



# StreetNet Newsletter

No 31 MAY 2016

## EDITORIAL: Focussing on Habitat III

Every 20 years, there is a United Nations International Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (known as HABITAT). The first was held in Vancouver in 1976, the second in Istanbul in 1996, and the third – HABITAT III – is coming up in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. At this conference a New Urban Agenda will be decided by Member States of the UN. The conference will bring together a large range of urban actors including local authorities, civil society, representatives of workers in the informal economy, the private sector, academic and professional institutions, and all relevant interest groups to review urban policies affecting the future of cities. In preparation for this, civil society organisations, in close collaboration with UN HABITAT, have started an international campaign called “The City We Need”. They are collecting demands for “The City We Need” from interest groups in different countries. This is what they are saying:

*The city we need is socially inclusive.* It provides spaces for all segments and age groups of the population to partake in social and cultural expressions. It eliminates all physical and spatial forms of segregation and exclusion.

*The city we need is well planned, walkable, and transit-friendly.* Schools are within walking or biking distance from homes. Offices are located no farther than a few transit stops away from homes. Shopping for daily necessities is within walking distance of residential buildings and located near transit stops. Open space for recreation is near schools, work, and home

*The city we need is economically vibrant and inclusive.* It encourages and fosters

local economic development from the smallest informal trader to the largest corporations. It recognises and protects the specific needs of the informal sector of the economy in its economic development policies and strategies.

As HABITAT conferences take place only every 20 years, HABITAT III is taking place in a context where many changes have happened since HABITAT II. Since 1996, there has been a massive increase in the organisation of workers in the urban informal economy, in sectors like street vendors, waste pickers, home-based workers, informal transport workers, urban subsistence farmers and fisherpeople. This organised sector is therefore a new player in the urban scenario. This space has enabled grassroots women to play a greater participatory role, and the emerging linkages between informal economy workers and slum dwellers present interesting new opportunities for grassroots solidarity and direct participation in developing urban agendas.

The prevailing language coming from Mayors about cities has changed over the years, from emphasis on infrastructure development and attracting investment, to a language focussing on social inclusion and participatory processes. However, this new language falls short of being implemented, and we are still seeing the same old abolitionist approaches in practice.

**All StreetNet affiliates are urged to mobilise, form alliances with other sectors of workers in the informal economy, landless people and slum dwellers, and initiate their own national campaigns for “The City we Need”.**

*Pat Horn, StreetNet International Co-ordinator*

# contents

EDITORIAL – Focussing on Habitat III.....	1
“Only together we can oppose impossible demands”.....	2
Fifth StreetNet International Congress – 2016.....	3/4
NAPETUL holds capacity building workshop.....	5
Liberia's Cities Alliance members meet at Inception workshop.....	6
NAPETUL holds its second national congress.....	6
THE CITY WE NEED 2016.....	7
Training Workshop on Organising from the Bottom up.....	8
Getting acquainted with IDEA.....	9
VGCL - meeting the membership goal in Vietnam.....	9/10
NASVI update on the implementation of the Street Vending Act in India.....	10/11
STREETNET Americas affiliates contribute to important book.....	12
Fire destroys vendors' stalls and goods in Pedro De Sula market in Honduras.....	12

## “Only together we can oppose impossible demands”

by Oksana Abboud, StreetNet Organiser

Irina Yaskevich, Chairperson of the Trade Union of Entrepreneurs, ‘Together’, a StreetNet affiliate from Belarus, reports that individual entrepreneurs (IEs) are demanding the cancellation of a Presidential Decree that was issued on informal trading. This decree is titled ‘On regulation of entrepreneurship activity and the sale of goods by individual entrepreneurs and other physical entities’.

Decree No 222 has been in force since 1 January 2016. It provides that entrepreneurs may trade light industry goods, imported from abroad, only if they can present documents confirming the quality and origin of these goods.

