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Home-based workers in Latin America:

Where are they?

WIEGO is trying to identify organizations of home-based workers in Latin America, and has engaged a researcher/activist, Laura Morillo, to track down home-based workers organizations as well as supportive NGOs. To date, this is proving difficult. Home-based workers in Latin America are hidden from view and may not even see themselves as workers. Trade unions tend to ignore them or perhaps are not aware of their existence. Morillo will undertake a field visit to promising cities in Latin America in September, and would welcome any information that other MBOs, NGOs or activists could provide. Please contact us at wiego@wiego.org.

The IDWN will recommend its members to seek affiliation with the IUF.

IDWN is currently confirming its membership and recruiting new members. It is preparing for a founding congress in 2013. The IDWN Congress will approve a democratic structure of IDWN.

IDWN will start discussing with the appropriate IUF structures how IDWN can carry out its functions within IUF.

- International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) Steering Committee



WIEGO MBO Newsletter



A Newsletter for Membership-Based Organizations of Informal Workers

GREETINGS FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES!

First and foremost, WIEGO is pleased to announce that the National Federation of Unions (*Federation Nationale des Syndicats*, FENASEIN) is the newest Institutional Member of WIEGO – welcome!

We are also excited to share with you the following announcements:

Domestic workers around the world rejoice! The [Philippines has ratified the C189](#), Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, becoming the second country to do so after Uruguay. The Senate voted in favour of the Convention on Monday, 6 August 2012, during the afternoon Session!

A New Handbook for MBOs and organizers is now available on the WIEGO and Inclusive Cities websites! [The Only School We Have: Learning from Organizing Experiences Across the Informal Economy](#) draws on the MBO Organizing Workshop held in Bangkok in 2011. This handbook details the experiences of organizing among informal workers, and provides information, practical ideas, successful strategies, inspiration and resources for organizers.

Also available on the WIEGO and Inclusive Cities websites is an [Education Manual on the ILO Home Work Convention \(C177\) and the rights of homeworkers](#). This manual is designed to encourage discussion about homeworkers and their rights as workers, raise awareness about the international ILO Home Work Convention and its significance for homeworkers in each country, encourage homeworkers and their supporters to get the ILO Home Work Convention put into national law in their own country, and foster stronger organization of homeworkers so that they can continue fighting for their rights.

Building Membership-Based Organization within the IDWN – A Discussion at the Steering Committee, Geneva, May 14th, 2012.

Elizabeth Tang, International Coordinator

The International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) Steering Committee met three times after the adoption of the ILO domestic workers' convention on June 16th, 2011. At the first and second meetings, a decision was made to build the IDWN as a long-term and solid global organization of domestic workers. In May 2012, the Steering Committee met again in Geneva in conjunction with the IUF Women Conference and the IUF 16th Congress; members shared their experiences in the process of formalizing membership in their respective regions.

One of many difficult questions during the discussions concerned the definition of membership-based organization (MBO), the main criteria of IDWN membership as agreed by the Steering Committee. The question was raised when locally and nationally based networks of domestic workers approached the

IDWN Regional Coordinators. These networks usually function in a region or country with a coordinating body, which often consists of individuals who were not elected according to a particular set of rules. Among the domestic worker organizations within their networks, some are membership-based, others are not. Other types of organizations are trade unions that organize workers from a variety of sectors, including domestic workers; these unions can support the organizing of domestic workers with the resources they generate from the larger pool of members, and they are mostly affiliated with the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF).

This issue reflects the complexity of domestic worker organizations in different parts of the world. Domestic workers have long organized themselves however

they could when no one took notice, resulting in a variety of organization types. If the objective of the IDWN is to become a true organization of domestic workers, it must be membership-based and nothing else. In this regard, education and training programs are particularly important. Through them, the IDWN is able to assist these organizations to develop strategies and programs to build women's leadership, and democratic and sustainable structures.

Furthermore, the Steering Committee took a strategic decision to move towards becoming an integral part of the IUF structure (see side bar).

