishing what the conversation should be about works well, then in my experience the participants at a certain moment end up 'in the same film'. In fact, they learn to see reality through each other's eyes. It's then that the dialogue can begin."

**In a dialogue between employees and employers you often have conflicting interests that keep on returning, don't you: wages, for example. That is a zero-sum game: one percent more in wages for the employees means one percent less profit for the employers.**

"Obviously that's something you can always argue about. But the good thing about a good dialogue is that everything becomes transparent. You can talk about higher wages or more profit, but before that, you need to together be clear what that greater profit is intended for. If for example you've established that what you want is to ensure continued employment, then you arrive at totally different common outcomes from when you're only talking about profit and wages."

**In the practice of social dialogue, we often have to deal with unbalanced power relationships. In some developing countries, certainly, there is a vast difference between the manager and the employees. Here too, in fact.**

"Dialogue is an emancipatory process. Whoever you are and whatever your position is you have to respect each other and listen to each other. Listen properly, because you realise that you don't have all the answers yourself. That sounds easier than it is because it cuts right across hierarchies. People come with their own egos, their position, their preconceptions. They have to leave them all behind at the door. Here, the director has to sit on the pouffe too. If people only talk from their position and their power then it is difficult to create trust."



### Princess Laurentien

Princess Laurentien is known above all as a promoter of literacy and children's right to participation. She leads dialogues among all sections of society. In 2018, together with her husband Prince Constantijn, she set up the Number 5 Foundation. This foundation focuses on promoting dialogue between different groups in society to together arrive at new solutions. This was the reason for Mondiaal FNV to invite the Princess to share her experiences during an international conference on social dialogue in October 2019.

### Would you like to read more about social dialogue?

#### Social dialogue: the basis for sustainable development

A concise brochure, published by Mondiaal FNV, explaining what social dialogue is. With clear, practical examples from Mondiaal FNV. Download: <https://www.fnv.nl/mondiaal-fnv/acties-thema-s/wat-is-sociale-dialoog>

#### Social dialogue and informal workers: What we can learn from 8 success cases

Social dialogue, surely of no use to the informal sector? On the contrary. This English language publication focuses on eight case studies taken from practice in which social dialogue can make a world of difference, for informal workers too. Download: <https://www.fnv.nl/mondiaal-fnv/nieuws-mondiaal-fnv/nieuws-publicatie/social-dialogue-and-informal-workers>

#### Poldering in Peru

A short special from the magazine P+ on the success achieved by social dialogue in Peru and the role played by Mondiaal FNV. Download: <https://www.fnv.nl/mondiaal-fnv/acties-thema-s/polderen-in-peru>

# Short messages

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## Making a complaint with no snoopers around

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Male colleagues who touch you in an undesired manner or make inappropriate remarks, while you put up with this for fear of losing your job. At an industrial site in Indonesia, where clothing, matches and other consumer products are produced, a group of brave women had had absolutely enough of it. With the help of trade union federation FBLP, a partner of Mondiaal FNV, they have for some time now been fighting to put an end to harassment or sexual harassment of female employees. With success. For some years the site has been a Violence-Against-Women-Free-Zone. The most recent achievement is a separate building - with no male snoopers around - where women who are experiencing harassment at work may make a complaint. Every day - before and after work - specially trained volunteers deal with the women's complaints, together with professional relief organisations. Some three to four complaints are received every day.

The Indonesian Minister for Women's Empowerment and Child Protection would like more such Complaints Offices on industrial sites in Indonesia.

## New Ethiopian labour law passed



In Ethiopia, the new Labour Law was enacted in the summer of 2019. This had been preceded by many years of dispute. The first version of the bill meant an unprecedented worsening in the position of employees in Ethiopia. The law was originally mainly intended to please the foreign investors. The Ethiopian trade union federation CETU led the opposition to the proposed legislation. Initially, CETU had a relatively weak position in terms of labour relations in Ethiopia. But thanks to the opposition to the law, and with the support of Mondiaal FNV, the confederation's position was strengthened. The members, too, expressed massive support for the critical position of CETU. An important element of the new law is a minimum wage for the private sector. Employees now also enjoy better protection against discrimination and sexual violence.



## Banks and insurers invest heavily in plastic and shale gas

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In 2017 the world produced nearly 350 million tons of plastic. Since 1950 nearly 80 percent of the plastic waste has been dumped in in land-fill sites, or has ended up in the environment. Plastic pollution causes an accumulation of 'plastic soup' in oceans. In addition, the increasing amount of shale gas extraction is making plastic cheaper and cheaper.

The majority of big banks and insurers in the Netherlands are investing heavily in companies that extract shale gas and produce plastics. This has emerged from research conducted by the Fair Finance Guide, in cooperation with the Plastic Soup Foundation.

The FNV is one of the parties to the Fair Finance Guide, together with Amnesty International, Friends of the Earth Netherlands, Oxfam Novib, PAX and World Animal Protection. Evert Hassink, spokesperson for the Dutch Fair Finance Guide, is calling for action: "ING and ABN Amro say they are concerned about the plastic soup found all over the world. It's time for action to protect the seas and the climate. Stop now, phase out financing of shale gas and plastics."





## At last: global treaty against violence and harassment in the world of work

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“A lengthy game of delaying, ‘spying’, impassioned pleas with tears and bickering about words”, is how Mondiaal FNV policy officer Wilma Roos described the negotiations at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on violence in the workplace. But the ‘lengthy game’ paid off: on 21 June 2019, workers all over the world gained the right to a world of work free of violence and harassment. Convention 190, which provides for this, was adopted by the ILO. A tremendous result, that many employees worldwide had been hoping for, says Wilma Roos, who attended the negotiations. Mondiaal FNV pushed hard for this treaty, together with its partners and a joint lobby with CNV International and the Fair Wear Foundation.

## Indonesian media union fights for mental health of freelancers



As many as 79 percent of the freelancers in the media and the creative sector in Indonesia struggle with mental complaints caused by work pressure and strenuous working conditions, as evidenced by research conducted among the members of the Indonesian trade union Sindikasi, co-funded by Mondiaal FNV. Sindikasi, was established in 2017 to coordinate freelancers in areas including digital technology, design, architecture, film, art, media and research. One of Sindikasi’s first successes is that mental health has been included among the national regulations relating to health and safety in the workplace.



## Victory for Palestinian factory workers

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After twenty years of exploitation, Palestinian workers at Maya Foods Industries, an Israeli company with a location on the occupied West Bank, have achieved a remarkable victory.

Some of the employees have worked for the company for over twenty years, without pay slips, without social benefits and with a wage that is below the statutory minimum. Employees who complained were dismissed. The only authorised trade union in the company, affiliated to the ruling Likud party, did nothing for the employees. Following years of intimidation, the employees took a brave decision: they collectively joined the union WAC-MAAN, a partner of Mondiaal FNV, which proceeded to file a complaint against the company, with success. At the end of August 2019, the court ruled that the dismissals were illegal and ordered Maya Foods to reinstate them. That had never happened in the Maya factory before. One of the employees, overcome by emotion, said: “Up to now we have lived in slavery. WAC-MAAN is our liberator.”



## Better prospects for shipbreakers


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With the ratification by India of the Hong Kong-convention, an important step was taken towards safer shipbreaking. Shipbreaking is one of the most dangerous jobs in the world. The Hong Kong-convention covers safe and environmentally sound recycling, but implementation has been on hold for ten years because too few countries have ratified. India is the largest shipbreaking country. Bangladesh and Pakistan, where a large proportion of shipbreaking also takes place, have not ratified. India’s signing means that implementation is close at hand.

Mondiaal FNV has, for a considerable time now, been engaged in improving the working conditions of shipbreakers. For example, campaigning has been conducted geared to organising more shipbreakers in India, and FNV members from the shipping industry have given safety training to shipbreakers in India and Nepal. Mondiaal FNV is also striving for the ratification of the Hong Kong-convention.

# Made by ME

*“I wanted to show them as proud creators, not as victims.” With this one sentence, photographer Chris de Bode summarises how he wanted to portray clothing workers in Myanmar. Of course, they work long hours, work in harsh conditions, earn little and live in ramshackle hostels. But Asian garment workers are also worthy and combative workers with their own dreams and ideals. So let them shine on their chosen catwalk, Chris thought.*



*Aye Moeh Zaw (20)  
is wearing a jumper from H&M  
priced at € 19.99*

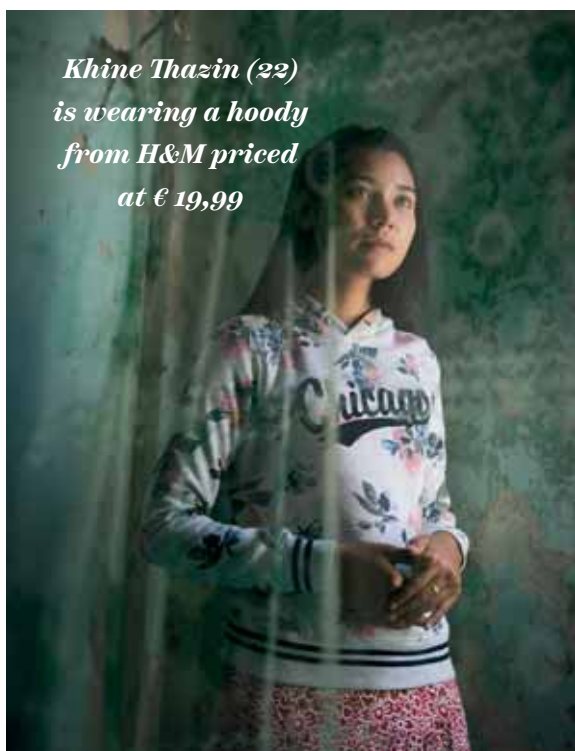
*This Photoserie is made possible with the support of:*

