

ISSUE 6, JANUARY 2022

OUR WORK, OUR LIVES

Hopes and Dreams for 2022

support

dignity

equal rights

independance

freedom

unity

education

respect

equal pay

justice



Our Work, Our Lives
Issue 6, January 2022

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Cover Design: Tanuja Sethi



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

Our Work, Our Lives

Many members and partners of the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) work closely with women workers to support and strengthen their organising. The women earn their living from domestic work, sex work, agriculture, weaving, entertainment work, garment sector work, home-based work, and any available daily wage work. Except those who are working away from home, all women also carry out much of the care work in their families. While some workers are affiliated with trade unions, others are part of informal collectives or community groups linked to local NGOs.

Since March 2021, some GAATW members and partners have been part of an online initiative called *Women Workers for Change*. The group has held discussions to understand what women workers who engage in unpaid and paid labour define as 'change' in their lives, how do they want to participate in creating change and what the CSOs can do to improve their accountability towards women workers.

Our Work, Our Lives, a monthly E-Magazine, is born out of those discussions. Published on the last day of the month, each issue will take up a simple theme that resonates with the everyday lives of low-wage women workers, their joys, sorrows, struggles and most importantly, their agendas for change.

While this English language E-Magazine will act as a bridge among CSO colleagues (and the few workers who can communicate in English) in different countries, each group will create publications in their own language. Where the workers have no formal literacy, they will use other innovative techniques. GAATW Secretariat will do all it can to democratise digital technology and facilitate knowledge building and sharing from ground up.

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Issue 6, Hopes and Dreams

Dear friends,

Greetings of the New Year. Even though so far 2022 feels like Twenty-Twenty-Too, let's hope that the situation will improve during the year. Hopefully the vaccination rates will increase significantly around the world and some degree of normalcy will return soon.

Our Work, Our Lives has reached its sixth issue which is very encouraging for a publication that relies completely on women workers and our colleagues who work closely with them. The women workers who write for the magazine are part of self-organised or community-based groups. They are at different stages of their collectivisation process. All of them meet regularly to carry out various collaborative activities. Some have facilitated discussions on various social issues and learning themes.

For the January 2022 issue of **Our Work, Our Lives**, we requested our sisters to share their collective hopes and dreams for the New Year with us. We made some suggestions on how they could go about their **Collective Dreaming** processes, but each group also had complete freedom to plan their own session in a completely different way.

The result is an interesting collection of stories, drawings, visual art, posters and poems. Seventeen groups from eight countries – Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India,

Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Nepal, and Sierra Leone – have shared their dreams and hopes for 2022 with us. The dreams range from simple personal aspirations for a decent job, hopes for good health for near and dear ones, and well-being of the community to visions for a strong collective. Bangladeshi women working in the garment sector in Jordan co-created a poem called **Hope** in Bangla. Our sisters from Seruni, a collective of women farmers in Indonesia, created the face of a rural woman using vegetables, food crops, and flowers from their farm. For them, the face symbolised the source of life as well as their faith in the collective struggle. Sex worker sisters from the state of Andhra Pradesh in India were unable to meet due to the spike in COVID-19 infections, but they drew pictures and shared with each other via WhatsApp. The women from Banjar village in the state of Chattisgarh, India brought various objects that they use in their daily lives and made interesting links between those objects and their hopes for the future. Each group's method is unique but the dreams are quite similar. Collective well-being, peace, harmony, decent jobs, and security of lives and livelihoods are what everyone dreams of.

We hope their dreams come true and their collectives go from strength to strength.

As with other issues, many colleagues supported the process by facilitating discussions, in-person or remotely, and by transcribing and translating the spoken or written words of women workers into English. Tanuja Sethi from Kala aur Katha has once again designed a beautiful cover page.

We trust that the dreams of our sisters will kindle new hopes in you too. You can write to us with your comments, suggestions, or stories for upcoming issues at bandana@gaatw.org

Warmly,
GAATW-IS team



Hopes and Dreams for 2022

Words of Domestic Workers

CVM COMUNITÀ VOLONTARI PER IL MONDO - ETHIOPIA



የቤት ሠራተኞች

Domestic workers

የቤት ሠራተኛ፣ የቤት ሠራተኛ፤

Domestic Worker, Domestic Workers

ጎንብስ ቀና ብላ፤

Bend up

ሠርታ የምታበላ።

Work and eat

ምስጋና ሳይኖራት፤

without thanks

ከሰው በታች ሆና፤

under human being

አለች እስከዛሬ፤

she said to this day

በሰው ዘንድ ተንቃ።

Awake to the people

ሮሮሽ ይበቃል፤

Rorosh is enough

ሀፍረት እና ሰቆቃ፣

Shame, Misery

የቤት ሰራተኛ እንደሻማ እየቀለጠች

A Domestic Worker melting like a candle,

ታድናለች የዶክተርን ህይወት

she saves the doctor's life!

ደራሲና አቅራቢ፡ ሌዋን ተስፋዩ

Author/Presenter Hewan & Eve Tesfaye

New Dreams and Passion

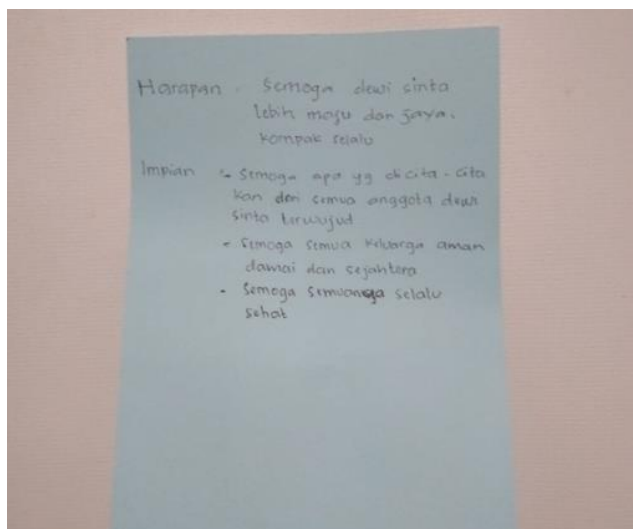
DEWI SINTA WOMEN'S COMMUNITY



The Dewi Sinta Women's Community held their regular community meeting on 9 January, 2022 in Bandarharjo, Semarang, Indonesia. It was the first meeting of 2022 so in addition to making their annual plans they also spent some time to talking about their hopes and dreams for the new year.

Here are their words:

1.

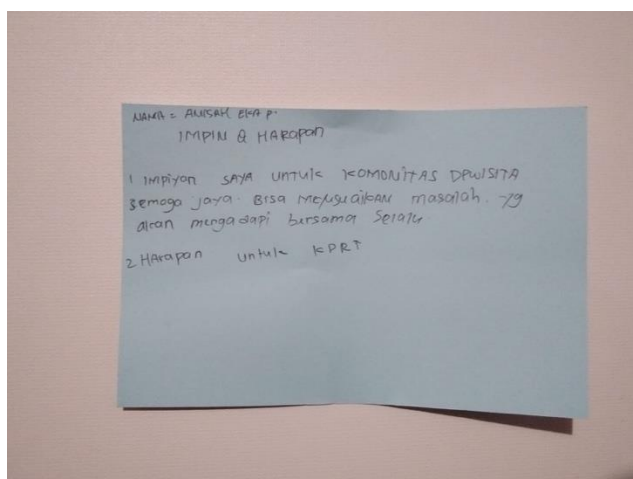


Message

- May the Dewi Sinta Community be more progressive and remain united.
- We hope the cases of domestic violence will decrease.

(Lestari)

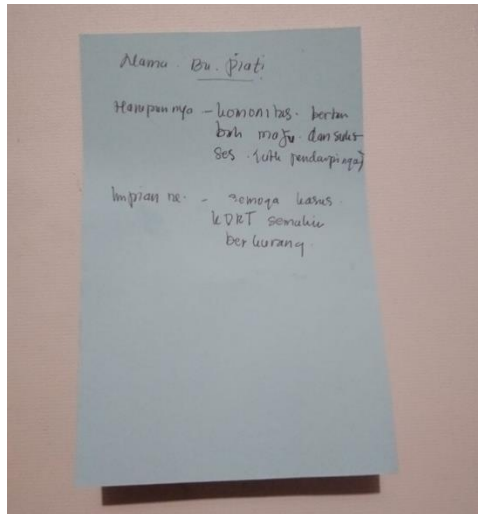
2.



- Hoping for the best for our community and to gain more support in overcoming problems and challenges that we face together within our community.

(Anisa Eka)

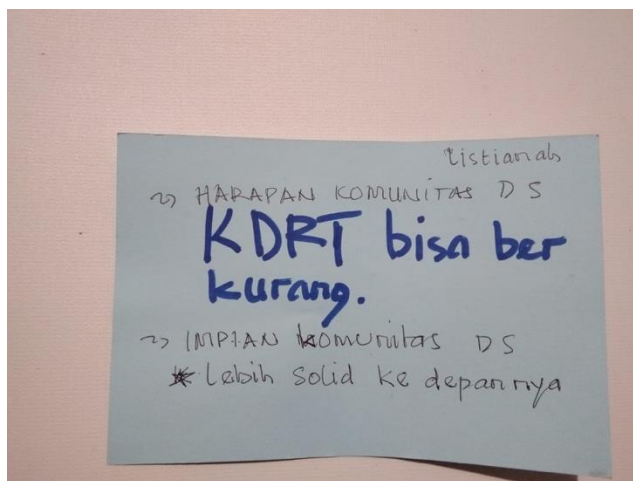
3.



- We hope to be able to meet our goals for our community.
- And to better respond to cases of domestic violence and have less cases in the community.

(Piati)

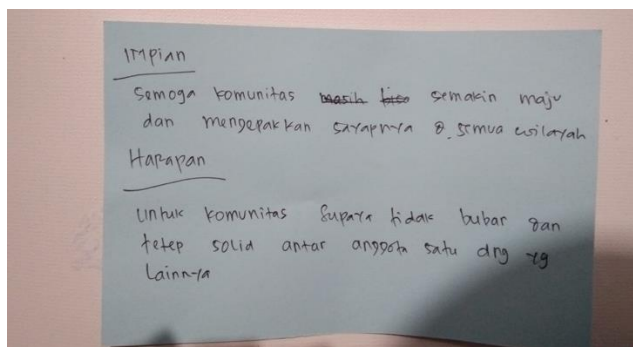
4.



- To address domestic violence cases.
- To see a stronger Dewi Sinta community in the future.

