

Regional Conference of City Authorities on Home-Based Workers
7-9 May 2014
Bangkok, Thailand

A Regional Conference of City Authorities on Home-based Workers was organized by HomeNet South Asia and HomeNet Thailand on 7-9 May 2014 in Bangkok. The conference sought to highlight how good civic amenities impact the productivity, livelihoods and quality of life of urban home-based workers and also sought to share programmes and interventions on the subject from South and South East Asia.

The workshop was attended by city mayors, administrators, networks of home-based workers and organizations working with home-based workers. These attendees arrived from eight countries located in South and South East Asia – namely, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

In the inaugural address, the Honourable Acting Governor of Bangkok and chief guest of the conference, Dr. Pusadee Tamthai, said that, *'Home-based workers should not only get civic amenities because they contribute to the economy significantly, but also because it is their human right ... there is a great need for coordination among the various departments and agencies that provide different services ...'*. Two home-based workers, Ms. Neeramol Suthipannaphong and Mr. Somkid Duang-ngeun from Thailand, also shared their views and concerns.



There were five panel discussions during the conference to discuss the key urban issues affecting home-based workers: housing, transport, water and sanitation, livelihood and health and safety. Dr. Martha Chen, from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and International Coordinator for WIEGO, gave the [keynote address](#). She shared the findings from the [Informal Economy Monitoring Study \(IEMS\)](#) in Ahmedabad, Bangkok and Lahore which touched on each of the key issues of the conference (see appended presentation).

WIEGO Statistical Briefs on home-based workers from four countries – Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan – were [launched by Dr. Tamthai and Dr. Chen](#).

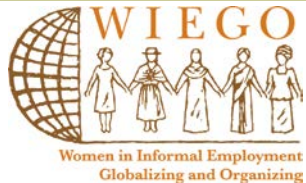


Shalini Sinha – WIEGO's Sector Specialist, Home-Based Workers - was the resource person in the session on "Secure and Adequate Housing". She highlighted the home as a place of work for the home-based workers and the need to turn these homes into productive spaces through better housing and infrastructure provision (see appended presentation).

On the concluding day of the conference, an ['Asian Cities Declaration on Home-based Workers 2014'](#) was adopted. Some key recommendations of the city declaration were as follows: include home based workers in existing government schemes and services and formulate new schemes where no such scheme / service exists; adopt an approach (by the local bodies and city planners) that recognizes the home as the workplace; extend tenure security through in-situ regularization and improvement for all existing settlements; and extension of basic civic amenities by relevant agencies in a participatory manner. The Conference hoped that the *Asian City Declaration 2014* will serve as a road map for governments and city authorities to address issues of urban home-based workers in South and South East Asia as well as provide directions and insights for city officials world-wide.

