

The blood, sweat & tears it took to build a bottom-up relationship of working class solidarity between organized workers in the informal economy and the trade union movement

- Pat Horn

Organising Environment

When workers in the informal economy in the 20th Century started to organize collectively as workers, they had to fight hard for recognition as workers who need rights, social protection, and appropriate labour standards. They encountered an established trade union movement fighting for improved working conditions for workers in the formal sector with the aim of achieving full employment where most work would be done in a formal workplace and workers would be covered and protected by labour laws—and they believed that the informal sector would disappear. But in fact, with globalization and liberalization, the opposite was happening. Formal jobs were declining. Trade unions were losing membership and power; they tended to blame informal workers for taking away their work.¹ So they were not exactly welcoming organisations of workers in the informal economy with open arms.

There were three international workers' organisations – the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) – of which the ICFTU was the largest. There were also sector-based international structures of trade unions from each sector – known as ITSs (*International Trade Secretariats*) in relation to ICFTU, and TUIs (*Trade Union Internationals*) in relation to WFTU.

North-South Geopolitics

Nevertheless, as globalization intensified and multinational companies increasingly moved production from countries in the global North to countries of the South, it became increasingly important for informal workers to have an international voice – and to build a relationship of international worker solidarity with the trade union movement.

ILO (International Labour Organisation) agenda

An ILO World Employment Mission to Kenya in 1972 first put the concept of the “informal sector” on the international development agenda. Through its technical programmes and local offices, the ILO began to support studies on the informal economy, including different approaches to organizing informal workers. Through the 1980s, as neoliberal policies and informalization gathered pace, the ILO technical departments were involved in research and projects on the informal sector. However, these were divorced from the standard-setting discussions, which were, and largely still are, the preserve of formal trade unions and employers' organizations (together with governments), neither of which are representative of workers or employers in the informal economy.²

¹ ILO Book Chapter 7 “Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s” by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.178

² ILO Book Chapter 7 “Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s” by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.179

The ILO, although one of the bodies of the United Nations (UN) family, has a structure which is quite different from the other UN bodies. Its main governing structure is the tripartite ILO Governing Body, which is composed of representatives from national governments, from national trade union centres and from national employers' associations. The Governing Body is given its mandate on a yearly basis at ILC (*International Labour Conference*) where all member countries of the ILO send tripartite delegations of representatives of employers, workers and governments. The ILC members meet in tripartite committees, which decide the direction of the ILO, monitor activities, pass resolutions and conventions on specific topics and monitor international compliance. The ILC also elects the Governing Body.

The ILC, as the general body of the ILO, has an inherently tripartite structure. Each country sends a delegation consisting of employers, workers and government representatives. Two Government representatives and one each of the worker and employer representatives are the "delegates" to the conference with a right to vote in the plenary. The other members of the delegation are known as advisors, with a right to vote in particular committees, but not in plenary.

The agenda of topics to be discussed at the annual ILCs are decided years in advance by the Governing Body. Each topic is then assigned to a tripartite Committee. In addition to the particular topics set down for each year's agenda, there are perennial committees such as the Standards Committee which meets every year to discuss the reports of the Committee of Experts on compliance/non-compliance of Member States with ILO Conventions.³

So in the 1990s, the following series of three standard-setting discussions on what was called "new forms of work" were placed on the ILC agenda by the ILO Governing Body:

- Part-time Work (1993/94)
- Home Work (1995/96)
- Contract Work (1997/98)

Strategy & Tactics

Birth of SEWA – a new kind of workers' union

In the 1970s, the globalization process, and all its manifestations, gathered momentum and provided the context for a new movement to organize informal women workers locally and then globally.⁴

"We are workers and want to register a trade union", Ela Bhatt, the founder of SEWA, and a group of head-loaders and street vendors told the Registrar of Trade Unions in Ahmedabad, India, many years ago. "We want to name it the Self-Employed Women's Association".

The Registrar was uncertain, "You don't have any employer, you don't work in factories, how can you be called workers?" he asked. "And you are all women. We cannot have a trade union with only women".

After some convincing, SEWA was registered in 1972 with about 600 fee-paying members.⁵

³ Unpublished paper by Pat Horn & Renana Jhabvala "The story of the ILC 2002 discussion on Decent Work and the Informal Economy – through informal-economy-tinted spectacles" 2003

⁴ ILO Book Chapter 7 "Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s" by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.178

⁵ ILO Book Chapter 7 "Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s" by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.179/180

SEWA did things differently from the established trade union movement. They developed a strategy of the joint action of trade unions and cooperatives, of struggle and development, for women workers they organized into cooperatives and who also became members of the trade union. They also formed a cooperative bank to help self-employed women workers to reduce exploitative rates of interest and increase their earnings and assets.

In 1972, when SEWA was formed, it was part of a larger trade union, the Textile Labour Association (TLA), which had 125,000 mill worker members in Ahmedabad. While it was still part of the TLA, SEWA was able to bring issues of informal workers to international attention through the ITS International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF) and the ICFTU. Unfortunately, after SEWA took a stand in favour of 'lower-caste' students in the caste riots of 1981, the TLA expelled SEWA. With the loss of TLA affiliation, SEWA also lost its membership in international and national federations and became isolated.⁶

Born in a mainstream trade union, the SEWA women leaders recognized early the importance of policy interventions and of being part of larger national and international networks. While grassroots organizing is extremely important, SEWA realized that the 'winds of change' in the macro environment could sweep away any gains made at the local level.⁷

SEWA succeeded in affiliating to the IUF (*International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco & Allied Workers' Associations*) ITS, whose General Secretary, Dan Gallin, understood non-traditional forms of organization and representation and needed SEWA's help in raising the profile of informal workers at the international level. SEWA was also then accepted as an affiliate by other ITSs ICEF (*International Chemical & Energy Federation*) and ITGLWF. IUF helped open the door for SEWA to introduce a resolution at a Congress of the ICFTU with a demand for an ILO Convention on Home Work, which ultimately led to the tabling of the discussion on Home Work on the ILO agenda of 1995/96 by the Governing Body.