Mondiaal  asn  bank





*Zin Zin Myint (36)  
is wearing a jumper from  
H&M priced at € 29,99*



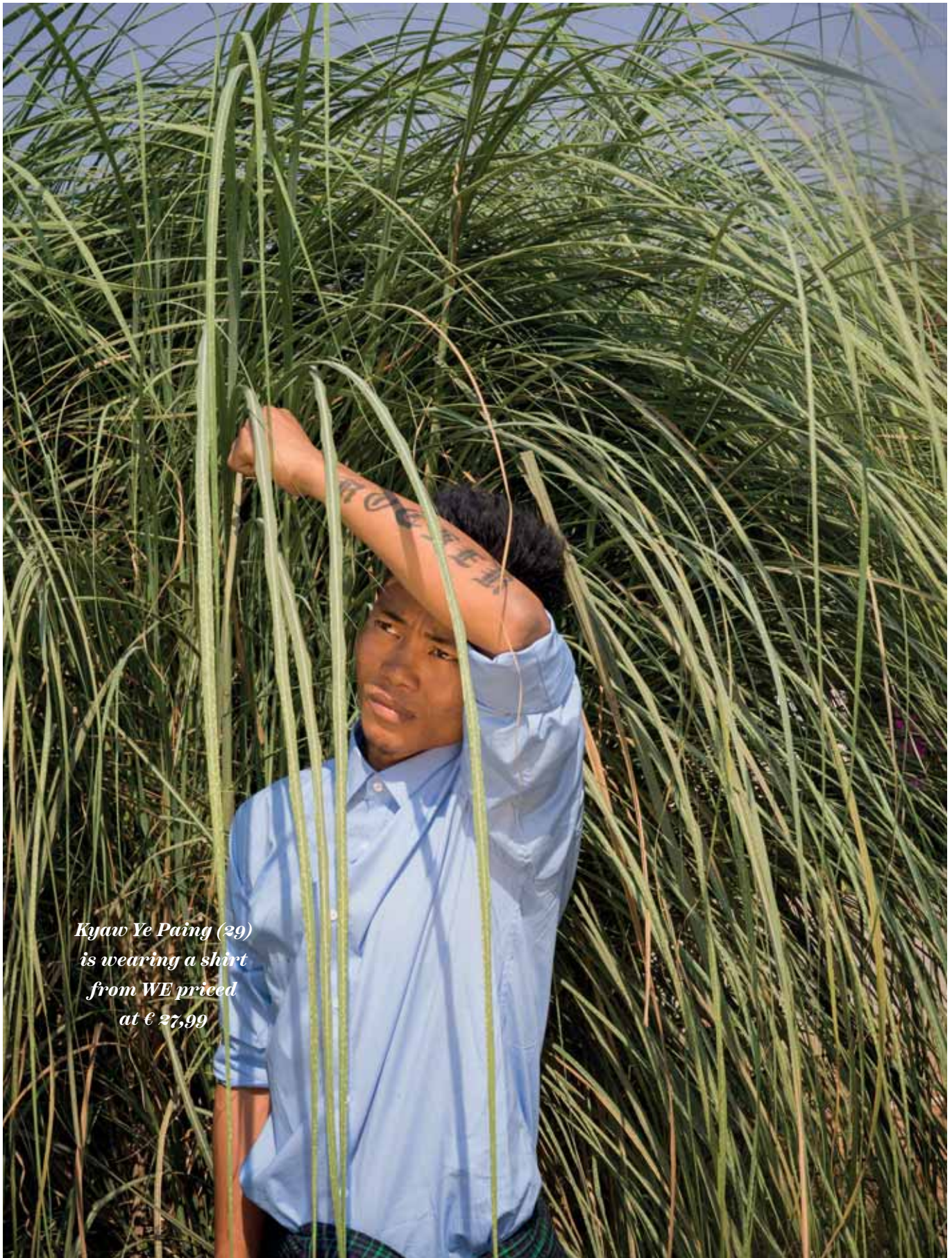
*Khine Thazin (22)  
is wearing a hoody  
from H&M priced  
at € 19,99*

*Chris bought a bag full of clothes from H&M and WE in the Netherlands, which, according to the labels, were made in Myanmar. In Myanmar he approached garment workers through unions in two factories in Yangon, which produce for H&M, among others. He let the clothing workers decide for themselves what to put on and where to pose. They chose beloved places like a temple or a swimming pool or their own bedroom. But they preferred not to pose in a hostel provided by their employer. In a country where superintendents yell at you and throw irons at your head, this could just be a reason for dismissal.*

*The clothing workers were very interested in the clothes Chris was carrying. What label was in them, how were they stitched? Sometimes they might well have made one of the garments themselves. They were amazed at what Dutch consumers pay for them. For the price of one snappy little jacket from WE, they have to work some ten twelve-hour days. It is therefore not surprising that Myanmar clothing workers rarely wear what they make themselves. As a thank you for posing, they were allowed to keep their chosen garment. Did posing still spark the desire to become a fashion model? Chris laughs: “No, most of them want to start their own clothing workshop. They are really proud of their profession.”*







*Kyaw Ye Paing (29)  
is wearing a shirt  
from WE priced  
at € 27,99*



## Fifteen years of Stop Child Labour

# 63 thousand reasons for a celebration

**In the first fifteen years of its existence, the coalition Stop Child Labour (SCL) has made a visible contribution to the global reduction in child labour worldwide. 63 thousand child workers have been helped into school. "63 thousand reasons to celebrate", is how SKA-coordinator Sofie Ovaa refers to it. This century, the number of children in child labour dropped from nearly 250 million to 152 million worldwide..**

Mondiaal FNV is one of the founding members of SCL, which also comprises the General Education Union (AOB), Arisa, Kerk in Actie (Church in Action) & ICCO Cooperation and Stichting Kinderpostzegels Nederland (Child Welfare Stamps). The coordination is in the hands of Hivos. 'School, the best place to work', is the philosophy of SCL, which is not only better for the children themselves, but also for their parents. Child labour is an obstacle to decent work for adults and therefore perpetuates poverty. Because without child labour, adults are better positioned to negotiate for better salaries and working conditions.

An important resource used by SCL are child labour-free zones, areas where the entire community works together to eradicate child labour. Together with local partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America, SCL has been able to designate several such zones. An example of these can be found in Torkor, in Ghana. Traditionally, children in Torkor have been set to work in fishing from an early age. With the support of Mondiaal FNV, the General Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU) helps, in particular by establishing second-chance education programmes. As a result, children from Torkor now go to university and have even managed to become ICT professionals, chemists and fashion designers".

### Improved education

The fight against child labour has had a number of positive secondary effects. For example, in Mali it has resulted in a decline in the number of child marriages. Girls in Mali frequently stop going to school prematurely in order to earn money for their dowries. Teachers are now successfully convincing parents that it is best for them to let their daughters finish their education before they get married. Children sometimes work in gold mines at five years of age. This number is now decreasing.

The Dutch teaching union AOb supports the Malinese education union SNEC in this approach. "You can't just grab children off the street or out of a company", says Trudy Kerperien, International Secretary of the AOb. "The basic principle is to keep pupils in school as far as possible and to get children who stop work back in the classroom as quickly as possible. Teachers are given training in a more child-friendly approach, improved teaching methods, better communication with the parents and information on the backgrounds of factors underlying causes of child labour. The school environment is tackled: walls are given a lick of paint, the mess is tidied up and the playground is fitted out with equipment. Out-of-school activities, such as sports events, make education more enjoyable."

Research into the approach adopted in countries like Mali demonstrated that as a result the education improved qualitatively, the school drop-out rate fell, pleasure in attending school increased and a stronger sense of community was created. The participating teachers felt better qualified and abandoned the traditional teaching methods. The unions themselves also benefitted: their membership increased and the relationship with the school management, the parents and the community improved, as did the social dialogue with the government. ■







Participants in the symposium ...



... 15 years of Stop Kinderarbeid ...



... on 23 May in The Hague.

## — Selfie —



Annie Francis, Mondiaal FNV  
consultant in Ethiopia

### *Annie will miss it*

*“When I began as Mondiaal FNV representative in Ethiopia in 2016, the country was buzzing with optimism: a new Labour Law was in the air, which would modernise the old-fashioned working conditions in Ethiopia. The bill, however, caused a shock: instead of improvements, the new law was much worse. It would be mainly the foreign investors who would get what they wanted. For example, it would be much easier for employers to dismiss someone.”*

*“The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) would not stand for this. In the past few years this confederation has been leading the fight against the new law. I remember once meeting a union leader, who said: ‘Maybe we’ll end up in prison, but we’ll stop this law getting passed. At whatever the cost.’”*

*Funding by Mondiaal FNV has enabled CETU to organise support among the nine union federations and their members. More than anything, the support by Mondiaal FNV provided a moral boost. The fight was finally over last June. A new Labour Law was passed incorporating most of the trade union demands. These included some kind of provision for maternity leave and for combating sexual violence. The law also offered scope for the establishment of a Wage Board in which employees, employers and government would be able to discuss the minimum wage. This was unheard of when I first began here.”*

*“This year, in 2020, I will be retiring. I’m certainly going to miss it. I will be succeeded by an energetic young woman, Tsinu Amdeselassie. Tsinu is a lawyer and gender activist. She is great. You’ll definitely be hearing from her.”*

FNV's Vice President Kitty Jong  
on 'just transition'

# An activist disguised as a woman

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Photos: Harmen de Jong







**FNV Kitty Jong holds the portfolio for energy transition on the FNV Executive Board. This is a challenging issue, because it will lead to lot of work disappearing or changing. It also has international dimensions -- take, for example, the coal we import. How does she envisage a just and fair transition, an energy transition without any negative social consequences?**

*To begin by giving yourself a bit of flesh and bone for the benefit of the reader, you may choose from among the following terms: diplomat, nagger, stirrer-upper, protector-of-interests, holder-together-of-everything, wave-maker, sacred-cow-toppler.*

"Deep in my heart I am an activist by nature, but I am often seen as a diplomat. You could say, I am an activist disguised as a woman. On the Executive Board I am known as being a live wire. I am passionate, cannot bear to see injustice, and place a greater emphasis on the conflict model than on the harmony model. At the same time, I try not to forget what my way of thinking was in times past. As an active union member, I was always allergic to 'getting people on board'. You have to listen to people and through dialogue arrive at decisions, but not 'get them on board'."

*Becoming Vice President of the FNV, was that something you used to dream of when you were a little girl?*

"Ha ha, no it wasn't. But I do come from a traditional trade union background and grew up in the 'red' Zaan region. My father was a construction worker and, like my mother, was a dedicated union member. He even went as far as not speaking to fellow workers who weren't union members. I grew up with it, so to speak."

*What did you want to become then?*

"Chief Commissioner of Police. Seriously, that was my answer when the Bishop asked me that at my confirmation when I was an eleven-year-old. He also asked me if I wanted to be mounted, but I don't know any more what I answered. I evidently already had leadership ambitions."

*You then went on to study Arabic. Where did that come from?*

"That was my father's idea. There was a large Turkish community in Zaandam. Many of them were working on the construction of De Heel Medical Centre. My father was very angry about how badly they were treated. I'd first enrolled to study law, but that course had an enrolment restriction. My next idea was to study Turkish. It was only when I came home with the course portfolio with all kinds of 'weird' squiggles on it that I found out that the main subject was Arabic, ha ha."

