



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



Above : StreetNet also supports the movement of the organised Waste Collectors. Pictured are the South African Waste Pickers Association who have been organising themselves throughout the country, supported by the environmental justice organisation, groundWork

Street vendors and climate change

by Pat Horn, Streetnet

StreetNet and COP17

In 2010 it was announced that the 17th Conference of Parties to discuss climate change (COP17) would be held in Durban in December 2011. At a national civil society climate change conference held in Durban from 26 – 28 January 2011, a COP17 Task Team was elected to co-ordinate civil society's programme of activism towards COP17.

Although StreetNet attended the conference, a continuing challenge is that street vendors are not very aware of climate change issues and in line with the discussions held on this at the Third StreetNet International Congress in 2010, we decided to encourage South African street vendors to participate actively in the civil society process towards COP17.

StreetNet's strategic partners COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), SDCEA (South Durban Community Environmental Alliance) and Abahlali base Mjondolo (a slum-dwellers' movement) were all represented on the COP17 Committee of 17 known as C17.

In 2011 a post-flood crisis (after widespread floods in December 2010 and January 2011) caused food prices to rise sharply after the heavy floods damaged food crops all over the world, and because it became much harder to import from those countries (like Brazil) who were also hit by floods this affected on street vendors who struggled to keep their prices at levels their customers could afford. ►

This is a direct climate change issue, with a direct impact on the livelihoods of street vendors; so street vendors participated in the civil society programmes towards COP17 as part of their own livelihood struggles.

StreetNet facilitated a meeting between SDCEA and COSATU KwaZulu-Natal Province to strengthen the strategic partnerships between these organisations on the ground. StreetNet also supports the demands of the movements of organised waste collectors in India and Latin America to combat climate change through the recycling of waste. They have been making these demands at the UNCCC (United National Climate Change Conference) and at COP16 in Cancun. They attended COP17 in Durban – and attended the launch of the South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) which has been formed by waste pickers organising themselves around the country supported by the environmental organisation Groundwork.

A civil society summit ran in parallel with COP17 as had been done with COP15 in Copenhagen and COP16 in Cancun. StreetNet and our partner organisations in the KwaZulu-Natal province ensured the united participation in the Global Day of Action against Climate Change on 3rd December 2011 of organised street vendors, in alliance with other groups of informal workers such as subsistence fishermen & farmers organised by SDCEA, waste collectors organised by SAWPA, and workers in the formal economy organised by COSATU and other trade union organisations.

Solidarity between street vendors and waste collectors.

AFRICA – In September 2010, participants from organisations of street vendors and waste collectors, two sectors of work in the informal economy, from Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, and Zimbabwe in Africa, Pune in India, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru in Latin America, and trade unionists from Chad and Burkina Faso, met in Senegal. The meeting was organised by StreetNet, who had asked all their African affiliates to approach waste collectors in solidarity and assist them to organise collectively, to provide the opportunity for them to meet experienced organisations of waste collectors from India and Latin America to exchange experiences.

LATIN AMERICA – In February 2012, a high-level StreetNet delegation attended the Central American meeting of waste recycling workers and the Latin American regional assembly of waste recycling workers, followed by a meeting between this network (Red LACRE) and their partners and allies including StreetNet, in Nicaragua – as a key working class partner representing workers in another sector of the informal economy (i.e. informal traders).

What does Climate Change have to do with vulnerable communities?

Climate change may be defined as fast-changing weather patterns and longer-term droughts, floods and higher temperatures.

These changing weather patterns may result in severe natural events, e.g. sea level rise and extreme storms. In most African countries, the temperature is already rapidly rising – by a full degree in the last two decades – because of human activities that release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. These mainly industrial-capitalist activities include burning coal and other fossil fuels to generate electricity as well as destroying forests and farmland in the name of development, as the world becomes more urbanised.

As the Earth grows warmer and in some areas much more prone to floods and droughts, poor communities will be worst affected.