MY HOME IS MY WORKPLACE

Housing for the homebased workers



REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF CITY AUTHORITIES ON HOME BASED WORKERS

7th to 9th MAY, 2014

SHALINI SINHA
WIEGO Sector Specialist, Homebased Workers

Structure of the presentation

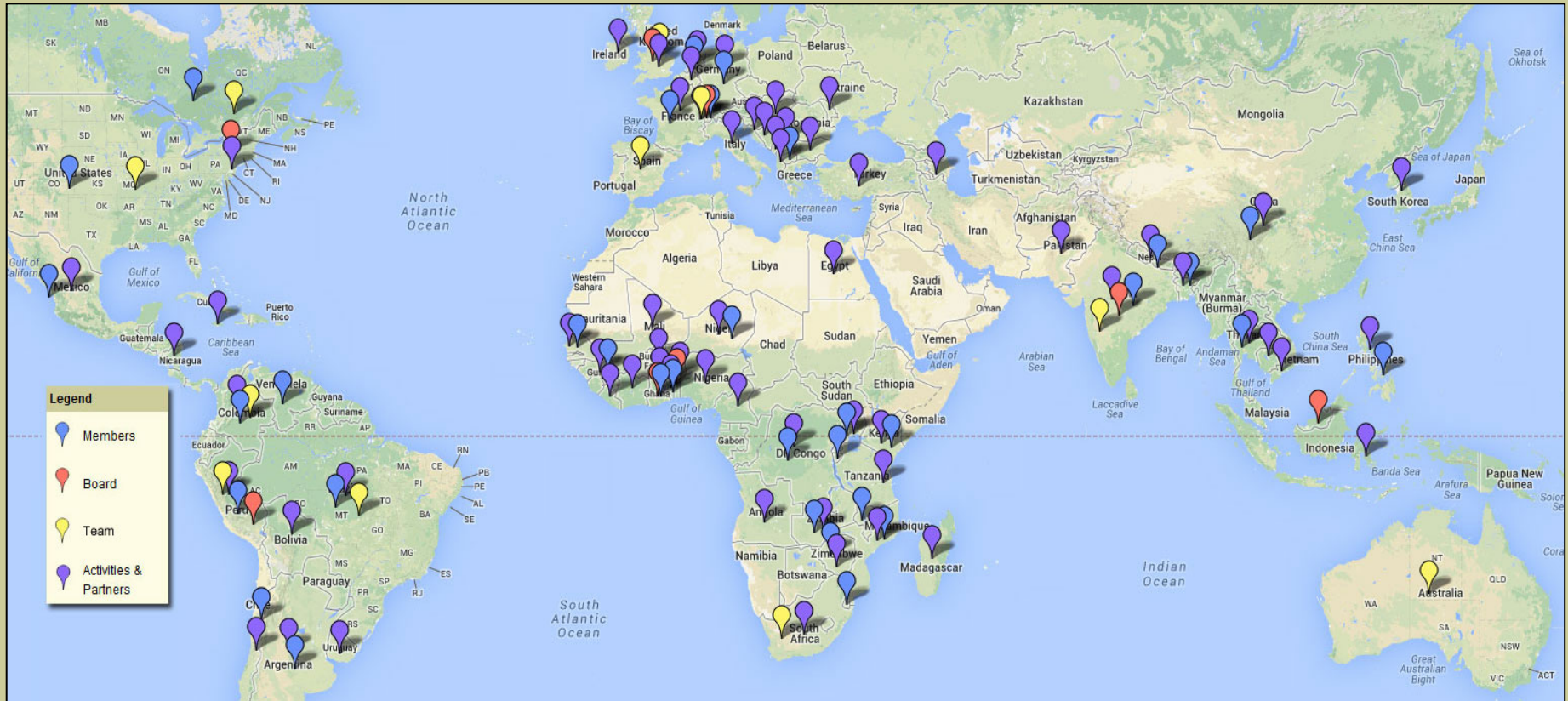
- Divided into two parts
 - Introduction to WIEGO
 - Home as a work place – emerging issues

WIEGO(in Brief)

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing or WIEGO is a global action-research-policy network

- **established:** 1997
- **goal & objectives:** to improve status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy through *systemic change* by increasing their Voice + Visibility + Validity
- **3 constituencies:** organizations of informal workers + researchers/statisticians + development professionals
- **defining feature:** bridging ground reality of the working poor & mainstream disciplines and discourses
- **6 core programs:** organizing/representation + statistics + global trade + social protection + urban policies + law
- **core functions:** networking/capacity building of organizations of informal workers (to increase **Voice**) + research/statistics and good practice documentation (to increase **Visibility**) → policy analysis and dialogues (to increase **Validity**)

WIEGO (in the World)



Activities & Partners: 63 countries * Members: 34 countries * Team: 11 countries * Board: 8 countries * Total Unique Countries: 72

