



# SMEEU Efforts in Organising, Promoting OHS & Women Participation in Workforce

IndustriALL Global Union Shipbuilding-Shipbreaking Action  
Group Meeting

31 October -1 November 2017





# SMEEU Sharing on Organising



# Representing the Vulnerable Workforce

1. Represent migrant workers who are union members on work and safety issues
2. Union leaders will be there during enquiry meetings – to ensure fair hearing
3. In some companies, migrant workers are covered under the collective agreement (CA) and enjoy good employment terms and conditions.

# Representing the Vulnerable Workforce

1. Actively organise companies which are not treating their workers correctly.
2. For example, one marine company was getting their workers to work extra long hours and did not pay them the correct overtime salary. SMEEU organize the workers and won the secret ballot this year. The union, company and ministry is currently working to correct all the wrong practices.



# SMEEU Sharing on OHS Practices



# Background

In 2011 Singapore amended the Workplace Safety and Health Act (WSH Act) to:

1. Extend the Act to all workplaces instead just specific types of workplaces and factories
2. Extend the responsibilities of work safety to all individuals rather than confining to the supervisors, managers and companies

# Major Challenges

## **Major challenges in enforcement and compliance**

- To ensure fairness in the investigation and awarding of penalties.
- Regular enforcement needed
- Management of migrant workers with regards to HSE due to cultural and linguistic diversity.
- More effort put in the educating the workforce through training.

# Improvement to OHS

- SMEEU leaders sit in the National Workforce Safety Council.
- SMEEU representatives in the HSE Investigation Teams and Grievance Committee of companies to ensure fair treatment.
- Union representation in the Yard HSE Committee
- Comfortable dormitories and facilities for the welfare of migrant workers



# Better Working and Living Conditions for Migrant Workers

1. Unions and companies worked together to provide a better working and living conditions for foreign workers.
2. The Integrated yard at Tuas is a good example. Host 4000 workers
  - Good accommodation
  - Gym
  - Entertainment Centre
  - Medical Centre
  - Washing facilities
  - Football court etc

# Better Working and Living Conditions for Migrant Workers



Well-equipped medical centre.



High standards of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE).

# Better Working and Living Conditions for Migrant Workers



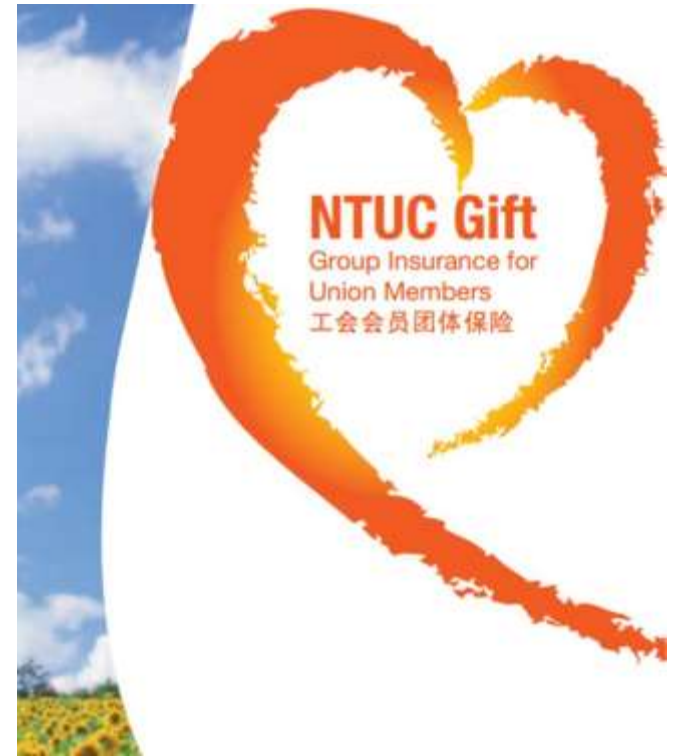
Neat and comfortable apartment.



In-house laundry services.

# Insurance Protection For Workers (NTUC Gift)

- Covered all union members for death and total permanent disability.
- Increase maximum coverage from \$20k to \$40k.
- This insurance is on top of other insurance coverage





# Enhancing Women Participation in the Workforce



# Enhancing Women Participation in the Workforce

Over the years SMEEU actively encourages women participation in union work. As a result:

1. There is an increase of women union leaders from 16 to 21 over the past 4 years – a 30% increase.
2. SMEEU women union leaders represent the union in various NTUC Committees and Nation wide committees.

# Enhancing Women Participation in the Workforce

3. Women union leaders take up key positions in NTUC and unions. Sister Eileen Yeo is a very good example, she is the General Secretary of SMEEU and is a member of the NTUC Central Committee.

# Enhancing Women Participation in the Workforce

SMEEU also works with NTUC to help women return and re-integrate into the workforce.

1. Returner Work Trial – to help transit economically inactive PMETs back to work. During the trial, there will be training allowances for the employees. Employer can also claim funding for the training.
2. Workpro Work-Life Grant – to incentivize companies to implement/enhance flexible work arrangements at the workplace for better retention of women

These programmes help to recruit and place women in family-friendly positions from employers across various sectors. After which, there are also programmes to encourage retention such as flexible work arrangements etc.



Thank you!