Home Work Convention 1996

The issue of home-based workers caught the attention of women in the trade unions, who understood the pressures on women to combine paid work, housework, and childcare. Women trade unionists in Europe, and Australia enthusiastically supported the demand for a Convention.

Meanwhile, SEWA had connected with existing home-based worker organizations around the world: in Australia, Brazil, the UK, Italy, and Spain. Some were affiliated with the trade unions, and some were NGOs. SEWA arranged to meet with some of the organizations. It was immediately obvious how much the home-based workers had in common—invisibility, isolation, low earnings, and gender. They even expressed the advantages and disadvantages of working at home in the same way. In multiple places, many exclaimed: "The biggest advantage of working at home is that I can look after my children, but the biggest disadvantage is that my children will not let me work!"

These organizations of home-based workers came together to form a network, HomeNet International, so that they could work together to lobby for a Convention.⁸

The Committee on Home Work at the ILC was like a battle-field.

⁶ ILO Book Chapter 7 "Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s" by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.181

⁷ Ibid

⁸ ILO Book Chapter 7 "Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s" by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.183

The Employers were not happy about the three new Conventions (Part-time Work, Home Work and Contract Work) which were up for discussion on the ILC agenda, as they were advocating for the ILO to move away from regulation of new forms of work which they preferred to remain unregulated. But the Convention on Part-time Work had already gone through, and they were really determined to fight harder against the Home Work Convention.

The situation in the Workers' Group of the Committee on Home Work was even more difficult!

“ trade unions from various countries were neither positive nor welcoming. Many felt home-based work undermined wage agreements reached in the factories and weakened the trade union movement. In the United States, industrial homework was prohibited, and the garment unions had fought a campaign to re-enforce the ban. The ITGLWF had, a decade earlier, passed resolutions condemning homework. Moreover, there was also tension surrounding the very presence of SEWA, as some trade unionists felt that it was not a 'real' trade union. One trade union leader said disparagingly: “All types of people are being brought into the Workers' group. Next they will bring in the Hari Krishnas!” However, most of the group accepted the suggestions and expertise of SEWA and other home-based workers' associations.⁹

The Employers fought tooth and nail. They tried to take advantage of the fact that most of the Governments, Employers and Workers did not even know what home-based workers are, and confused them with domestic workers. Lobbying some of the government delegates, we could see them thinking “*Wait a minute, does this mean that I will have to start paying my domestic workers more? I'm really not so sure about this*” But the HomeNet coordinator had come well-prepared to the ILC with mounted photographs of home-based workers at work in different countries in the world, and got permission to exhibit these outside of meeting halls. This was really effective in mitigating the general level of ignorance among delegates about home-based workers.

In the Workers' Group, the hostility from the Employers helped to create some unity between Workers from the formal and informal economy. But the issue that the home-based workers' network could not crack was the inclusion, or even acceptance, of own-account (self-employed) home-based workers to be covered by the Convention. This meant the effective exclusion of nearly all the home-based workers in Africa and Latin America from the provisions of the Convention. The home-based workers' network ended up having to settle for this as a means of “getting a foot in the door” for the time being.

When all else failed for the Employers, in 1996 they decided to boycott the entire discussion in the Committee on Home Work during its second year of work – something unheard of in the ILO, and regarded by many as a veiled attack on the entire institution of tripartism. Fortunately for the home-based workers' network, this ended up not working in the Employers' favour. Word spread that they were using the time the Committee was in session to lobby delegates to abstain during the vote.

This threw Workers and Governments into consternation. They realized that, according to the ILC's election rules, a large number of abstentions would substantially reduce the number of eligible votes, and there was a risk that the number of votes would fall below the quorum (*as only “yes” and “no” votes are counted for the purposes of calculating the quorum*) and the entire election would be disqualified.

The home-based workers' network found itself now going back to governments they had previously persuaded to at least abstain rather than vote “no”, after failing to lobby them to commit to vote “yes” for the Convention. Now they had to change their tune and beg them to vote “no” rather than to abstain, just to protect the level of the quorum and avoid the disqualification of the vote!

⁹ ILO Book Chapter 7 “Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s” by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.184

In spite of opposition from employers, the Committee on Home Work in 1995 voted for a Convention. The intense lobbying by HomeNet members had won enough support from workers and governments. In 1996, more than enough 'yes' votes were garnered to secure Convention No. 177 on Home Work. Home-based workers themselves had taken a step towards their empowerment in the public arena through organizing and engaging at the ILC. They had changed mind-sets and gained recognition as workers.¹⁰

Moving to the next level

SEWA initiated the formation of WIEGO (*Women in Informal Employment: Globalising & Organising*) in 1997, to do research and provide technical support for membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy. SEWA and WIEGO turned their attention to workers in other sectors of the informal economy, starting with street vendors and informal traders. The General Secretary of IUF retired and started work for WIEGO as Director of the ORP (*Organisation & Representation Programme*).

In the trade union movement, unity talks were now in progress with a view to a merger between the WCL and ICFTU. This extended to the sectoral international unions of the ICFTU (ITSs) and the WCL.

Global Union Federations: The new merged structures were re-named GUFs (*Global Union Federations*). There was a growing appreciation in the GUFs about the importance of organizing workers in the informal economy. Hence the WIEGO network of organisations saw the GUFs as strategic allies. This is because some of the main WIEGO organisations were active members of some GUFs. SEWA had a Vice President in the International Textile Garment & Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF) and a member on the Executive Committee of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco, & Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) as well as an affiliate of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy and Mineworkers' Unions (ICEM). SEWU (*Self-Employed Women's Union*) South Africa was an affiliate of Union Network International (UNI) and ITGLWF. Also, some GUFs already had large numbers of informal workers in their sectors. The ITGLWF, for example, was in a sector where there were large numbers of informal garment and leather workers, and IUF had agricultural workers who had become mainly informal.