Traders say the Decree will paralyse their activities. They say that people who sit in “high offices”, are far away from the work of small entrepreneurs and are unable to appreciate that the requirements of this Decree can’t be fulfilled. The result has been that most entrepreneurs working in flea markets and shopping centres, have had to suspend their activities since January 1 2016. Many claim that despite delays and an 18-month transition period during which they were expected to acquire such documents, they are unable to provide them.

“We drew up a collective appeal to the President and on 13 January a small delegation went to the Ministry of Finance, where we met with the Minister”, explained Irina. The demands were:

- revoke Decree № 222;
- provide entrepreneurs the opportunity to work at the same rate without raising the availability of documents and the import duty of 20%;
- reduce tax rates paid by entrepreneurs;
- reduce huge penalty sanctions.

After submitting the appeal more than 500 individual entrepreneurs from Vitebsk region gathered in the morning on January 28 near the regional executive committee. IEs from Vitebsk, Orsha and Polotsk and other cities demanded officials discuss the problems of small businesses. In late January, the Deputy Chairman of the Regional Executive Committee (union regional authority) joined the meeting of entrepreneurs together with senior officials and emphasised that local authorities need to hear the problems raised by entrepreneurs and try to help them.

Irina still hopes that the state authorities will compromise with the small entrepreneurs. “Only together we can oppose the impossible demands,” she says.

Irina is a member of the Working Group established under the Ministry of Economy on entrepreneurship issues. She has made it clear that if there is no progress on the IEs' demands, she will leave the Working Group and continue fighting for their rights in other ways.



Irina Yaskevich, Chairperson of the Trade Union of Entrepreneurs, ‘Together’

# Fifth StreetNet International Congress – 2016

*by Pat Horn, StreetNet International Co-ordinator*

StreetNet's International Congress is the highest decision-making structure in the organisation, and meets every three years. The Fifth StreetNet International (SI) Congress is intended to be held in August 2016 in India. We are hard at work raising funds for this to take place as required by the StreetNet Constitution.

This is the opportunity for all SI affiliates to have a voice in the democratic decision-making processes driving the organisation. It is also the opportunity for all StreetNet affiliates to decide what kind of leadership they would like to see driving the organisation.

## **Voice of Street Vendors in developing and implementing the New Urban Agenda – Nothing For Us Without Us!!**

This is the title of an international conference which will immediately follow the International Congress. Because the Fifth International Congress is due to take place in 2016, the same year as HABITAT III, we plan to use the opportunity to hold an international meeting immediately after the Congress to develop demands for the work sector represented by StreetNet International, i.e. street vendors and informal traders, which should be reflected in the New Urban Agenda that is to be adopted at HABITAT III in October 2016. All Congress delegates will attend this international planning conference.

This conference aims to create a platform for street vendors to share their experiences of urban challenges and best practice examples of engagement with decision-makers at city level, and to make inputs on the key issues for street vendors and other vulnerable informal workers. The conference will strategise on how to make the New Urban Agenda policy document that will be developed at the HABITAT III conference a living policy for effective change in street vendors' lives in their cities, countries and regions, and to discuss congress resolutions that will become street vendors' position on critical issues to be included in the new urban agenda policy document.

By the end of the conference the following outcomes are anticipated:

- A conference declaration of street vendors' priorities to be included in the New Urban Agenda policy, endorsed by 100 conference delegates representing 567 474 street vendors globally. The declaration should include practical steps towards establishing multi-stakeholder collective negotiation forums

at city level where street vendors will be part of collective decision-making to attain the goal of "Nothing for Us without Us"

- The StreetNet model framework for negotiations should be adopted as a tool that could be adapted to different regional contexts and implemented for multi-stakeholder negotiations in forging the New Urban Agenda in every city where street vendors are recognised as key actors in the development of sustainable cities and livelihoods.
- An action plan to deliver negotiation skills training at local, regional and international level.

Affiliates of StreetNet International should already be preparing for the International Congress, focussing on all the following Congress tasks.

### **1. Membership and participation**

In order to determine how many delegates each StreetNet affiliate is entitled to send to the International Congress, updated membership figures have to be sent to the International Coordinator. Affiliates will then be notified of the number of participants their organisation will be entitled to in accordance with Clause 9.1 of the StreetNet Constitution (and specifying how many of them have to be women) and asked to start the process of democratically selecting their participants to the Fifth International Congress.