WIEGO's

World of homebased workers

- Home based workers are one of WIEGO's four focal worker groups
- WIEGO has been working closely with membership based organization partners in South Asia and South East Asia (HomeNet SA and HomeNet SEA), for several years
- Presence in Eastern Europe – Bulgaria. Building partnerships in Albania, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey, Serbia; starting in Georgia, Montenegro, Ukraine, Serbia
- Exploring Latin America – Peru, Brazil and Argentina
- Exploring Africa – Kenya, Egypt and South Africa

WIEGO's

World of homebased workers

- We have collected information on HBW in over 25 countries of the world. This includes poor countries of Asia, to middle income level countries of South East Asia and Eastern Europe.
- We have primary data on HBW, their work, the urban issues that plague them in nearly 30 cities (through city studies, in partnership with HNSA)
- We have primary data on HBW, their earnings and incomes and factors that impact their livelihoods from 3 cities from our ten city informal economy monitoring study. This is a follow on from a previous study analyzing the impact of the global economic crisis.
- We have documented many of the programs of the Self Employed Women's Association, one of premier organizations for women HBW in the world.
- We have contributed to strengthening the visibility of HBW by strengthening the LFS.

A Knowledge Base on HBW

- *WIEGO – generating a knowledge base on HBW.*

Nature of outputs

- *City studies* from 8 countries of South and South East Asia (in partnership with HNSA)
- *Mapping* reports of HBWs and their organizations
- Documentation of *Best Practices*
- *Primary data* on HBWs
- Several *manuals for organizing* HBWs and *MBOP study* of HBWs in two countries of South Asia

A Knowledge Base on HBW

- *WIEGO – generating a knowledge base on HBW*
 - ▣ In depth *Review of Policy and Laws* for home based workers studied in Thailand and Peru (proposed for India)
 - ▣ Estimating the numbers of HBW *using the national level labor force data generated by national level LFS*. For the first time on estimates of HBW in urban employment as well as urban informal employment.
 - ▣ *Secondary data* on home based workers has also been generated through a review of literature, a 'live' reference list and a global news collation, a photo directory as well as wiego website

Part II

MY HOME IS MY WORKPLACE



SECURE & ADEQUATE HOUSING
for
Homebased workers

HOUSING FOR URBAN HBWS

- **Small and cramped spaces in low income settlements**



- **Poor quality – construction and location**

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOOD

- ❑ **Small Space used for Multiple activities interrupts work**
- ❑ **High Rents**
- ❑ **No bulk orders or bulk raw material**
- ❑ **Poor health and postures reduces productivity**
- ❑ **Eviction and relocation**



IMPACT ON LIVELIHOOD

- ❑ Policies regarding housing, slum eviction and relocation, and land allocation **more directly affect homebased workers** than other informal workers
- ❑ Home-based workers produce a wide variety of goods and services from their home: for the city, for local economies and even for global producers. Yet **most do not have secure tenure or good quality and/or affordable housing** to make their homes into productive workplaces.
- ❑ HBW are **not recognized and included in city development plans** as productive economic agents

TURNING HOMES INTO PRODUCTIVE SPACES

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Need for an approach to urban planning and local economic development that recognizes the contributions of the HBW and seeks to integrate them- and their livelihoods - into urban planning and economic policies.
- ❑ Promote "inclusive urban planning" by inviting organizations of HBW to have a seat at the policy table.

ISSUES FOR THIS SESSION

- ❑ How to **develop an approach in city planning and urban development**
 - ❑ that looks at 'home' as a workplace; a productive asset,
 - ❑ Sees HBW as contributors to the economy, a worker and a producer
- ❑ How **to integrate/prioritize HBW in housing policies** and schemes for economically weaker sections
 - ❑ Facilitate access – documentation, awareness etc
 - ❑ Address issues of design and low cost
 - ❑ Design new schemes – partners, costing, design etc
- ❑ How to rethink issues around **eviction and relocation** in the context of HBW and develop appropriate policies
- ❑ Addressing issues such as **land tenure, housing loan, zoning regulations**
- ❑ Ensure participation of the HBW and their organizations in the city

THANK YOU