It is hoped that through double affiliation of member organizations, the growth of the IDWN will contribute to the strengthening of the IUF and vice-versa, thus leading to a stronger global labour movement.



Street vendors from the centre of Rio (above) and Porto Alegre (below) draft letters of demand
Photos by StreetNet International



"We are asking for the Municipality to respect the laws that exist as a first step. For example, the law requires that there are two notifications before any fine, and that the notification is made in person, explaining to the worker in what way there is an irregularity. It also requires that if merchandise is confiscated, the police provide written proof so that the worker can recover his or her goods. None of that is happening here in Rio."

Maria do Carmen Santos, Rio Forum



Rio street vendors at the Rio+20 Mobilization with StreetNet President Oscar Silva

Photo by StreetNet International

"Our livelihoods are at risk because we face systematic threats from the public authorities, neglect, prejudice and continuing obstacles. We can only conclude that the public authorities are seeking to end informal trading in the city and privatize many existing public spaces."

First Charter of Demands, Porto Alegre Municipal Forum

World Class Cities for All Campaign: Strengthening Municipal Level Street Vendors' Forums in Brazil

Nora Wintour, StreetNet Campaigns Coordinator

Since March 2012, StreetNet International's World Class Cities for All Campaign in Brazil has been implementing a series of training programmes in cooperation with the United Workers' Centre (CUT) in some of the municipalities where the 2014 World Cup will be held. This programme follows on an initial [mapping exercise](#) that identified over 80 different vendors' organizations in 10 of the 12 host cities.

Because the organizations are relatively fragmented and local in their reach, StreetNet has been working to establish municipal coordination structures, or vendors' forums, in order to strengthen the capacity to establish municipal wide demands and representative structures. To date, there have been training programmes in Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre, both of which have led to the creation of a municipal forum, and a decision to hold regular consultation meetings. In Porto Alegre, the forum has brought together seven organizations representing a wide

MBO Spotlight: LDFC

In January 2010, the [League for the Rights of Congolese Women \(Ligue pour le Droit de la Femme Congolaise, LDFC\)](#) opened a Women's Trades Training Center called "YA MISALA BASI / FEMALE LEADERSHIP" located at its headquarters. The objective is to train poor, uneducated women and young teenage mothers who do not attend school. The students, or "apprentices," learn the trades of Cutting, Sewing and Aesthetics. They also participate in home economics courses in which they are taught household tasks and general life skills. The women benefit from sensitization, information on the concepts of rights, the HIV / AIDS pandemic and sexually-transmitted infections, as well as other information related to their surroundings.

The LDFC also has among its

range of informal trade, including street food and drinks vendors, the social economy market, the Afro-Brazilian ethnic market, the handicrafts market, the large popular shopping centre in Porto Alegre, and the organizations representing those who will move to a new shopping centre in Canoas, in the Porto Alegre metropolitan area.

The forum drew up their first charter of demands. It sets forth key issues in each of the market areas in the city in May 2012. While the critical issues identified vary depending on whether vendors are working inside the official popular shopping centre or in less regulated open-air environments, the document underscores the discriminatory and unjust treatment by public authorities as paramount (see quotation in sidebar).

In Rio, the vendors' forum was established on 8th May 2012. It issued a [letter of demands to the Rio Municipality](#), calling for the implementation of the Law

members 63 acres of fields approximately 55 km from the city of Kinshasa. The crops are sold to the members of LDFC at a lower price, and after the women sell their products, they return some capital to the LDFC for its continued operations. The harvested products include corn, cassava, potato inch, eggplant, and peppers, among other produce.

In its capacity to promote the advancement, protection and defense of the rights of women and girls, the LDFC is conducting the awareness campaign, "No to the trivialization of sexual violence to women and girls" with support from the Center for International Studies and Cooperation (*Centre d'Étude et de Coopération Internationale, CECI*) and the Canadian International Development Agency (*Agence*

1876/1972, which regulates street vending. In particular, it calls for the implementation of the clauses in the law whereby all decisions of the public authorities related to street vending be discussed with a representative commission of street vendors.