### **2. Resolutions**

Draft resolutions are invited from all StreetNet affiliates as well as Regional Focal Point organisations on behalf of the affiliates in the region (after proper consultation with the affiliates in the region). Resolutions have to be submitted and circulated not less than 40 days before the International Congress, so that all StreetNet affiliates may have a chance to discuss the draft resolutions as widely as possible in democratically-constituted meetings, and develop clear mandates for their delegates to follow in the discussions during the Congress.

StreetNet International Congresses are an important opportunity to develop StreetNet policies on global political and organisational issues which are the subject of international civil society forums. Accordingly, StreetNet affiliates are invited to apply their minds to areas where StreetNet does not yet have official policies, and to start the discussing them with members in preparation for submitting substantial draft resolutions for discussion at the Fifth International Congress.

The following founding resolutions were adopted at the launch of StreetNet in November 2002:

- Party political policy
- Class and gender organisational policy
- Sustainability and financial self-sufficiency

StreetNet also has policy resolutions on the following:

- Development of promotional policies for street vendors
- Promotion of informal women workers of the world
- Foreign and migrant street vendors
- Child labour
- Fight against harassment and government crack-downs
- Street children
- Informal economy workers
- Fight against poverty
- HIV-AIDS in the informal economy
- Worker education in the informal economy
- Privatisation of markets
- Fund-raising and financial self-sufficiency
- Social Solidarity Economy
- Globalisation and the informal economy
- Climate change, recycling and the informal economy
- Inclusion of street vendors in new urban policies
- International informal economy/Street Vendors' Day
- Class and employment relationships in the informal economy
- World trade and the informal economy
- Anticipation and warning of health problems

However, there are many other topics on which StreetNet has no policy resolutions yet, and we encourage our affiliates to put forward resolutions on other topics.

### 3. Constitutional amendments

According to the constitution of StreetNet, constitutional amendments have to be circulated at least 60 days before they can be adopted. The Commission on Constitutional Reform established by the Third StreetNet International Congress in 2010, prepared recommendations for constitutional amendments, and their recommendations were revised by the Resolutions Commission appointed by the Fourth International Congress in 2013. The recommended constitutional amendments will be

presented at the Fifth International Congress for adoption.

### 4. Elections for leadership positions

As usual there will be elections for the International Council of StreetNet International, which will be composed as follows:

International President

International Vice-President

International Secretary

International Treasurer

11 additional members.

**All nominations for the above mentioned positions should be received in advance and circulated at least 40 days ahead of the International Congress. Affiliates are reminded to send nominations for any of these positions – with a one-page profile and motivation describing their candidate and why their organisation believes that s/he will be a suitable candidate for the position. Please send all your organisation's nominations to the StreetNet International office before the deadlines notified to you by email, so that the profiles may be translated and the nominations circulated to all affiliates for discussion.**



StreetNet affiliates at the 4<sup>th</sup> StreetNet Congress held in Santiago Chile

# NAPETUL holds capacity building workshop

by Sibailly Douhoure



Participants at the negotiation capacity building workshop

The National Petty Traders Union of Liberia, NAPETUL, and its international partners Cities Alliance, WIEGO and StreetNet International, held a three-day negotiation capacity-building training workshop for leaders of NAPETUL in Liberia. This was under the five-year Cities Habitat Project and took place at the YMCA in Monrovia from the 28-30 March 2016.

NAPETUL is expected to meet with the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) within two weeks following the workshop, to discuss the status of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which they signed on the 30 October 2014.

One of the terms of the MOU is that officials of the three parties to it, will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss the status of the MOU and suggest modifications if necessary.

The MOU allows petty traders working under the banner of NAPETUL, to sell at designated sites on principal streets in central Monrovia without confiscation of their goods by MCC officers or those of the Liberia National Police (LNP). This is part of a two-year pilot project to organise professional street vending in Liberia.