(Listianah)

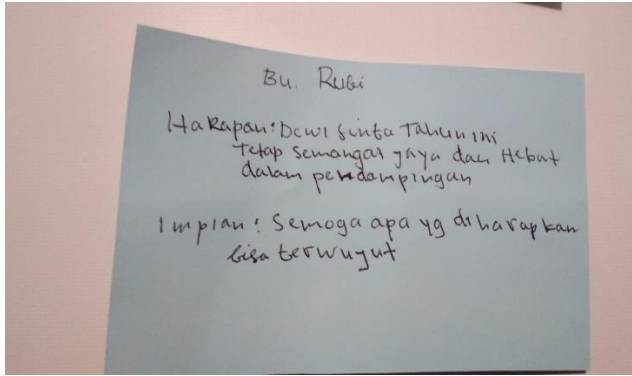
5.



- May the community progress and spread its wings in all regions.
- Commitment and solidarity among members should continue.

(Dian Kartika)

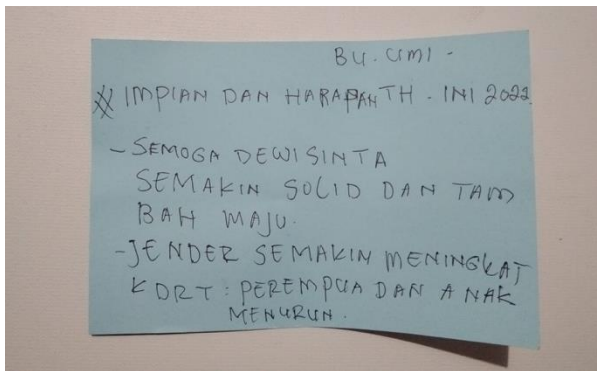
6.



- Continued enthusiasm, success and support for women this year.
- For our hopes to come true.

(Rubi)

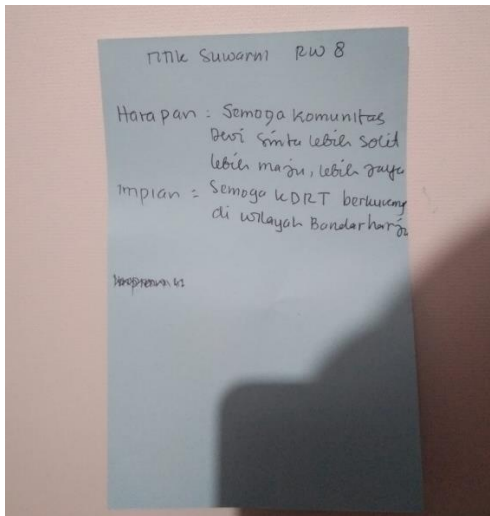
7.



- Solidarity and more progress in our work.
- Less cases of domestic violence.

(Umi)

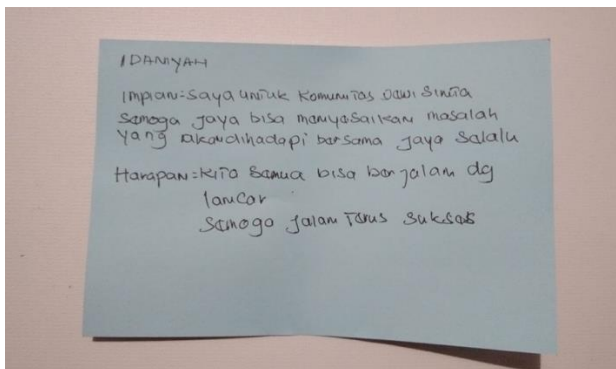
8.



- To stay committed in making progress in our work for our community.
- Less cases of domestic violence in Bandarharjo area

(Ninik Suwarni)

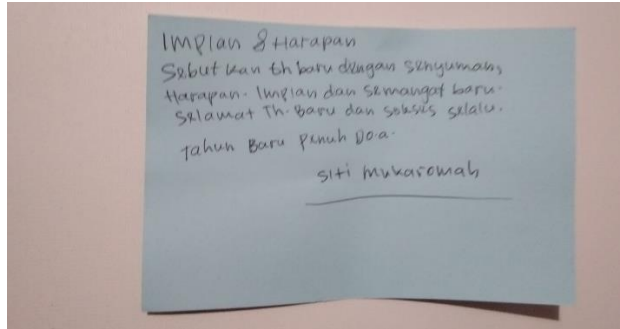
9.



- To enable a more supportive community.
- To work for our community with passion and success.

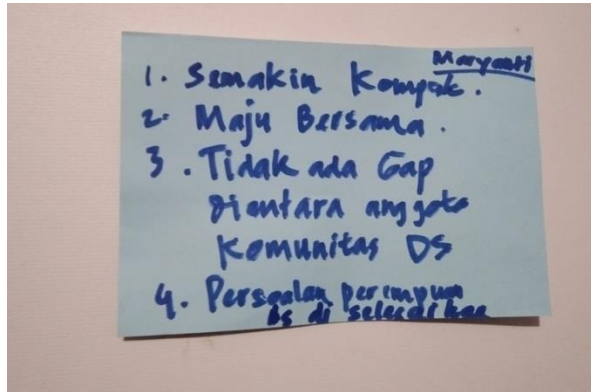
(Idaniyah)

10.

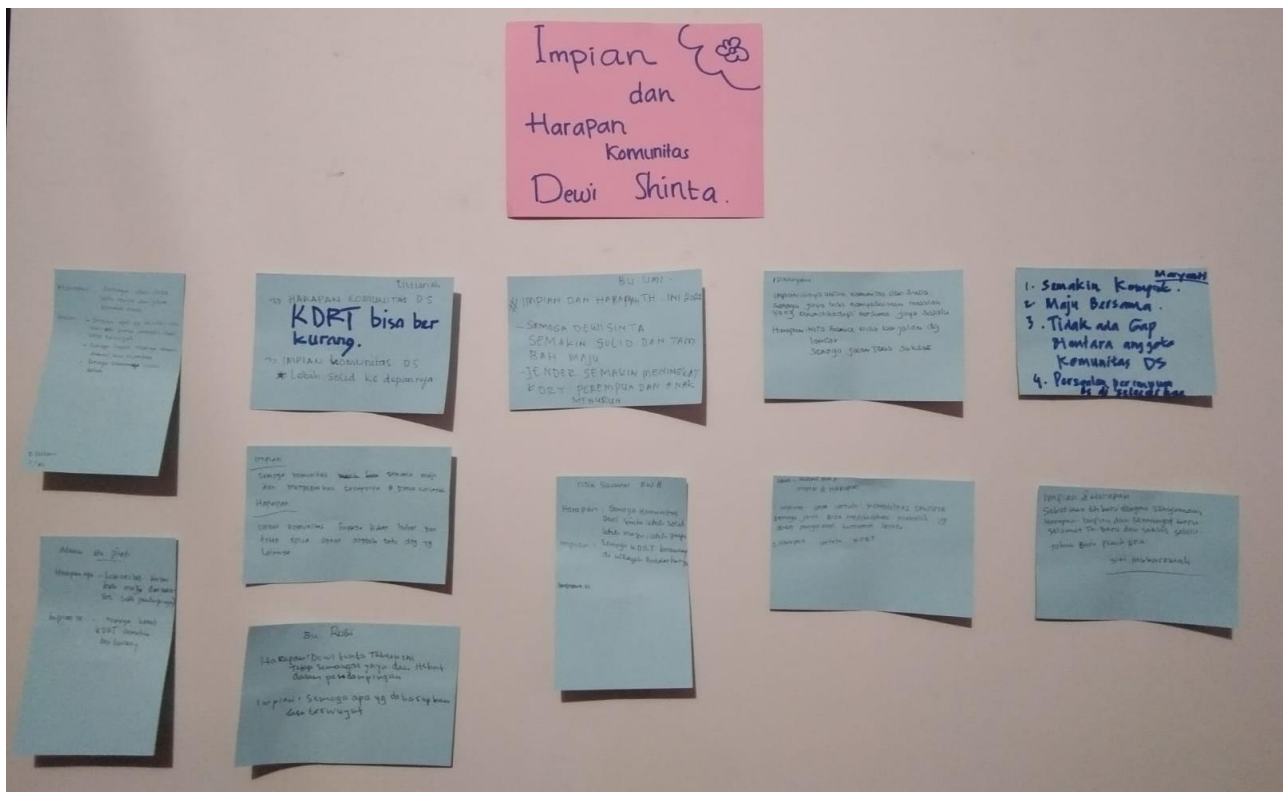


- To welcome the new year with a smile.
 - New dreams and passion, a new year full of prayers.
- (Siti Mukaramah)

11.



- Better communication and unity among members of the Dewi Sinta Community.
 - To support more women.
- (Maryati)



Translation from Bahasa Indonesia by Yaya from LRC KJHAM.

Growing Together

DOMESTIC WORKERS SOLIDARITY NETWORK JORDAN



We are members of the Domestic Workers Solidarity Network (DWSN) Jordan. In early January we formed a Whatsapp group called *Our Collective Journey* to share

our hopes and dreams for the new year. We appreciate the help of Ms Alfie Gordo from GAATW-IS in facilitating this process of on-line sharing.

As a collective, we hope to see our network grow. We would like to speak in one voice for the rights of women migrant domestic workers in Jordan. We are a diverse group united by our struggle for equal rights and empowered by our commitment to be in the frontline of policy advocacy for rights of migrant domestic workers. We hope to build a healthy relationship among members by putting our differences aside. We want to be able to assist each other in times of need.

We appreciate the different opportunities we have for learning and knowledge building. We hope that there will be continued support for new learning spaces and opportunities to listen to the reflections of other women migrant workers. We dream of having a stronger network, with members who are able to share, learn and be encouraged by other women's stories.

We also hope that our leaders remain committed to their responsibilities and serve the network. We hope that as a group, we are able to achieve our goals for advocacy irrespective of the color of our skin or the level of our formal education.

We share here our individual hopes and dreams for self, family and our communities.



Ruth

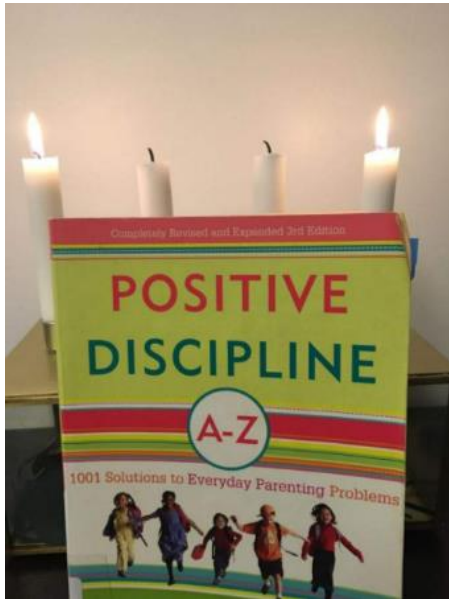
This picture of a frozen river was taken during my trip to Colorado. The river is frozen but I use it as a symbol of hope because it will flow again when the sun rises. It is the same with our dreams.