These impacts include:

1. **Health impacts** ranging from skin rashes to more severe cases of dehydration and skin cancer. Indirect health impacts caused by ecosystem changes may result in life threatening diseases such as cholera. The spread of diseases like malaria affect impoverished communities the most when they do not have access to health facilities or good medical treatment.
2. **Biodiversity** refers to different forms of life, and climate change will result in a dramatic loss of species. Biodiversity is important to the people of poor countries as it provides food, fuel, shelter and medicine, making the people of poor countries vulnerable to climate change. ►

3. Agricultural production is affected because most crops are rain-dependent. Changes in climate, e.g. drought, season changes, less/more rainfall, cause lower farm output. Many poor people rely on jobs and an income from agricultural activities, but the United Nations estimates nine out of ten African peasants could lose their ability to farm.

The first step of climate change activism is to make communities aware of the impacts of climate change and how it may negatively affect their lives and livelihoods. The second step is to equip communities at risk with the knowledge and skills of how to adapt and survive in a changing climate and how to achieve a sustainable way of life. The most important step is to put collective pressure on governments to adopt policies, laws and investment strategies that end our addiction to fossil fuels and instead, take advantage of the potential for renewable energy and public transport, to really transform society. ■



Above : Global Day of Action against Climate Change: StreetNet, their partner organisations and civil society united in the Global march where they voiced their concerns. It was estimated that around 10 000 people were present.

The Green Economy and Decent Work for Independent Workers in the Informal Economy

by Blanca Llerena G. – FUTRAND

Depending on Comprehensive Occupational Health

It is evident that critical contamination of the environment, on a global scale, is caused by emissions of toxic gases and the greenhouse gas effect of large industries, by the large amount of chemical effluent that is discharged into the air, watercourses, and the soil in watersheds, as well as by the residue of dangerous pesticides in agricultural ecosystems and foods and their impact on the local populations' health.

Further, over-extraction and the exhaustion of natural resources, deforestation, erosion and the decrease in biodiversity, have caused global warming and climate change, affecting local populations' and worker's health.

The effects of climate change on the health of independent workers in the informal economy

We are very vulnerable workers, as, especially because of our high levels of poverty, we are exposed to greater risks and accidents at work; we encounter physical, chemical and biological dangers with a high incidence of accidents and occupational illnesses; many of us, eg street vendors, work outdoors without any protection or physical structure to safeguard us against environmental contamination. Thus we are at greater risk compared with other workers. We are exposed to noise, silicosis, poisons, pesticides, metals, solvents, and neurotoxins with resultant musculoskeletal disorders, cancer, malformations, abortions, mental health disorders, premature ageing and early death. It is sad to see colleagues sick, without medical assistance; if they die, there are no economic resources for burial; there is total State absence in the form of assistance. So we ask, if we are more than half of the GNP, who does the State protect?

Alternatives and challenges for Union Organisations of Independent Workers in the Informal Economy .Faced with the problem of climate change, paradigm shifts for independent or salaried workers should be raised. Social protection should be available to all workers without social exclusion of any nature, to insure us against risk due to climate change or economic crises, and to ensure a more equitable distribution of economic wealth and environment in society to eradicate poverty, so that all of us can participate in the welfare provided by a green and fair economy, in a sustainable world.

As workers who should enjoy social security with our families, we would choose health, education, recreation, housing and old age pension as our priorities. We wish to be part of the modern concept of human security, based on the principles stated in the current legal framework of social security in our country and the ILO Resolution on Decent Work.

THE PROTECTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT IS THE TASK OF ALL. ■

Global Warming: Climate Change and its Impact on the Informal Economy Sector of Fotssieh – Honduras

by Eugenio Rodríguez – FOTSSIEH

FOTSSIEH, Honduras, held a workshop in December 2011 in the city of San Pedro Sula. The topics discussed were basic concepts concerning climate change, and the effects and impact of climate change on society.

For the development and study of the topic, 35 comrades from different parts of the country were involved, giving the study national “representation”. The first central topic dealt with was global warming, with workshop techniques including “brainstorming” and a summary of central issues during plenary sessions.

It was concluded that global warming consisted of changes in weather that occur over time, measured against current meteorological parameters and other variables, which affect relationships and conditions of life on the planet.

Subsequently, four working groups were organised to discuss the following questions: “How is global warming produced?”/“How does global warming happen? and “What does it comprise?” The plenary session concluded that it is the result of natural causes, and is “visible” in the variability of weather patterns, and is also be produced through human activities, for example: deforestation, fires, the use of environmental contaminants, etc.