Unfortunately, in 2001 a misconception had arisen among the GUFs that WIEGO was promoting another GUF (ITS) of informal workers. The impression was created that this would be a parallel structure to the GUFs. In order to counteract this, the Director of WIEGO's ORP arranged a meeting with the General Secretaries of some GUFs with WIEGO. The meeting was chaired by the General Secretary of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and attended by representatives of the International Federation of Building & Woodworkers (IFBWW), Public Services International (PSI), IUF, UNI and ICEM.

- a. The GUFs said that workers should be organised vertically along trade lines and that horizontal organising would undermine them. WIEGO responded with a view that workers get more strength if organised vertically as well as horizontally.
- b. The GUFs were worried that WIEGO was forming a parallel GUF. WIEGO said no – they were making a “platform” in which all those organisations which organised informal workers were welcome to join. WIEGO explained its intention to bring together all organisations in the labour movement which were working with informal workers, preferably under the leadership of the international trade union movement.

¹⁰ ILO Book Chapter 7 “Informal Women Workers Open ILO Doors through Transnational Organizing, 1980s to 2010s” by Chris Bonner, Pat Horn, Renana Jhabvala, p.185

- c. The GUFs said that WIEGO should not represent informal workers. WIEGO responded that it was a network, and as such had no intention of representing informal workers. It was the membership-based organisations within WIEGO which would do the representing.¹¹

Women in the trade unions: The women in the trade union organisations had been the greatest supporters of the issues of informal workers. FNV (*Netherlands*) had been the most consistent supporter. They supported HomeNet International during its formation, and they led the successful Convention on Homeworkers at the ILC in 1995 and 1996. They had been consistently supporting informal workers' organisations in developing countries. At the 2000 ICFTU Congress they led the move to get a resolution on the informal economy passed. Women from the FNV, KAD (*Danish women workers' union*) and AFL-CIO (*USA trade union centre*) had participated in WIEGO activities.

Among WIEGO's main supporters during the ILC were also women trade union leaders. In particular, Committee representatives of the FNV, AFL-CIO and CGIL (*Italian trade union centre*) were strongly supportive. All these senior women leaders spoke in favour of issues raised by WIEGO team members, opposed the ICFTU Secretariat where they deemed necessary and exerted pressure on mandated issues from their trade union leaderships.¹²

Internal debates in WIEGO ORP: There were tactical differences between members of WIEGO ORP, which were being robustly debated. There were those who leant in the direction of moving towards the establishment of an international confederation of membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy. Some of their detractors in the trade union movement were picking this up, and reacting to it as the defining vision of the WIEGO networks. However, this vision was not shared by others who insisted that the membership-based organisations in WIEGO (*at the time being SEWA and StreetNet International*) should independently lead the organizational strategies and engagements with the trade union movement, while WIEGO should stay in its lane as a technical support organization for membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy. The latter position prevailed.

ILO Resolution on Decent Work & Informal Economy 2002

At its meeting in March 2000 the ILO Governing Body had agreed to table the issue of the informal economy on the agenda of the International Labour Conference in 2002. The next Governing Body meeting in November 2000 was to decide whether it should be just a one-year discussion, or a two-year discussion with a view to adopting an instrument such as a Convention and/or a Recommendation.

In April 2000, the ICFTU passed a resolution on the informal economy at its world conference in Durban. The resolution, proposed by FNV (*Netherlands trade union centre*), CUT (*Brazilian trade union centre*), COSATU (*South African trade union centre*) and KCTU (*Korean trade union centre*) proposed the establishment of an Informal Economy Task Force to help ICFTU affiliates take forward the task of organising workers in the informal economy. This Task Force was constituted by the Organising structures of the ICFTU, consisting of representatives from the different regional structures of the ICFTU and some of the national centres, and met for the first time in September 2001 in Brussels, and the second (and final) time in March 2002 in Geneva. By this time it had been decided by the ILO's Governing Body to table a one-year discussion on "Decent Work and the Informal Economy" and the Task Force focused on preparing for that discussion. Representatives of WIEGO's Organisation & Representation Programme (ORP) also attended the meetings of the ICFTU Task Force in order to try to co-ordinate WIEGO's preparations with those of the ICFTU.

¹¹ Unpublished paper by Pat Horn & Renana Jhabvala "The story of the ILC 2002 discussion on Decent Work and the Informal Economy – through informal-economy-tinted spectacles" 2003

¹² Ibid

The Secretariat of the ICFTU Task Force was less than enthusiastic about WIEGO's participation in the process, although many members of the Task Force welcomed the contribution and experience of the WIEGO group. In an ILO Office meeting to determine the format and content of its Report for the General Discussion on "Decent Work and the Informal Economy" the ILO Workers' Bureau (ACTRAV) and the Employers' Bureau (ACTEMP) agreed that there should be no draft resolution prepared by the Office, but rather 6 questions to structure the discussion of the Committee.

Preparing ILO documents (influencing content): When WIEGO came to know that the Informal Economy would be discussed in the ILC, they tried to find out which department of the ILO would be responsible for drafting the Background Report. At first, a Task Force was set up in the ILO Office which was co-ordinated by the Employment Department and which had people from different departments, and some documents were drafted. Later on the main responsibility was given to Lin Lean Lim from the ILO Gender Promotion Programme to co-ordinate the ILO Office input into the ILC discussion.

