

# **Domestic/Household Workers**

## **demand**

## **respect and rights!**



Tens of millions of people worldwide work in the private homes of others.

- Most are women from poorer sections of society.
- Many are migrants from other countries, or from rural areas to towns/cities.
- There are many children doing this work too.
- Most are isolated, invisible and vulnerable to abuse.
- Some are even in slavery.



*“Almost nowhere are our  
rights as workers respected.”*

*“Almost nowhere are we respected  
for the contribution we make.”*



*“We want the world to recognise us as **workers** – for that is what we are.”*



*“We demand **respect** for what we contribute –  
to the economy and society.”*

*“We work hard to feed our families and lift ourselves out of poverty.”*

*“We look after other people’s most precious things – their children and elders.”*

Domestic/household workers are the oil in the wheels of the economy, looking after homes so that others can go out to work.





# Domestic/household workers are mobilising across the world for the rights and respect that they deserve.

Latin America  
and Caribbean



Peru



*“We are organising ourselves for a better future, and we want your support.”*



Hong Kong



Thailand

USA

Switzerland



# The 'Respect and Rights' Network

Involves domestic/household workers' own organisations and supporters across the world - trade unions, associations, national/international networks and federations, NGOs, researchers, and so on.

Formed after a ground-breaking international conference  
'Respect and Rights'  
Amsterdam, November 2006  
[www.domesticworkerrights.org](http://www.domesticworkerrights.org)





# The 'Respect and Rights' Network

is guided by a **Steering Committee** of domestic/household workers' organisations from all world regions

is part of

the **IUF global union federation**

which is providing an organisational base

and is supported by

- the **Global Unions**: especially the public sector workers' PSI, and the global union confederation ITUC
- **WIEGO**: Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising



*“Decent work for all’  
must include us”*

- Domestic/household work could be ‘decent work’ - if the workers who do it are paid and treated properly.
- Domestic/household workers want an international ILO Convention setting out their rights as workers, everywhere.
- It is one step on the road towards....  
**Rights and Respect!**



# The process has begun

In June 2011, the ILO will adopt an international standard setting out the rights of domestic/household workers as workers.

This document must give the protection that they need and deserve.

It must be an ILO Convention (not only a Recommendation) and with strong wording.



# Activities in each country - 2009

- ✓ Build alliances between domestic/household workers' organisations and trade unions in your country.
- ✓ The trade unions should help domestic/household workers get involved in the ILO process.
- ✓ Prepare your arguments and evidence.
- ✓ Lobby your government.
- ✓ Respond to the ILO draft 'Law and Practice Report' and questionnaire (deadline: end August).
- ✓ Do public awareness-raising.





# Activities in each country - 2010

- ✓ Get the revised ILO 'Law and Practice Report': check it is accurate about your country; if not, prepare your arguments and inform the unions.
- ✓ Get domestic/household workers onto the official country delegation to the ILO.
- ✓ Join our Network activities at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva in June.
- ✓ Respond to the third ILO report, which will have a draft of the instrument (deadline: end November).



# Activities in each country - 2011

- ✓ In March, get hold of two new ILO reports and check what they say:
  - the replies given by your government, unions and employers
  - the text of the proposed standard(s).
- ✓ Get domestic/household workers onto the official country delegation to the ILO.
- ✓ Join our Network activities at the ILC in Geneva in June – **here the Convention and/or Recommendation will be agreed.**



# From 2011 on

- Once we have the international Convention, we must all work hard to make sure each Government ratifies it and puts its standards into national law.
- Only then can it really start to change the lives of domestic/household workers.



# Be part of the Network

- Use our leaflets, logo and other materials in your awareness-raising.
- Inform the 'Rights and Respect' Network:
  - arguments raised against you and how you overcome them
  - what you have done to build your own organisation and your alliances with others
  - the position of your Government on the proposed Convention.
- Link to the Network website:  
[www.domesticworkerrights.org](http://www.domesticworkerrights.org)





# The time has come!

- Join in the campaign for an ILO Convention for the rights of domestic/household workers!
- Build respect for the huge contribution that domestic/household workers make to all our lives!



[www.domesticworkerrights.org](http://www.domesticworkerrights.org)

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