With respect to the relationship between climate change and social challenges, concentration was on implementation of “green” occupations within agriculture, the provision of energy, recycling, construction and transport, keeping in mind the prevention of environmental contamination. It was concluded that the impact of climate change, includes illness, decreased average life-spans, decreases in production, and in some instances, the total destruction of the national economy.

The following specific causes were listed:

- Irrational human behaviour;
- Lack of awareness of the effects of global warming and the fact that there is no training on the topic;
- The absence of an effective government strategy.
- The total indifference of society.

FOTSSIEH is carrying out significant actions to counter these challenges, although we know that to fully combat this problem, a national and global strategy will be required which should be integrated into state policy. Starting with these convictions, our Federation is carrying out a campaign of announcements concerning the socio-cultural impacts of climate change, and about the indifference of the state of Honduras to it. Through mobilisation, regional meetings and assemblies, we are demanding that the president of the Republic introduce a law which returns the rivers and forests to the communities, of which we are a part. We also have influence in the Child and Youth Occupational Health Committee and will ensure that our campaign message is spread here. We are demanding vigilance concerning the protection from, and monitoring of, the use of environmental contaminants. We have also embarked on a waste collection campaign in some regions in coordination with local government.

SUCSESSES OBTAINED

- The participants exchanged information and knowledge regarding their conscientisation
- They committed to reproduce the knowledge gained in their respective regions and organisations.
- Interest in the topic was awakened.
- The level of awareness regarding climate change was raised.
- Follow-up in the form of future workshops was requested. A plan of activities was developed to reproduce the knowledge acquired.



FOTSSIEH held a workshop in the city of San Pedro Sula during December last year. It was based on climate change and its impact on society. Pictured are some of the attendees who were present for the workshop.

La Chureca as a people's model and solution for social, ecological and welfare transformation

by Abdy Fuentes Ubeda / Amalia Chamorro – CTCP-FNT

“La Chureca” is the name by which the largest open waste dump in the country (Nicaragua) is known, and has been in existence in the capital Managua for 43 years. Situated on the banks of Lake Xolotlan, the dump comprises 49 hectares, with a daily input of 1 300 tons of waste.

Between 1 500 and 2 000 adults and children classify and collect waste, and are exposed to a high level of contamination and to biochemical processes which can cause spontaneous and uncontrolled combustion of waste, resulting in the emission of highly toxic gases.

The “Ramón García” Self-employed Workers’ Union of La Chureca, was constituted on the 25 July 2008, and has more than 300 members, including waste “scavengers” and classifiers. The Union is affiliated to the Confederation of Self-Employed Workers (CTCP-FNT); it is a member of the REDNICA board of directors.

Conversion of La Chureca

The “Acahualinca Integrated Development Program” signed by the Managua Municipality, the Sandinista Government and the Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECID), resulted in a project for the conversion of La Chureca, valued at 40 million dollars, to be completed in 2012.

This will be done in two phases: a) sealing of the landfill; b) the construction of a plant for the treatment and separation of the waste. This includes the construction of an energy plant for the production of biogas. The La Chureca recyclers’ union has survived conditions of social, economic and political adversity, but slowly continues to strengthen.

During this process, the recognition by the authorities of union representation in a new project has been achieved, in that workers will have the opportunity to influence and negotiate their participation in the execution of the project and its influence on the life of the community.

The objective put forward by the union is that of a guarantee of the restitution of rights lost during the 43 years of work and co-existence in a system of marked by exclusion, marginalisation and extreme poverty.

Social Re-organisation

With the completion of the sealing of the landfill, the union members have achieved agreement that some of the members will continue to work as recyclers within the project. Other members will be integrated as employees in construction work; in summary a large number of members will work in the recycling company. The union also proposes the formation of recycling, agricultural and tourist-oriented co-operatives in which members will participate as guides for the recreational centres of La Chureca. ■



Above: Members of Waste Pickers Union “La Chureca” who attended the Red LACRE meeting at Nicaragua in February this year

Follow up on the Recommendations of Dakar Regional Seminar on the Activities of Waste Collectors in West Africa

by Sibailly Douhoure - StreetNet

In order to follow up on the recommendations of the regional seminar in Dakar, a mission was organised in Togo, Cote d’Ivoire and Senegal, from the 17th to 30th October 2011, by Kapita Tuwizana, facilitator of the activities organised in these 3 countries.