***In the end you did all kinds of other things.***

"I thought I'd go on doing something with Arabic for the rest of my life, but that's not what happened. Amongst other things, I've been a commercial administrative assistant in the offshore industry. At the beginning of this century I decided my career needed to be more structured so I applied to the Free University of Amsterdam and became administrative secretary of the Works Council in 2006. That's how I got into employee participation. My CV is rather chaotic, but in the end, everything had a part to play in my doing what I do now. I've done flex work, been involved in pregnancy discrimination, set up a works council ..... People with chaotic CVs shouldn't despair."

***But by your 52<sup>nd</sup> you knew what it was to be.***

"Yes, that's right. Of course, from a very early age I was involved in trade unionism, but it was at this point that I felt a need to help shape its direction. As I saw it, the focus of the FNV had narrowed too much. I talked to Executive Board members, who said that we needed to concentrate on our core task, negotiating collective labour agreements. Whereas in times past we'd been busy protesting against apartheid and cruise missiles. I was disappointed not to hear the voice of the FNV in the refugee debate. I'm all for the FNV as a broad-based civil society organisation. So, I thought to myself: this is my FNV too. So, let's do something about it."

“

***As a country we  
cannot simply  
wash our hands  
of them***

”

***Within the FNV Executive Board you are responsible for energy policy/sustainability, meaning that you are occupied with the energy transition. How optimistic are you about this?***

"This is set to become a major issue. It is being treated as a mainly technological topic, but I see energy transition in the first place as being a societal matter. As a trade union we have to play our part. This is also our responsibility to others in the world, climate refugees for example. As a country we cannot simply wash our hands of them. We are the cause of entire areas becoming uninhabitable. Climate racism is a reality. Women are suffering disproportionately from climate

change ... I think this is really something that trade unions should involve themselves in. It's in our fundamental principles, after all.

"But for us as trade union obviously the main focus is on work and income. I am seriously concerned about the underexposed position of workers. It has been calculated that as a result of the energy transition in the Netherlands, a quarter of a million jobs will disappear but that at the same time a quarter of a million new jobs will be generated. However, these are not interchangeable: it's a question of different work, in different sectors, in different regions. It won't all happen by itself. What also has to be avoided is that in new sectors, such as offshore wind, where as yet there is no collective agreement, pointless jobs start appearing. In climate circles we refer to employees as 'hands'. Not only does this demonstrate little respect for the workers, but attached to those hands there are lives and families. The end, saving the climate, would appear to justify the means. And the workers are the means. But you can only make a transition like this a success if you offer people a perspective for action, a prospect of good work, education and personal control."

***Which is why you are working for 'just transition', an energy transition without any negative social consequences. The closure of the Hemweg plant in Amsterdam was a first test case. What have the effects of this test been?***

"We have high hopes of a positive outcome. A coal fund has been set up, funded by the government, offering employees new opportunities. The Hemweg social plan will be funded from this. Employees in the coal chain who have lost their jobs through closure of the Hemweg plant will be provided with support in the job-to-job process, have access to training, and receive a supplement to their income if they lose out financially. The final official seal of approval is set to be given shortly."

***After the closure of the mines in Limburg not everyone was given adequate employment. Why should things be any different now?***

"Because now, we're carrying out the social plan in conjunction with the employers' organisation AAVN and the benefit agency UWV. The remarkable thing about the coal fund is that it's the employee who has control. This has never been so pronounced before. This is different from when the UWV takes the lead, because that then forces you in a particular direction. Somebody in the coal chain who wants to get into, say, health care, will be able to. We expect that, in the end, between forty and fifty people will be able to make use of this plan. It is a pilot in which the just transition is clearly defined."

***The Dutch coal plants, like the Hemweg plant, source most of their coal from Colombia. This means that the closures here impact on Colombian coal miners. Will the coal funds compensate them as well?***





### Who is Kitty Jong?

In 2017, Kitty Jong (1964) was elected to the FNV Executive Board as the first active union member. She is Vice President of this Board and holds the portfolios health care, working conditions, energy policy/ sustainability, diversity, social security and employee participation/corporate governance. She is also President of the Social Alliance, a collaboration of several dozen organisations working to combat poverty in the Netherlands. Previously, among her other positions, Kitty was local councillor for the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) in Weesp. She has a reconstituted family with five children.

"No, it won't. The Dutch government feeds the fund, which is intended for people in the coal chain in the Netherlands. The problem you're referring to needs to be tackled on a larger scale. Though what we are doing is not irrelevant for them: they can still take this as an example."

### **But we do have an international responsibility, surely?**

"In general, yes, we do. Worldwide we are number four in terms of ecological footprint, above India and China. We congratulate ourselves about our electric cars, but guess where the waste batteries are dumped."

### **So, you'll be flagging up the issue of the Colombian miners?**

"I have raised the international aspects in a conversation with Diederik Samsom (who assists European Commissioner Frans Timmermans with his Green Deal, ed.). Europe is faced with a tremendous challenge, in which it is especially important for all parties to begin to realise how the energy transition can have a positive impact on all people in all countries. Sometime this summer, the plans for Europe have to be ready, as I understand it. Europe has the ambition to be the model continent for the rest of the world."

### **In addition, there is the problem of the coal extraction under atrocious working conditions. It is not for nothing that it is called 'blood coal'. Shouldn't this be tackled side by side with energy transition?**

"The problematics involved are gigantic. And yes, indeed, it's better to deal with both these issues side by side. On the other hand: it took us four years to get one small fund for the Hem-

weg plant set up. You also need to think effectively and strategically. And that works better with small, clear-cut projects. Which you can, in turn, export to countries like Colombia."

### **What role can Mondiaal FNV play here?**

"Mondiaal FNV can keep me on my toes regarding the links with, for instance, international corporate social responsibility and trade treaties. Because everything affects everything else."

### **What about your own energy, where do you get it from?**

"From the people around me, the members, the active union members and the colleagues. We are not always in agreement, but together you always arrive at good ideas. I am approached about this specific dossier on an almost weekly basis by members who have begun an energy transition workgroup in a trade union house. This illustrates that the subject is very much alive. It is motivational. There are also days when a job like this weighs heavily on me. A climate agreement and the diversity agreement that we're now working on are both sensitive issues. Finding the right balance between the members for whom the transition is a potential threat and the members who, on the other hand, see opportunities there; that's what sometimes keeps me awake at night." ■

**>> See page 30 for more on just transition and the energy transition in Colombia**

# Added Bonus!



Nice and  
creamy

Spread that peanut butter on nice and thick. It's chock full of vegetable fat, like palm oil, so good for heart and blood vessels. The palm oil workers in Asia will be happy at that. After all, they have work with permanent dangers. But those very dangers bring out the greatest creativity in them. For example, they knit their own gloves to protect themselves from the pesticides they use - pesticides that we've forbidden. And walking along with a heavy spraying tank like that on your back makes you even stronger, right? And those palm plantations look a whole lot neater than all that messy rain forest. In a word, don't look at the label, just spread on an extra layer of that palm fat.

Mondiaal FNV works with local NGOs and trade unions in countries like Indonesia to improve the working conditions on palm oil plantations.

Social Monologue  
Course Colombia

'Shoot first,  
talk later'

Always wanted to gag your employees?  
Always had a dislike for trade unions?  
Specially for employers, there's a course on 'social monologue'. Colombia style!

**Tips from the teaching material:**

- Only give workers short-term contracts
- Sack workers who want to join a union
- Set up a union for your employees yourself: that makes communication so much easier
- Send threatening letters to union activists

And don't forget the golden rule for every Colombian employer: shoot first, talk later!

**Mondiaal FNV supports social dialogue in six countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.**

'in close  
association with  
army and para-  
militaries!'



**Job placement for the  
little ones:**

Help a child out  
of their school  
desks!

*Reactions from satisfied customers:  
"Wonderful how those tiny hands  
are able to do those fiddly jobs"  
"Quality for a small price"*

Employment agency 'Tiny hands' acts as intermediary in the employment of young workers. Are you a manager of a sewing sweatshop? Do you manage a cocoa plantation? Owner of a quarry? Consider hiring children. Children are particularly suited to precision handiwork; they'll fit through the tiniest opening in your quarry. Not only that, but they're suited to the strenuous work too: with their youthful enthusiasm they'll go on working when their parents have long grown tired. And: don't pay a penny more than you have to! Special offer: an extra sister or brother and get two for the price of one!

Mondiaal FNV has been involved in the coalition Stop Child Labour - School, the best place to work since 2005. Our work includes setting up child labour-free zones.



## Flowers love people

.....  
**Something you need to make amends for? Take a bunch of roses home with you.**

A good chance that they came from Uganda, by the way. And quite possibly picked by Joyce, or by Patience. Up to a couple of years ago, that wasn't something that made either woman feel particularly happy. Underpayment, sexual harassment and poor working conditions were the order of the day.

Or in other words: the roses for us, the thorns for them.

Nowadays things have improved. The workers in the flower sector became organised in the union UHISPAWU. This union successfully fought for higher wages and a constructive social dialogue. For Joyce and Patience, the future is looking rosy.

.....  
**The majority of the flower companies operating in Uganda are Dutch, and 80 percent of their production goes to the Netherlands. Mondiaal FNV helped flower union UHISPAWU with issues like how to bargain more effectively.**



# Added Bonus!



## Hind supports the protest

*“My highlight for 2019 was without any doubt the multi-day gender workshop in the Rwandan capital Kigali, organised by the Building and Wood Workers’ International BWI, in conjunction with the Rwandan construction workers’ union Stecoma. The three of us were from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region: two women from Tunisia and Egypt and myself. Since August, I’ve been the Mondiaal FNV consultant in the MENA region. I’m based in Lebanon.”*

*“The building sector is dominated by men, that’s no secret. A workshop on gender in the construction industry was an eye-opener for all present; not only women, but also men from East Africa. I was proud of my colleagues from Tunisia and Egypt: they spoke so convincingly about their position. I admired their strength and their bravery.”*

*“The workshop gave me an incentive to continue strengthening women’s leadership in the unions in my region. Including combatting sexual harassment in the workplace. It was clear that adopting the ILO convention on sexual violence in June 2019 has given everyone a boost.”*

*“The workshop took place at the end of October. In that period, people in Lebanon were going out onto the streets in protest against corruption and unemployment. On the last day, I asked those taking part if they’d all record a video as support for the protest movement. That was fantastic, especially when the East African participants broke into their Pacha Pacha solidarity song. I don’t know the words, but it was most impressive. We’ve shared the video via social media.”*

*In the MENA region, Mondiaal FNV supports trade unions in the area of social dialogue, gender and migration.*

# Projects worldwide

In 2019 Mondiaal FNV had 177 ongoing projects. This magazine includes examples of the projects and this map highlights a number of these.