During this year I am going to work harder to realise my dreams. One of my dreams is to go back to school and be able shift my career in the direction that is close to my heart. Second, I would like to have good health and peace of mind. I would like to be more appreciative of what I have achieved in my life.

For my family and loved ones, I hope that they have more financial stability, good health and my siblings are able to continue their education. Having good education will bring more opportunities and success to them.

For my community, I hope that our society gains better understanding of the lived realities of women workers with regard to migration and integration. I hope that people understand the changes that migration brings to workers and refrain from showing hypocritical, hostile and biased behavior.

I dream of a community where women are free and empowered rather than experiencing harassment and shame for wanting their due in life.



Manuela

Let me light the candle and read my own book to focus on positive energy every day.

I have many hopes and dreams for myself. For example, I tell myself to 'aim high but remain grounded and work towards where I envision myself to be in future.'

Goal setting is important in my life as it helps me stay focused and motivated. I believe in being realistic and I never let go of an opportunity for self-improvement.

As a mother I always hope for my one and only handsome son to maintain a positive discipline in his life and I wish my entire family to have a better life. I always hope for safety, security, good health, economic stability and happiness for my family, especially during this pandemic.

I hope for a community where there is clean and safe environment, a stable economy and peace. Being a worker leader, I hope to continue serving our Filipino community with positive energy through my skills and God-given talent. I am confident that I can take an active role in society and keep everyone engaged in community-based activities and events.

As a leader of the Organising Committee, I hope to be a good example to other members by helping fellow domestic workers in need. I value and respect them. I

am open to discuss improvements within our team and want our network to stand independently. I want to be one of the reasons for the success of my group.

Doris

This photo symbolises the growth of a small seedling that is in full bloom.

I am hoping for a better situation for all migrant workers, free from fear of the dangers around us in a foreign land. I hope that we all will have good health, safety and strength to face the challenges that this year may bring.



For my family and loved ones, I'm hopeful that this new year will bring some positive energies to overcome difficulties in life. Right now, both my niece and my nephew are facing some challenges, one is recovering from fatigue after working abroad and the other one is undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer. My siblings and I are working together to provide moral support. I'm looking for that golden pot at the end of the rainbow for them. Despite these difficulties they have remained positive in their attitude and I trust that they will be able to overcome this ordeal.

As for the community that I am in, I dream and hope of a progressive, united and stronger community.



Asha

I am like gold. I encountered many trials in my life but I'm still shining as gold, like what is represented in the photograph.

I dream of a happy life, to travel to different places and to have a better job for myself. I also hope for good health for my family; better employment opportunities. I hope we have good leaders in our community.

Mercy

This is a symbol for us to keep hoping and dreaming for the best and to keep working hard. With perseverance we will pursue our dreams and keep moving forward.



My dream is to try and save as much as possible to be able to afford an airline ticket to visit my family this year.

My biggest dream is to be able to provide for my children and my family members especially in times of need.

My main hope and dream for the community is to be a role model by teaching my community members some good morals, such as respect towards others especially towards the elderly.

Mary Joy

'Without rain there would be no rainbow'.

This picture is a symbol of a real event in my life. In 2000, I decided to leave my country for the future of my two dear children and before I came here to Jordan, I told



myself that I will work abroad for only two years. But I have now reached 21 years of working overseas. So I said to myself maybe there is another tomorrow waiting for me.

For myself I hope that I will have many more years of my life. I would like to work here in Jordan for another 5 years so that I can save enough for my future. I look forward to being with my children and grandchildren and to live happily together. Life is so short; we have to enjoy every moment of it.

I am hoping for good health for my children. I hope that they can find a good and decent work, and a good place to call their home.

For my community, I dream of a better future for our children's children.

Maria Corazon

This photo is a symbol of my journey in life, which represents the sunrise and the sunset.



I hope this year brings me good health, peace of mind and more strength and energy so I can do my daily work as a domestic worker. And I hope that my dream to move to Canada comes true.

I hope to see my family in good health, especially my ageing mother. I wish safety and protection from harm and sickness for my siblings, my daughters and my 6 grandchildren. I hope that they are able to pursue their ambitions in life.

I dream of helping my community and to start a livelihood programme for them. I am keen to share my knowledge on how to start a small business and other skills that I have gained while working overseas.

Dreams of DoWan Sisters

DOWAN, SIERRA LEONE

The year 2021 was really a challenging year for us. Many of us returned home from Lebanon, Kuwait and Oman with very difficult experiences. Back home we face joblessness and hunger.

Our collective dream for 2022 is an end to the sponsorship system. We want opportunities for regular labour migration and full workers' rights in the countries of destination. We want activists from other parts of the world to join us in this fight against systems of migration.

We want to thank all sisters and brothers who have supported us during the last year. Even small supports of rice help us a lot in difficult times. We are happy that GAATW is with us and has included us in on-line meetings.



Old Things, New Hopes

NAV NIRMAN CHETANA MANCH, CHHATISHGARH, INDIA

The Nav Nirman Chetana Manch organised a community meeting in Banjar village on 19th January 2022. The group comprised mostly women and girls but some men had also accompanied them. The small group met around mid-day. Each person who had agreed to join the meeting was requested to bring one object from their house that they use in their everyday life. But there was one condition, the object should have some link to their hopes for 2022.

Women came with different things from their houses. A rectangle was drawn on the ground and people placed their special objects inside it. Soon the rectangle filled with rice, wood, forest produce, seeds, leaves, broom, vegetables, cow-dung, books and notebooks, sanitary pads, milk, a cot, a bi-cycle, a piece of brick, washing powder, medicine, newspaper, soap etc. While talking about the object each person told the group whether it is something she can get easily or if it is very expensive, how she uses it and what meaning it has for her in the new year.

Mouya, an adolescent girl, had brought a small packet of sanitary napkins. She said that due to school closure they did not get free sanitary napkins and had to use cloth. She said that she would like to reduce her dependence on store bought napkins and wanted to learn how to use cloth in a hygienic way.

Meera Bai is a woman farmer. She had brought some paddy from their field. She said that she wants the new year to be filled with the green and gold of paddy

fields. “I want the year to bring the freedom and joy that I see in rice fields when the green plants dance with the wind,” she said.

Sarita, another farmer, had brought some organic fertiliser. She said that like fertiliser that helps plants to grow well, human beings need knowledge to grow. She wants the new year to create interest among her people to learn new things.

Sangita had brought some green vegetables. She said that green vegetable is good for our health and Covid-19 has made everyone conscious about the importance of good health. She hopes that she can grow more vegetables for her family during 2022.



Kabita had brought a piece of brick with her. Her hope for 2022 was that everyone in her village should have decent houses to live in.

Kusum had brought a small bowl filled with water. She said that there is scarcity of clean drinking water in the village which is why many people fall sick. She

hopes that the government will take steps to ensure that everyone in the village gets safe drinking water.

Shivkumari had brought some plants and forest produce. She talked about the value of each herb and the importance of having trees. During 2021 many people had died because of breathing problems. She said that clean air is as important as clean water. Moreover, many people from the village depend on forest produce for their livelihood. She hopes that everyone recognises the value of trees and forest.

Several young girls had brought books and notebooks. They talked about the loss of education during this on-going pandemic. The on-line education has not worked for them as they do not have mobile phones with internet access. One girl had brought an old newspaper. She said that no newspapers come to their village and they don't get any news from other parts of the state. She is hopeful that this would change in 2022.

The woman who brought the bi-cycle said that the prices of petrol and diesel are going up so transportation cost is also very high now. It is no longer affordable for villagers to just take a bus or auto-rickshaw. So she said that it would be better to start using bi-cycles in 2022.

Another woman farmer had brought a sickle with her. She said that she is worried about the iron-smith families of the village. She said that everyone in the village should buy their farm implements from the village iron-smiths.

Some women had brought rice grains and pulses with them to highlight the fact that many families in the village do not get the government ration. They hoped that the state government would take steps to reach out to all families in need.



Finally, a bar of soap and a mask were also among the objects. The young girl who had brought them reminded everyone that the pandemic is not over yet. So she hoped that everyone will continue with their regular handwashing and mask wearing habits.

Meeting report in Hindi by Reena Ramteke. Translation by Bandana Pattanaik.

Me and My World of Dreams

NETWORK OF SEX WORKERS' COLLECTIVE, ANDHRA PRADESH

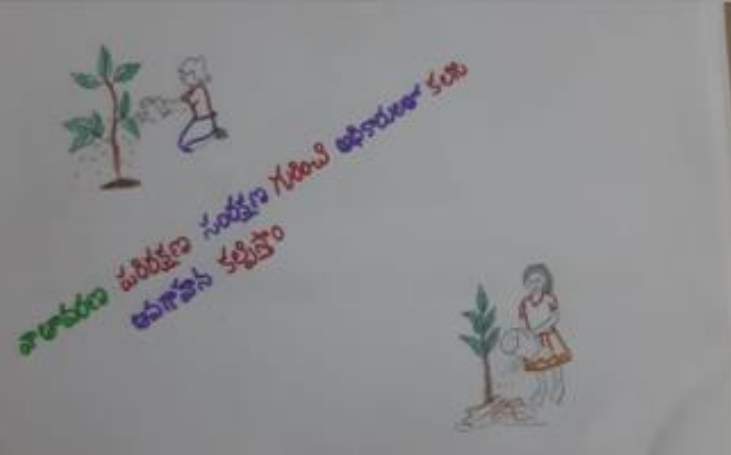


Me and My World is a state Network of Sex Workers Collectives in Andhra Pradesh, India. All the collectives are partners of the National Network of Sex Workers, India. The groups have a long history of working on a range of issues and campaigns around sex workers' rights. They also engage with a range of issues around human rights, gender, sexuality, inequality and other related topics. Six key areas of capacity enhancement were identified by the groups. The group members felt that developing those skills and personality traits would enable them to exercise their agency. These areas including self-respect and self-

చేతి పుణి పనుల ద్వారా ఆదాయం పొందుటకు
చేతి పుట్టా శిక్షణలు తోసుకుంటాము



ప్లాస్టిక్ నిషేధం గురించి మా
కమ్యూనిటీ మరియు మా గ్రామంలో
ఇతర వాళ్ళకు కూడా ప్రచారం
చేస్తాము



మా కమ్యూనిటీ సభ్యులు మేమే పరిష్కరించుకుంటాము

నాటకాల మంచి ద్వారా అభివృద్ధి విధానం
అర్థమవుతుంది మానసికంగా ఆనందాన్ని అభివృద్ధి కల్పిస్తాము



అందరం సంఘటితం అవుతాము



confidence, relationship with families, partners and children, seeking and using resources by strengthening small groups, dealing with power structures in family, neighborhoods and communities, developing resilience, and greater freedom to practice sex work. WINS made a commitment to support the women in their capacity enhancement efforts.