Mr. Kapita visited Togo from the 17th to 20th October. He used his time to meet with leaders of SYVEMACOT and FAINATRASIT, the two StreetNet affiliates in Togo, and also to participate as a facilitator in the local seminar aimed for waste collectors. ►

This training activity took place in Lomé from 18 to 19 October and was attended by 40 people who shared their experiences regarding their working conditions. After the seminar, three platforms which serve as dump sites were visited.

In Côte d'Ivoire, working sessions were held on October 21st with the leaders of UFEPCCI (Federal Union of Pre-collection Professionals of Côte d'Ivoire) and on October 22nd, with leaders of FEPSU-CI (Federations of Pre-collectors and Providers of Urban Services in Côte d'Ivoire).

Visits to platforms were carried out for each federation in Yopougon, a suburb of Abidjan. The two federations claimed that the outbreak of war in Cote d'Ivoire following the presidential elections prevented them from carrying out activities. They thus sought the support of StreetNet to organise a meeting to review progress on the Dakar recommendations. The visit in Abidjan was conducted jointly with Sibailly Douhouré, StreetNet Organiser, based in Abidjan.

Kapita's visit in Dakar was scheduled from the 25th to 30th of October. This programme helped him to organise a meeting particularly with the two StreetNet affiliates, and the leaders of BOKK DIOM, the organisation of waste collectors in Senegal. It was clear from discussions that the recommendations of the Dakar seminar were not followed and therefore a training activity will be organised for members of BOKK DIOM in collaboration with the two StreetNet affiliates.

The visit of Kapita to the three West African countries showed that StreetNet affiliates in these countries are actually in contact with waste collectors and organisations of waste collectors. However, it is important to urgently develop a programme in each country and to follow up activities in collaboration with StreetNet affiliates. ■

Looking ahead to Rio +20 June

by Nora Wintour – StreetNet

StreetNet is organising a delegation to attend the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), most commonly known as Rio+20. The conference takes place in June 2012 and is expected to be a massive event, with more than one hundred heads of state or government in attendance.

In its official process, Rio+ 20 will result in a short political document, to re-affirm commitments and principles related to sustainable development, and present an agenda to direct activities related to sustainability and a transition to a new economic model. The final text will not be a legally binding document but will have clear recommendations.

The first draft of the document was presented in January 2012 and can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/rio20zerodraft>. There will be a series of meetings from now until June to negotiate amendments to the document.

The main issues under discussion are:

(1) The transition to a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. The three main aspects of a green economy under consideration are that it is low-carbon; it has an efficient use of natural resources and is socially inclusive.

(2) The institutional framework (governance tools) for sustainable development, which include both environmental governance and sustainable development global governance.

A likely result of this discussion is the creation of a new UN body with more autonomy and influence or the strengthening of the existing UN Environment Programme (UNEP) so as to improve co-ordination between the UN and governments on the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements.

Rio+20 will also address measures related to global governance and the weakening of national states in relation to transnational powers, such as multinational and financial capital.

Civil society organisations are able to participate in the discussions in a variety of ways. Since the Earth Summit of 1992, the UN has organised the direct participation of civil society through setting up 9 major groups, including workers and trade unions, women, children and youth, business and industry and NGOs. ►

In addition, many civil society organisations and social movements are organising activities prior to and during the conference. There will be a People's Summit for Social and Environmental Justice, which will include a wide range of self-organised events. Some of the issues which will be discussed include food security, poverty eradication, energy security, sustainable development; technological innovation, cities; water; decent work; and migration. Biodiversity, climate change and desertification are seen as cross-cutting issues to be raised in all discussions.

The People's Summit will organise a large march through Rio de Janeiro on 17th June.

StreetNet International's delegation will include Oscar Silva, StreetNet President, Nora Wintour, Campaigns Coordinator, and Maira Vanucchi, World Class Cities for All Campaign Consultant for the World Cup in Brazil.

Possibly others will attend as well. The street vendors' organisations in Rio will also participate in different ways. StreetNet will coordinate its work at Rio+20 with WIEGO and with the international trade unions, in particular the ITUC – Americas.