[StreetNet, together with the CUT and the Gaspar Garcia Centre for Human Rights, has also written to FIFA](#), the International Federation of Football Associations, to make recommendations concerning street vending during the World Cup. Rather than imposing commercial exclusion zones around the stadiums and fan parks, StreetNet argues for inclusive policies which would permit representative organizations of street vendors to work within the designated areas to sell local products and traditional food and drinks.

StreetNet is now planning to write to all the host city municipalities to call for inclusive policies to take into account the livelihoods of the street and market vendors.

canadienne de développement international, ACIDI).

With the financial support of RCN Justice & Democracy (*RCN Justice & Démocratie*), an international Belgian Human Rights NGO in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the LDFC has signed a partnership contract through July 2013 to run the program "Local Justice in the Democratic Republic of Congo." This program aims to popularize the rights and dialogue with the authorities which began in August 2011, including the LDFC Library forum on sexual violence in the district of Mont-Amba (Lemba, Ngaba, Matete, and Kinsenso Limete). Boys as well as girls are among the beneficiaries.

As part of the New Manifesto campaign launched by StreetNet International in 2010, the LDFC

Continued on next page



Photo by LDFC, used in [The Only School We Have](#) (p.51)



Photos from Day Two of the Global Strategic Workshop in Pune, India (above and below)

Photos by GlobalRec Alliance



Photo taken during solid waste management (SWM) system tour in Pune as part of the Global Strategic Workshop in Pune, India

Photo by Leslie Vryenhoek

Continued from previous page

helped facilitate the collection of data on workers' needs. To date, the LDFC has conducted surveys of street vendors, market vendors

Informal Workers Need Protection: WIEGO Law Project

Informal workers have little or no legal protection or social security. Many existing laws and regulations fail to take into account the needs of informal workers and often result in harassment and even criminalization of their work. Many struggles of informal workers revolve around defending themselves against, or fighting to change, unfavourable laws and regulations. For this reason, WIEGO has a focus on law and informality. It is currently engaged in a three-country project in Ghana, Peru and Thailand with partner MBOs to

Waste Pickers Global Strategy Workshop

From April 27-29, waste pickers from more than 20 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe participated in the Global Strategic Workshop in Pune, India. This workshop was hosted by [KKPKP](#), the trade union of waste pickers in Pune, and [SWaCH](#) (an autonomous waste pickers' cooperative) on behalf of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers. [WIEGO](#) and the [Inclusive Cities](#) project provided support.

The workshop offered participants a chance to share their challenges and their solutions, and to formulate new ideas. In addition, allies and supporters from WIEGO, [GAIA](#), [WASTE](#) and [MIT](#) participated in discussions.

To set the stage for discussions on the integration of waste pickers into municipal systems, workshop participants were taken on a guided tour of the integrated, decentralized solid waste management (SWM) system utilized in the Pune municipality, where they saw waste pickers organized through KKPMP at work. Through a contract between the Pune Municipal Corporation and SWaCH, the workers do door-to-door collection, segregation, waste disposal and composting. A biogas

and waste pickers, among other informal workers, produced a list of vendor needs expressed by the survey responses and held a Day of Awareness and Information on the

research, document and analyze laws affecting different groups of informal workers, to record their legal struggles and to empower workers, especially women, to engage with authorities to adopt new laws or implement existing laws.

In a recent workshop held in Bangalore, India, members of the country project teams came together with WIEGO team members involved in work on law and informality and the project coordinators, Indian lawyers Roopa Madhav and Kamala Sankaran, to

facility was included in the tour.

Much time was spent describing and discussing various models of inclusion, and what's working in different circumstances. In exploring threats to their livelihood, the waste pickers found common ground, and determined that the greatest threats across all continents are privatization of access to waste (and the related move toward incineration and waste-to-energy schemes) and government corruption. The need to rely on middlemen rather than selling directly to industry, declining prices, and a lack of adequate equipment and space to do the work were also identified as challenges.