## Surinam - AOb-fund Train the trainers

The AOb Teachers' Union supports teachers and education in Surinam. This is carried out in a train the trainers-programme, in conjunction with the Teachers' Association (BvL) at 'the Trade Union Academy'. By the end of the project, there were sufficient trainers in trade union education available for the Trade Union Academy and the wishes of the membership can be adequately responded to.

## Peru - TUCP Improving working conditions in export agriculture

The asparagus, avocados, mangos from Peru are in plentiful supply in our shops. The fruit and vegetable sector in Peru is therefore one of the sectors in which Mondiaal FNV wishes to improve the working conditions in the chain. In this project, trade unions are strengthened and mature industrial relations are built with four of the biggest companies (total number of employees: 36,847). In two companies we support the organisation of the employees. Furthermore, our partners are focusing on improving the special labour law relating to the sector and we are endeavouring to improve the dialogue and working conditions throughout the sector, including by influencing companies in the chain, many of which are Dutch.

## Colombia - FNV Solidarity fund Strengthening fisherwomen

The Colombian transport union SNTT stands up for fisherwomen. These women work in the informal, small-scale fishing industry; sometimes on their own and sometimes with their husbands. SNTT helps these women to organise and voice their demands vis-à-vis local and national authorities. The project is taking place in Sanquianga, an isolated area that for a long time now has been plagued by violence on the part of the guerrilla movement FARC and drug criminals. The FNV-sector involved is WIS-Women's network. The Transport sector is also involved.

## Ghana & Ivory Coast - Mondiaal FNV Fund Cooperation on social dialogue and influencing of government

This project is about the cooperation between partners in Ghana and, to a lesser degree, Ivory Coast. With the exception of meetings and discussions with the partners, there are activities to give further momentum to the new programme, which focuses on social dialogue as well as on the cocoa chain. The project also focuses on strengthening the capacity of partners to influence government policy. Exchanges and training programmes are organised on social dialogue and on cocoa.





**Kuwait & Lebanon - FNV Solidarity fund**  
**Stopping violence, including sexual violence, against domestic workers**

This project, organised by International Domestic Workers Federation IDWF maps out in various ways the problems faced by domestic workers in Kuwait (particularly the female migrants from the Philippines) and Lebanon (particularly the female migrants from Sri Lanka). Their situation is harrowing: they are 'invisible', without any rights at all. IDWF works in Kuwait with an association of Philippine domestic workers and in Lebanon with an association of Sri-Lankan domestic workers. The focus of the project is on stopping violence, including sexual violence, against women.

**Myanmar - Strategic Partnership**  
**Strengthening the textile union**

As part of the Strategic Partnership with CNV International, the Fair Wear Foundation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we support the strengthening of the biggest textile union federation in Myanmar, IWF, to make them better able to stand up for the workers in the garment industry. This relates, among other things, to new ways of organising in order to increase membership numbers, enlarge negotiation skills of leaders at factory level and enter into more collective labour agreements. In addition, the aim of IWF and the confederation CTUM is for this project to increase their lobbying power at national level and build a stronger position in tripartite discussions.

**Ethiopia & Uganda - TUCP**  
**How decent is my flower?**

In this project, the WageIndicator Foundation, in conjunction with local unions in Ethiopia and Uganda, collects facts about the living wage and terms of employment in the flower sector and makes these accessible to unions and workers. In addition, WageIndicator Foundation organises debates on these issues for the social partners. Thanks to this work, the unions have access to accurate data enabling them to bargain effectively on wages and working conditions.

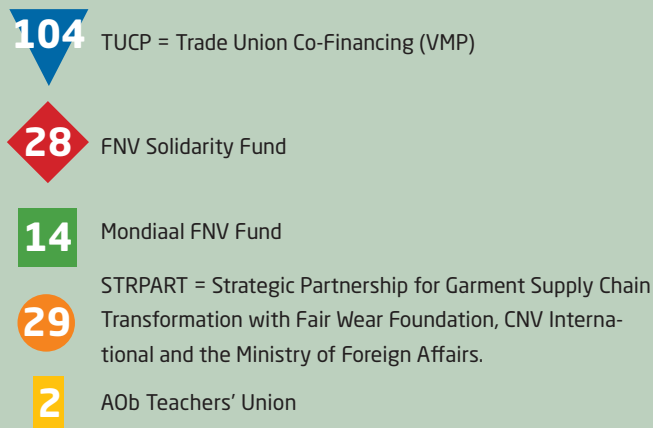
**Indonesia - TUCP**  
**Standing up for the self-employed**

SINDIKASI is a young union that focuses on freelancers in the media and in cultural professions. The union endeavours to increase the degree of organisation of freelancers and to professionalise their own organisation. The goal is a sustainable union which, on behalf of the self-employed, is able to play a leading role in social dialogue with government and clients. SINDIKASI also takes part in our social dialogue programme, in developing knowledge and strategy in times of robotisation and digitalisation.

**Nepal - TUCP**  
**Social dialogue for porters and guides**

The tourism sector is of great importance to Nepal. In particular, the mountain climbers in the Himalaya area provide employment for the porters and guides in remote areas. Their working conditions are, however, far from optimal. The only trade union federation for these workers, UNITRAV, endeavours by means of social dialogue at company as well as national level, to improve these conditions. With the introduction of the federal system in Nepal, social dialogue will also be conducted at provincial and local level. Via training and research, UNITRAV provides assistance to its members in these new forms of social dialogue.

**Number of projects per fund in 2019\***



\*Based on disbursements.

Double portrait from  
the seed sector

# There

# Here

*Dutch Nico (63) and Indian Sakri (45) both do work involving tomato seed. But that's where the similarity ends. The seed sector in India differs enormously from that in The Netherlands. We asked Nico and Sakri what their working day looks like, what they earn and what happens if they're ill.*

Photos: Roderick Polak



### What kind of work do you do?

**NICO** "As seed cleaning manager at seed company Hazera, I am responsible for the extraction process, the cleaning and drying of the seeds and the storage."

**SAKRI** "I grow tomato seeds for the international market on half a hectare of land. Besides that, I sometimes do work for landlords on a daily-wage basis and I arrange work for fellow villagers."

### What does an average working day look like?

**NICO** "No one day is the same, but my working hours are constant. I begin at eight o'clock. Sometimes I sit at my pc and answer e-mails, but I'm often on the shop floor too. I supervise staff, adjust machinery and monitor the processes. I hold consultations with fellow departmental managers. In addition, I visit machinery suppliers. At around 16.30 hrs I get in my car and go home."

**SAKRI** "Early in the mornings, fellow villagers phone me to ask whether I know of any work, or a landlord phones to let me know he's got a big job going. I make my breakfast and go out to the fields. What I do depends very much on the season. At the moment I'm doing weeding and making sure that the tomatoes are doing ok. I carry on till the work is finished. When it's dark, at about six o'clock, I walk home and work is done for the day."

### How many hours a week do you work?

**NICO** "Officially, 38.5 hours. But in practice, I work forty hours and I save up 1.5 hours for extra days off or else opt for financial compensation: it's up to me. During busy periods, I do overtime. The overtime hours are compensated in time off. What is more, there is a generous compensation for this that is way above what has been agreed in the collective agreement."

**SAKRI** "In fact, we can only grow anything for eight months in the year. During these months, I work hard: from eight in the morning to five or six in the evening. It is hard work physically, especially in the harvest season. In the other four months we have no work or income, so we have to make sure we have enough food and money at these times."

### How much do you earn?

**NICO** "My salary is in CBA scale F max, which is around 3,000 euros a month. In addition to my fixed salary, I receive a personal allowance and have my reduction in working hours allowance paid out on a monthly basis. If I do overtime, I can have it paid out or take it as time off."

**SAKRI** "Last year, the harvest was very disappointing: we recouped less than half of our investment of 50,000 rupees (over 600 euros). When I work for landlords, I earn 200 rupees (2.50 euros) a day. You can't live on that as a family."

### Do you ever lose any sleep over your work?

**NICO** "I don't have any targets, but I do have deadlines. Sometimes you get really close to the mark. For example, the cabbage has to be cleaned and calibrated mid-September and ready for transport to Spain, where the sowing season is then about to begin. At these times we work long hours. But lose any sleep over it ... no, fortunately I don't."

**SAKRI** "I often worry about our high debts. Year after year we try to get a higher price for the seeds. But the price is raised very little, if at all. In the end, it's the big companies that rake in all the profits while the risks are ours."

### What happens if you're ill?

**NICO** "Five years ago, I suffered a cardiac arrest. While I was recovering, I was drawing sickness benefit and didn't have to worry about my salary. When I was back at work, part of my work was transferred to a colleague, to relieve my workload to some extent."

**SAKRI** "If I'm ill, the work simply carries on as normal. I only stay at home if I really can't work. This means that my other family members have to work extra hard: the work just has to be done and we can't afford to hire in other people."

### When will you be retiring?

**NICO** "I'll be retiring in about four years: then I'll be over 67. I'm saving for this in a pension fund: I contribute part myself, and part comes from the employer. But in the meantime, I'm still enjoying it. I absolutely look forward to going to work every day!"

**SAKRI** "When I'm sixty, I'm entitled to a benefit from the government of 25 euros a month. But I can't live from that, so I'll keep on going for as long as I can. If I absolutely can't any longer, I hope my daughters will be willing to take care of me: that is the custom in India."

### What do you do for the union?

**NICO** "I am on the CLA committee for Garden Seeds and am member of the FNV working group FNV International Industry and Agriculture. We monitor compliance with CBA legislation. I'm also on our company's works council."

**SAKRI** "I am unit leader in my village and take part in discussions with, for instance, the local authority. We have managed to get the daily wage for women raised from 160/170 to 200 rupees (2.50 euros)."

### What do you know about your colleague in India/The Netherlands?

**NICO** "In 2018 together with a delegation of FNV Agrarisch Groen (agricultural and green sectors), we visited the seed sector in India. It was shocking to see the conditions under which people there work. Because they are people working in the same sector, it comes very close to home."

**SAKRI** "I have no idea at all which company our seeds are sold to. An intermediary is the link between us and the big seed companies. I sometimes hear Syngenta, Pioneer and C.P.S. mentioned. But I have no idea what work is like in the Netherlands."



# *Just transition* as export product

*He's just back from Australia, where he was speaking at a trade union conference on 'just transition', a fair energy transition without any negative social consequences. In November, Cees Bos, FNV Havens official, spoke in Colombia on the same subject. 'Just transition' is increasingly becoming a topic for international trade union cooperation.*



In the Dutch coalition agreement, it was agreed that all coal plants must be shut down by 2030, and that one would be closed during the current legislative period. This has in the meantime become a reality: in December 2019, the Amsterdam Hemweg plant emitted its last steam clouds.