For more information on the People's Summit, see: www.cupoladospovos.org.br ■

StreetNet International : Almost ten years old and still growing. How do we measure its success?

by Mónica Garzaro Scott – StreetNet

StreetNet International was launched in November 2002, as a federation of street vendors' and market vendors' organisations to be represented in the international arena. Each member organisation has the responsibilities and rights to make the network as representative as possible of street vendors' and market vendors' needs. Since its creation, StreetNet has followed the procedures, resolutions and policies that have been agreed upon by their elected leadership.

As part of StreetNet there are unions, union centres, informal economy organisations and city-based street vendors' organisations. They contribute to unify their voices to share common problems and ideas to solve the challenges they face in many parts of the world. The idea is to make visible their needs, problems and labour rights at local, national and international levels.

The urban public space has been largely controlled and utilised by politicians to their own advantage. Street vendors are constantly harassed when beautification projects influence the political agenda, and relocation plans made without consulting all stakeholders involved is a usual occurrence.

Since StreetNet has been supporting its member organisations worldwide, the process of enhancing working conditions has started, but there are many problems to solve and different levels of understanding them. First of all, we have to consider the organisational conditions, the survival strategies and needs of all the members and then the specific political and historical conditions in each country.

In general terms, street vendors around the world suffer from harassment, social stigma as a nuisance, unregularised working conditions and lack of social security benefits. Women in this sector suffer more since they have to deal with the problems generated by patriarchal societies.

StreetNet has created programmes to strengthen the capacity of the organisations' members as well as the information exchange to share actual experiences.

One of these programmes is country activities where StreetNet allows members to choose which areas of work they want to enhance.

Although the final decision is taken by the affiliates, StreetNet gives them some guidance. Some affiliates have taken full advantage of this programme but others have not presented proposals. In the cases where affiliates have chosen to get funds for country activities there have been some interesting outcomes, where grassroots members have received training alongside leadership.

StreetNet has a gender policy that reinforces the participation of women in all the activities supported by it. So one of the successes has been that most of the members have taken into consideration the situation of women and the special need for them to be trained and heard. From the feedback by the affiliates, this policy has enhanced the participation of women in decision-making structures. ►

StreetNet has managed to be heard and has made an impact at the international level with other partners and international organisations, especially at ILO Conventions and Global Union Federations Conferences. Success is a very unstable matter for the kind of work we are doing as there are many variables to take into account and change. More than a fixed goal to reach is a process of reaching a common set of rights and principles that will secure the livelihoods of vulnerable workers.

We still need to work for a long-term plan and strategise on the pathway to solve all the problems encountered, and keep a check on the national conditions and international change. ■

MUFIS - A SUCCESS STORY

by Mwanda Chiwambala - MUFIS

Success for the Malawi Union for Informal Sector (MUFIS) began soon after joining StreetNet International as an affiliate.

MUFIS represents informal economy workers. These workers are vulnerable, some working in unprotected and unsecured places. There are more workers in the informal than in the formal economy. An estimated number of over 3.5 million workers are in the informal economy in Malawi.

It is evident that expansion of the informal economy has become a key feature of the labour market in Malawi. This sector is characterised by poor working conditions. When one visits the informal economy workplaces, sometimes you will not find toilets, running water, storage facilities, or a place eg bench, to display the goods or a security fence.

Success

After MUFIS' affiliation to StreetNet, many major successes and opportunities came about, such as the registration by Government of the union as representing the informal economy in the country. This has created a more conducive environment for social dialogue with regard to mainstreaming the decent work agenda in the informal economy.

MUFIS has participated in local activities financed by partners and these activities, through organising and recruitment, have increased membership from 6800 to 10550.

Record Keeping in the Informal Economy

Record-keeping with regard to issues pertaining to the informal economy is generally poor.

This is aggravated by a lack of business management skills among the workers in the informal economy. As such, workers in this sector rarely keep records of basic information such as hours worked per day; output or sales per day; violations of workers' rights; receipts, accounts, and formal contractual agreements.

After noting the above gaps, MUFIS used the negotiations skills attained through StreetNet International, to convince a local Italian organisation – Comitato Internazionale per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP) to train membership in business skills management. Members were also trained in co-operative financing as a viable option for their own savings and credit as with their own bank.

MUFIS, with financial assistance from partners, has organised and trained membership in different workplaces. This training has led to good and meaningful representations and discussions.

Workers negotiated with local councils in Neno when members were evicted from the market by the Council at very short notice. After negotiations with the authorities, the notice period was extended and members were compensated.