Discussion on solutions focused on the need for waste pickers to be recognized and included in solid waste management systems. It was determined that to achieve this, waste pickers need strong, democratic organizations, improved relationships, especially with municipal bodies, adequate research to help frame arguments for inclusion, and more visibility for the important work of waste picking. As often happens, some of the most important conversations took place informally as waste

New Manifesto campaign.

Read an interview with Angelique Kipulo Katani, LDFC Secretary General, on **p.51** in [The Only School We Have](#)

share information and develop ideas for the way forward. Two things were very clear: that gaining protection through law is of central importance for informal workers in every sector, and that consequently WIEGO should increase its focus and activities on law and informality.

Please refer to the [WIEGO micro-site on Law and Informality](#), which we hope will develop into a valuable resource for MBOs, researchers, advocates and sympathetic legal practitioners.

pickers from different places shared knowledge and forged bonds.

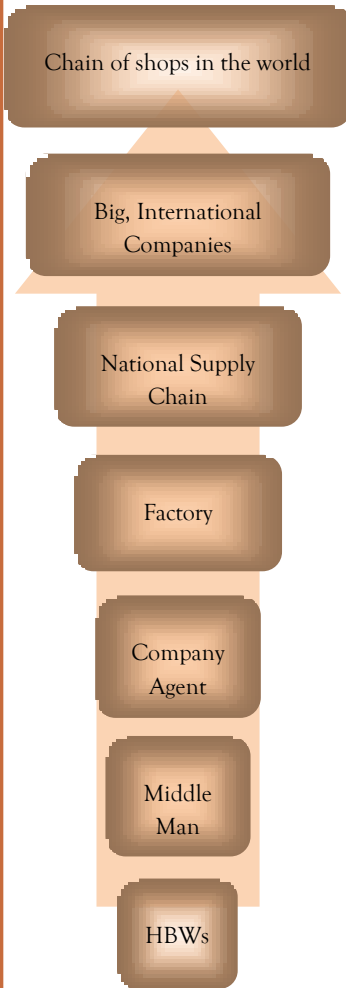
What emerged in the workshop most clearly was the need for more communication and knowledge-sharing at the global level and among local groups, so that waste pickers can benefit from each others' experiences while building an international sense of solidarity. At the concluding meeting of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers to determine future directions, a clear definition emerged of the alliance as a knowledge base and tool for facilitating the integration of waste pickers in a profession recognized as vital worldwide. However, it was stressed that while the Global Alliance should serve as a uniting force, the focal point for advocacy and action will continue to be the local, national and regional organizations.

Following the workshop, many of the international representatives took part in the Labour Day march on May 1, where the Pune Municipal Corporation presented SWaCH with an award and announced that it will extend the integrated "zero waste" system with SWaCH into 15 more wards.

Read the [full report of the workshop, with links to presentations.](#)

"It was good to know all about supply chain, especially to know through Internet that our products are sold in the world renowned stores."

Sana Hakeem, Hosiery Garment Textile Industry Karachi



"Home-based workers need to be adequately reflected in national statistics and recognized as workers in the labour laws of the country, thus making them eligible for social, economic and legislative protection. They need support in information, knowledge, capacity building – developing contacts, presenting issues, advocacy skills, designing and marketing, etc. Here organizational strength is required while making efforts to strengthen home-based workers, creating linkages, networking, capacity building and advocacy."

Ume Laila, Executive Director Home-Net Pakistan

Workshop on Understanding the Supply Chain of Home-Based Workers in Pakistan

In April 2012, [HomeNet Pakistan](#), [HomeNet South Asia](#) and WIEGO convened a [sharing and learning workshop](#) on understanding supply chains in Lahore, Pakistan. The purpose of the workshop was to initiate a pilot to map a sample of supply chains to gain a better understanding of: (1) which supply chains the HomeNet members are engaged in, as well as (2) what services and other interventions the HomeNet affiliates provide to their home-based worker (HBW) members. The objective was to identify the gaps in previously collected information and to plan further research that HomeNet Pakistan members and HBWs could do to build an understanding of the supply chains they are involved in.