WIEGO then had meetings with Lin Lean Lim, and were commissioned to do the following:

- a. To pull together from existing official statistics a statistical profile of women and men in the informal economy, including working with Lin on a statistical definition. WIEGO worked closely with the statisticians in the ILO Bureau of Statistics in preparing this document.
- b. To write a paper outlining a policy framework for the informal economy.
- c. To write a paper analysing the links between globalisation and the informal economy.
- d. To write a study on the informal economy in Africa.

The ILO also commissioned many other studies which fed into the final report.

Preparing a statistical profile for the ILO Task Force: Since its establishment in 1997, WIEGO had been pushing for an employment-based, rather than an enterprise-based, definition of the informal economy. Through its on-going collaborations with the ILO Bureau of Statistics and the International Expert Group on the Informal Sector Statistics (known as the Delhi Group) WIEGO had been able to promote improved concepts and measures for the informal economy so defined. In preparing for the ILC's 2002 General Discussion, the ILO Task Force, under Lin's leadership, decided to promote a worker-based definition of the informal economy and commissioned ILO Bureau of Statistics to prepare a statistical framework for such a definition and encouraged WIEGO to apply this definition/framework when compiling and analysing official statistics on women and men in the informal economy.

Regional workshops (getting direction from workers in the informal economy): Regional workshops were one of the main ways in which WIEGO prepared for the ILC. These workshops brought together organisations (mainly membership-based, many trade unions and some NGOs) which had been working in the informal economy. Four regional workshops were held with collaborating institutions. The African workshop, in Lusaka, Zambia, was piggy-backed onto a workshop which had already been planned by WEA (*Workers' Education Association*) of England, WEAZ of Zambia and the International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA). The Asian workshop, in Bangkok, was jointly organised by CAW (*Committee of Asian Women*) and HomeNet Asia. The North American workshop, in Boston, was organised by the Harvard Trade Union Program. The main European workshop, to be organised by the FNV, and the Latin American workshop could not be organised before the ILC, but were organised in 2003. However, a workshop was organised in Europe by IRENE (*Institute for Restructuring Network Europe*) and WIEGO just before the ILC, where a number of European organisations (including the FNV) as well as the ICFTU and some of the organisations from other regions (SEWA, HomeNet Thailand, WEAZ, Ghana TUC) were represented.

Firstly, WIEGO used the workshops to identify representatives and organisers active in the informal economy who could attend the ILC as part of the WIEGO group. Secondly, a larger group of people could be informed about the ILC and the issues to be discussed and could lobby their own Governments and

trade unions. Finally, the workshops were used to identify the issues which were important to the informal workers in the region, with some of the workshops endorsing a platform of issues. The most exciting thing about the workshops was that they revealed how much organising was already going on in the informal economy, much of it within the labour movement. Another notable feature was that the workshops included representatives from the ICFTU as well as national trade unions and membership-based organisations not affiliated to trade unions. This mix blended well together to discuss the issues and actions for informal workers.

Preparing platform of issues: The regional workshops produced a list of issues that affected informal workers in their regions. These issues were put together into an international “Platform of Issues”. The Platform was written so as to get further support (or approval) on it from as wide a group as possible.

The Platform was the main document used by WIEGO during the ILC. It served a number of purposes:

- a. It introduced WIEGO to workers’ organisations and made clear what WIEGO’s positions on the issues were. This was especially necessary in view of misconceptions and negative views in circulation at the ILC about WIEGO.
- b. It served as the basis on which WIEGO made its interventions, spoken and written, into the document being drafted by the Committee.

Attending ICFTU Task Force meetings: ICFTU held two meetings of the Task Force on the Informal Economy before the ILC discussion in 2002. The ORP Director of WIEGO wrote to the ICFTU asking for WIEGO to attend, which was eventually agreed. The WIEGO members present in the first meeting included a representative of ITGLWF, a representative of IUF, and the ORP Director, who was invited to present WIEGO’s approach. There was a very hostile reaction from the Task Force, based on the fear that WIEGO may be building a “new ITS”. Although WIEGO team clearly clarified that this was not so, a strong undercurrent of hostility to WIEGO remained.

This hostility persisted in the second Task Force meeting, where the WIEGO members present included representatives from UNI, ITGLWF as well as the ORP Director. The main discussion in this meeting centred around whether the main discussion at the ILO should be around the definition of the informal economy or whether to go into more substantial issues. Most members of the Task Force felt that we should have more substantial discussions on implementation, whereas the Task Force Secretariat wanted to mainly centre the discussions around the definition. The hostility in this meeting was more covert, and outside the meeting there were rumours that “the NGOs are trying to take over the discussion”.

Getting as many of our team as possible as official country worker reps: Some of the WIEGO group were accredited as part of the official worker delegations by the national trade union centres in their countries. In particular:

Renana Jhabvala – SEWA, India

Rakawin Lee – HomeNet Thailand

Lameck Kashiwa – Zambian National Marketeers’ Association (ZANAMA) accredited by ZCTU

In addition, some of the WIEGO group had been in touch with the other trade union delegations from the regional meetings and through earlier discussions, e.g. – the official delegates from Ghana TUC, CSPIB Benin, Philippines, CGIL Italy, Japan, TUC of UK, AFL-CIO of USA, and Canada. The group kept up discussion with these delegates and worked with their support throughout the Committee’s proceedings.

Getting the rest accredited as NGOs: IUF and IFWEA were very helpful in accrediting the additional non-official delegates as their observers to the ILC. Organisations which were accredited with the ILO were allowed as many observers as they wished to attend. In all, 33 delegates attended through IFWEA, IUF, ITGLWF, UNI and PSI.

Box 1 – during the ILC 2002 (*learning from previous experience in 1995/96*)

Co-ordination of the team at the ILC: The WIEGO team was large (2 people and another 13 allies who were going to be at the ILC anyway, invited to work with the team). The co-ordination of the team was not something which could merely be left to chance. In order to be effective, a group management system had to be devised and adhered to by the whole group. Because the whole group was very committed to the task in hand, there was a high level of co-operation in working according to the agreed systems.