MUFIS collaborated with NBS Bank to establish a savings and credit account (cooperative) for its women membership. This is viewed as a support mechanism for the women, which promotes easy access to credit on reasonable terms, to improve their individual enterprises. ►

MUFIS participated in the Inclusive Cities research done by WIEGO and it was the first organisation in the country to publicly say that informal economy workers are affected due to the global economic crisis. This has forced the Government to sit down with civil society to seek a way forward in talks mediated by the United Nations.

MUFIS is trying everything possible to lobby with other stakeholders so that they are involved in all informal economy worker activities. ■



Above : Participants at a local activity in Thyolo

Syvemacot: To Become a Union for all Street Vendors and Market Traders? - A Challenge

by Sibailly Douhoure – StreetNet

SYVEMACOT is one of the two StreetNet affiliates in Togo. This union has been a member of StreetNet since 2005. SYVEMACOT specialises in street trading and operates in the sector of building materials.

As an affiliate of StreetNet, one of the challenges that will face SYVEMACOT within a reasonable time is that of broadening its base by recruiting unreservedly, all the street vendors and market traders. It is worth noting that SYVEMACOT has been working with the association of women vendors in Nokafu Market since 2009, a market belonging to the neighbourhood and built with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1999. The Nokafu Market currently has about 600 women.

The association of women in this market is headed by an elected committee made up of nine women. This committee participates in the management of the market and works with the local municipality. The association directly manages the market's latrines and boreholes (wells).

The women's association in this market participates yearly in training activities organised by SYVEMACOT, with financial support from StreetNet. However, what remains to be done, is to involve them directly in the other management activities of SYVEMACOT. ►

During StreetNet's regional workshop on the focal point and the New Manifesto Campaign, SYVEMACOT leaders confirmed their intention to recruit not only other street vendors but also the market traders. If SYVEMACOT commits itself to realising this good intention, the union will be much stronger in terms of membership and will be much closer to meeting one of StreetNet's main objectives which is to unite all street vendors and market traders.

Togo is a country with a tradition of street trading. The informal economy represents about 60% of the GDP. If informal workers, meaning street vendors and market traders, dominated by women, are organised into unions, there is a better chance that their voices will be heard and that their demands will be taken into consideration, particularly in the context of regulatory or statutory negotiations with the central government and local municipal authorities.

During the StreetNet workshop which took place in Lome, the two StreetNet affiliates in Togo, namely FAINATRASIT and SYVEMACOT, each received a congratulatory letter from the General Directorate of Informal Trading for having led information campaigns in the five districts of Lome and 3 regions of the country, and to have held a debate on a private television. In fact, it was an activity of StreetNet's New Manifesto Campaign, which began in November 2011 and ended in February 2012.

During these campaigns, both affiliates identified all the problems faced by street vendors, market traders and cross-border traders, to be presented in another phase to the authorities of the central government and local municipalities. ■

World Class Cities for All Campaign in Brazil- Research Report by Nora Wintour – StreetNet

StreetNet International commissioned a research study of the organisations of informal traders in the 12 host cities of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

The research was conducted over the period May –October 2011 and was conceived as preliminary step to establishing the World Class Cities for All Campaign (WCCA) in Brazil.

The study was carried out by three researchers, who counted on the technical support of the Gaspar Garcia Centre for Human Rights and WIEGO. It was supervised by the StreetNet International campaigns coordinator, Nora Wintour.

The research was conceived as an "action-research" programme designed also to build the capacity of street traders' leaders to work together within a national perspective.

The researchers used a semi-structured questionnaire to carry out personal interviews with leaders of the street trader organisations.

The researchers also interviewed social movements, government authorities, NGOs and university departments concerned with urban planning.

The main areas of inquiry include:

- Legal framework
- Information about the membership, composition and organisational structure,
- The gendered nature of the organisation,
- The political context and allies with which they worked
- Main demands of the different organisations,
- The possible impact of the World Cup.

On 26th October, the street traders' organisations and other organisations, including the CUT Brazil, the ITUC/CSI, and the Popular Movements Centre, adopted the platform. ►

This was an historic occasion representing the first time that street traders' organisation had had the opportunity to meet together and to adopt a national platform of demands.