A **supply chain** (diagram at left) is a system of organizations, people, technology, activities, information and resources involved in moving a product or service from supplier to customer. Supply chains may be short or long, and may be domestic, regional or international. Supply chain activities transform natural resources, raw materials and components into a finished product that is delivered to the end customer.

Supply Chain Mapping examines the steps involved in producing a

product and getting it to the end customers, keeping in mind the addition of margin at all stages. The goal is to understand how many HBWs are involved in which supply chains, and whether they are own account operators or work for a piece rate.

The groups of HBWs participated in a Supply Chain Mapping Exercise, during which they mapped out the steps of their products, from the purchase or creation of materials through the final market location. In some cases, large, well-known organizations were identified as final recipients of the participants' products, supplied through intermediaries.

Groups also participated in exercises to build confidence, strategically address grievances, and highlight resources and strategies they could employ to influence the supply chains in favour of better working conditions and wages. Participants discussed the different types of HBWs, as well as the importance of either establishing an organization or joining an existing trade union or association in order to improve work and increase wages. Other discussion topics included the [Kathmandu Declaration](#), issues

faced by HBWs in general and in Pakistan in particular, and the [Ethical Trading Initiative \(ETI\) Base Code](#) as it applies to HBWs.

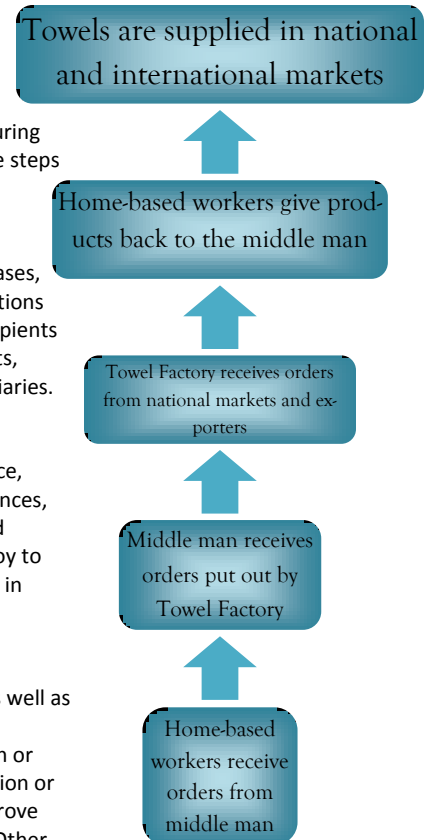


Diagram by the Hosiery Garments Textile Worker Union

Organizing Home-Based Workers in South-East Europe

In March 2012, HomeNet South-East Europe was launched at a Conference held in Sofia, Bulgaria. A team from WIEGO and HomeNet South Asia participated, sharing experiences of home-based workers organizing in different parts of the world. WIEGO has been supporting the Association of Homeworkers (AHW) in Bulgaria, an MBO with 40,000 members, to reach out into other countries in South-East Europe to identify where home-based workers are located, what they do, links into

global markets, and if and how they are organized. Through this process, organizing is taking place in several countries in the region and the informal HomeNet South-East Europe network has been established.

The AHW, with trade union support, has been successful in getting the Bulgarian Government to ratify [C177](#) and to change the Labour Code to include homeworkers that do sub-contracted work for an enterprise/

through an intermediary. Albania and recently Macedonia have also ratified the Convention, so it is very important for homeworkers in those countries to get organized in order to push governments to adopt and implement protective laws. The AHW is also helping own account home-based workers in countries in the region, and in June it organized a fair in Rousse, northern Bulgaria, where home-based workers' products from many countries were exhibited.