MORNING MEETINGS FOR REPORT-BACK AND STRATEGISING: The official programme of meetings is published in a ILC bulletin. Because of this the busy schedule of the Workers' Group meetings, Committee meetings, informal lobbying meetings which had to be set up during breaks, etc. the WIEGO group gathered every morning at the same place next to the ILC plenary hall at 8 a.m. – one hour before the schedule of daily meetings started at 9 a.m. This was set as a daily fixture, and the group continued to attend these meetings every morning right until the end. This allowed everybody to be filled in on all the developments during the previous day. On very busy days, this was sometimes the only forum where certain people could be brought up to date. This also provided the opportunity to discuss and reassess strategy every day – and to develop new strategies in reaction to developments which were occurring in the daily dynamics. By the end of the process, it was only those participants in the Committee who were involved in very regular strategising with their constituencies or colleagues at the ILC who were able to keep their interventions strategic and effective. The WIEGO group, despite its relative inexperience, was able to keep up because of its strict collective discipline – generally about 25 people attended the meetings every day.

INFLUENCING CONTENT: The objective of participating in the Workers' Group was, firstly, to get the chance to speak – which was not that difficult, as labour NGOs could speak more freely in the Workers' Group meetings, once the Chairperson's permission had been obtained for their attendance. Secondly, and more importantly, the objective was to influence the content of the text of the resolution – and this was not something which necessarily followed from getting a lot of chances to speak. To influence the content of the text, it was necessary to get the support of other members of the Workers' Group (sometimes they had to be lobbied outside of the meeting in advance of a certain issue coming up) especially if the Chairperson, ICFTU advisor and ACTRAV Secretariat were not supporting such issues. Then the WIEGO group had to ensure the right people in the Drafting Committee of 5 workers, 5 employers and 5 government representatives – which would prepare the text for discussion. The final chance to influence the text came when the Drafting Committee had completed its work and the Committee opened discussion on amendments to the text, which could be put forward by the Workers' Group, the Employers' Group, or individual governments. The WIEGO group drafted amendments and first put them to the Workers' Group. Some of those not taken up by the Workers' Group were put forward by some of the governments.

LOBBYING TRADE UNIONS AND GOVERNMENTS: In the ILC Committees it can normally be assumed that the Employers' Group will adopt the opposite position to the Workers' Group on most issues. Both these groups vote as groups, and are equal in size. Therefore, in order to win any point or issue, it is crucial to get the support of as many governments as possible, as they vote separately and are free to take independent positions. The government blocs are formed on a voluntary basis, and can be flexible – some more binding than others. It is therefore critical, in each ILC Committee, to find out how the governments are constituting themselves in that ILC, before working out how best to lobby them – to work out which can be lobbied in blocs (in which case, which are the influential governments in the bloc to target) and which have to be individually lobbied. Relationships have to be built early with sympathetic governments, and they have to be nursed throughout the three-week process to ensure that another more powerful lobby does not intervene and persuade that government to take another direction – or at least if it does, it is important to be aware that this is no longer a reliable ally, and to readjust strategy accordingly. Another important factor in lobbying governments is to be able to back up positions with reliable information and statistics. The WIEGO group was strongly prepared in this regard, and was successful in lobbying many of the governments of developing countries.

It is also important to understand the current politics in any country when lobbying their government. Conservative governments are less easily lobbied on social issues than Social Democratic or Labour governments as a general rule – but there are also all kinds of specifics which can either work in favour or against the specific issue around which the lobbying is taking place. Without understanding such dynamics, lobbying attempts can prove completely futile.

Keeping relationship and co-ordination with ILO Office before and during the ILC: Prior to the ILC, WIEGO held regular meetings with the ILO Office about the preparation of materials. During the ILC, regular contact was still maintained with the Office while they prepared the text of the Conclusions.

Materials: WIEGO brought piles of materials, such as statistics in popular booklet form, and the Platform of Issues, to make available to governments and other members of the Committee. HomeNet, StreetNet and the other organisations brought organisational information and newsletters for distribution to publicise their organising work in the informal economy. Permission had to be obtained to display this material on a table outside the Committee meeting room throughout the three weeks of the ILC, which was granted through the ILO Office.

Getting good people onto the drafting committee (influencing the text content): The WIEGO group selected two people for the Drafting Committee (one with extensive organising and policy formulating experience, and the other with substantial legal expertise). Then other members of the Workers Group had to be lobbied to support these two candidates, which was successfully accomplished – after a fight.

Key Issue – Definition of the Informal Economy: The ILO Office had worked closely with WIEGO to come to a broad definition, moving from informal “sector” to informal “economy” and “informal employment”. Throughout the conference, it very clearly emerged that there was unanimous support for a move away from the term “informal sector”. This broke down the dualism of dividing the economy into the formal and informal. Because of this agreement, the term “informal economy” was finally accepted without much problem, as all groups were keen to move onto the main discussions. The general consensus was reflected by a number of Government members, who

‘urged the Committee not to have an exhaustive discussion on definitions, but rather to devote time to the subsequent, more action oriented points. Clear cut definitions were difficult as the situation and problems differed among countries, however the term “informal economy” was accepted as preferable to “informal sector” because the people and activities involved cut across different sectors of the informal economy’¹³

Key Issue – Own-account Workers as Workers: The WIEGO group raised the issue of the status of own-account workers: that is, those who do not hire others to work for them. They insisted own-account workers should be included as workers and so covered by the resolution. The Workers’ Group supported this. The Employers’ Group however had a different position. They too wanted the own-account to be covered by the resolution, but they wanted them to be categorised as entrepreneurs.