So in the New Year when they sat down to do a group exercise to show their hopes and aspirations, it was interesting for WINS to note the positive impact that the Me and My

World initiative has made on the women. The pictures drawn by the women show different facets of their lives. They have also flagged some key concerns and challenges for future deliberation.

Messages in the Pictures

'We need alternative income as there is no/less income from sex work now.'

The picture with the police says, *'We will deal with the "power structures" as a community.'*

'Climate change is hitting all of us, we will spread the word about conservation.'

'Our groups are our strength and faith. Whatever we do, we do it as a team.'

'Art forms like dance help us to remain sane and healthy. We will promote education through art forms like dance.'

Translation from Telugu by Meera R, WINS

Dreams and Hopes of Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj

NEPAL MAHILA EKATA SAMAJ (NMES)

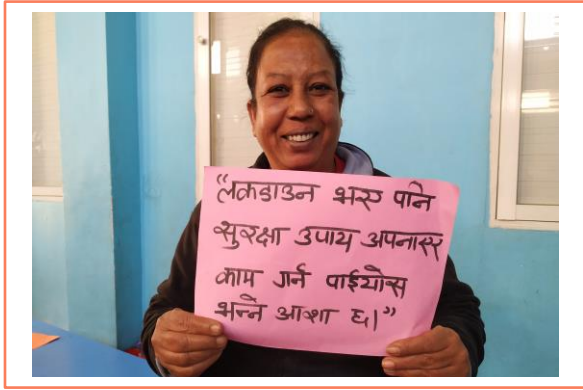
Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES) works with landless informal women workers who live in settlement communities. In our Kathmandu communities we hold structured weekly discussions on several issues. Our key focus issues in 2022 are land rights and rights of women workers in the informal sector. There are 350 women workers who take part in these weekly discussion processes.

Last week women in 5 of our groups had facilitated discussions on two topics:

1. Our dreams and hopes for ourselves and our families in the coming year
2. The changes that we want to see in our community in 2022

Our field team guided the women to close their eyes and put on some soothing background music. After 5 minutes of thinking the women wrote or drew a picture on the paper. They then shared their writings with the whole group. Here are some of the hopes of women from our communities:





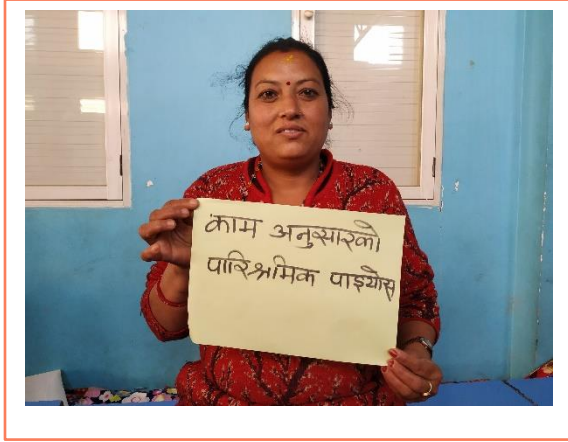
Rama Basnet: There may be another lock down and COVID-19 may continue but I dream that I will be able to go for work with proper safety measures.



Sanjeevani Timilsina: My work should be respected.



Jayanti Koirala: I dream that all street vendors are allowed to trade on streets.



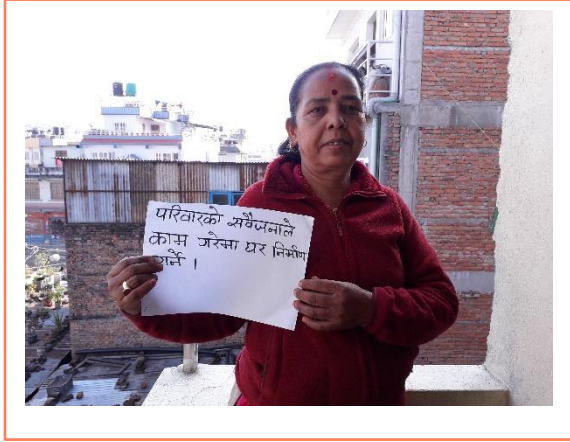
Manju Neupane: My dream is to get paid adequately for my work.



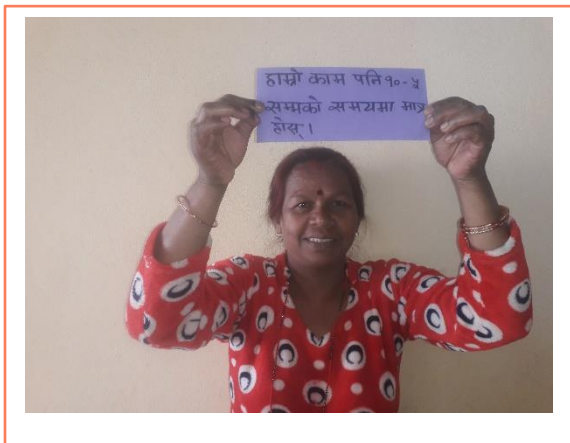
Bhumika Lama: I am hoping for the facility of health insurance in my work.



Maiya Pariyar: It is my hope and dream to get the salary as per the criteria set by the government.



Januka Bhattarai: My dream is for everyone in my family to have employment so we can build a house.



Shova Pariyar: I am dreaming of a 10 AM-5 PM job.



Sunita Shah: My dream is to live happily in a peaceful environment with my family.



Anita Lama: As I got the livelihood support from NMES and was able to increase my income in the meat shop, I hope that this continues.



Women Workers' Group: Community women put their dreams for the upcoming year together. They shared in the discussion that they want to see their community with land entitlement and free from the threat of forceful eviction.

Sustainable Jobs, Education, and Services

NIVEDITA FROM SRIJAN FOUNDATION

Baghima is a village in Palkot block in Gumla district of Jharkhand state, India. It is 94 KM from the state capital Ranchi. Nagpuri is the local language here and the population has both tribal and non-tribal communities. A group of women from the village met on 12th January to talk about their hopes for the new year.

The facilitators started the meeting with good wishes to everyone. She asked them how they celebrated their new year and what they were planning in the new year. A sheet of paper and some colours were kept in the middle and the women were asked to describe their hopes and



dreams for 2022 by drawing it on paper. The facilitators suggested that the women could discuss it with each other and make it a collective picture of their hopes and dreams.

The women want happiness, joy and family celebrations in the new year with their family members. They want to enjoy the basic facilities of life. They dream that one day their village would be a modern village where people can have parks, a hospital nearby, and water and cooking gas facilities for all families. As many

our children could study in English medium schools.) They also hoped for marital happiness and less conflict within families.



Most villagers migrate for work from this village, mostly to work in brick kilns. During the discussion, the facilitators came to know that mostly people from the Harijan community migrate to brick kilns for work and others who stay back do daily wage labour, collect firewood from the forest and grow and sell vegetables.

Families who have their own land hope for better agriculture this year and the landless families hope to get employment in their own village so they won't have to migrate. The difficulties they faced in March 2020 when there was a sudden nationwide lockdown is still fresh in their minds. With the rise in infection rate, they are afraid to leave their village now. They said, "*Humare mann kar pura subidha gaon ae me mili har humare man kahe jab bahar*"(If we get proper facilities and job opportunities here, why would we migrate for work?)

Collective Hopes and Dreams

RETURNEE WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS' GROUP, MUNSHIGONJ

Today we came to OKUP's Munshigonj office for a meeting called by Mony apa. We thought that it would be a meeting to discuss some serious issue. But we were surprised when Mony apa said that today we would have some fun and talk about our dreams and hopes for the New Year. She said that we could draw pictures of our dreams. We became nervous because we did not know how to draw. But Mony apa encouraged us and said that it is not a drawing competition or test. She gave us coloured paper and color pencils and asked us to draw from our hearts. As we talked, we realised that many of us dream of a better income. We all want to work for economic independence but we don't want to go far from our families. We went abroad and earned some money. But our family life was impacted. Our children were not cared for. They did not study well. We dream of home-based income source.

We all are dreaming of building our beautiful houses to live in with our families. We want to be socially accepted. Sometime ago, something nice happened to Laki. She helped her house owner to learn Arabic language. She also gave him advice about overseas travel. The owner followed all her advice and went to Saudi Arab. He talked to her from there and thanked her for all help, especially for her language teaching. Laki felt very good.



See our drawing. We hope to make money from rearing cows, raising poultry and fish farming. We want to educate our children. Some of us want to make hand embroidery and *nakshi kantha*. Some want to have a vegetable garden for family and to sell. Another person wants to start a *Pitha* (traditional cake) House and grocery shop beside her home. Others wanted to raise ducks or to set up a Beauty Salon. All of us want to have a happy family. We want to travel to beautiful places as a family.

Meeting facilitation and translation from Bangla by Salma Akter Mony, OKUP.

'Swapner Ghuri' or Dream Kite

RUMANA, SANJIDA, HALIMA AND SELINA



Sanjida: I lost my home and family at an early age due to river erosion. So I dream to have my own home with lots of trees and a yard.

Halima: My dream is to educate my children and also to build a brick house and own a car for my children.

Selina: My only dream is to send my children to good schools and educate them so that they can have a respectable life.

Rumana: I dream to live happily with my husband and daughters.



Rumana, Sanjida, Halima and Selina met at Badabon Sangho's office in Keranigunj, Bangladesh. Translation from Bangla by Lipi Rahman, Badabon Sangho.

Unbroken

SANDIGAN KUWAIT DOMESTIC WORKERS ASSOCIATION
(SKDWA)

Linda, Ayah, Lyncy, Joy and Helen from the SKDWA team met up in January to talk about their hopes and dreams for 2022. We drew a picture together and called it **Unbroken**.



We named it unbroken because no matter what happens, regardless of the thousand challenges; we will never abandon our hopes and dreams. We will continue fighting and resisting the odds around us.



Our drawing portrays oneness, determination, collaboration, organizing and serenity. We felt very emotional while creating this collective picture because we remembered the goals, we had set for ourselves when we decided to become a migrant worker. We had made promises to our families – to our mothers, fathers, siblings and children.