Participants at the workshop resolved to amend certain clauses of the MOU. This would be through negotiation with the other two parties as indicated in the MOU which was signed by the Mayor of Monrovia, Clara Doe Mvogo, Commerce Minister Axel Addy and NAPETUL chairperson, Comfort Doryen. Participants realised that clause #3 of the MOU does not serve the intended purpose of street vending which is self-employment in the informal sector of Liberia's economy, free from confiscation of their goods and donation to charitable organisations in the country.

They noted that officers of the MCC are not abiding with the mandate of MOU, but continue to confiscate goods of NAPETUL members at designated sites. This affects and undermines the significance of organising street vending in Monrovia.

Participants asked that the MOU should be extended to other cities in Liberia, and that city authorities should realise that the informal sector of the business community contributes tremendously towards the growth and development of Liberia's economy.

They pointed out that street vending has been accepted globally, and has led to individuals moving from the informal to the formal sector as business tycoons, in other parts of the world. Liberia is no exception in this regard. Training from local and international partners for petty traders in Liberia, they pointed out, will go a long way to enhance the development of street vending across Liberia. They noted that NAPETUL is working hard to ensure that mayors in cities around Liberia embrace street trading. Participants also urged government officials to work alongside them to minimise the unemployment confronting the nation. Over the years this has been affected severely by civil conflict as well as the fact that people are still trying to recover from the ashes of war. A negotiating team for engaging with the MCC and MOCI about the proposed amendments, was appointed.

The workshop was attended by 30 participants - 20 women and 10 men - and 17 observers were present. The three-day workshop brought together national executive members, coordinators from counties in Liberia and block leaders of the various designated streets of Monrovia. It was facilitated by the organiser and educator, Sibailly Maximilien Douhoure, of StreetNet International - Africa Region.

## Liberia's Cities Alliance members meet at Inception Workshop

by Sibailly Douhoure, StreetNet Organiser

Liberia's Cities Alliance member organisations met at an Inception Workshop, which took place at the Monrovia City Hall from the 22nd-24th February 2016. Over 30 Cities Alliance member organisations participated.

Each member presented information about its organisation, strategic priorities under the Cities Alliance programme and intended activities or draft implementation plans for 2016, covering outputs, partners, deliverables and timetables.

A report of the Petty Traders Union of Liberia (NAPETUL) states that the presence of its delegation at the Liberia programme members' Inception Workshop, was a remarkable achievement and rewarding. Members learnt that a City Development Strategy needs collective bargaining so that expected outcomes can be manifested in the



The Cities Alliance Liberia Programme members Inception Workshop which took place in Monrovia, Liberia

lives of those involved. They also learnt that the informal sector plays a major role in cities' development: so there is a need for consolidated efforts within this sector.

The Executive Committee of NAPETUL, including its chairperson Comfort T Doryen, and three other members attended the three-day workshop.

Sibailly M. Douhouré participated in the meetings on behalf of StreetNet International and WIEGO.

## NAPETUL holds its second national congress

The National Petty Traders Union of Liberia (NAPETUL), used the opportunity presented by the Cities Alliance, Monrovia Programme Inception Workshop, to conduct its second national congress. The Congress was held on the 31st March 2016 at the YMCA, after the introductory workshop. There were 63 delegates. Of these 20 were women representing 19 branches established in 13 counties of Liberia. Comfort T Doryen was re-elected as the National Chairperson. The Election Commission was led by Sunny Doe of the International Desk of the Liberia Labour Congress (LLC).