There was consensus in the Workers’ Group to put all its weight behind getting their position into the text. It was first introduced in the drafting committee, and resisted by the employers in the drafting committee. As there was no consensus and the Government representatives in the drafting committee did not support either position, it was dropped from the text.

The Workers’ Group then introduced it as an amendment.

“The amendment generating the most controversy was that posed by the Workers’ Group, prepared by the Coalition and introduced in the Workers’ Group by Renana Jhabvala, on the inclusion of ‘own account’ workers under Point 1 (Paragraph 4). In this instance, after extensive lobbying efforts on the part of the Coalition drawing on the expertise of representatives from workers organisations of petty traders (e.g. street vendors etc.) the Workers Group proposed that the following paragraph be added to the text to make clear the nature of own account work and to ensure that these own account workers are brought into the mainstream: “Workers in the informal economy include both wage workers and own account workers. Most own account workers are as insecure and vulnerable as wage workers and move from one situation to the other. Because they lack protection, rights and representation, these workers often remain trapped in poverty.”¹⁴

¹³ See Provisional Record 25 Para 50, 25/15

¹⁴ International Labour Conference (2002b). *Report of the Committee on the Informal Economy*. Sixth item of the agenda: the informal economy (general discussion) Provisional Record. 25: p.41, par. 172

This amendment ended up going to the vote – and won! Thus for the first time ever, the category of own-account workers was defined in a political resolution of the ILO.

Unresolved Key Issue – Recognising and legitimising membership-based organisations:

“In the Workers’ Group, despite the lobbying efforts of the Coalition, a consensus was never reached on whether the Workers’ Group should support and/or call for the inclusion of ‘democratic membership-based workers’ organisations’ in the portion of the text calling on the ILO to provide technical assistance and to ensure freedom of association. The Workers’ Group was divided among those largely (but not exclusively) trade unionists concerned that the inclusion of such language would undermine tripartism, and thereby dilute organised labour’s strength at the ILO, and those trade unionists and representatives of organisations of informal economy workers arguing that the inclusion of this language is essential to supporting organising in the informal economy.”¹⁵

Clarifying position on representation at Committee plenary: It was of utmost importance to clarify that WIEGO was not seeking representation as part of a fourth social partner of NGOs. Because the new Director General (DG) of the ILO, Juan Somavia, had been investigating such a possibility, it was feared by trade unions that WIEGO may be his instrument for introducing such changes into the ILC. But in fact, WIEGO’s position was that membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy should be an integral part of the Workers’ Group at the ILC, and in discussions on matters affecting them, should take the lead in determining the outcome. It was clear that convincing trade unions and GUFs of WIEGO’s actual position on this would greatly facilitate the establishment of co-operation and alliances with them.

Building alliances within the Workers’ Group: It was essential for the WIEGO group to maximise and strengthen its alliances within the Workers’ Group, and to make it difficult for anybody hostile to or confused about WIEGO or its aims and objectives to convincingly misrepresent these.

Meeting ICFTU General Secretary: A sympathetic senior ICFTU official advised that one way to reduce unfounded suspicion about WIEGO’s motives would be to request a meeting with top leadership of the ICFTU and present WIEGO’s organisational agenda to the ICFTU. This should not necessarily be with the purpose of seeking agreement, but rather to be completely transparent and express WIEGO’s willingness to work with the ICFTU based on a clear and honest understanding of one another’s aims and objectives.

Accordingly in June 2002, after meeting the General Secretaries of the GUFs, a group from WIEGO met Bill Jordan, then General Secretary of the ICFTU. They explained WIEGO to him and said that they wanted to work closely with the ICFTU to get a good result of an informal economy discussion scheduled for the 2002 ILC. The General Secretary said he knew very little about the informal economy, but that the ICFTU was very committed to the organisation of its workers. However, he dwelt on his frustrations with NGOs and publicity-seeking protesters who are taken more seriously by the media than trade unions representing millions of workers, which have for years been organising around the same social issues. (He was particularly irritated by an anti-WTO protester who had gained much publicity by threatening to nail his ear to a tree!) Although WIEGO tried to explain more about informal workers and the need to organise them, and the fact that they believed in membership based organisations and had many in their midst, he appeared to continue to equate WIEGO with the publicity-seeking NGOs. Also he seemed to have very little interest in informal workers. However, he did agree that there should be some co-ordination between ICFTU and WIEGO, but did not specify what kind of co-ordination.

¹⁵ Leah Vosko paper

After Bill Jordan left his position, WIEGO made a point of meeting his successor, Guy Ryder, who showed considerably more interest and pledged the intention of the ICFTU to work in cooperation with WIEGO on the organisation of workers in the informal economy.¹⁶

Trying to keep active support of ACTRAV: WIEGO had been meeting with different people in ACTRAV ever since 1999, but ACTRAV presented rather a divided front. A lot of support was forthcoming from some ACTRAV representatives – but not all of them. As a result, the strategy of keeping ACTRAV fully on board all the time, although it was given full attention, was not altogether successful.

Lobbying developing country governments: The Indian and Thai governments were extremely responsive to substantial suggestions for practical programmes, and interacted well through their worker representatives on this Committee, who were part of the WIEGO group. The African governments worked as a bloc under the leadership of the Kenyan government representative – and they were also very genuinely concerned to achieve strongly action-oriented Conclusions, and were willing to put forward amendments incorporating such proposals.

Box 2 – unexpected final bonus due to geopolitical dynamics

International trade resolution: The Argentinian government had submitted a draft resolution to the ILC about the unequal access to world markets by developing countries compared to the USA and European countries whose farmers enjoyed massive agricultural subsidies. The ILO Governing Body, in trying to decide on which committee of the ILC to dump this out-of-place resolution for processing, decided on the Committee on Decent Work and the Informal Economy. The Committee had accordingly been instructed to deal with the resolution before completing its work – and decided to do so after completing the text on Decent Work and the Informal Economy.