A 'coal fund' was created, partly thanks to the efforts of the FNV. The 22 million euros currently in the fund are intended for retraining, support towards new employment and compensation for loss of income for people in the coal chain who lose their jobs. This only relates to Dutch coal workers: other countries will have to fund their own 'just transition'.

### **Blood coal**

The coal burned in the Netherlands not only comes from Russian and Polish mines but also from Colombian mines. The working conditions there are poor and the pollution levels high. Furthermore, during the armed conflict, mining companies were closely linked to paramilitary organisations that caused huge numbers of casualties, which is why human rights organisations speak of 'blood coal'.

In November, Colombia's first national meeting took place on a fair energy transition, organised by the FNV-partners USO, Sintracarbón and Sintraelecol, the largest unions in the Colombian energy and mining sector. Here, Cees Bos

talked about his experiences with our coal fund.

Now, after his return, he is of the opinion that a 'just transition' in Colombia will be different from the form it takes here in the Netherlands. The government will not be in any hurry to establish a coal fund. Cees Bos: "The funds for retraining will have to come from collective agreement negotiations. But then you have to be in a position to make demands. Which means that the union membership density will need to be increased. I realise that it's easy for me as a Dutch union official to say that. Our colleagues in South America are being imprisoned and threatened and have to be constantly on the alert for their safety. I am also pressing for a dialogue: put trade unions from the fossil energy sector at the table with European colleagues to together make a roadmap to a fair energy transition. However, the best strategy with regard to the energy transition is to not resist, but to arrange compensation and have employees think about alternatives: if my current job comes to an end, what will I do then? Work in electric transport, in health care? It's largely a process of acceptance and awareness."

### **Lively meeting**

Elvira Willems of Mondiaal FNV, responsible for the FNV projects in Colombia, was also at the meeting. "This was the first time that our partners had held a national

meeting on equitable energy transition. This was preceded by six regional meetings. The national meeting was extremely lively, with over 230 participants from a wide variety of bodies: international and national trade unions, environmental groups, farmers' organisations, communities experiencing the negative impact of mining and oil extraction, academic researchers, and so on. What was unique in the case of Colombia was the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Mining and Energy and oil company Ecopetrol. Sometimes there was a clash of opinions, but the good thing was that all the stakeholders were at the table together. The trade unionists there were particularly impressed by what Cees Bos had to say and his message of 'organise, unite and fight'. They will absolutely be incorporating that in their 'just transition'." ■

**Mondiaal FNV is actively engaged on the Paris objectives, the 2015 United Nations climate treaty, and is carrying out the wish of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to integrate climate action into development cooperation. In October 2019, Mondiaal FNV organised a workshop on how to achieve 'just transition' in countries like Colombia, the Philippines, South Africa, India, Nigeria, Kenya and Indonesia. In Colombia, Mondiaal FNV supports a platform of unions in the mining and energy sector, environmental groups, farmers, indigenous peoples and other social organisations. The platform is conducting a national dialogue on the future of the mining and energy sector. The intention is that this will ultimately lead to common proposals that are good for workers, the environment and the economy alike.**

Miner in the 'El Pedregal' mine in Colombia

# 5

## questions

### *about measuring & knowing in the trade union world*



# 2

Mondiaal FNV supports trade unions in a range of sectors worldwide. How do we actually know whether this is of any use? Rob Witte, policy officer for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning, on “measuring is knowing”.

# 1

#### **What does Rob Witte do exactly?**

“Within Mondiaal FNV I am responsible for the ‘measuring and knowing’ of the projects in all the countries.” He laughs: “To put it somewhat irreverently, it’s my job to make sure people fill in their Excel sheets, to see if we are actually achieving the results that we are planning. This is what monitoring is: the day-by-day crossing off of the steps we are taking. Besides that, I’m also engaged on the wider programme. Whether we achieve the objectives in the long term and in particular how. We do this via evaluations.”

*‘Het is balanceren tussen activisme en diplomatie’*

#### **What kind of things are measured?**

“You can measure progress by attaching indicators to particular objectives. As to whether progress is being achieved in training union members, that can for instance be seen from the number of training courses given and how many people took part in them. Hmm, when I look at the Excel-sheets, then there are about twenty indicators in the short term, such as the number of participants in a training course. And as for the process of negotiating, then you’re another thirty indicators further. To be honest: it’s sometimes all rather an indicator soup. But at least it enables you to broadly measure progress. A concrete result is for example a new collective bargaining agreement. But the one collective agreement cannot be compared with the other. You have labour agreements at all sorts of levels and in all sorts of sectors. What it all boils down to is: what, actually, are better wages, better relations on the work floor and better working hours? What counts is the logic behind every project in the context of the specific country. And this in particular is what is looked at by the local consultants and the project officers. I’m further removed from that.”

# 3

#### **What works in the trade union world? What can be learned?**

“Within the trade union world, it is fairly easy to say what, or rather ‘who’ can make a difference: in the first place the employer who is open to negotiations, and in the second place, the government by means of legislation. Trade union work is all about encouraging members to be active. By developing knowledge and negotiating skills, you gain added clout as a union. Fortunately, it’s taken as a matter of course that trade unions have a place at the negotiation table. For ‘ordinary’ civil-society organisations it is much more challenging to secure a place at the table.” “In union work, it’s all about balancing between activism and diplomacy. As trade union, you want to mobilise your members to such an extent that they’re willing to stick their necks out, for example by going on strike and demonstrating. It is tempting to treat the employer and government as enemy figures. The difficulty in doing so is: those are the very people that you have to try and get to the table. You also need to be able to see their interests too.”



# 4

## What examples are there of good results?

After some thought, Rob says. "Difficult question, so many good things I could mention! Well, take the palm oil sector. Over the past few years, we have worked extremely hard to get trade union freedom in this sector on the agenda in Colombia, for example. And it is quite incredible: in the midst of all the repression and violence, the plantation union and an employer have nonetheless had the courage to enter into a social dialogue. And have managed to get improvements laid down in the collective labour agreement. It shows that it is possible. That you can break through the existing situation."

# 5

## What is the situation in terms of the Mondiaal FNV support?

"In some countries it is difficult, but in principle, members pay a membership fee to the union, so it is important that you as union show what use you as union can be to them and that you are accountable to them. But if more than half of the money comes from external sources, then that relationship becomes tricky. We therefore encourage partners to be accountable to their own members. And to give thought to how they will in time be able to break away from their dependence on donor resources.

"At the same time, there is incredible power in the north-south exchange. As Mondiaal FNV, we enlist the aid of Dutch trade union experts. Local trade unions learn how Dutch negotiators tackle issues and, vice versa, we learn what is going on in a particular country. Please take note: the palm oil chain extends right through to our biscuits and detergents. Or take our clothes, made in Bangladesh. We managed to get people in the Netherlands into dialogue on issues in countries over there. All the various individuals taking part in consultations at all the various levels, that is the strength of our work." ■

**Under the Engine Bonnet** Every half year, the consultants discuss with the Mondiaal FNV partners what outcomes have been achieved. This is published in the half-yearly report. During the course of evaluations, independent evaluators hold talks with the partners, with trade union leaders and with representatives of employers and governments. They assess whether Mondiaal FNV and partners have made a significant contribution to the outcomes achieved, such as changes in legislation or sector-wide agreements.

## — Selfie —

## *Eutropia sees self- confidence grow*



*"It was during the conference in the Netherlands on social dialogue last autumn. Large numbers of partners had come together from all corners of the world. They were sharing their experiences in social dialogue in their countries. I realised then how much self-confidence has grown in the last few years."*

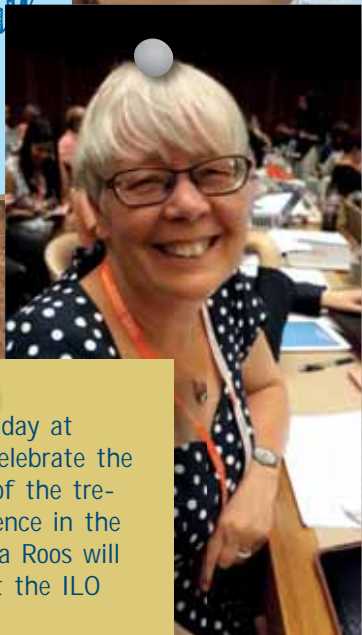
*"In many countries social dialogue was already a well-known concept. In Ghana, for example, people have been involved in social dialogue for a long time now. But usually this was limited to for example conversations about the minimum wage. Or else people would wait patiently until the government took the initiative in opening talks. The Ghanaians' presentation during the conference was most impressive. Social dialogue in Ghana has broadened tremendously and focuses on much more than only the minimum wage. Recently in Ghana, for example, a platform has been created where employees, employers and government are able to discuss the social economic policy."*

*"We've come a long way since 2017. I was at that time involved in developing programmes on social dialogue in several African countries. I remember how uncertain people were. 'What's the use of social dialogue to us!' The result has exceeded expectations. This year we're busy drawing up a new work plan on social dialogue. If you ask me, we should be putting more into strengthening interaction between the partners. The conference has taught me that trade unions from all parts of the world can above all learn a lot from each other."*

*In Africa Mondiaal FNV supports social dialogue in the East Africa and Ghana region.*



A happy person is half the work



A party next Friday at 17.00 hrs!! To celebrate the ILO's adoption of the treaty against violence in the workplace. Wilma Roos will be talking about the ILO negotiations!

*Greetings from Mount Everest*  
 'Stop violence in the world of work'. A banner bearing this text was unveiled on 23 May 2019 at a remarkable spot: the summit of Mount Everest! It was an action by Sherpa Lal Bahadur Jirel and the union Unitar. The Everest climb did not end well for Lal Bahadur Jirel. After his return he was treated in the hos



Don't forget for the demo on Saturday:

- 10,000 FNV caps
- Book Malievel d
- Sound system
- Banners
- Han's speech
- Arrange buses



Look, even trade union women in Colombia are wearing the FNV bandana! Greetings from Bogota, Cees Bos



Black Friday! -- Plein square in The Hague late last November was a temporary location giving everyone the opportunity to learn all about Fair Fashion in a most remarkable way. Sit down in front of a sewing machine, talk to the people behind the brands and meet a seamstress in Bangladesh via VR glasses. Organised by Mondiaal FNV, CNV International and the Fair Wear Foundation.