While drawing a picture together and talking about our hopes we also felt that we are not alone, that Sandigan Kuwait, our families and the people we cherish will always be there for us.

The Power of Rural Women

SISTERS FROM SERUNI



Triana Kurnia Wardani, Istriana Setya, Syamsiah, Helda Khasmy, Septya, Dian Raya, Nur Laili and Rani Saputri gathered at the Seruni office on a bright morning on January 15th. As women focusing on organic





farming, we decided to show our dreams and hopes for 2022 by using natural things around us.



So we have created the face of a rural woman who is the source of life. Our creation consists of vegetables, food crops, and flowers as symbols of natural beauty. This creation also highlights our strong faith in the power of collective struggle, and our belief that what we strive for as women can be realized step by step and sustainably for generations to come.

Our Dreams

PUSHPA, RINA, MUNA, VIGNESHWARI, MANJUDA, JINI, URMILA,
SUSHILA SARASWATI & KAVITA FROM TARINI MAHILA SAMUHA
WITH RUBY MAHATO

We had had many meetings before but had never shared our dreams with each other. Nor talked about our dreams as a collective. Ruby gave us some pens and paper. But many of us cannot write. What will we do with pen and paper?



We gathered rice powder, red, yellow and pink colour, sand and lime and then we tried to draw our dreams – on paper and on the ground. Our children saw us doing



it and they also started drawing. It was as if we were all playing together, mothers and daughters. Everyone was happy.

Makar Sankranti, our big festival was only a day away. There was a lot of work to do at home. But we were drawing our dreams, house work could wait. We wanted everyone to see the beauty and colour of our hopes and dreams.

We drew bright green fields, a road, a pond, a child birth centre for women and a large playground in the school where teachers and students can play football together. Those of us who had left their studies mid-way because they got married at an early age wanted to get a chance to start their studies again. They made a red sun on paper so that everything is bright and safe. Our dream is to build a supportive network, help each other and learn from each other.





It was getting late for Ruby. So she left. But we continued to play with colours to give our dreams a visible shape. On paper and on the ground. Mothers and daughters played together. Forgetting our housework for a while.

Self-Reliant and Economically Self-Sufficient

WOMEN FROM THE NUAPATNA GROUP WITH KALA AUR KATHA

A group of women trainees in their early twenties meet regularly at a small training centre in Nuapatana village of Cuttack district in Odisha, India. They come to the centre to learn computer and tailoring skills. At the start of the new year, they held a group session to talk about their dreams and aspirations.



They began the session by sitting quietly with their eyes closed for about ten



minutes to reflect on their dreams and aspirations. After that they sat in pairs facing each other and looked deep into each other's eyes for five minutes without saying anything. After that exercise all of them wrote down their thoughts on

small pieces of paper and posted those on a large sheet of paper. Collectively all of them want to be self-reliant and financially strong. Some of them want to be designers and teachers while others want to work on computer education.

(Bishnupriya Das, Dharitri Sahoo, Saraswati Sahoo, Mini Behera, Satyabhama Pal, Sarita Naik, Barsharani Kundu, Shrabani Rout, Sarita Das, Anjali Rout, Pratima Behera, Pritimayee Panda. Manisha Naik and Lipika Behera participated in the group exercise.)

out to the learning facilitator to discuss various issues. Some sisters have been very enthusiastic about the E-Magazine and have contributed stories for previous issues. Nadia Afrin, the learning facilitator, encourages them to write and translates their work into English. The group also plans to bring out a publication in Bangla.

For the New Year issue of **Our Work, Our Lives**, the women decided to write a poem together. The collaborative process was guided by Nadia.

Nadia gave them the theme and suggested a starting line. Over several days, creative ideas were exchanged back and forth. Everyone contributed different lines, which complemented each other, and finally formed a complete poem. During this process, Nadia made some suggestions for editing and rearranging and what was suggested as the first line became the conclusion of the poem. When the final version of the poem came together, all the sisters were very excited to see the final result. They became very emotional to see how their group work ended up reflecting each of their lives so well. As Sabina said, “I didn’t even imagine we could come up with such a nice thing together! I had mixed feelings while reading the complete poem, I cried, I laughed, and I got very excited.”

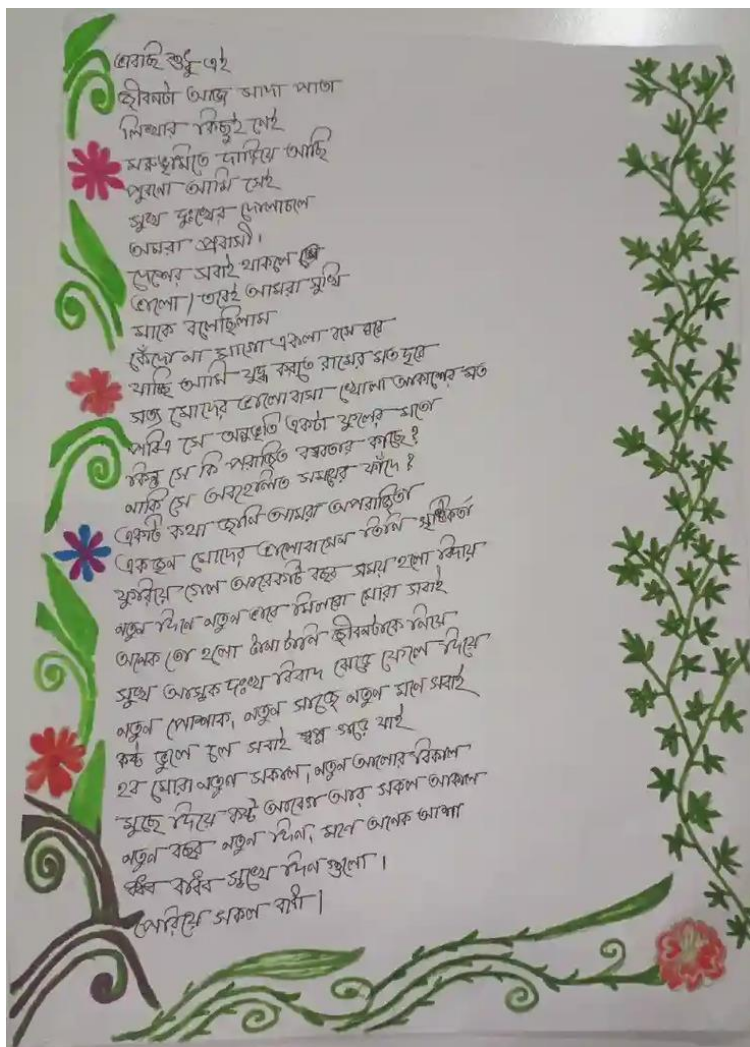
In addition to co-writing a poem, some sisters also came up with their own individual poems, as well as drawings. One of the sisters, Rupali, produced a handwritten version of the group poem.

We share two poems here. The poem called **Hope** is written by the group and **2021 Full of Storm** is written by Sabina. The English translation provided by the

facilitator tries to capture the content and emotions of the original and is therefore not an exact translation. It also does not aim to reproduce the rhyme scheme contained in the original version.

Hope

Women Garment Migrant Workers' Forum, Jordan – with contributions from Sabina, Mahmuda, Rojina, Jannath, Rupali, Shefali, Afroja, Nurjahan, Masuma, Anwara



Life today is just a blank page
Nothing to write on
I'm still the same old me
Standing in the desert alone

We are migrants floating
On a raft between happiness and
misery

We are only happy
If everyone at home is merry

I told my mother,
Don't cry, Ma, sitting alone
I'm going to the battlefield
Far away from home

Our love is true like the open sky
That sacred feeling is flower-like
But is it defeated by the harsh reality?
Or it is neglected in the trap of time?

One thing I know is
That we are invincible
The one who loves us for certain
Is our Creator

Another year has passed
And it is time to say good-bye
The new day will bring us together
In a new way

Enough of the strain in life
Let there be happiness
Let go of conflict and sorrow
Let's make progress

New clothes, new decorations
New minds, everyone!
Let's forget all the troubles
And build new dreams

We will be the new morning

The light of the new afternoon

Erasing the bad days

Dark demons and suffering

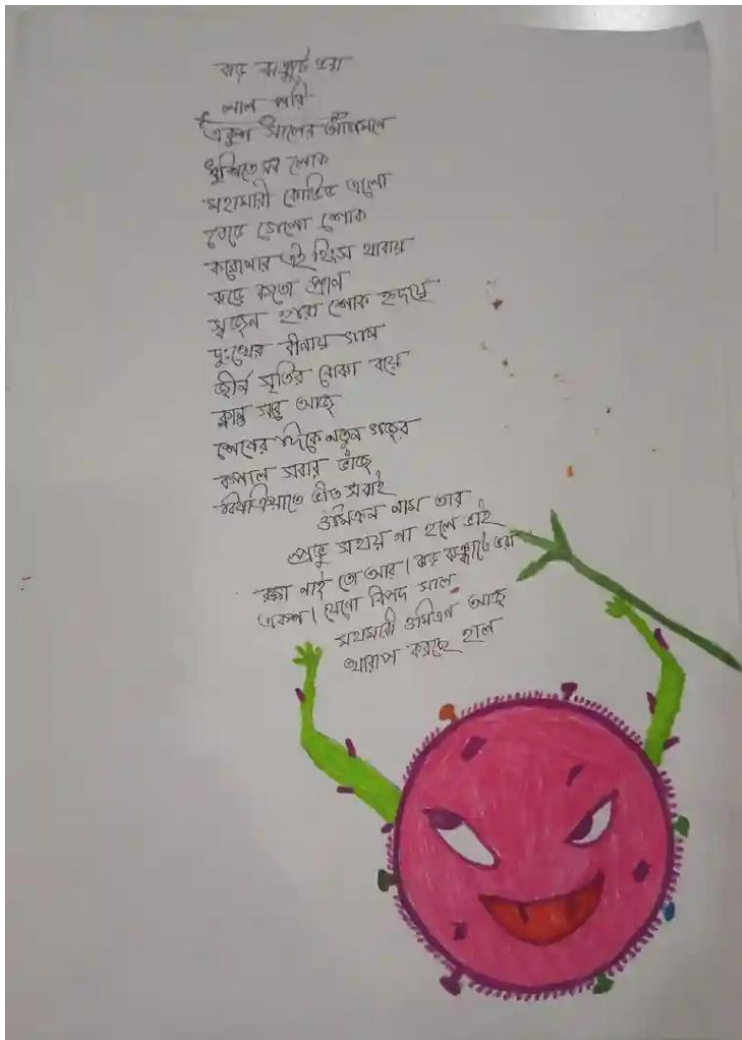
New year, new days

Hoping so much

We will build our happy days

Overcoming all barriers.