However, the Argentinian government and its Latin American allies, presumably in their determination to ensure that the issue should not get lost, had then tabled a number of amendments to the text on Decent Work and the Informal Economy to introduce the issues of globalisation and inequality in access to world trade into the Committee's text Conclusions. Judging by their amendments, they were less interested in the informal economy and more interested in issues of world trade.

As the last day of the Committee discussion was drawing to a close, and the deliberations on the Resolution continued to drag on, the Argentinian government ran out of patience.

Finally the first of the amendments on world trade came up in the Committee. The Argentinian and other Latin American governments dug their heels in and refused to withdraw the amendment or make any compromises. They insisted on a vote being taken – an extreme step after both the Workers and Employers group spokespersons had not supported the amendment. The vote split the Workers group, as some Latin American worker representatives voted with their governments and against the Workers Group, and other worker representatives who could not bear to vote against an anti-globalisation amendment left the room in order to avoid voting against their consciences. By ILC standards, it was extremely dramatic. The vote was lost.

The next amendment was very similar, and the Argentinian government threw down the gauntlet and indicated that they would again go for a vote – despite having lost the previous vote. This caused great panic, particularly in the Secretariat of the Workers Group. An unholy alliance which had been built between the Workers and Employers groups Secretariats up to this point was seriously threatened by the unexpected timing of this challenge from the Latin American governments. The Workers Group had adopted the position that the Argentinian resolution did not belong in this particular committee, and had neither decided to oppose nor to support it. The governments of the USA and Europe were lined up to oppose it, and had lobbied extensively against it. However, there was a real danger that the other dissatisfied Third World governments would team up with the Latin American governments and support them on this issue now that it was unexpectedly dominating the discussion.

¹⁶ Ibid

The only way to get rid of this issue from the text of the Conclusions on Decent Work and the Informal Economy was to appease some of the other governments by offering to accept their outstanding amendments about the informal economy – after all, the real issue under discussion in the Committee.

The proceedings came to a standstill as advisors and representatives rushed around the room, abandoning the normally super-strict tripartite seating arrangements as they did so, seeking possible solutions to the *impasse*. Finally the members of the WIEGO group who had been lobbying the African governments were now begged by the Workers Group Secretariat to approach these governments and offer support from the Workers group as a whole for their remaining amendments – including the significant and substantial ones detailing ILO programmes which until that moment had looked like they were going to be forfeited due to lack of time and strong enough support – in order to finalise the text before any further unexpected interventions could emerge. One African government mistakenly withdrew their outstanding amendment due to a misunderstanding as to what had just been agreed, and the Workers Group hurriedly re-tabled the amendment in an amazing turnaround from the morning's alliance with the employers which had left the governments out in the cold. The final result of this unexpected turn of events was that the WIEGO group found that all the important ILO programmes for which it had been fighting, were included in the final text.

Thus ended the ILC in which organized workers in the informal economy turned the corner from relative oblivion to recognition, with an officially adopted resolution clause distinguishing own account workers from the entrepreneurial class of self-employed, and clear mandate to the ILO Office to work on decent work in the informal economy.

Moving to the next level, building on the membership base

StreetNet International and SEWA sprang into action to strengthen the working relationship between the membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy with the international trade union movement by means of an international conference where these two working class constituencies would meet face-to-face and exchange information and organizing experience.

ICC on Organising in Informal Economy 2003 – 2010

In December 2003, a conference was convened in Ahmedabad, India by the International Organizing Committee (ICC) comprising the following, which had been brought together by SEWA and StreetNet:

- SEWA India
- StreetNet International
- HomeNet Thailand
- Nigeria Labour Congress
- Trades Union Congress (TUC) of Ghana

At this conference, 60 participants from over 36 organisations from 15 countries, mainly membership-based worker organisations (both mainstream trade unions and specifically informal economy organisations – see *Annexure 1*) gathered together to discuss their work and strategise on ways of promoting the organisation and more effective representation of workers in the informal economy world-wide. At the end, a resolution was adopted giving the organizing committee the mandate to continue coordinating these efforts based on agreed activities, including participation in the ILC discussion on Migrant Workers in 2004 and organizing an international meeting of trade unions there:

“The conference asks the present International Organizing Committee to continue to act as the coordinating committee to take forward the plan of action adopted here, and to include representation from the Americas and Europe.”

CROC (*Confederación Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos*) of Mexico was accordingly added to the ICC from this point onwards. StreetNet International was assigned to take on the role of Secretariat of

the ICC. A follow-up conference was planned, aiming to bring in more organisations and from more countries, to further consolidate the work being done in organising workers in the informal economy and to further extend the alliances and partnerships in force between different kinds of trade unions and other workers' organisations in this field of organising. It was agreed that the next conference would be more issue-based, focussing on:

- Trade issues
- Organisational strategies
- Social protection
- Laws and policies
- Collective bargaining
- Workers' education manual

In 2004, StreetNet International was officially accredited by ILO as an official observer at the ILC. This further strengthened the ICC's standing as it began to carry out its mandate at ILC 2004:

- a. A delegation of representatives of workers in the informal economy which included SEWA, StreetNet and its affiliates from Zambia and Korea participated, supported by WIEGO and GLI (*Global Labour Institute*) and in collaboration with the official delegates of the Ghana TUC, in the General Discussion on Migrant Workers at the ILC 2004 in Geneva.
- b. ICC convened an international meeting of trade unions – inviting ALL the trade unionists attending the ILC – to discuss organizing in the informal economy. 55 participants attended (*see Annexure 2*)
- c. ICC members held several meetings with ILO officials, leading to agreement for a joint ICC-ILO workshop (suggested by Deputy ILO Director responsible for Social Protection, Assane Diop) on organizing in the informal economy and with a social protection focus, to be held in Senegal.