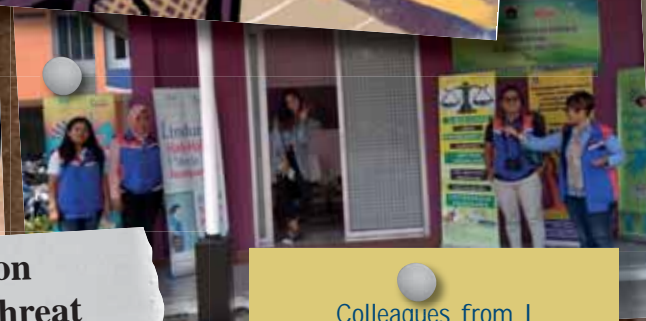
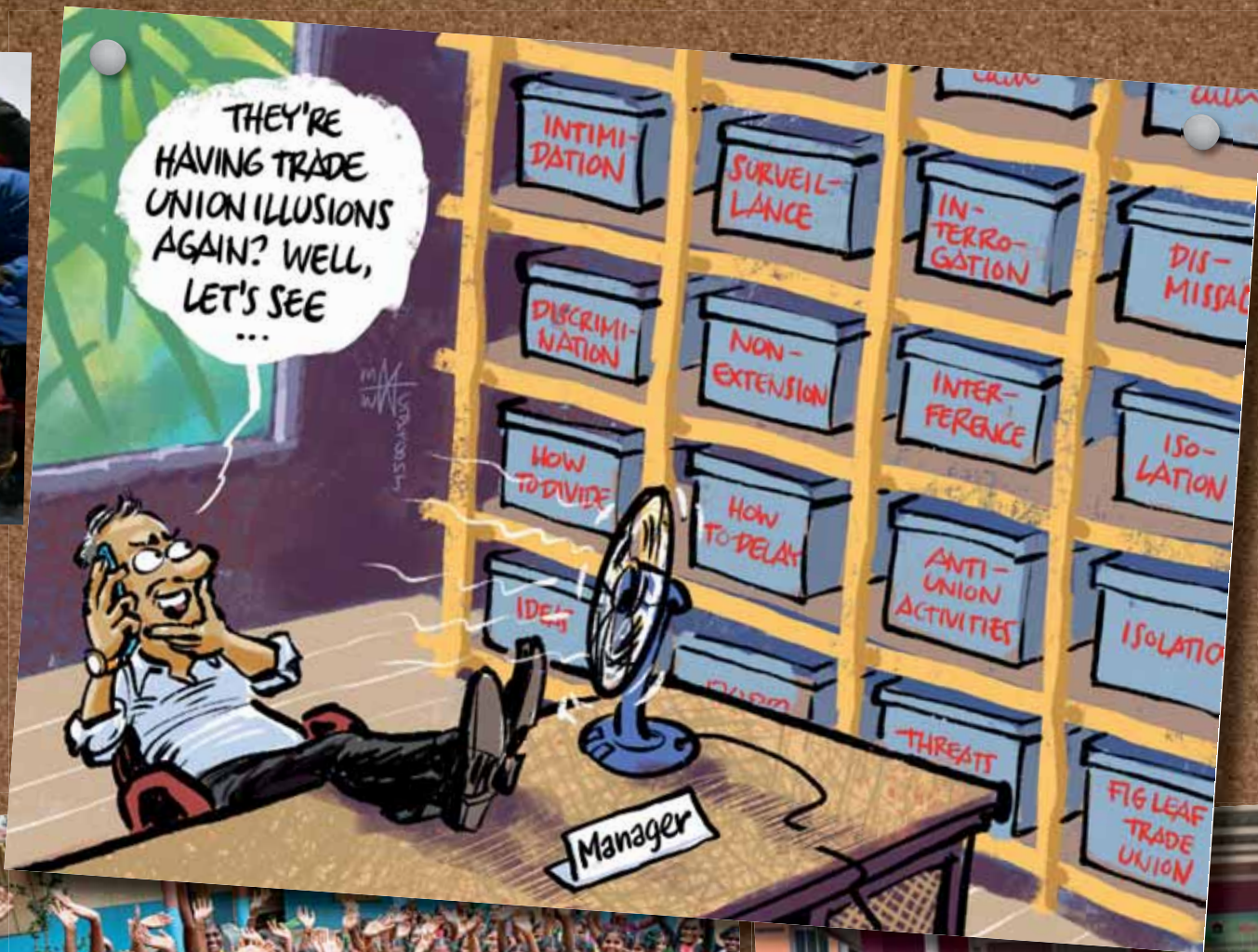


Greetings from Joop in India!

**SEEKING ACQUAINTANCE**

ACQUAINTANCE Employer in the cocoa industry, mid-Ghana, seeks employee for social dialogue, to see if it clicks. The utmost discretion please. Letters with passport photo under no 32467 of this publication.





### Colombian trade union leaders sent a death threat

Bogota, from our correspondent

On 11 May 2019, Igor Díaz, a member of the Colombian trade union Sintracarbón, received this death threat. Sintracarbón is a partner of Mondiaal FNV. It was triggered by a meeting by Igor and the other union activists named in the death threat with Dutch parliamentarians to discuss the situation in Colombia. The sender of the death threat is a right-wing paramilitary group calling itself Aguilas Negras (Black Eagles). In the pamphlet, Igor and his colleagues were given 48 hours to leave the country or else ...

Woman (46) seeks cleaning work. Neat and reliable. Good references. Good work for a reasonable rate. (also available for babysitting). Declared work only!

06 - 55 71 58 32  
06 - 55 71 58 32  
06 - 55 71 58 32  
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6 - 55 71 58 32

Colleagues from Indonesia report:  
*'At last, an office of their own for women where they can report harassment or sexual harassment!'*





**Jeanne Nyirarwesa,  
bricklayer from Rwanda**

# “They think we can’t do this kind of work”



**A female bricklayer? Huh? Jeanne Nyirarwesa from Rwanda often gets this kind of reaction. Followed by a rejection. Female painters, road makers and carpenters also have trouble getting a job in Rwanda. A further factor is that many building construction workers in Rwanda have no official diploma. They learned their trade in practice. To give the mainly the self-employed construction workers a stronger identity, the trade union Stecoma has begun on certification of construction workers. Meanwhile over two hundred women have such a certificate. “It’s now easy for me to show that I can actually do what I do.”**

“It used to be a great challenge to find enough work”, fifty-year-old Jeanne Nyirarwesa from Rwanda tell us. For twenty years now she has been working as a bricklayer and joiner. Since her husband was murdered during the genocide in 1994, she is the sole breadwinner for her five children. It is therefore especially important for this widow to have enough work. However, companies in the Rwandan construction sector mainly employ temporary workers. As a result, construction workers have to go looking for work on a day-to-day basis. This is even more challenging for women. “Many employers in the Rwandan construction sector do not take female workers very seriously”, says Jeanne. “They think we’re not capable of doing

this kind of work. I used to find it very difficult to convince employers that I really am a bricklayer and joiner. I’ve learned these skills in practice, which means I wasn’t able to provide any diplomas.” In 2008 - right after its foundation - Jeanne joined the Rwandan construction union Stecoma, which has been working with Mondiaal FNV for the last five years. “I heard that a union helps you during labour conflicts and tries to improve working conditions. Via the trade union, I also followed all kinds of training courses, for example in the area of safety: wearing a safety helmet, good shoes and an overall. I bought gear like this myself, because employers in Rwanda often don’t provide it.”

However, the Stecoma certification programme had the greatest impact. “Via Stecoma, I was able to take a practical exam in bricklaying and jointing five years ago, after which I received an official certificate stating that I possess these skills. This certificate makes me super happy. It’s now easy for me to prove that I can actually do what I do, which means that it’s much easier for me to persuade employers to hire me. I now have much more work, which means my life has improved a lot. I now no longer have a problem paying the rent, and I have taken out health insurance for the whole family. I have been able to send all my five children to secondary school. I also feel more self-confident in my work.” ■



## Trade union Stecoma experiencing unprecedented membership growth

The construction sector in Rwanda mainly employs informal construction workers who learned their skills in practice and do not have certificates.

The result is that they are taken less seriously by employers, are regularly underpaid and have difficulty finding enough work.

Five years ago, the Rwandan construction union Stecoma began on the certification of these informal construction workers in conjunction with Mondiaal FNV and the global union BWI. The construction workers' skills are tested during practical exams, after which they are awarded a certificate stating their skills. This official document enables construction workers to show which skills they possess. This means they can get more work, demand a fair wage and they're in a stronger position. Because female construction workers are often not taken seriously by many employers, they derive extra benefit from certification. With financial support from

Mondiaal FNV, Stecoma has been able to achieve certification for over two hundred women in the past five years.

The executive secretary of Stecoma, Jacques Sezikeye, tells us: "The support of Mondiaal FNV - in money and in training programmes - has strengthened our position vis-à-vis employers and government. This is important in our negotiations, for example on the minimum wage. Because we don't have that yet. Over the past five years, we've got 36 thousand construction workers through the certification process. This is something that is of real use to them. One result of this service that we offer the members is that our membership numbers have grown from two thousand to 53 thousand in the space of five years". In Rwanda, a total of some 600 thousand people are employed in the construction sector. After agriculture, it is the largest sector in the country.



## — Selfie — Samuel sees win-win options



*"The training courses we held over the past year for young trade union leaders were possibly the most effective. Some eighty young people took part in all. Among other things, they learned skills in mobilising workers. And in discovering and negotiating win-win opportunities when bargaining with employers. This latter training course was delivered by someone from DECP - a Dutch employers' organisation. The participants found this rather curious. But it did work.*

*"In one particular course there were older trade union leaders taking part. Jokes were made, on the lines of 'Watch out, when I've finished this course, I'm going to be taking your job!' The curious thing was that this did actually happen later in a couple of instances! Young people are slowly but surely taking over the important positions. The trade unions are modernising."*

*"The training in mobilisation methods for trade union members is important in Peru. Many unions are still organised in a very top-down way. People see their trade union merely as an organisation that delivers services. The young trade union leaders are working towards a trade union in which the members are active."*

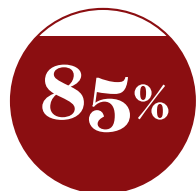
*"The modernised trade union in Peru has achieved a number of important outcomes by engaging in dialogue. Because employees and employers alike are seeking win-win options, results are produced quickly. Furthermore, employers and employees are able to tackle things on a joint basis. In health care for example. By taking concerted action, employees and employers are in a position to demand shorter waiting lists in health care. This means better health care for the workers, and for the employers less sickness absenteeism. You see: win-win."*

*In Peru Mondiaal FNV supports trade unions in strengthening and maintaining social dialogue, which in the past few years has been developed with employers' organisations. This is at national and company level.*

## Away with the union!

All over the world things are going badly for trade union rights. In its latest report, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) concludes that more and more countries are making it difficult or impossible to form a union or to join one. Arrests and detention of trade union members are on the increase. The worst region when it comes to trade union rights is North Africa/the Middle East. Colombia continues to be one of the most dangerous countries for trade unionists: two thirds of all murders of trade unionists took place there..