2021 Full of Storm



Red Fairy (Sabina), Jordan
WMWF

With the advent of 2021

People were all happy

But the pandemic came

And increased the woes

So many lives have fallen

To the violent claws of COVID

The heart is mourning for the
loved ones

The eyes are straining

Everyone is tired

Carrying the memories

Towards the year's end
Came the new wrath
Wrinkles on everybody's foreheads
We are all petrified of Omicron

It will not be possible to escape
If the Almighty doesn't help
2021 was full of storms
A dangerous year
A new variant, Omicron, today
Again, makes us fear.

Our Shared Dreams

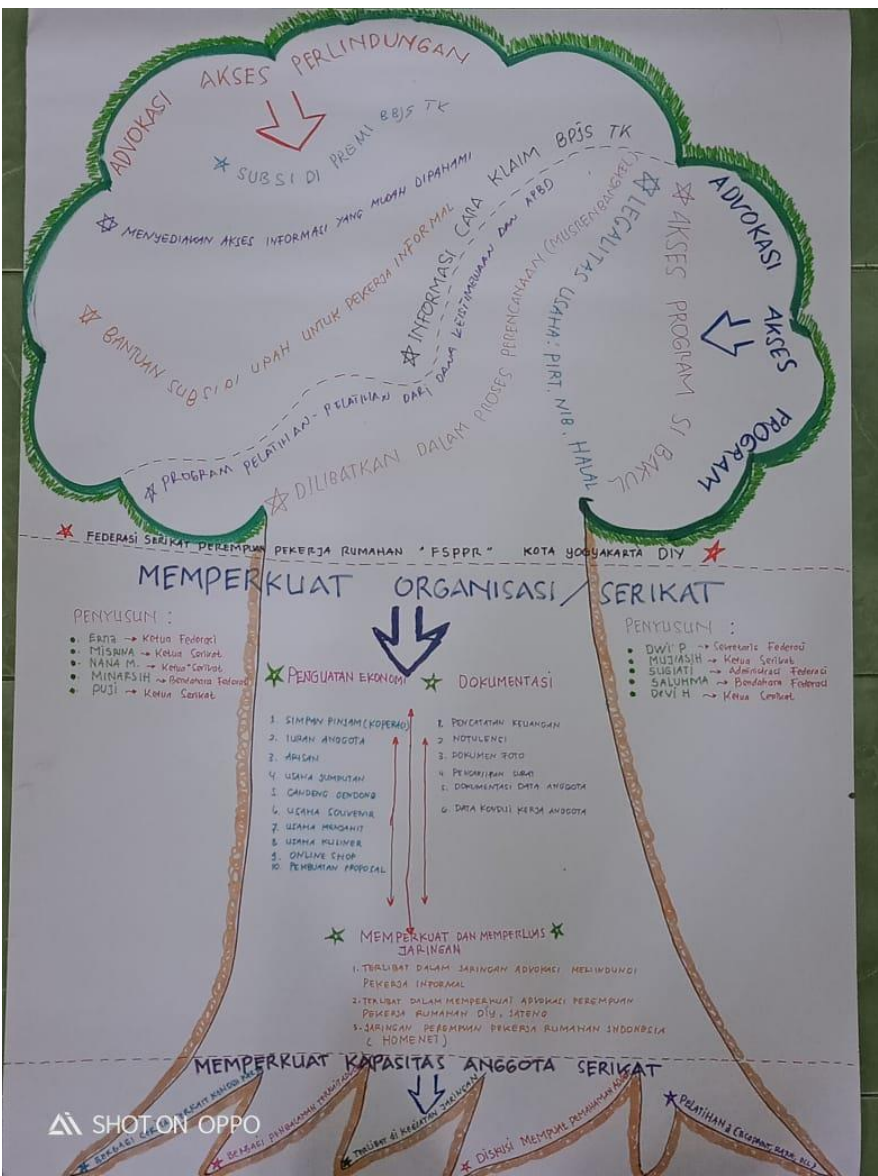
MEMBERS OF FSPPR-YOGYAKARTA, FSPPR-BANTUL DISTRICT, PPR MANDIRI-UNGARAN DISTRICT, CENTRAL JAVA, PAGUYUBAN BURUH GENDONG-YOGYAKARTA WITH YASANTI

Yasanti is a women's rights organisation in Yogyakarta, Indonesia that works closely with women workers, especially those who are recognised and protected by the state. In this essay, Yasanti would like to share the collective hopes of four groups of women workers: the Federation of Homeworkers in Yogyakarta city and Bantul district in Yogyakarta province, the Homeworkers Union in Ungaran, Central Java province and a group of Women Porters from four traditional markets in the city of Yogyakarta.

The hopes articulated by the four groups of women workers have a common thread. All of them hope to be recognised as workers and want their rights protected by the state.

Hopes of FSPPR (Federation of Homebased Women Workers Unions) in Yogyakarta City

FSPPR is a federation of five homebased workers unions located in Yogyakarta City. Yogyakarta FSPPR has been registered at the Yogyakarta City Manpower Office. Currently, Yogyakarta FSPPR in collaboration with Bantul FSPPR and the Informal Workers' Advocacy Support Network is conducting advocacy on the draft regional labour regulations that is being discussed by a team of experts at the Provincial House of Representatives.



This picture of collective hope was drawn by union officials. They are Erna (Head of the Federation), Dwi P (Secretary of the Federation), Sugiati (Administrator of the Federation), Mujiasih (Chair of the Union), Minarsih (Treasurer of the Federation), Saluhma (Treasurer of the Federation), Devi H. (Chairperson of the Union), Puji (Guild Leader), Misrina (Union Leader) and Nana M (Union Leader). Before compiling this picture, the administrators had a long discussion.

So what does the picture say?

Roots signify hope to strengthen the capacity of union members through sharing stories and experiences as informal workers, engaging in networking activities, discussions, and trainings to strengthen members' perspectives and awareness and build solidarity.

Trunk of the tree signifies hope to strengthen the union through:

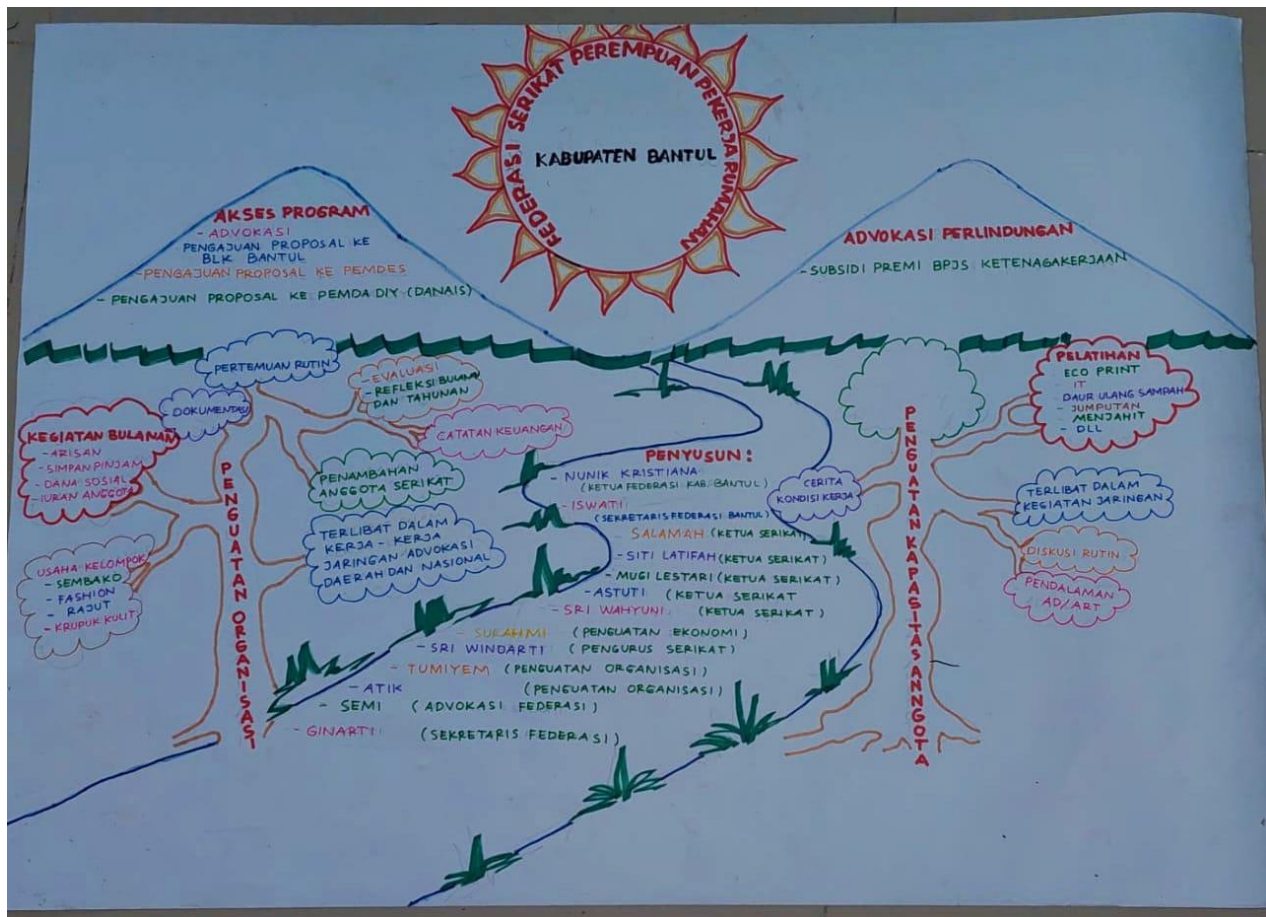
(1) Strengthening the economic situation through membership fees, savings and loan cooperatives, social gathering, *jumputan* (the technique used to make batik motifs) cloth business, souvenir business, sewing business, culinary business, online shop, and by writing funding proposals.

(2) Documentation by union members on members' working conditions, financial records, recording of meetings, filing of letters.

(3) Strengthen and expand networks by engaging in collaborative advocacy for the rights protection of informal workers and homebased workers in the provinces of Yogyakarta and Central Java.

Branches and leaves signify hope to have access to workers' social security. Workers need information on how to claim BPJS Tenaga Kerja (Employment Social Security Administrator) and wage subsidies. They also need to **advocate for** access to *Si Bakul* programme (Information System for the Development of Cooperatives and Business Actors in DIY, which is one of the integrated programmes of the DIY Regional Government). They need legal recognition of their business such as halal certificate, they need to participate in *Musrenbang* (the process of deliberation on the Yogyakarta regional development plan) and access to training programmes funded by the Yogyakarta Province APBD (Regional Expenditure Budget) funds.