Partial view of congress delegates during the election



New leadership of the NAPETUL . The President of the Election Commission Sunny Doe (left) introducing the new leadership after the election

# THE CITY WE NEED 2016

## THE NEW URBAN AGENDA: CIVIL SOCIETY DEMANDS



Ubumbano Traders' Alliance Chairperson with representatives of campaign partners leading the campaign meeting



Leaders of SAITA (South African Informal Traders' Alliance) at the launch of the Cites We Want campaign in South Africa

*The city we need is socially inclusive. It provides spaces for all segments and age groups of the population to participate in social and cultural expressions. It eliminates all physical and spatial forms of segregation and exclusion.*

*The city we need is well planned, walkable, and transit-friendly. Schools are within walking or biking distance from homes. Offices are located no further than a few transit stops away from homes. Shopping for daily necessities is within walking distance of residential buildings and located near transit stops. Open space for recreation is near schools, work, and home.*

*The city we need is economically vibrant and inclusive. It encourages and fosters local economic development from the smallest informal trader to the largest corporations. It recognises and protects the specific needs of the informal sector of the economy in its economic development policies and strategies.*

### International campaign

Every 20 years there is a United Nations (UN) International Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development, known as HABITAT. The first was held in Vancouver in 1976, the second in Istanbul in 1996, and the third – HABITAT III – is coming up in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. At this conference a 'New Urban Agenda' will be decided by Member States of the UN. The conference will bring together a large range of urban actors including local authorities, civil society, representatives of workers in the informal economy, the private sector, academic and professional institutions, and all relevant interest groups to review urban policies affecting the future of cities.

In preparation for this, civil society organisations, in close collaboration with UN HABITAT, have started an international campaign called 'The City We Need'.

### National campaign

In South Africa, street vendors and informal traders, fisherpeople, waste pickers, taxi drivers and conductors, low-income migrants and people who live in informal settlements are still being treated as if they are a nuisance in cities. It is time for our voices to be heard, and to make our demands for **The City We Want**. These demands

need to go to all the municipalities and political parties. There is going to be a national local government election in August 2016. For the months before the elections, it was decided to use the time to pressurise local government authorities to implement the demands of informal workers for **The City We Want**. After they have been elected, they do not hear our voices very well any more.

All the organisations of people in these excluded sectors were invited to initiate meetings and put forward their demands for **The City We Want**. As a start, a meeting to launch this campaign in Durban was initiated by workers in the informal economy on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016. It was agreed to develop a campaign together, and consolidate the campaign demands. It was also agreed to march on the streets for the demands, ask the authorities to negotiate these demands with informal workers, publicise the demands on the social media, and make sure that every political party putting up candidates for the local government elections understands that it will be expected to meet these demands.

Then the demands of our national **The City We Want** campaign in South Africa, will be sent to those allies preparing for HABITAT III in Quito in October, so that they can become part of the international **New Urban Agenda** to be adopted at HABITAT III.

# Training Workshop on Organising from the Bottom up

by Oksana Abboud, StreetNet Organiser

On the 23-25 and 28-30 March 2016, StreetNet International and the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL), jointly ran a training workshop on organising from the bottom up for syndicates of workers in the informal economy in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City respectively. The workshop fell within the framework of a project with Oxfam, Belgium. The 40 participants who attended the two workshops were syndicate organisers and leaders. They came from different provinces of Vietnam to learn how to organise informal workers and establish negotiating forums, as well as to share their experience on work in the different sectors of the informal economy.

StreetNet International Coordinator, Pat Horn and StreetNet Organiser for Asia and Europe, Oksana Abboud, facilitated the training course.

The main aims of the workshops were:

- To help syndicates to learn how to involve workers and members in strategies of organising from the bottom up;
- To learn participatory negotiations skills;
- To understand all the steps of collective negotiations processes;
- To develop action guidelines which can be used by organisers as a guide to methods of organising from the bottom up.

The Hanoi workshop was opened by Dang Trung Dung, the deputy-director of the VGCL International Department. In his welcoming speech Brother Dung stressed that the informal sector should be recognised and unions should organise both formal and informal workers and with the support of StreetNet and the VGCL, develop an Action Plan in this regard.

The VGCL set its membership development goals which aim to organise workers into unions comprising up to 10 million members in all, by the end of 2016.

The participants of both the Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City workshops, mainly VGCL organisers from different provinces, represented different sectors of the informal economy, namely: fishermen, teachers of private kindergarten schools, migrants, Seon (tricycle) drivers, market vendors, porters and waste pickers.

OXFAM and Research Center for Gender, Family and Community Development (GFCD) representatives also attended the workshop.

On the first day of the workshop, Pat Horn focused attention on the formalisation issue, introducing the recently adopted ILO Recommendation 204. Participants were tasked with identifying clauses of this ILO



Above, Participants in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and below, the workshop held in Hanoi, Vietnam

Recommendation, that are the most important and helpful for the protection of informal workers. On the second day, participants had to think about a range of collective negotiations, identify different levels of negotiations, identify the differences between bilateral and multi-lateral negotiations as well as learn how to use a logframe as a planning tool.

The next activity was aimed at developing an understanding of negotiating counterparts, what to expect when approaching them and to develop an ability to anticipate obstacles and strategies to overcome them.

In their next task, participants were expected to develop ideas as to how to organise negotiations internally; identify capacity constraints while negotiating as well as to understand all the steps which make up a good negotiations process.

On the last workshop day, all trainees worked on identifying five things which are the most important for establishing a new negotiations forum; discussing obstacles which may confront them while establishing a new forum and ways of overcoming these obstacles. The last session was devoted to developing action guidelines for methods of organising from the bottom up.

It should be noted that all participants of the



two workshops succeeded in their tasks and acquired new skills and knowledge regarding the organising of informal workers and establishing negotiations forums in the informal sector. The Cambodian participants from Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Associations (IDEA), a StreetNet affiliate, attended the second training workshop in Ho Chi Minh City, and added value to it by sharing their experience with their Vietnamese colleagues.

In conclusion, it can be confidently said that all the trainees now understand bottom up organising and are ready to implement their knowledge and skills in practice.



Street Vendors in Hanoi

## Getting acquainted with IDEA



Sam Orn, mobilising informal economy workers in Cambodia



Ms Nop Soeun, street vendor leader in Derm Kor Market, Cambodia

***Oksana Abboud, Street International's Regional Organiser for Europe and Asia, acquaints us with three leaders (and their ideals) of the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Associations (IDEA), a StreetNet affiliate from Cambodia***

**Sam Orn** is a 34 year old, very strong and confident trade unionist who used to be a General Secretary of IDEA. Sam shared his experience on lobbying government through solidarity support of all trade unions and NGOs using social media.

He is keen to develop and mobilise trade unions in the Asian region and has his own vision for the protection of informal workers in his country. Sam says, "It's important to raise awareness among informal workers about their rights and interests, as well as to build capacity among organisations of informal workers. We are trying hard to raise funds to educate our members and to get minimum social security coverage for informal workers in Cambodia".

**Ms. Nop Savy** is 62 years old, and a member of IDEA's General Council. She used to work as a fruit street vendor in Cambodia. Ms. Savy joined the union in 2009 and felt the difference this made in her life as it changed for the better. A strong local activist, Sister Savy is sure that street vendors need to be organised to be able to enjoy their rights and freedoms, especially the right to a working space. This is the most important right for any street vendor. Sister Savy was arrested but it didn't prevent her from being a trade union activist as she is keen to help other people.

**Ms Nop Soeun** is 50 years old and has been a vegetable street vendor for around 11 years. She joined IDEA in 2013 and is now a street vendor leader in Derm Kor Market. She used to work at least 12 hours a day without any weekend break. She shared her story about her role in stopping the public Derm Kor Market market from being sold in 2014. The market has around 800 booths and more than 1 000 vendors sell their goods here - 300 are members of the street vendors' union, an affiliate of IDEA.

When they heard about the plans to sell Derm Kor Market, the market and street vendors mobilised themselves quickly and strongly over 15 days. They approached the Cambodian Prime Minister and while negotiating, succeeded in delaying the "selling issue" till 2021. Moreover, it was agreed in a signed contract between the City Governor and the traders that after 2021, the market would not be sold but would be developed and improved.

## VGCL - meeting the membership goal in Vietnam

*Speaking to Oksana Abboud, VGCL organisers emphasised the importance of the training of organisers since the informal economy sector is given weight on the VGCL agenda.*

**Le Khac A, Chief of Division, VGCL Organising Department (left) took a leading role in in the workshops in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.**



“Since its 6th Congress in 1988, when VGCL got its current name – Vietnam General Confederation of Labour, it started to organise informal sector workers. We don’t differentiate between workers. Either they are engaged in formal or informal sector work.

We have had some experience in organising informal workers, such as: fishermen, cyclo (tricycle) drivers, porters and craftsmen into unions but unfortunately only some of those unions are still going now. It’s difficult to sustain informal worker unions.

There is a big need for educating and capacity building to organise all sectors of informal workers, including market and street vendors as well as to negotiate for their rights. VGCL has started to pay more attention to informal sector workers and to think about organising multisectoral unions of informal workers to structure them somehow.

But first of all we need to develop an Action Plan on bottom–up organising of informal economy workers. VGCL needs both technical and financial assistance to deal with informal workers and hopes that StreetNet and other external and internal partners and NGOs will continue to support us.

VGCL also has its Membership Development Goal. The goal set is to unionise both formal and informal workers and to reach a membership of 10 million workers by the end of 2016. Currently VGCL claims around 9 million members.

Despite the fact that Vietnam and Cambodia are different countries, it was worthwhile for VGCL unionists to meet and communicate with Cambodian counterparts who shared their best practices in organising and negotiating approaches. We could notice a lot of similarities especially regarding dealing with informal sector workers.”

**Dang Tan Dat, VGCL Organiser from South Vietnam**

“I personally learned a lot from the StreetNet facilitators. I know that now we will try to negotiate using our acquired knowledge to raise voices of both formal and informal workers in Vietnam. We will also use our new skills to implement VGCL Membership Development Goal.”

**NguyenXuan Hong, President of the Tay Ninh Federation of Labour, affiliated to the VGCL.**

“It’s very possible to organise informal workers in Vietnam but due to lack of knowledge and proper skills it’s rather a long process. We have some experience in organising informal workers and now our main challenge is to start the negotiating process, to clearly understand how to approach the negotiating counterpart and to establish effective negotiation forums.”

## NASVI update on the implementation of the Street Vending Act in India

*by NASVI/SEWA*

On March 14, 2016, the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), StreetNet Affiliate, held a National Workshop on the Town Vending Committees (TVC) in New Delhi, India. The objectives of the workshop were: to review progress on the Street Vendors Law with special focus on provisions of the Town Vending Committee (TVC), its functioning, role and status in different states as well as revitalisation of the TVCs.

NASVI Coordinator, Arbind Singh, briefed the workshop on the objectives and said that that the 2014 Law on Street Vendors is very unique as it focuses on the livelihood aspect of the vendors. While the world clamours for peoples’ participation in governance and labour activists search for negotiation mechanisms for informal workers, India enacted a Law for Street Vendors in 2014 which mandated setting up of multi- stake holder TVCs in every city with 40%

participation of street vendors, 33% of which have to be women.

On 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2014, the Parliament passed the Street Vendors' Bill. The new Law is called the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, and it came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2014. NASVI is presently focused on implementation of the Street Vendors Act across India. Eight state governments have already prepared the scheme for implementation. NASVI is also partnering with state governments and municipal bodies for implementation of the Act.

TVCs are to be headed by the Chief Executive Officers of the municipal bodies and with representation from all important stakeholders – police and owning authority, residents welfare associations (RWAs), market

associations, banks etc. These TVCs are empowered to recommend to the local authority any action to be taken for street vendors.

NASVI Co-ordinator underlined that the TVC forms the heart of the Act. Opposed to the workers involved in formal sector where they have an adequate mechanism to put their demands in front of their employer through unions, the informal sector workers lacked the formal mechanism and ways to put forth their demand. The TVC provides a platform where the street vendors could talk openly with the policy makers as the TVC comprises of representatives from different departments where the vendors could freely put up all their problems. It will set an example for the street vendors of the whole world if this body is handled in a planned way.

### **INDIA: Street Vendors' Act, 2014 – Major Provisions**

1. The Act provides for constitution of a Town Vending Committee (TVC) in each Local Authority, which is the fulcrum for implementing the provisions of the Act.
2. In order to ensure participatory decision making for aspects relating to street vending activities, the TVC will be involved in activities like determination of natural markets, identification of vending zones, preparation of street vending plans, survey of street vendors, etc.
3. To avoid arbitrariness of authorities, the Act provides for a survey of all existing street vendors, and subsequent survey, at least once in every five years, and the issue of certificates of vending to all the street vendors identified in the survey.
4. It has been provided that no street vendor will be evicted until the survey has been completed and a certificate of vending issued to the street vendors.
5. All existing street vendors, identified in the survey, will be accommodated in the vending zones subject to a norm conforming to 2.5% of the population of the ward or zone or town or city.
6. Those street vendors who have been issued a certificate of vending/licence etc. before the commencement of this Act will be deemed to be a street vendor for that category and for the period for which s/he has been issued such.
7. Procedure for relocation, eviction and confiscation of goods has been specified and made street vendor friendly.
8. Relocation of street vendors should be exercised as a last resort. Accordingly a set of principles to be followed for

'relocation' is provided for in the second Schedule of the Act.

9. The Local authority is required to make out a plan once in every 5 years, on the recommendation of TVC, to promote a supportive environment and adequate space for urban street vendors to carry out their vocation.
10. The thrust of the Act is on "natural market" which has been defined under the Act. The planning exercise has to ensure that the revision of space or area for street vending is reasonable and consistent with the existing natural environment.
11. Provision is made for the establishment of a dispute redress mechanism with the chairperson a retired judicial officer with two other professionals to maintain impartiality towards the redressing of grievances of street vendors.
12. The Act specifies the time period for release of seized goods, for both perishable and non-perishable goods.
11. The Act provides for promotional measures to be undertaken by the Government, towards availability of credit, insurance and other welfare schemes of social security, capacity building programmes, research, education and training programmes for street vendors.
12. The Act provides for protection of street vendors from harassment by police and other authorities and provides for an overriding clause to ensure they carry on their business without any fear of harassment by the authorities under any other law.
13. The Act specifically provides for notification of the Rules under the Act within one year of its commencement, and Scheme within six months of its commencement to prevent delay in implementation.

# STREETNET Americas affiliates contribute to important book

by Laura Morillo

Eleven organisations affiliated to StreetNet Americas, have written on their experiences in a book published by Trade Union Confederation of Americas (TUCA), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV-ILO).

TUCA, ITUC and ACTRAV-ILO published the book *Experiencias Sindicales de Formalización Mediante Organización Sindical y Diálogo Social en América Latina y el Caribe* in 2015. It is a collection of the experiences of organisations in the region, as well as information materials produced by the Working Group for Union Self-reform (GTAS), CSA, Sindical Obrera (USO), and StreetNet International.

The book is on StreetNet website (Spanish):

<http://www.streetnet.org.za/docs/books/sp/2015/2015-CSA-Libro-Experiencias-Infomal.pdf>



## Fire destroys vendors' stalls and goods in Pedro De Sula market in Honduras

by Vilma Arévalo, FOTSSIEH, treasurer

On the 2nd March 2016 at approximately 3.30 am Honduras time, a fire in the Barrio El Centro Market in San Pedro Sula (see left) started. In less than 30 minutes, it had utterly destroyed the stalls and merchandise of 68 vendors here; 49 of them women, 19 men. All were affiliated to either the Sindicato de Locatarios de Mercados de Honduras (SULMERH) or FOTSSIEH. According to a firefighter report, the possible cause of the fire was a reheating cable problem. The affected vendors met with the San Pedro Sula Mayor to decide on an urgent solution to their situation. They have been advised by their municipal authority that the market will be reconstructed. This will be completed within a year.

StreetNet International publishes this newsletter in four official languages offering affiliates information and opinions.

Contact details: Website: [www.streetnet.org.za](http://www.streetnet.org.za)