### Some worrying figures:



of the 145 countries investigated violate the right to strike;



of countries violate the right to collective bargaining;



72% of countries deny or restrict workers' access to justice.

## What is the situation in the countries supported by Mondiaal FNV?

In all the countries supported by Mondiaal FNV, trade union rights are violated to a greater or lesser degree. Colombia and Bangladesh are even among the top ten of the worst countries for working people. Mondiaal FNV also supports partners in the region with the greatest number of violations, Middle East/North Africa.

The lowest category, 'sporadic violation of trade union rights', does not contain any of the countries supported by Mondiaal FNV, but this category does include the Netherlands.

Source: International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC): the ITUC Global Rights Index 2019

Burundi	Absence of legal rights
Bangladesh	No guarantee of rights
Colombia	
India	
Indonesia	
Kenya	Systematic violations of rights
Lebanon	
Uganda	
Peru	
Tanzania	
Ghana	Regular violations of rights
Jordan	
Morocco	
Nepal	
Rwanda	
South-Africa	Repeated violations of rights

## Sixteen ways to get rid of trade unions

What kind of things do employers do to keep unions out? They are shown to be highly creative at this. The International Trade Union Federation ITUC, together with a number of international sectoral unions, listed the most frequently used methods in the report 'The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the human rights of workers to form or join trade unions and to bargain collectively'.

- 1 Interrogation of workers concerning their support for trade unions;
- 2 Surveillance of trade union activities;
- 3 Intimidation of workers by threatening the loss of their livelihood;
- 4 Intimidation of vulnerable workers such as migrant workers;
- 5 Physical intimidation of trade union supporters;
- 6 Screening for trade union supporters during recruitment;
- 7 Creating, circulating or using "blacklists" of trade union supporters;
- 8 Dismissal of trade union supporters;
- 9 Discrimination against trade union supporters through demotions, less favourable assignments, less favourable conditions of work, reduction of wages, benefits, opportunities for training, transfers, and relocation;
- 10 Non-extension of employment contracts to trade union supporters on fixed term and temporary employment;
- 11 Interference in the decision process by which workers choose whether to be represented by a trade union or by which they choose among different trade union organisations;
- 12 Devising and conducting anti-union campaigns
- 13 Actively pursuing legal and administrative delays in the process by which trade unions obtain recognition;
- 14 Isolation of workers from trade union representatives;
- 15 Establishing unofficial substitutes for independent and representative trade unions, such as works councils
- 16 Acting as if there is freedom of association whereas in reality worker's rights are not guaranteed.



## **‘As trade unionist you’re very likely to be seen as a rebel’**

**“Today, we’re honouring France Castro for her work in the Philippines to defend the rights of teachers and for her contribution to uniting them in a trade union.” With these words, FNV President Han Busker presented the FNV 2019 Febe Elizabeth Velásquez trade union rights award.**

### **A ‘rebel’ with a goal**

France Castro (1966) is a teacher and former Secretary General of the Philippine teachers’ union Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT). In just a short time, ACT grew into one of the largest trade unions in the Philippines under her leadership. But for Castro this was not enough. She took her struggle into Parliament when she was elected in 2006. Amongst other things, she pushed for the extension of maternity leave for all women to 105 days. And with success: the law was adopted in Parliament.

In a country that is one of the 10 worst countries in the world for workers and trade unionists, Castro, as Secretary General of ACT, fought among other things for higher minimum wages. “All the trade unions in the Philippines are under fire” says Castro. “Trade union leaders suffer assaults, threats and intimidation. Our right to be critical of government policies and the right to freedom of expression is curtailed, including for our unions. The right to collective bargaining is under fire. There is no provision in the law for bargaining about wages. As trade unionist, you’re likely to be seen as a rebel.”

### **Inspiration for young people**

Trade union women need to be supported by their families, contends Castro. “This is important, because these women have two burdens to bear: the fact that they’re women and the fact that they’re trade union leaders.” She continues: “I’ve been an activist for half my life already. My husband is also a trade union activist. Our sons are now adults and understand us better. Hopefully we are an inspiration for the next generation.”

Castro is positive about the future. “I look on everything as a challenge. I hope that the unity in the union will be preserved. On the whole, I see a bright future for our trade union and our people.” She emphasises that she welcomes the international support, which is evident from her being awarded the FNV Febe Elizabeth Velásquez trade union rights award “This helps us continue with our struggle for trade union rights and a better life for Philippine people.” ■



**France Castro**

### **About the Febe Velásquez trade union award**

Since 1992, the FNV has presented the trade union rights award once every two years to individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to defending and protecting trade union rights in countries where human and workers’ rights are lacking. The award is named after the Salvadoran union leader Febe Elizabeth Velásquez (1962 - 1989) who was murdered for her trade union activities.



## Recognition at last for abused women

*When the ILO convention against violence and harassment at work was adopted last year, great was the rejoicing – not only in the Netherlands, but also in Indonesia. NGOs such as women’s organisation Perempuan Mahardhika have been striving for years for a violence-free workplace, in particular for women. Mondiaal FNV official Marijn Peperkamp and Vivi Widayawati of Perempuan Mahardhika, a partner of Mondiaal FNV, e-mailed each other about the convention’s significance.*



*Marijn*

*Congratulations, Vivi, on the ILO convention against violence and harassment! Its adoption is big news for working people all over the world. Who, actually, are the main victims of violence and harassment in the workplace in Indonesia?* ✓✓



*Marijn*

*What does the convention mean for these women?* ✓✓



*Vivi*

*Hi Marijn! Research that we carried out in 2017 and 2018 showed that these were predominantly women. Lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders (LBT people) in the garment industry and other sectors are also frequently confronted with this. We recently conducted research into domestic violence. One thing to emerge was that domestic violence also has an impact on female employees in the workplace. They suffer from loss of concentration and make mistakes, get to work late or even are unable to work because of the injuries they have incurred.* ✓✓



*Vivi*

*The convention is of huge importance for them because violence and harassment, and in particular gender-related violence at work, are now recognised. Its existence was quite simply not admitted to and furthermore was often difficult to prove, not least by the government and the unions. What actually does this breakthrough mean for Mondiaal FNV? Was this a cause for celebrations?* ✓✓





**Marijn**

Definitely. We were super happy. Later, back in the Netherlands, we drank a toast with colleagues from the FNV and Mondiaal FNV who had been involved in the campaign. This is so important for women and men who don't have a safe workplace, as is the case in many garment factories in Asia. But even more than that, the convention also recognises the impact of domestic violence upon employees. ✓✓



**Vivi**

Yes, absolutely, the convention will help us to open up a dialogue with employers, the government, the trade union and with the employees themselves. We can in this way address the issue and focus attention on the recommendations and scope of the convention. ✓✓



**Marijn**

How exactly will you be implementing this in your work? ✓✓



**Vivi**

Do you think that the international lobbying by the trade unions has helped? ✓✓



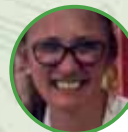
**Vivi**

We will be implementing the convention in all our activities that concern employees. On the one hand we will be providing information, especially to women and LBT people and to the unions. On the other, we will be setting up 'modular training' on violence in the workplace. Apart from that, we will be making use of the convention in our lobbying for a violence-free workplace. And you yourselves, what we will you now be doing? ✓✓



**Marijn**

Yes, I do. Within the ILO (the International Labour Organisation, ED) employees, employers and governments prepare resolutions jointly. The unions were therefore a part of this resolution. But for a long time, it had seemed likely that there would only be a non-binding 'guideline', which was the preference of many employers and governments. The lobbying by the unions definitely contributed to it becoming a 'true' convention, with obligations and so on. For example, the Netherlands was in the first instance not in favour, but trade union lobbying led to the country nonetheless ultimately coming out in support of the convention. As far as Indonesia is concerned, I did wonder: will this convention really enable you to counter violence in the workplace more effectively? ✓✓



**Marijn**

Together with our international partners we will be pressing for ratification and implementation of the convention in as many countries as possible. The FNV is doing this in the Netherlands. The international trade union movement has launched a campaign with the same goal, under the heading #RatifyC190. We will be linking up to this and making our own contribution. Once again, many congratulations, Vivi... ✓✓



**Vivi**

You too! ✓✓



## *Meanwhile in India*

The temperatures are rising to over 40 degrees. There is no protective equipment. A day's work will sometimes get you only 15 euro cents. Harvests fail regularly. In spite of this, practically no-one is insured. Many Indian seed growers even have heavy debts to their suppliers. Trade union APVVU successfully fights for higher wages and better terms of employment, including in the agricultural state of Andhra Pradesh, where the photo was taken.





**East African delegation on a working visit to the Netherlands and Brussels**

# Lessons in lobbying

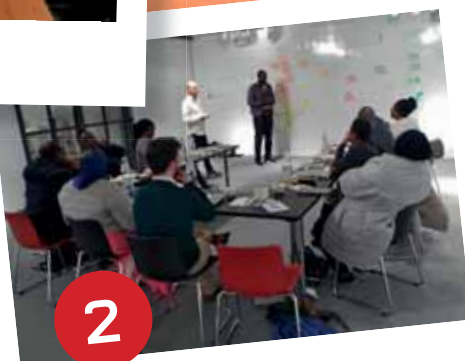
**From 9 to 16 November, an East African trade union delegation visited the Netherlands and Brussels. The purpose: see how they go about things in Europe – lobbying. The ten participants, officials and experts of East African Trade Union Confederation EATUC and national trade union federations from Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda were there at the invitation of Mondiaal FNV. EATUC Executive Secretary Caroline Khamati Mugalla looks back on the visit.**



1

*1: Networking works fine at low-key, relaxed moments. This informal dinner is just such a moment. Cateleene Passchier tells us here how unions have influenced the EU policy.*

*2: Information is the currency in lobbying. At the end of a lobbying activity you should stop and reflect on the information you have picked up. In this session we translate the lessons learned into our own lobbying strategy..*



2

*3: Here, we are on a visit to Bart van Riel and Roland Zwiers of the SER. A consultative body like the SER demonstrates the power of social dialogue and consultation.*



3

*4: Agnes Jongerius welcomed us to the European Parliament. If you make the move from a trade union to politics, don't forget that first and foremost you're a trade unionist.*



4



5

*5: Trade union history as displayed in trade union museum De Burcht shows new generations the origin of their rights.*



6

*6: In lobbying, always think one step ahead. So, at the first meeting work towards a follow-up. We learned this during the training session given by FNV's Antonina Ronhaar and Marjolijn Bulk.*

**Jerome Scheltens of GDP Consultancy organised and led the working visit. Rosa van Wieringen and Frans Dekker of Mondiaal FNV accompanied the EATUC delegation.**

# About Mondiaal FNV's work

*Mondiaal FNV is a foundation affiliated to the largest employees' organisation in the Netherlands, the FNV. Mondiaal FNV helps employees and trade unions, particularly in developing countries, to campaign for real jobs and better working conditions. How do we do this?*

We do this by giving direct support in the form of a financial contribution to specific projects and by means of support for research, lobbying and campaigning. Mondiaal FNV also gives colleagues in developing countries a voice in the Netherlands by providing educational information, organising actions and lobbying in The Hague.