The declaration also condemned the police violence against street traders, which was taking place in Bras, in the centre of Sao Paolo, at the time of the meeting, and called for the respect for informal traders during the World Cup. (For the text of the declaration see www.streetnet.org.za/campaigns)

The researchers identified a total of 89 street traders' organisations in 10 host cities. The great majority are organisations which are geographically located and registered as associations. There is a marked fragmentation and division among the organisations. The organisations worked in a relatively isolated manner at municipal level and have not developed state-level co-ordination structures, let alone a national network

Main Challenges

- Municipalities are not issuing new licences to trade in the centres of the host cities. Many street traders are therefore left in a legally precarious situation, the prey to arbitrary treatment and other forms of abuse.

- Illegality often fosters corruption with street traders' leaders used by the police and municipal authorities to collect arbitrary payments. Such situations directly affect the capacity of the street traders' organisations to mobilise.
- In some cities, there is an increase in police crackdowns against street traders, including the confiscation of their goods without compensation or return; fines, and on some occasions, there are incidents of physical violence and imprisonment.
- The majority of traders do not have licences and their needs are not taken into consideration by the public authorities; there are often acute divisions between traders who possess licences and those who do not.

Main Demands

- The main demand of all the organisations is to have a safe, permanent workplace, with a licence, issued by the municipal authorities, whether on the streets or in a popular shopping centre. They want legal and social recognition that they have the right to trade in public spaces in order to earn an income for themselves and their families

News of Streetnet Focal Point Organisations

by Sibailly Douhoure – StreetNet

Streetnet Regional Focal Point Meeting For The Americas:

The StreetNet Regional Focal Point meeting took place in Managua, Nicaragua from the 20th to 25th February 2012. It was attended by CTCP members, StreetNet's International Co-ordinator, StreetNet's Organiser and StreetNet's President. The aim was to empower StreetNet's Regional Focal Point of the Americas, CTCP, in the tasks of regional coordination which are needed in order to consolidate this region of StreetNet International as a means of strengthening the organisation as a whole. This effort was successful, as a result elements for a Regional Focal Point Plan 2012-2013 were identified, such as:

- (a) Communications
- (b) Regional meeting to get horizontal communications between working, after negotiation with affiliates in the region about using some of their country activities budgets;
- (c) Meeting with national trade union centres in Paraguay;
- (d) Coordination of participation in StreetNet research, campaigns, Social Protection Floors strategy for International Labour Conference of ILO. ►

- (e) Coordination of affiliates' preparation for Fourth StreetNet International Congress in 2013, including preparation of new resolution topics.

The meeting ended at 12 noon on Saturday 25th Feb 2012, having achieved its objectives.

Streetnet Regional Focal Point meeting for West and Central Africa:

From March 6th to 9th 2012, StreetNet Organiser, Sibailly Douhoure and Campaigns Coordinator, Nora Wintour, facilitated a workshop in Lome, Togo, to discuss a work plan for the period 2012-2013, for the Focal Point organisation in that region. The communication strategy that came out of that meeting were:

- The focal point is to set up an affiliates and contacts directory, with telephones, postal address; email; fax and Skype.
- All affiliates, if possible, are to get connected to Skype. A CD with instructions about how to download Skype has been distributed to all participants.
- The focal point will hold monthly telephone conferences with the StreetNet Organiser (Sibailly Douhoure) and, when appropriate, with Campaigns Coordinator (Nora Wintour).

- The focal point will encourage regular exchanges with affiliates about their activities.
- The focal point will encourage affiliates to contribute with news and photos about their activities to the StreetNet newsletter, website and blog (<http://streetnet-campaigns.blogspot.com/>)
- The focal point will produce regular written reports about activities in the region.

The other following points for the Action Plan 2012-2013 discussed during this meeting are:

- Recruitment of new affiliates
- Organisation of young people (recruitment and training)
- Affiliates' participation at the International Day Action on Street and Market vendors
- Training on Social Protection
- Cross-border traders' programmes
- Preparation for International Congress

The participants agreed to move the Focal Point organisation to SYVEMACOT in Togo. There were 19 People including 15 Women from 10 different countries who attended the meeting. ■



Above : The StreetNet Regional Focal Point meeting for West and Central Africa was held in Lome/Togo Pictured are the participants who attended including CTCF members, StreetNet's Organiser, StreetNet's Campaign Co-ordinator and the Secretary General of CSTT.