This picture of collective hope also shows the advocacy priorities and organisational development plans of the federation for the next two years.



Hopes of FSPPR (Federation of Homebased Women Workers' Unions) from Bantul District

FSPPR (Federation of Homebased Women Workers' Unions) Bantul District is a federation of homeworkers unions located in Bantul District, Yogyakarta Province.

This picture was drawn by union officials. They are Nunik Kristiana (Head of the Federation), Iswati (Secretary of the Federation), Ginarti (Secretary of the Federation), Semi (Advocacy Division in the Federation) Salamah (Chairperson of the Union), Siti Latifah (Chairperson of the Union), Mugi Lestari (Chairperson of the Union), Astuti (Union Leader), Sri Wahyuni (Union Leader), Surahmi (Economic Strengthening Division), Sri Windarti (Union Management Division),

Tumiyem (Organisational Strengthening Division), and Atik (Organisational Strengthening Division).

The group had the following explanation of their drawing:

The first mountain shows hope of workers to access government programmes by submitting proposals to the Bantul Government Job Training Centre, the Village Governments, and the Yogyakarta Provincial Government.

The second mountain shows hope that informal workers will be better protected through BPJS (Social Security Administrator) Employment premium subsidies.

The first tree shows hope that organisational strengthening can continue through staple food, fashion, knitting, and other businesses, monthly *arisan* (money collection) activities, savings and loans, social funds, and membership fees. Regular meetings, documentation of activities and financial record keeping would also be needed as well as collaboration with advocacy networks at the regional and national levels. New members should join the union. Regular evaluation and reflection should be done.

The second tree shows hope to strengthen capacity of members through sharing of experiences – stories of working conditions, engaging in network activities, deepening understanding of AD/ART (union rules), regular discussions, Ecoprint, Internet and Technology trainings, recycling and sewing business and *jumputan* (the technique used to make batik motifs) cloth business, etc.

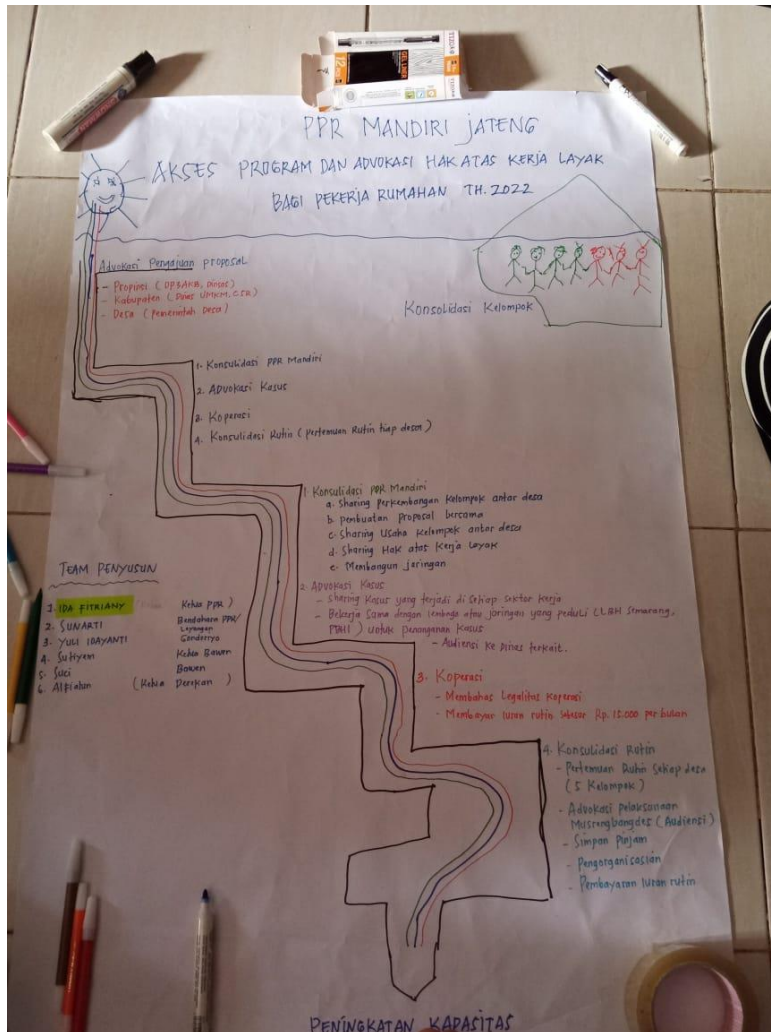
Hopes of PPR Mandiri (Mandiri Homebased Women Workers' Unions) in Ungaran District, Central Java

Ungaran Mandiri Homebased Women Workers' Union is located in Ungaran District, Central Java Province.



This picture of hope was drawn by union officials. They are Ida Fitriany (Union Leader), Sunarti (Union Treasurer), Yuli Idayanti (Gender Ministry), Sutyem (Bawen Area Head), Suci (Bawen Area Manager) and Alfiatun (Derekan Area Leader).

Their Hopes



They want to see workers able to access government and private programmes through proposal submissions to social services, small and medium-sized business offices, corporate CSR, and village government programmes.

PPR Mandiri hopes to do internal consolidation by sharing news about the development of inter-village groups, joint proposal preparation, sharing group

efforts between villages, sharing knowledge about workers' rights, and building networks.

They hope to raise their voices against violation of workers' rights by learning how to handle cases, cooperate with legal aid institutions on cases, and arrange hearings with relevant state bodies.

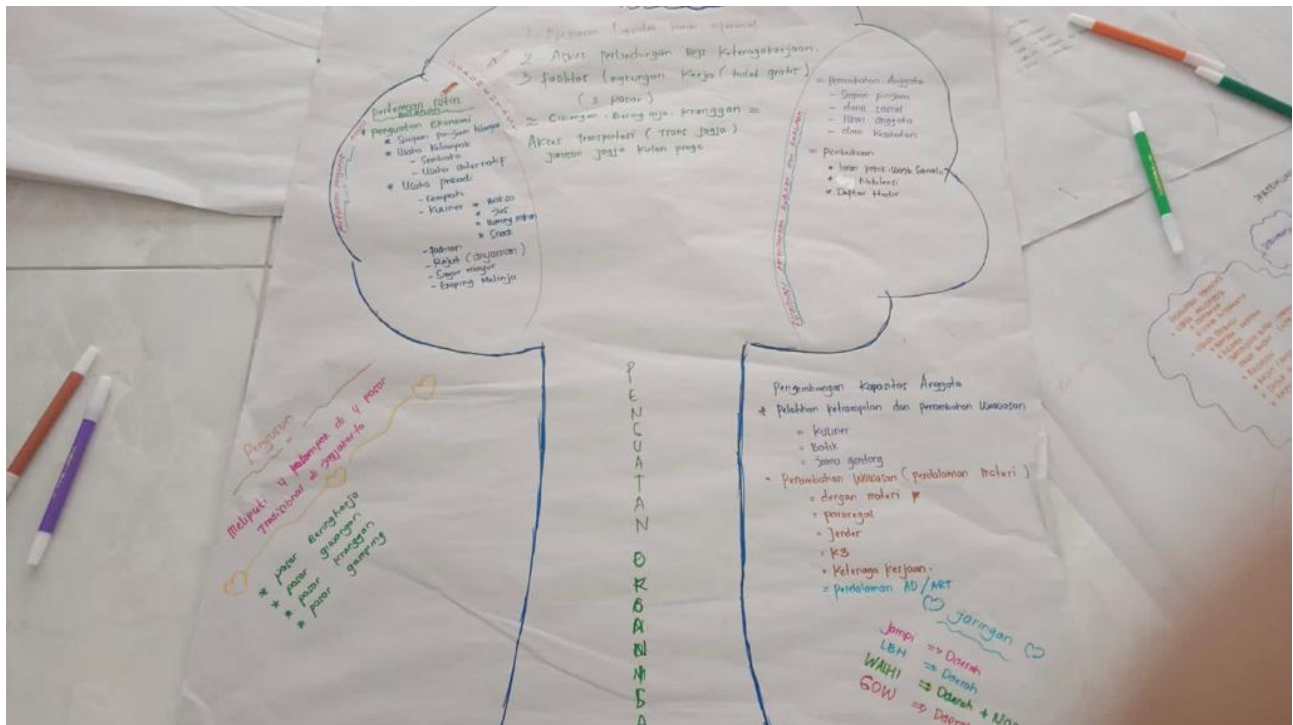
They hope to strengthen cooperatives by demanding legalisation of cooperatives and by regular membership fees.

They would like to see their membership consolidated by holding regular meetings in five villages, advocating for involvement in development planning at the village level, and increased savings.

Hopes of Paguyuban Buruh Gendong (Women Porters' Groups) in Yogyakarta

Paguyuban Buruh Gendong (Women Porters Group) in Yogyakarta is a women porters' group in Yogyakarta city. They work in four traditional markets in the city.

This picture of hope was drawn by the group members who work in Beringharjo, Kranggan, Gamping, and Grawangan markets.



They hope to continue to strengthen their organisation by capacity building of members and skills training in making batik, selling food, and mixing and selling *jamu* (herbal medicine) to support their entrepreneurship. They would

like to build knowledge and insight on occupational safety and health and deepen their understanding of AD/ART (group rules), learn about workers' rights, develop networks with legal aid groups, women's organisations and environmental organisations.

They hope to hold regular meetings to discuss economic strengthening such as knitting business, savings and loan business etc.

Their hope for change includes access to cheap and fast transportation (trans Jogja) and access to BPJS Ketenagakerjaan (Employment Social Security Administrator) subsidies.



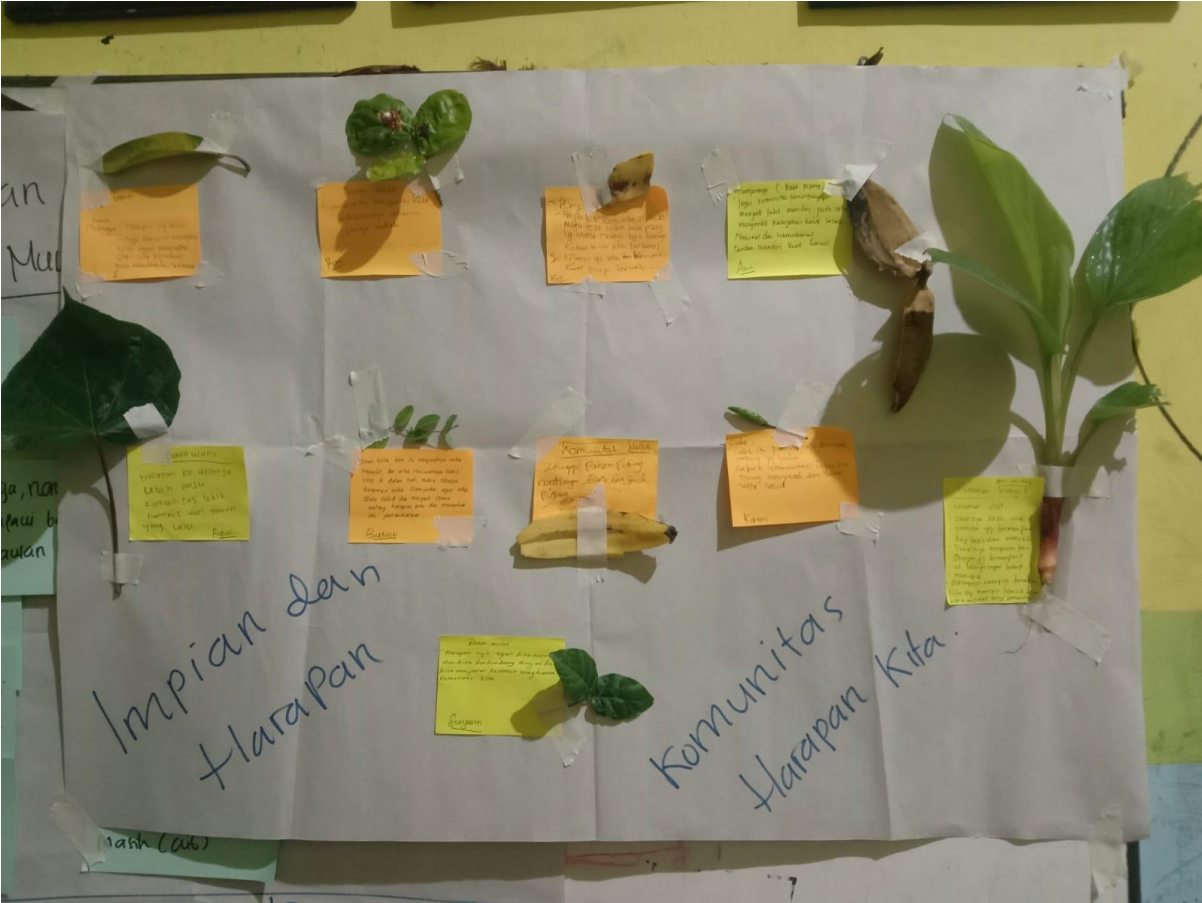
*Women Porters Group is delighted that their ideas and hopes will feature in **Our Work, Our Lives**.*

Text prepared in Bahasa Indonesia by Amin M. English translation by Dewi Nova.

Our Hope for our Community

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY OF MUKTIHARJO KIDUL

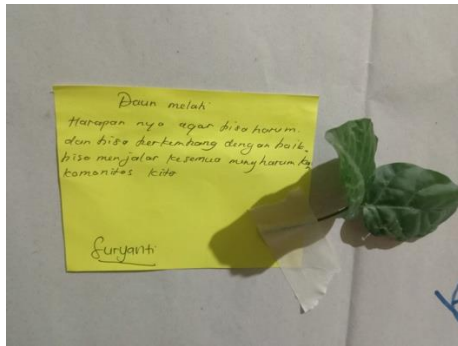
The Women's Community of Muktiharjo Kidul held its regular meeting on Sunday, January 9, 2022. As this was their first meeting of this year, they wanted to spend some time to talk about their hopes and dreams for the year. Each member used something from nature while sharing their thoughts.





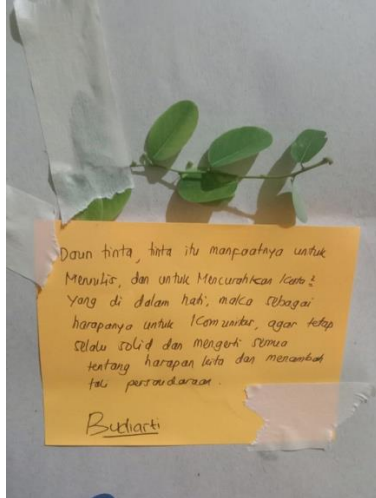
Sharing

1.



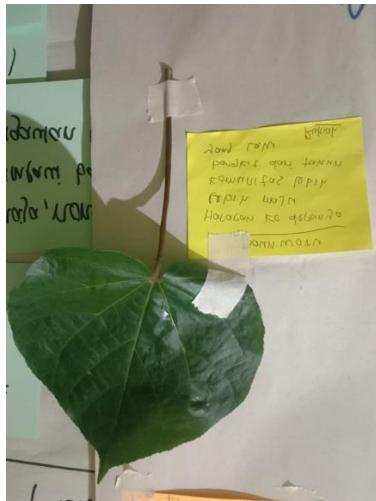
Jasmine Leaf by Suryanti
Like the Jasmine flower spreads its fragrance around her, I hope for a happy future for all women in our community.

2.



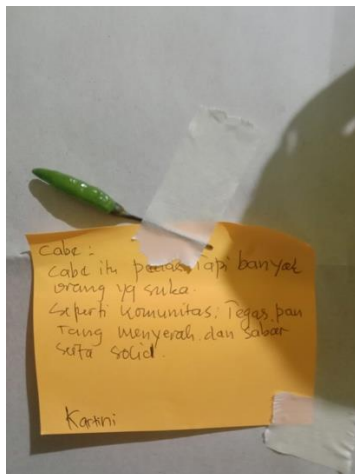
Ink Leaf by Bu Budiarti
Ink is used for writing and for pouring out thoughts into words. My hope is for my community to always stay in solidarity and understanding of all members.

3.



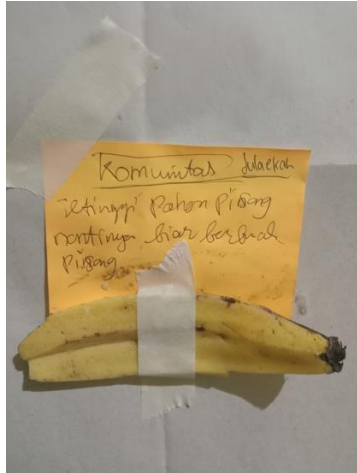
Waru Leaf by Mrs. Rukiah
For my community to be more progressive and vigilant than last year.

4.



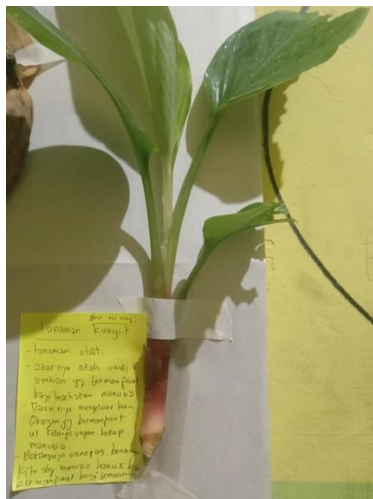
Chili by Kartini
Chili is spicy but many people like it. Like our community, my hope for our members is to stay firm, patient and to be strong-willed.

5.



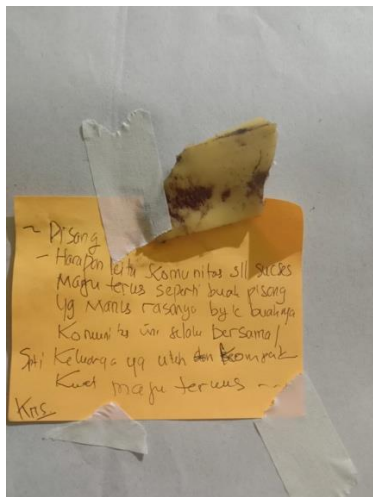
Banana Peel by Julaekah
 Our community members should stand tall and valuable, like how a banana is tree is like.

6.



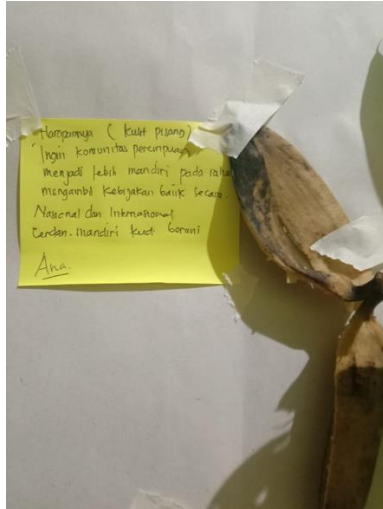
Key Plant by Nining
 This is a medicinal plant, the roots are used for medicine and the stems support the plant. My hope is for us to be supportive and thoughtful to our community and environment.

7.



Banana by Kris
 My hope is for the community to recognise its contributions and to stay united.

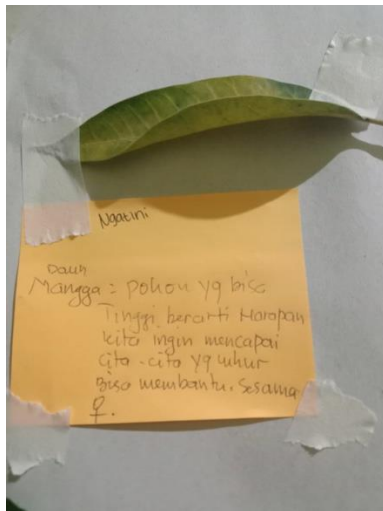
8.



Banana Peel by Ana

I hope to see more independent, strong and brave community members.

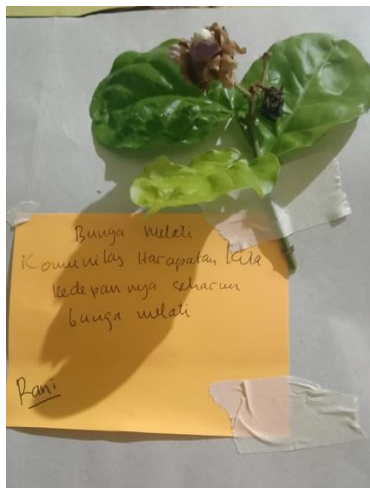
9.



Mango Leaf by Mrs. Ngatini

Like a strong mango tree that provides shade to others, we can also set a valuable standard of supporting women in our community.

10.



Jasmine Flower by Rani

Our community should be like the jasmine flowers.

Translation from Bahasa Indonesia by Yaya, LRC KJHAM.



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women
191/41, Sivalai Condominium, 33, Itsaraphap Road
Bangkok, Thailand, www.gaatw.org