## Strengthening employees and unions

Our current programme was launched in 2017 and will run until 2020. This programme focuses on:

- Improving social dialogue at national and regional level.
- Improving terms and conditions of employment in a number of production chains

Trade unions that operate effectively and are able to carry out their work freely are indispensable in achieving an equitable distribution of income and wealth. Unfortunately, this is in many countries not the case: the trade union rights are not respected and employees are put under pressure to not stand up for their rights. Social dialogue between employees and employers is the basis for improving labour rights. Our programme supports creating or improving social dialogue by helping unions to become a strong social partner and by working together with employers' organisations and government.

As the economy becomes more and more a world economy, employees are more often becoming part of the global production chains spread across a large number of countries and sectors. In these chains, employees are largely invisible because traditional

industrial relations are disappearing. Mondiaal FNV therefore supports unions and employees in four global production chains in improving their skills, creating real jobs and defending the fundamental rights of employees.

The four global production chains are:

- Agriculture (palm oil, cocoa, fruit/vegetables and seed cultivation)
- Shipbreaking
- Construction
- Clothing production

## Financial resources for support to trade unions

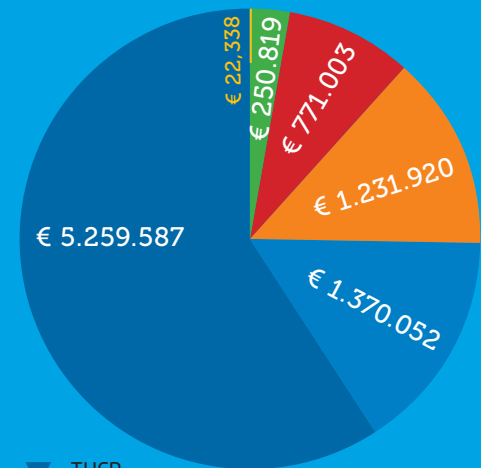
Mondiaal FNV supports a hundred and fifty to two hundred projects on an annual basis. The funding for this comes primarily from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the framework of the Trade Union Co-Financing Programme (VMP) and the Strategic Partnership for Garment Supply Chain Transformation.

Other sources are the FNV Solidarity Fund, to which 0.7 percent of the FNV membership dues go, and the Mondiaal FNV Fund, which receives donations from members and non-members and contributions pursuant to collective bargaining agreements.

## Our mission

Mondiaal FNV contributes to economic growth, which is of benefit to everyone and leads to a more equitable distribution of income and prosperity. Mondiaal FNV does this by enabling democratic, representative and independent unions and labour-related organisations to promote decent work and livelihood security for everyone.

## Funding of the projects in 2019



- ▼ TUCP
- ▼ LARK NL and Region (TUCP funds)
- Strategic Partnership
- ◆ FNV Solidarity Funds
- Mondiaal FNV Fund
- AOb Teachers' Union

## Developments in 2019

2019 was the third year of our programme under the Trade Union Co-Financing Programme (VMP) and the fourth under the Strategic Partnership for Garment Supply Chain Transformation (SP). The year was marked by the further expansion of the strategies under our core themes of social dialogue, fair value chains, a living wage, and eradication of gender-related violence in the workplace. In the Netherlands we publicly called attention to the poor terms and conditions of employment for garment workers and the people working on the palm oil plantations. The global trade unions, supported by Mondiaal FNV, achieved success internationally with the adoption of ILO



convention 190 focused on the elimination of violence at work.

### **Our organisation**

In 2019, our workforce remained substantially the same as the previous year. At the end of 2019, 21 people (18.14 FTE) worked and still work at Mondiaal FNV. 19 people had a permanent contract, two people had a temporary contract. For the first time we took part in the AMID programme organised by the Radboud University Nijmegen, which recently began offering graduate master students a programme combining academic training and practical experience. In the Netherlands, Mondiaal FNV also employed the services of a number of self-employed people, who assisted us at times of sickness and peak periods. In addition, in 2019 we worked with 11 independent consultants, who support our work and our partners in the countries where we operate. The consultants all originate from the region in which they work. Their locations are: India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Peru and Ecuador.

The day-to-day management is in the hands of Managing Director Karen Brouwer, who reports to the Board of the Foundation.

### **Board of Mondiaal FNV Foundation**

The Board of Mondiaal FNV comprises five members. The President and the Treasurer also occupy the same positions on the Board of the FNV. Other members are connected to one of the sectors or member unions of the FNV. The Board Members meet approximately 5 times a year. The Executive Committee is composed of the President, Treasurer and Secretary. In 2019 Willem Noordman was appointed Treasurer, after the resignation of Coen van der Veer. The Board is non-salaried: the members receive no remuneration for attendance at the meetings

Board members of Mondiaal FNV Foundation

**Han Busker**, President  
**Willem Noordman**, Treasurer  
**Marieke Manschot**, Member  
**Carla Kiburg**, Member  
**Walter Dresscher**, Member  
**Karen Brouwer**, Secretary

### **Personnel representative body**

Mondiaal FNV has as yet no personnel representative body (PVT). However, employees are kept informed and are consulted on the policy and

procedures of Mondiaal FNV on a regular basis. A number of employees are currently engaged in developing plans for the formation of a PVT. This body is expected to be appointed in 2019.

### **CLA and remuneration policy**

Mondiaal FNV follows the collective labour agreement of the FNV and is a member of the Employers' Association FNV organisations. The remuneration policy of Mondiaal FNV is in line with that of the FNV and is below the maximum permitted level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (collective labour agreement Rijk scale 19). A working week for employees at Mondiaal FNV is a maximum of 35 hours.

### **Working culture**

Mondiaal FNV employees may work flexibly, in the office or from home, to ensure a better work-private life balance. Employees are encouraged to learn new skills or acquire new knowledge by following courses. Employees may submit a request to this effect.

### **Integrity**

Each Mondiaal FNV employee signs the Mondiaal FNV code of conduct on commencement of their work. The code describes desired and undesired conduct and contains sections on: abuse of power and attention to power relations; bribery and receiving gifts; regard for customs and sensitivities in other cultures; sexual abuse and inappropriate relationships; discrimination; personal situations that might present a risk for the organisations; misuse of information and data carriers such as laptops. The code also specifies that where the code is violated or there is a risk of this occurring, this must be reported to the Management, to the Board or to a confidential adviser. On the occurrence of any violation, a sanction is determined by the Board. In 2019, no complaints or reports of violations of the code were submitted.

### **Policy adjustments in 2020**

In 2020 Mondiaal will take steps to improve its policy relating to integrity and complaints and to develop policy relating to mobility and diversity. An external adviser on integrity and interpersonal behaviour will be appointed, as will an external confidential adviser. The code of conduct will be updated and policy relating to mobility and diversity will be developed. ■

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# 7 WAYS YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ETHICAL CLOTHING

(BECAUSE THIS ISN'T HOW YOU WANT TO BE) ↪

FASHION IS A WAY OF LIFE, YOU KNOW, AND I ABSOLUTELY MUST HAVE A NEW MASS-PRODUCED T-SHIRT EVERY DAY TO SHOW THE WORLD WHO I AM



## 1. BUY FEWER CLOTHES



## 2. FIND OUT WHERE YOU CAN BUY ETHICAL CLOTHING

### CRAZY FUN FASHION

CRAZY FUN FASHION  
ONLY €4.95!!!  
FOR CHILDREN, BY CHILDREN!  
AMAZING WHAT THOSE TINY HANDS CAN PUT TOGETHER IN A FOURTEEN-HOUR WORKDAY!  
COMPLETE WITH THE FAINT ODOUR OF TOXIC FACTORY CHEMICALS AND TEARS

AND MAYBE DON'T SHOP FOR ANYTHING HERE ↪

## 3. ORGANISE A CLOTHING SWAP.

A WIN-WIN-WIN SITUATION: NEW STUFF, A TIDY WARDROBE AND ON TOP OF THAT - FREE ENTERTAINMENT

## 4. SHOP SECOND HAND.

AND ADD THE ELEMENT OF THE HUNT TO YOUR RETAIL THERAPY



YOU CAN RUN BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE, BIKER BOOTS, IN THE END I'M GONNA BUY YOU FROM MIENTJES24 IN STAVOREN

EN... FIGHT!!



## 5. BE CREATIVE WITH YOUR OWN WARDROBE

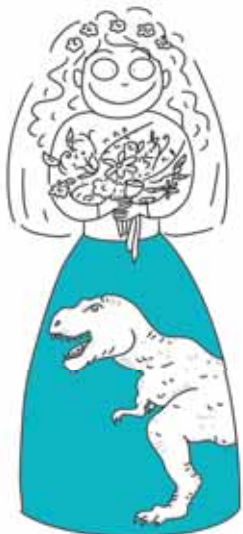
CLEAR EVERYTHING OUT, SORT THE WHOLE LOT BY COLOUR. DO A TOTAL MARIE KONDO ON ALL THAT SHIT AND LOVINGLY ROLL UP ALL YOUR UNDERPANTS, PUT HALF YOUR WARDROBE AWAY TO SURPRISE YOURSELF WITH AGAIN HALF A YEAR LATER: YOU OWN MORE THAN YOU THINK

COMPLETELY FORGOT THAT I WAS A TROUSER SUIT PERSON!



## 6. UPCYCLE

THERE'S NOTHING THAT A DIY IRON-ON DINOSAUR EMBLEM CAN'T FIX



## 7. SUPPORT MONDIAAL FNV

WHICH HELPS CLOTHING WORKERS IN BANGLADESH AND MYAMAR GET UNIONISED SO THAT THEY'RE ABLE TO DEMAND BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS