



Women in Informal Employment
Globalizing and Organizing



Empowering Informal Workers,
Securing Informal Livelihoods

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing

Annual Report

April 2015 – March 2016

WIEGO's MISSION

WIEGO believes all workers should have equal economic opportunities and rights and be able to determine the conditions of their work and lives. WIEGO works to improve the status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy through increased organization and representation; improved statistics and research; more inclusive policy processes; and more equitable trade, labour, urban planning, and social protection policies.

For more detail on the information in this report and to access publications, presentations, videos and other resources, visit www.wiego.org

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Front cover photo: 2016 marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of ILO Convention 177 concerning Home Work. Regional HomeNet organizations in South Asia, Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe are using the anniversary to raise awareness about home-based workers throughout the year. Photo: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images Reportage



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Letter from the Chair of the Board and the International Coordinator

Dear WIEGO Family and Friends,

WIEGO is a global action-research-policy network that seeks to improve the status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy by increasing their *Voice* (through stronger organizations and representation); their *Visibility* (through improved statistics and research); and their *Validity* (through legal recognition and identity). We do so by building and strengthening organizations of informal workers and sector-specific networks of these organizations; by promoting their representative voice in relevant policy-making, rule-setting and collective bargaining processes; by improving statistics measures, methods and collection on informal employment; by undertaking research on informal workers and their activities; by documenting good practice examples of policies and programmes that support the informal workforce; and by promoting their legal recognition and identity and creating platforms for them to engage with government and other stakeholders. We seek to bridge ground-level reality and mainstream discourse, local advocacy and global advocacy, and networks of informal workers around the world. The organizations of informal workers who are members of WIEGO have 158 affiliates in 84 countries.

WIEGO's activities during our fiscal year 2015/16, as detailed in this Annual Report, illustrate well how WIEGO works: to generate knowledge for and build the capacity of informal workers and their organizations to enable them to engage effectively in local and global advocacy. Here are some of the highlights of the past year:

Global Advocacy - In June 2015, WIEGO facilitated a delegation of informal worker leaders and their technical advisors to the standard-setting discussion on formalizing the informal economy at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva, Switzerland which approved Recommendation 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy. Recommendation 204 contains many provisions that the informal worker leaders advocated for, including recognition that most informal workers are poor, as well as a mandate to preserve informal livelihoods during the transition and to guarantee informal workers regulated access to public space and to natural resources. Throughout the year, WIEGO was also active in the preparations for UN Habitat III to be held in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016. These efforts included: facilitating a delegation of informal worker leaders to the second preparatory conference for Habitat III in Nairobi, Kenya in April 2015; serving as members of three policy units that prepared background documents for the New Urban Agenda (the outcome document to be approved at Habitat III); participating in the General Assembly of Partners and the World Urban Campaign (as co-chairs of the Grassroots Constituency and the communications sub-committee); and participating in several thematic and regional preparatory meetings. In March 2016, WIEGO was selected to be a member of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. The two of us (Marty Chen and Renana Jhabvala) represent WIEGO on the Panel.

Local Advocacy - In both Accra, Ghana and Lima, Peru, WIEGO has resident team members who help build platforms for different organizations of informal workers to come together to voice joint demands, strengthen the capacity of these organizations to engage in effective joint advocacy, and promote policy dialogues between these organizations, local government and other relevant stakeholders. In both cities, WIEGO Team members have coached informal worker leaders to engage with local government officials and also political candidates. In November 2015, our local team in Lima organized the first-ever national workshop of informal workers. Also, in several cities across Colombia, WIEGO continues to work with local organizations of waste pickers and municipal governments to promote the replication of the Bogota model of integrating waste pickers into solid waste management.

Knowledge Generation – WIEGO continues to work closely with the International Labour Office (ILO), regional statistical agencies, and national statistical offices to improve the measurement of informal employment in both developing and developed countries, and to analyze national data on informal employment as they become available. WIEGO completed a research project on technology and informal workers in three cities (Ahmedabad, India; Durban, South Africa; and Lima, Peru) in collaboration with local organizations of informal workers and support NGOs; and continues to analyze the findings from the 2012 10-city Informal Economy Monitoring Study on specific topics, such as occupational health and safety, and pay and working conditions.

Finally, WIEGO is actively engaged with the three regional HomeNets and the International Domestic Workers' Federation in campaigns for ratification of, respectively, ILO Convention 177 concerning Home Work (C177) and Convention 189 (C189) on Domestic Workers. With HomeNet South Asia and SEWA, WIEGO convened an international celebration of the 20th anniversary of C177 in Ahmedabad, India in March 2016.

These highlights, and the other activities documented in this annual report, illustrate WIEGO's unique strengths: how we collaborate with organizations of informal workers in all we do and, in the process, enhance our mutual knowledge and capacities; how we bridge the day-to-day reality of informal work and mainstream discourses and practices; and how we put a human face on complex issues.

We would like to thank the WIEGO Board for its wise counsel and stewardship; the WIEGO Team for their commitment, creativity and boundless energy; and the WIEGO members for their solidarity and trust. We would also like to thank all of the individuals and institutions that partner with WIEGO in our activities for sharing their skills and perspectives. And we would like to thank our funders for their moral and financial support. Last but not least, we want to thank the domestic workers, home-based workers, street vendors, waste pickers and other informal workers who so openly and generously share their time, knowledge and experiences with us and from whom we gain so much grounded knowledge and such an inspiring sense of purpose and direction.

With abiding hope that informal workers and their organizations, with support from WIEGO, will continue to go from strength to strength.



Renana Jhabvala

Renana Jhabvala
Chair, WIEGO Board

Marty Chen

Marty Chen
International Coordinator, WIEGO

October 2016



The working poor in the informal economy have a common core set of needs and demands, as well as those specific to their employment status, occupation and place of work. For all informal workers, formalization must offer benefits and protections – not simply impose the costs of becoming formal.

– Statement on formalization from the WIEGO Network Platform of Demands

Advancing Informal Workers' Demands through Global Advocacy

One of WIEGO's principal functions is to act as a bridge, connecting informal workers and their organizations with international standard-setting and policy-making processes. In addition to engaging in ongoing advocacy efforts, this year informal workers in the WIEGO network have contributed their insights, experiences, and demands to the creation of a roadmap for inclusive formalization, a global urban agenda, and an agenda for women's economic empowerment.

Achieving a landmark victory: ILO Recommendation 204, Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy

In June 2015, the International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted a new international labour standard: the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204). The landmark Recommendation is the first-ever international labour standard specifically for the informal economy. It provides a roadmap for the ILO's 186 Member States to develop policies facilitating formalization.

WIEGO played a significant role in ensuring informal workers' voices were heard throughout the two-year process leading up to the adoption, beginning in 2013 when WIEGO and SEWA participated in the tri-partite Experts Meeting at the ILO. In 2014, WIEGO organized three regional workshops – in Africa, Asia, and Latin America – where informal workers provided their input to a WIEGO Network Platform on transitioning from the informal to the formal economy. The Platform was subsequently presented by a delegation of informal workers at the 2014 ILC.

In June 2015, WIEGO's Organization and Representation Programme (ORP) convened and facilitated another delegation of 32 informal workers' representatives to return for the second year of negotiations at the ILC 104th Session in Geneva. Representatives from organizations of domestic workers, home-based workers, street vendors, and waste pickers participated during the discussions. Chris Bonner, Director of ORP; Karin Pape, ORP Deputy Director; and Pat Horn, StreetNet International Coordinator, supported the informal worker representatives' advocacy efforts during the conference, which culminated in the groundbreaking adoption of Recommendation 204.



WIEGO Delegation at ILC 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland. Photo: WIEGO

The Recommendation contains many provisions supportive of informal workers, including, among others, the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, social protection, occupational health and safety, and regulated access to public space and natural resources. It stipulates that livelihoods should be preserved and improved during the process of transition. The task now is to ensure that the Recommendation is implemented.

Voices from our network:



"This [Recommendation] is, for me, a huge advance. Because domestic workers, from a long time back, we have been in an oppressive situation as workers, and women too.

Now we are great because we are able to have dialogue, because we can say, 'these are our rights!' and we can claim our dignity at work as workers, as women and as citizens."

- Closing remarks from Adelinda Diaz, member of ILC 2015 WIEGO delegation and representative of SINTRAHOGARP, Peru, an affiliate of the International Domestic Workers' Federation

Advocating for inclusive urban policy and planning

Habitat III is the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development which takes place in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. The goal of Habitat III is to offer an opportunity to discuss how cities can be planned and managed in order to fulfill their role as drivers of sustainable development. The Habitat III process is meant to shape the implementation of new global development and climate change goals in cities. All UN Member States and other relevant stakeholders are invited to participate.

Since 2008, WIEGO has attended the biennial World Urban Forum (WUF) convened by UN Habitat. Through engagement with WUF in 2015, WIEGO became involved in the preparations for the Habitat III conference. WIEGO was granted Special Accreditation to Habitat III to attend the Preparatory Committees and the October Conference.

In 2015 and 2016, WIEGO's team members and member organizations have been engaged in several preparatory activities, both directly with UN Habitat and also independently. WIEGO's goals in this process are to create spaces for informal worker organizations, through their representative leaders, to have their voices heard, to make visible the positive contributions of the informal economy to cities, and to advocate for urban policy approaches that would result in greater livelihood security for urban informal workers. Specifically, WIEGO has been involved in the following:

Policy Units: Marty Chen, WIEGO's International Coordinator; Sally Roever, Director of WIEGO's Urban Policies Programme (UPP); Sonia Dias, WIEGO Waste Picker Sector Specialist; and Alison Brown, consultant to WIEGO on urban planning, were selected to serve as members of Habitat III Policy Units focused on urban economic development, socio-cultural frameworks, and the right to the city – three of the ten policy units that drafted policy papers to feed into the New Urban Agenda document.



Worker delegation with UN Habitat Executive Director Joan Clos at PrepCom2. Photo: WIEGO

World Urban Campaign: WIEGO, through Pilar Balbuena of WIEGO's UPP, is co-chairing the World Urban Campaign's Communications subcommittee.

Voices from our network:

Gloria, a street vendor leader and informal workers' rights advocate from the Peruvian union National Self-Employed Workers' Network (RENATTA, its Spanish acronym), has contributed to official GAP discussions in Nairobi, New York, and Prague. At a side event at the Europe Regional Meeting in Prague she addressed participants, saying:



"This is why we are in the Habitat III Process, because we believe that the city we need must be economically and socially inclusive of the informal economy. But this can only be possible if the Habitat III process takes us into account. This process will impact us, and we want to be included – in the dialogues, in the planning, and in the implementation."

- Address from Gloria Solorzano at Europe Regional Meeting, Prague, Czech Republic, 17 March 2016

WIEGO's role in this process includes advising on messaging, outreach, and dissemination within campaign efforts toward the Habitat III conference.

Urban Thinkers Campus: In October of 2015, WIEGO hosted the panel, "Informal Livelihoods and Inclusive Urban Planning," at UN Habitat's Urban Thinkers Campus, India, which is part of a series of programmes that are helping to shape the Habitat III agenda. Shalini Sinha, WIEGO Home-Based Worker Sector Specialist, moderated the panel, which discussed examples of how informal workers can be incorporated into urban policymaking and planning. Participants included representatives from the Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP) waste pickers' union in Pune, the Self-Employed Women's Association in Ahmedabad (SEWA), and the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI).

General Assembly of Partners: The General Assembly of Partners (GAP) is a stakeholder engagement platform initiated through the World Urban Campaign. WIEGO is co-chair of GAP's Grassroots Partner Constituency Group alongside Shack/Slum Dwellers International. In the role of co-chair, WIEGO has participated on Advisory Boards, presented stakeholder statements, and contributed inputs to the official declarations of Habitat III regional and thematic meetings.

Regional meetings: In February of 2016, WIEGO Urban Advocacy Specialist Victoria Okoye, participated in the Habitat III Africa Regional Meeting together with representatives from the Federation of Informal Workers' Organizations of Nigeria (FIWON). In March, Victoria, Pilar Balbuena, and street vendor leader Gloria Solorzano participated in the Habitat III Regional Meeting for Europe. The New Urban Agenda (NUA), to be unveiled at Habitat III, has the potential to impact urban development on a global scale. In the lead up to the October meeting, WIEGO continues to advocate for the recognition and integration of informal workers and their livelihoods in the document.

In addition to bringing urban informal workers and their livelihoods into the Habitat III agenda, WIEGO also participated in the campaign for the Urban Sustainable Development Goal (SDG # 11). The new SDGs were officially adopted by world leaders at a UN summit in September 2015, and include two new stand-alone goals that are of particular significance to the urban working poor:

- Goal 8 calls for sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth as well as full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 11 calls for cities and human settlements to be inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Making urban livelihoods a central issue in urban policy discourse is a key goal of UPP. The Programme's first three objectives are:

- to shape urban policy debates and government practices
- to make visible the key challenges faced by urban informal workers
- to support the voice of organizations of urban informal workers

Helping to shape a global agenda for women's economic empowerment

WIEGO is one of two civil society organizations that are represented on the first-ever United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (UN HLP). The panel brings together leaders from the public and private sectors, civil society, and international agencies to define an actionable agenda for improving economic outcomes for women in alignment with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The UN HLP's inaugural meeting took place during the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations on 15 March 2016. The meeting kicked off a year-long process of research, consultations, and dialogue with a broad set of stakeholders from around the world. Through this process, the panel aims to produce two reports for the UN Secretary-General. The first report will frame key issues, define priorities, and highlight positive examples for a women's economic empowerment agenda and will be presented during the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly in September 2016. The second report will be presented in March of 2017 and will primarily focus on implementation.

Renana Jhabvala, National Coordinator of SEWA and Chair of the WIEGO board, is representing WIEGO on the panel. She will provide expertise on women in the informal economy grounded in her extensive experience with WIEGO and as National Coordinator of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). Marty Chen also represents WIEGO in the role of Deputy. A major objective of WIEGO and SEWA is to bring the voices of women in the informal economy into the UN HLP process. With this objective in mind, at the first panel meeting Renana invited all of the panelists to participate in a consultation at SEWA to engage with informal workers and learn directly from them how they define, experience, and struggle for economic empowerment in their own lives. The consultation is planned for August 2016.

In addition to participating in meetings and consultations, WIEGO will contribute to the panel's work by writing the background paper on "promoting opportunities for women informal workers." WIEGO will also contribute policy briefs highlighting the perspectives of women informal workers on each of the other five issue areas identified as priorities by the UN HLP: pay and work conditions, child care, legal barriers, financial and digital inclusion, and women-owned enterprises.



Renana Jhabvala, Chair of the WIEGO Board, and Jenna Harvey, Writer and Research Assistant, attended the inaugural meeting of the UN HLP. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

Voices from our network:



"We aim to elevate women's voices. The role of WIEGO and SEWA on the high level panel is to bring women's voices into the process."

- Renana Jhabvala, National Coordinator of SEWA and Chair of WIEGO Board

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

Celebrating home-based workers: twenty years and time for action

In 1996 the ILO adopted Convention 177 concerning Home Work (C177), representing a major victory in the struggle for decent work and rights for home-based workers. Since then, home-based workers have built regional networks in South Asia, South East Asia, Eastern Europe, and are organizing in Latin America and Africa. However, despite the gains that have been made in the twenty years since the adoption of C177, few countries have ratified the convention, and implementation is an ongoing challenge within those countries that have.



In March 2016, HomeNet South Asia (HNSA), WIEGO, and SEWA organized an event in Ahmedabad to mark the twentieth anniversary of C177's adoption. Attended by over 150 participants, the event sought to build solidarity and highlight the need for increased national ratifications of C177. Renana Jhabvala (who also serves as HNSA President), played a lead role in organizing the event. Affiliates of HomeNet South Asia and HomeNet South East Asia worked together during the event to collectively formulate a platform of demands for home-based workers. The platform was subsequently circulated to home-based worker and support groups in Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America for their inputs in preparation for the discussion on global supply chains at the 2016 International Labour Conference.

In the twenty years since the adoption of C177, home-based workers have continued to build networks and strengthen transnational solidarity.

Photo: HomeNet South Asia

Voices from our network:



"There are many differences in the way we work in our countries and regions, but there are so many common issues. Despite tremendous challenges, the regional reports are showing us that it is possible to organize, to become more visible and to have our voices heard. Progress is being made."

- Chris Bonner, Director of WIEGO Organization and Representation Programme

Photo: L. Tuttle

Driving Local Action and Political Engagement

In Accra, Ghana, and Lima, Peru, through our Focal Cities initiative, WIEGO has built platforms for ongoing negotiations between informal workers and municipalities and trained informal worker leaders in effective negotiating and advocacy skills. Throughout 2015-2016, teams in both cities have been heavily involved in advocacy with incoming political parties, among other things.

Organizing around a collective platform of demands in Lima, Peru

In November 2015, in Lima, WIEGO and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) convened a national conference of informal workers' membership-based organizations (MBOs) from different sectors, including domestic workers, market and street vendors, market porters, moto-taxi drivers, newspaper vendors, shoe shine workers, and waste pickers from Lima and other regions in Peru. The objective was to promote discussions and exchanges to identify key demands and to elaborate a common platform of these.

During the meeting, participants had the opportunity to engage in dialogues with representatives from political parties contending in the first phase of national elections in Peru. Specifically, they shared their vision for decent work, and necessary reforms for improving the situation of informal workers. Participants also had the chance to learn from central trade unions about their efforts to organize informal workers, to discuss the relevance of the ILO's Recommendation 204, and to review the calendar of preparatory activities leading up to Habitat III in Quito in October 2016. More than 100 informal workers from Lima and other regions in Peru participated in the meeting, as well as 15 technical experts that work in partnership with WIEGO. During the meeting, Federico Parra, WIEGO's Latin America Coordinator for Waste Pickers, presented on the integration of waste pickers in the municipal solid waste management system in Bogota, Colombia.

As a follow-up to the conference, in March 2016, WIEGO and FES began to facilitate a series of working sessions with leaders from 10 informal workers' organizations to draft a common platform of demands based on the priorities that had emerged during the November conference. Ultimately they hope to present a unified platform to the political parties contending for the presidency in Peru in advance of the final round of national elections in June 2016.



Representatives from a range of occupational groups and membership-based organizations attended the national conference in Lima, Peru. Photo: C. Roca

Mobilizing for engagement with political parties in Accra, Ghana

A lack of appropriate and supportive policies, commitments, and legal frameworks are among the constant challenges facing informal workers in Accra and elsewhere. Membership-based organizations (MBOs) of informal workers in Accra aim to take advantage of the 2016 national election process to engage political parties and presidential candidates around these challenges and to present their demands and vision for change. Specifically, informal workers in Accra are hoping to directly influence the political agendas, or manifestos, of the prospective parties. The political manifesto in Ghana is an integral document that contains the vision of the political party and drives policies and programmes when they come into power. As parties define their programmes in 2016, WIEGO will be working with MBOs, including the Greater Accra Markets Association, the Informal Vendor and Hawkers Association of Ghana, and StreetNet Ghana Alliance, to advocate for the inclusion of policies and programmes that will benefit informal workers.



Dorcas Ansah, WIEGO's Focal City Coordinator in Accra, is working closely with these partners to review the existing manifestos for the two major political parties, collectively define priorities, develop policy positions, and organize workshops. If the MBOs are successful in getting their demands on the political parties' agendas, it would be the first time that a national party in Ghana has prioritized policies and programmes for the informal economy.

MBOs of informal workers have coordinated their efforts to influence political agendas in Accra. Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik/Getty Images Reportage

Capacity Building and Movement Building

WIEGO continues to focus on building the capacities of informal worker organizations based on the unique needs and demands of different occupational groups in diverse national and regional contexts. The emphasis is on supporting membership-based organizations to embrace internal accountability, democracy and representation and to engage effectively with government and other key stakeholders.

Increasing skills and capabilities with waste pickers

Occupational certification in Colombia

In 2013, the Constitutional Court of Colombia passed progressive national legislation protecting waste pickers' right to work and supporting their role as professional public service providers in the area of waste recycling. Since then, WIEGO has been working closely with the National Association of Recyclers (Spanish acronym ANR) to support organizations of waste pickers in eight cities of Colombia to get registered and certified as waste recyclers. As part of this effort, in 2015, WIEGO and the ANR worked with Colombia's National Training Service to define a set of occupational skills involved in waste recycling and to develop a certification process for individual waste pickers – a significant step in professionalizing the occupation. The certification process has involved the development of a training module, which reinforces practical and conceptual knowledge about topics such as the types of materials that are handled in recycling, personal protection, and occupational health and safety. The module merges technical concepts with traditional terms used by waste pickers in their work – an approach that aims to strengthen confidence and skills for the certification test.



Since July 2015, more than 400 waste pickers belonging to the Association of Recyclers of Bogota (ARB) and allied organizations in Bogota were certified or have updated their occupational skills through the certification programme.

Photo: M. Orozco

Skill-building in Brazil

During a series of educational workshops that formed part of WIEGO's Gender & Waste Project, (launched in 2013), women waste pickers expressed their desire to improve communication skills at work. As a result, WIEGO partnered with the International Coaching Federation (ICF) to develop a programme focused on building and strengthening the communication skills of women waste pickers in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. The resulting three-hour workshop was held in May 2015 for 70 women waste picker leaders representing the Cataunidos, Redesol, and Catavale networks, and featured discussions about gender and leadership roles within cooperatives.



The communication skills workshop builds off ongoing work on gender dynamics within the waste sector in Minas Gerais.

Photo: A.C. Ogando

Voices from our network:



Valdete Roza, a waste picker leader, reported that the new communication tools that she has gained have helped her in her work, especially in delegating responsibilities:

"I'm learning to understand myself by talking to another person and by analyzing my own attitudes in order to improve the way I deal with others." – Valdete Roza

Photo: A.C. Ogando

Organizing around shared challenges in South Africa

Also in May of 2015, WIEGO organized a workshop in Cape Town, South Africa, in partnership with the International Labour Research and Information Group (ILRIG) for women waste pickers in South Africa. Thirty women representing two organizations – the local Cape Town organization Siyacoca and the national South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) – traveled from across the country to attend. Through group discussions and interactive methods, they shared the

challenges that they face as women waste pickers in their homes and workplaces. They exchanged information about organizing efforts, and collectively identified priority issues based on their shared experiences, including lack of workplace safety; lack of recognition and respect from officials, neighbours, and family; and lack of childcare. The women discussed possible future actions to address the challenges they identified. As a follow-up to the meeting, Vanessa Pillay of WIEGO's Organization and Representation Programme (ORP) facilitated a series of local "listening" meetings with groups of women waste pickers in three South African cities to expand on the priorities defined in the workshop. ORP is planning to hold a series of capacity-building meetings to address these issues in the near future.



Women waste pickers from across South Africa attended the workshop in Cape Town.

Photo: V. Pillay

Strengthening movements of home-based workers and domestic workers

In addition to supporting the efforts of the regional HomeNets in South Asia, in 2015-2016, WIEGO has been working to strengthen efforts to build regional networks of home-based workers in Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe:

- In July and August 2015, WIEGO's Home-based Worker Coordinator for Latin America, Laura Morillo, met with a union organizing home-based workers in Montevideo, Uruguay, and membership-based organizations in Santiago, Chile, to advance ongoing organizing and advocacy efforts in the region. In December 2015, with support from WIEGO, 25 home-based worker representatives met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to draft proposals to the national government regarding improvements to legal protections and official statistics for home-based workers.

- In September 2015, HomeNet Eastern Europe and WIEGO jointly ran a regional conference on social protection for home-based workers in the Kyrgyz Republic (convened by the Kyrgyzstan Mountain Societies Development Support Programme, an initiative of the Aga Khan Foundation). The aim of the conference was to initiate a process leading to an inclusive labour law framework and a national platform for home-based workers in Kyrgyzstan. The conference built on HomeNet’s previous strategic planning and organizing efforts in the Eastern European region.
- Home-based workers and organizers from Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda gathered in Kampala in November 2015 to strengthen ongoing efforts to organize a network of home-based workers in Africa. At the workshop, (organized by WIEGO in partnership with the Uganda Federation for Alternative Trade and the World Fair Trade Organization for Africa and the Middle East), a working group was established to coordinate strategies in the movement-building process. Established goals of the movement are to ensure home-based workers’ recognition as workers and the inclusion of their demands in policy and practice.

WIEGO is also engaged in providing ongoing support to the development of the African Domestic Workers Network (AfDWN). In December 2015, domestic workers from English and Portuguese speaking countries across Africa and members of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) met in Cape Town, South Africa to assess progress and define future goals for the AfDWN. During the workshop, WIEGO’s Organization and Representation Programme team members facilitated a participatory strategic planning session.

Developing strategic resources for street vendors

In 2013, WIEGO’s Organization and Representation Programme (ORP) team developed a paper on collective bargaining for informal workers, which subsequently evolved into a project to advance research and promote collective bargaining. Pat Horn, International Coordinator of StreetNet International, was brought into the project to document experiences of collective bargaining and to assist in developing a strategy to advance the formalization of collective bargaining for informal workers. The objective is to win the unfettered right of workers in the informal economy to direct representation and collective bargaining through their elected organizational representatives – an integral component of ILO Recommendation 204. The work on researching, documenting, and advocating for collective bargaining rights for informal workers is ongoing in 2016. A collective bargaining toolkit for membership-based organizations of informal workers will be one of the concrete outputs of the project.

The slogan “nothing for us, without us” is widely used by membership-based organizations of informal workers, reflecting the desire to exercise influence in policy-making processes. Collective bargaining and negotiation skills are critical for accomplishing this.
 Photo: Juan Arredondo/
 Getty Images Reportage



Strengthening Legal Focus

WIEGO launched a new programme on Law and Informal Employment in October 2015. The programme aims to analyze and improve legal and regulatory frameworks for informal workers and empower workers' organizations to fight for their recognition and rights as workers at the local and international level. The programme builds on the work achieved by an earlier project on Law and Informality.

New Law and Informal Employment Programme

WIEGO's new programme on Law and Informal Employment held its first strategy meeting in November 2015 in Boston, USA. The Law Programme Director, Marlese von Broembsen, previously led an interdisciplinary master's programme in social justice at the University of Cape Town before taking up a Harvard South Africa Fellowship. Her special interest is in global value chains, particularly as they impact home-based workers. The two other members of the new Law Programme are Pamhidzai Bamu-Chipunza, a labour lawyer from Zimbabwe who has long worked on domestic workers' issues, and Tania Espinosa Sanchez, a human rights lawyer from Mexico City with expertise on waste pickers. The members of the newly formed programme met with senior members of the WIEGO team to strategize and plan the Law Programme's work over the next three years, building on the lessons learned from the earlier multi-country project on Law and Informality.

Law is an essential tool in improving livelihoods and lives, but legal and regulatory frameworks are designed for the formal economy. Too often, they fail to protect and support informal workers.

WIEGO's Law Programme aims to empower informal workers to:

- use the law
- know the law
- demand legal change



The Law Programme will be working with WIEGO colleagues and members in various capacities, including the Organization and Representation Programme, to realize Recommendation 204 (Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy). Marlese will also be supporting the delegation of homeworkers at the discussion on global supply chains at the ILC in June of 2016. Tania is working on the submission of a case to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to foreground the human rights violations visited upon informal workers in South America. Additionally, the Law Programme team will work with WIEGO's Urban Policies Programme and the Focal Cities teams on realizing the bundle of rights that constitute the "right to the city" and on legal strategies for street traders and waste pickers at the city level.

A major area of focus for WIEGO's Law Programme in 2016 will be homeworkers in global supply chains. Photo: Paula Bronstien/Getty Images Reportage

Generating and Sharing Knowledge about the Informal Economy

WIEGO is dedicated to expanding the global knowledge base on the informal economy. This includes improving official national statistics on informal employment, undertaking field research on informal workers and their economic activities, and compiling on-the-ground knowledge from partner organizations of informal workers.

Increasing accessibility to resources and statistics through new dashboard

During 2015 and 2016, WIEGO has been working on a project to transform years of accumulated resources on the informal economy into a more accessible format for users via an online dashboard. The dashboard will feature an interactive map of the world that will allow visitors to access WIEGO's Publications and Resources, comprehensive Statistics Database, and to view WIEGO's presence by country, or region, around the world. The dashboard is designed to make data and resources on the informal economy more accessible to policymakers, academics, development practitioners, and informal worker organizations. Look for the data visualization dashboard on the WIEGO website homepage in September 2016 when it will be launched.

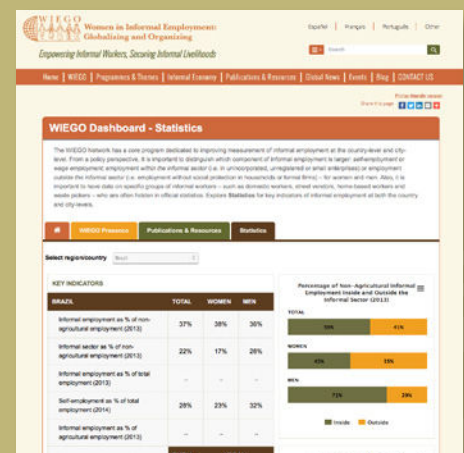
Highlighting the positive impact of cooperative-formation on informal workers

WIEGO and the Cooperatives Unit of the ILO (ILO Coop) are collaborating on a research project to explore how informal workers are organizing into cooperatives to improve their economic situation and representative voice. The research is focusing on two sectors: home-based workers and waste pickers. WIEGO team members, WIEGO partner organizations, and ILO staff have conducted interviews with 40 cooperatives, or cooperative-like organizations, in 12 countries. The research is designed to better understand the role cooperatives are playing in increasing the negotiating power of informal workers with governments, suppliers, and buyers, as well as the challenges they face such as sustaining their operations and in registering as cooperatives. The report is due to be published by the end of 2016.

Generating statistics on informal work

WIEGO continues to work towards the revision of the International Classification of Status in Employment-93 (ICSE), one of the three major international classifications in labour statistics. As members of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Working Group for this revision, Françoise Carré, WIEGO's Research Coordinator, and Joann Vanek, Director of WIEGO's Statistics Programme, are focusing on the improved identification and classification of several categories of informal workers: outworkers and homeworkers, dependent contractors, misclassified self-employed, domestic workers, and casual day labourers.

Françoise and Joann participated in the first and second meetings of the ILO Working Group in May and December 2015 at the ILO in Geneva, Switzerland. Dependent contractors and homeworkers/outworkers were among the main categories considered at this meeting. In particular, meeting participants discussed the criteria used to identify these workers as having special intermediary statuses of employment distinct from the self-employed and employees.



In November 2015, Joann was also a resource person in the ILO Training Programme, Labour Market Statistics and Analysis Academy, held at the ITC-ILO International Training Center in Turin, Italy. The course had 90 participants from 50 countries and included labour statisticians, data analysts, and senior managers. The focus of Joann's lecture was gender and labour statistics, including informal employment and the collection and compilation of data on specific categories of informal workers.

Françoise and Joann were invited to serve as members of the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment and of its Steering Group, which was established by the Conference of European Statisticians. This group has included informal employment as an experimental indicator in the framework for measuring quality of employment. Membership in this group provides an opportunity for WIEGO to work on the testing of this variable and, in this way, contribute to the application of the concept of informal employment in developed countries.

Exploring technology and the future of informal work



In February 2015, WIEGO partnered with Practical Action, (a UK-based NGO which seeks to promote technology justice), to begin a one-year project funded by the Rockefeller Foundation called "Technology & the Future of Informal Work." Through a unique set of qualitative methods, an exploratory research project was designed to study the technology currently being used by informal workers, the emerging technologies in their sectors, and the impact of city-level technology systems (energy, transport, and waste) on informal workers and their livelihoods. WIEGO's research focused on three cities: Ahmedabad, India (in partnership with SEWA Academy); Durban, South Africa (in partnership with Asiye eTafuleni); and Lima, Peru (with WIEGO team and consultants).

WIEGO published a report of its findings in these three cities in March 2016. The WIEGO team members and local partners who worked on this study plan to follow-up on the findings and lessons that emerged. Specifically, they aim to highlight and address the factors that discourage informal workers from investing in improved technology, including fear of theft and confiscation by local authorities.

Researchers looked at the use of both existing and emerging technologies in a range of sectors.

Photo: A. Devenish, Asiye eTafuleni

Highlights of WIEGO Publications, Blog posts and Resources from 2015-16

Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS) publications

On International Waste Pickers' Day, (March 1, 2016), WIEGO launched the report, "Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS) Sector Report: Waste Pickers." The report was written by Sonia Maria Dias, WIEGO Waste Sector Specialist, and Melanie Samson, WIEGO's former Africa Waste Sector Coordinator. The report presents evidence on the systemic forces driving change in the waste sector in five cities – Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Bogota, Colombia; Durban, South Africa; Nakuru, Kenya; and Pune, India – and details the responses of waste pickers and their organizations to these driving forces. This is the last of three sector reports that have been published as part of the 10-city Informal Economy Monitoring Study. The other two reports focused on home-based workers and street vendors.

Dias, Sonia, and Melanie Samson. 2016. [Informal Economy Monitoring Study Sector Report: Waste Pickers](#). Cambridge, MA, USA: WIEGO.



Worker education, training and organizing materials

Gender and Waste Recycling Toolkit

To understand the gender dynamics and sexual division of labour in the waste picking sector, WIEGO undertook a Gender and Waste Project in 2012-2015 in Minas Gerais, Brazil. The key outputs of this participatory, workshop-based project were two toolkits: a popular toolkit for waste pickers (launched in 2015), and a toolkit for practitioners or academics interested in understanding gender inequalities in the waste sector (launched in 2016). The recently launched practitioner toolkit integrates learnings from the project workshops, links to resources (literature, videos etc.), and examples of workshop exercises. It includes three books: 1) theoretical considerations on gender, empowerment, and waste; 2) project design, tools, and recommendations; and 3) practical resources. The toolkit is available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Dias, Sonia Maria and Ana Carolina Ogando. 2016. [From Theory to Action: Gender and Waste Recycling: A Toolkit for Teachers, Researchers and Practitioners and supporting materials](#).





Training package for women's producer groups

This seven-part package of training materials focuses on the leadership and business skills for women's producer groups. The package was created for use by community facilitators or organizers who train or work with producer groups of women informal workers. It is broken down into seven modules, which include training session plans that can be integrated into regular group meetings and delivered over a period of several months. The modular approach allows for flexibility and adaptation – the training sessions can take place whenever it is convenient for the groups involved. It is based on the principles of participatory action learning, an interactive form of pedagogy that focuses on practical, applied knowledge. The training sessions outlined here are designed for participants with any level of literacy. All of the modules in this package were written by Elaine Jones, who was the Director of WIEGO's Global Trade Programme for 10 years (2006-2016), and WIEGO Consultant Carol Wills. They were edited by Leslie Vryenhoek.

[Building Capacity for Change: Developing Women's Leadership and Business Skills](#), January 2016.

[Introduction & Training Module 1: Understanding Gender and Employment Relations](#), January 2016.

[Training Module 2: Understanding Women's Economic and Social Contribution to Effective Poverty Reduction](#), January 2016.

[Training Module 3: Promoting Democratic Participation and Accountability](#), January 2016.

[Training Module 4: Enhancing Financial and Business Management Skills](#), January 2016.

[Training Module 5: Understanding the Market](#), January 2016.

[Training Module 6: Quality Management Systems](#), January 2016.

[Training Module 7: Improving Innovation and Production Techniques](#), January 2016.

WIEGO Blog

In 2015-16, WIEGO launched a successful blog to address contemporary issues related to the informal economy. Below is a selection of popular blog-posts:

[Inclusive Cities: What Have We Learned?](#) by Rhonda Douglas, 30 October 2015.

[Tunisia Leads the Way: Peaceful Dialogues After the Arab Spring](#) by Ela Bhatt, 10 November 2015.

[How a New Kind of "Modern" Urban Development Can Include Street Vendors](#) by Victoria Okoye, 11 November 2015.

[Pope Francis, the Environment and Waste Pickers](#) by Tania Espinosa Sanchez, 9 December 2015.

[Four Lessons from Thailand's Participatory Process in Gaining Universal Health Coverage](#) by Laura Alferts and Francie Lund, 9 December 2015.

[Growing a Dream: The Vaal Park Recycling Centre](#) by Leslie Vryenhoek, 3 February 2016.

[Inclusive Cities for Informal Workers](#) by Marty Chen, 17 February 2016 (originally published on the World Bank's Jobs and Development Blog).

[The People's Economy and the Future of Cities](#) by Sally Roever, 22 February 2016 (originally published on the World Urban Campaign website).

[Visibility Matters: New Publications Bridge Gender and Waste Issues](#) by Sonia Dias and Ana Carolina Ogando, 3 March 2016.

Additional publications

Alfers, Laura. 2015. [WIEGO Child Care Initiative Annotated Bibliography](#). WIEGO.

Alfers, Laura. 2015. [WIEGO Child Care Initiative Literature Review](#). WIEGO.

Anyidoho, Nana Akua and William F. Steel. 2016. [Perceptions of Costs and Benefits of Informal-Formal Linkages: Market and Street Vendors in Accra, Ghana](#). WIEGO Working Paper No. 35.

Budlender, Debbie. 2015. [WIEGO Child Care Initiative Institutional Mapping of Child Care Actors](#). WIEGO.

Casey, Jonathan and Jenna Harvey. 2016. [Review of Literature for the Technology & the Future of Work Project](#). WIEGO.

Chen, Martha. 2016. [Inclusive Cities and the Urban Working Poor: Informality, Gender and Empowerment](#). WIEGO.

Chen, Martha, Laura Alfers, Namrata Bali, Mike Bird, Themis Castellanos, Richard Dobson, Kendra Hughes, Sally Roever and Mike Rogan. 2016. [Technology at the Base of the Economic Pyramid: Findings from Ahmedabad \(India\), Durban \(South Africa\) and Lima \(Peru\)](#). WIEGO.

Crush, Jonathan, ed, Abel Chikanda, ed and Caroline Skinner, ed. 2015. [Mean Streets: Migration, Xenophobia and Informality in South Africa](#). Southern African Migration Programme, African Centre for Cities & International Development Research Centre.

Dias, Sonia Maria and Ana Carolina Ogando. 2015. [Rethinking Gender and Waste: Exploratory Findings from Participatory Action Research in Brazil in Work Organisation, Labour & Globalisation](#). Volume 9, Number 2, Winter 2015.

Dias, Sonia Maria and Ana Carolina Ogando. 2015. [Engendering Waste Pickers Cooperatives in Brazil](#). Paper prepared for ILO Research Conference, "Cooperatives and the World of Work."

Governance, Operations and Finance

New Directors for WIEGO Organization and Representation & Social Protection Programmes

As part of a planned transition, and after a global search, WIEGO announces the appointment of Jane Barrett as the new Organization and Representation Programme Director and Gisèle Yasmeeen as the new Social Protection Programme Director. Jane, a trade unionist from South Africa with over 30 years of experience in the labour movement, is a former General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union (now the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) and most recently the Affiliate Support Officer in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Gisèle was most recently a senior fellow with the University of British Columbia's Institute of Asian Research. She was previously the vice president for partnerships, and then research, at the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Her doctoral dissertation focused on street food vendors in Bangkok, Thailand. The outgoing directors, Chris Bonner and Francie Lund, will continue to work with WIEGO as senior advisers to their respective programmes.

Board of Directors

The current Board was established at the WIEGO General Assembly in 2014.

Directors

Renana Jhabvala (Chair), Self-Employed Women's Association, India
Juliana Brown Afari, StreetNet International, Ghana
Barbro Budin, International Union of Food and Allied Workers, Switzerland
Debra Davis (Treasurer), Independent Consultant, UK
Ravi Kanbur, Cornell University, USA
Vicky Kanyoka, International Domestic Workers' Federation, Tanzania
Lin Lean Lim, Independent Consultant, Malaysia
William Steel, University of Ghana, Ghana
Jeemol Unni, Institute of Rural Management / Anand, India
Carmen Vildoso, Independent Consultant, Peru

WIEGO Team

The WIEGO team has 43 members, only six of whom work full-time for WIEGO. The rest work anywhere from one-third to four-fifths time for WIEGO; many have other affiliations (such as academic institutions), and some have chosen reduced hours to achieve a work-life balance.

WIEGO Team	March 2016	
Segment of Team	Number	FTEs
Secretariat (USA)	3	2.6
Operations Office (UK)	6	5.4
Programme / Projects (global)	25	19
Communications Team (global)	9	6.6
Total	43	33.6

Financial Report: Year ended 31 March 2016

Financial summary

The overall aim of the financial strategy is to ensure that resources are used efficiently to contribute to meeting programme and project targets and to achieving WIEGO's priorities. In furtherance of these objectives, the maximum possible level of resources is channelled directly to programmes to ensure delivery of quality improvements in research, policy advocacy and capacity building, while at the same time maintaining prudent financial management control over WIEGO's resources as a whole.

During the year, we received our first tranche of core funding (\$3 million) from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation from a total grant of \$7 million and the second tranche from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) from a total grant of SEK 24 million. Both grants cover a period of three years, commencing on April 1, 2015 and will end in September 2018. These grants will enable WIEGO to further the objectives set down in the five year Strategic Plan, 2013-2018, increasing the voice, visibility and validity of the working poor, especially women.

The total incoming resources were \$4.755m for the financial year ending March 31, 2016 compared to \$3.554m in the previous year. Total resources expended were \$4.708m – a decrease of \$0.994m on the previous year.

The figures for 2016 are extracted from the statutory accounts approved by the directors on August 15, 2016. The full statutory financial accounts, on which the auditors, Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP, gave an unqualified opinion, were delivered to the Registrar of Companies. These extracts may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the company. For further information the full statutory accounts should be consulted together with the Auditors' Report and the Directors' Report.

The auditors have confirmed to the Directors that the 2016 figures extracted from the statutory financial accounts are consistent with the statutory financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The full annual accounts, together with the Auditors' Report and Directors' Report are available from the Company Secretary at the company's registered office in Manchester UK, and are also posted on the WIEGO website.

Revenue and expenditure

The report combines the income received and expenditure incurred both in the US and the UK. The tables making up this report reflect the overall organization's results. We are very proud of the number of funders continuing to support WIEGO. As stated above, the Hewlett Foundation has been one of our main sources of funding this year as well as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Netherlands, under the Funding Leadership Opportunities for Women (FLOW) programme has continued to support WIEGO during the final year of the grant.

The Ford Foundation, Comic Relief, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Solidarity Centre have continued to contribute generously to the funding of WIEGO's core programmes and overall network and programme coordination.

Summary charts list expenditures according to core categories of the organization and a breakdown of the core programmes.

Supporters

Our thanks to the following organizations, foundations and governments for their generous financial support of WIEGO programmes and projects:

ACV Voeding En Diensten

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Comic Relief

Ford Foundation

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

The Rockefeller Foundation

Solidarity Center of the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Financial governance

The Finance Committee of the WIEGO Board reviews the budgets and reports of all WIEGO funds and accounts. Budgetary and financial controls are reviewed continuously to reduce the risks of under or overspending and to mitigate the effect of a drop in income in any one financial year. This risk is further mitigated by the building of designated reserves which currently stand at a level of \$541,000 USD.

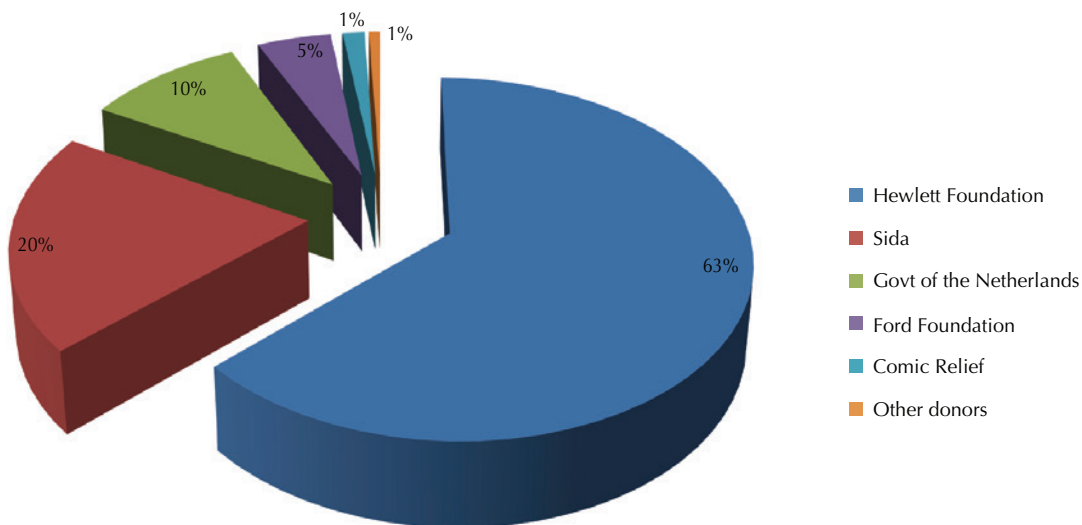
In addition to funds managed by the WIEGO office in the UK, WIEGO has a fiscal sponsor, Harvard University in Cambridge, USA. These WIEGO accounts are audited each year as part of the annual financial audit of Harvard University.

SOURCE OF FUNDS	2016	2015
	US \$000	US \$000
Hewlett Foundation	3,000	261
Sida	948	1,265
Government of the Netherlands/FLOW	475	1,069
Ford Foundation	225	200
Comic Relief	67	104
Rockefeller Foundation	12	379
Solidarity Centre US	10	10
Action Aid	0	11
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	0	237
Other Donors	12	4
TOTAL FUNDING	4,749	3,540

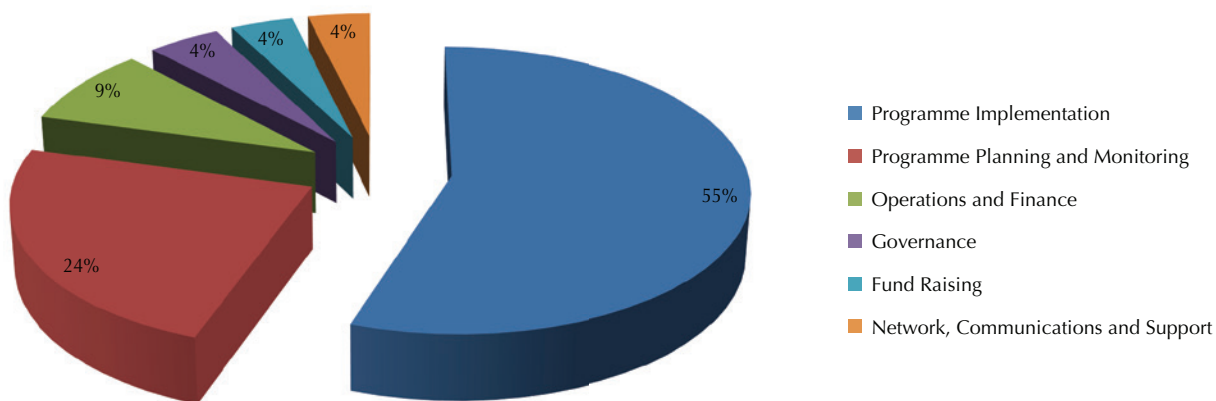
BALANCE SHEET	2016	2015
	US \$000	US \$000
CURRENT ASSETS		
Accounts Receivable	322	197
Cash at bank	2,159	5,152
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	2,481	5,349
CREDITORS		
Accounts Payable	-464	-3,379
NET ASSETS	2,017	1,970
FUNDS		
Restricted Funds	61	397
Unrestricted Funds	1,956	1,573
	2,017	1,970

Source: Extract from the statutory accounts

Source of Funds for Year 2015/16

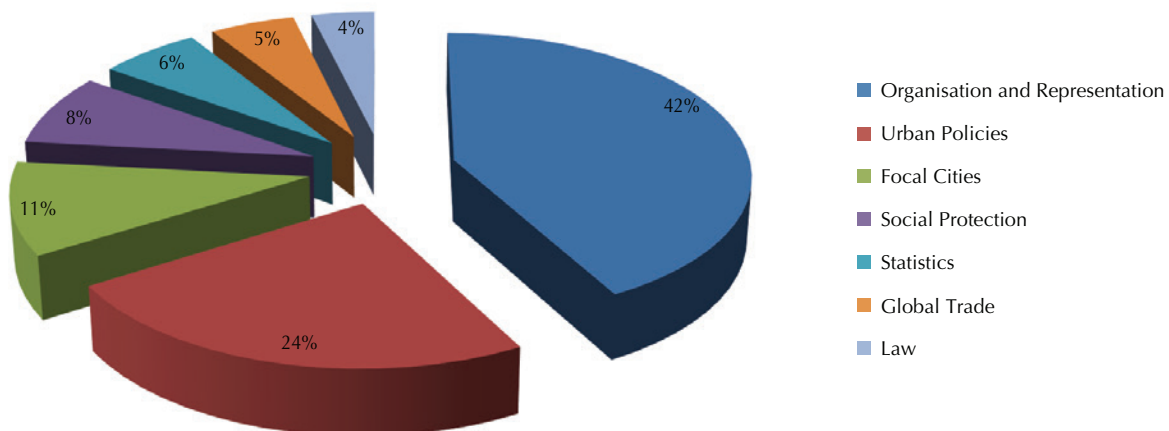


Use of Funds for Year 2015/16



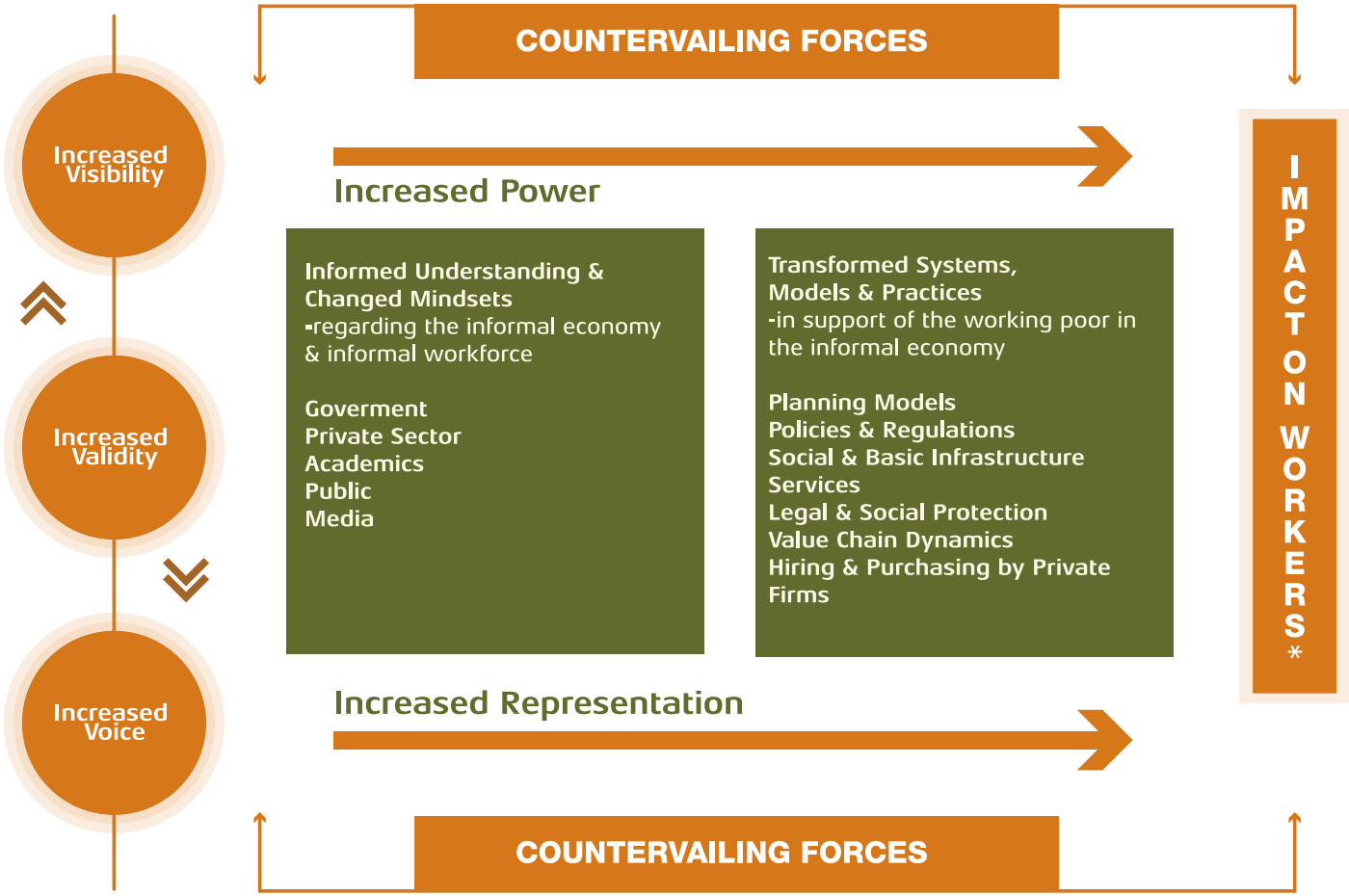
Note: This chart includes payments to Subgrantees of \$347k

Programmes



Note: This chart represents a detailed breakdown of Programme Implementation and Programme Planning and Monitoring

WIEGO MODEL OF CHANGE



*Enhanced Ability to Voice Demands & Shape Wider Environment
*Increased Incomes, Reduced Risks, & Improved Well-Being





Photos: Juan Arredondo, Jonathan Torgovnik, Paula Bronstein, Jonathan Torgovnik /Getty Images Reportage

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing

Annual Report

April 2015 – March 2016

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Women in Informal Employment
Globalizing and Organizing