In October 2005, a high-level African regional ICC-ILO workshop on “Combining our Efforts: Organising for Decent Work in the Informal Economy: The Way out of Poverty” was convened in Dakar, Senegal. The workshop was planned as a joint ICC-ILO effort and aimed to bring together those unions/worker organizations organizing informal workers in the African region to exchange experiences, identify issues and develop organizing strategies, with a special focus on social protection for informal workers.

Objectives (agreed mutually by ICC and ILO) of this regional workshop:

- to better understand the lack, gaps and needs of social protection for the workers in the informal economy;
- to develop strategies to intensify organization of workers in the informal economy;
- to discuss the role of workers organizations to improve social protection in the informal economy;
- to discuss future co-ordination between organizations of workers in the informal economy, and develop mechanisms for such coordination;
- to build links between Anglophone and Francophone African countries in order to maximise the sharing of experiences and organizing traditions between them in organising the informal economy;
- to identify existing and new partnerships and alliances;
- to collect inputs for the organisers' manual which was being prepared as an ICC project;
- regional preparation for the next international conference to be convened by the ICC in Ghana .

The participants were selected by the ILO Governing Body, which proved to be somewhat of a challenge. So they were mainly from national union federations, with a mix of those affiliated to ICFTU and WCL. The majority were from Francophone West Africa: Senegal, Niger, Mali, Guinea, DRC, Benin, Burkina Faso. English speaking union participants were from Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia. Guest speakers Mirai Chatterjee from SEWA, India, and Rakawin Lee from HomeNet Thailand were selected by the ICC for international perspectives on social protection for workers in the informal economy.

This high-level workshop did however have the effect of linking the ICC up with an ongoing ILO Project on organizing in the informal economy being conducted across four countries – Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Senegal. As a result it was reported that in Niger there were now 5 trade unions of informal workers and a confederation of informal economy workers in which 3 federations were represented; in Senegal, 3 federations had people responsible for informal workers; in Burkina Faso there were 70 000 members in 5 unions of informal workers.

Prior to the workshop a set of questions had been sent out to all the participating organizations, which provided an interesting overview of what was happening across Africa. 20 unions/federations reported that they had set up bodies /structures for organizing informal workers; the 3 largest informal “sectors” being trade, transport and agriculture.

Conclusions of the workshop and final recommendations to trade unions:

- More than 80% of workers are in the informal economy, so Unions have a duty to organize them under their mandate of worker solidarity;
- The needs of workers in the informal economy provide an opportunity for development of trade unions in their work sectors;
- Civil society organizations have already begun to organize. Unions need to amplify what is being done by others – not oppose it;
- Organizing is a must – with or without unions;
- Unions have experience in organizing but not in the informal economy. They should use their formal economy experience and adapt for informal economy;
- Unions need new methods, strategies and attitudes;
- Unions/federations need a special committee, department or desk;
- Unions need to define their role in organizing informal workers – collective bargaining, social dialogue, knowledge of labour law, social protection methods;
- Unions/federations should play an active role in advocacy and information with governments, parliaments – national, local and provincial.

In 2006 there were many developments. SEWA was officially recognized as a trade union and accepted as an affiliate of ICFTU, automatically becoming a founding affiliate of ITUC at the end of 2006. At the ILC 2006, the ICC convened a second international meeting of trade unions to report back on ICC activities. Funds were secured by the ICC for the production of a manual during 2007 as an organizing guide (*which is still to this day being widely used in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian, and has been further translated into some other country-specific languages*)¹⁷ to be used by organizers organizing workers in the informal economy.

The second ICC Conference on Organising Workers in the Informal Economy was convened in September 2006 in Accra, Ghana, attended by 65 participants from 44 membership-based worker organisations in 15 countries, and 11 GUFs and support organisations (*see Annexure 3*). This conference developed detailed recommendations on – Organising Strategies, Collective Bargaining & Representation, Social Protection, Skills Development & Employment Creation, Laws & Policies – and produced a detailed strategy for engagement with the ITUC at its launch in Vienna from 1-3 November 2006. The ICC conference resolved to jointly advocate for the new international trade union confederation to address the organization of workers in the informal economy in the following ways:

- establishment of an ITUC Department for the informal economy;
- informal economy workers’ issues to be included as a priority area in all plans and programmes of the new confederation, such as Specific Action Plans and research programmes.

¹⁷ Under “Organising in the Informal Economy” on <https://www.wiego.org/worker-education-advocacy-materials>

The following participating organisations in the ICC's Accra conference attended the launching congress of the new TU confederation, either as founding affiliates or as invited guests: Afro-ICFTU, DOAWTU-WCL, OATUU, CNTS Senegal, CROC Mexico, Ghana TUC, FNOTNA-CROC, FNV Netherlands, Hong Kong CTU, IFWEA, SEWA India, StreetNet International, TUC of UK, UNTM Mali, UNSTB Benin, USTN Niger.

The next follow-up ICC conference was planned for 2009 in Mexico.

Starting to transition beyond the ICC

From this point onwards, the ICC on Organizing Workers in the Informal Economy started *de facto* to disband itself, long before there was a unanimous consensus to disband it – as it began to dawn on its constituent parts at different moments that its basic mindset-change task was largely accomplished. The organizing environment in the international trade union movement had started to change. Earlier hostility from trade unions to organized workers in the informal economy was now much diminished. Membership-based worker organisations in the informal economy were now more widely recognized both at national and international levels. The ILO Workers' Group now routinely welcomed membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy in annual ILCs, *albeit* sometimes with a bit of grumbling from some of its constituents who were still struggling to adjust.

Nevertheless, there was a predictable reluctance to formally agree on the disbandment of the ICC. So for the next three years, the Secretariat of the ICC continued to try to hold things together with poorer coordination and much more uneven participation from its constituent organisations.

In 2007, WIEGO was officially accredited by ILO as an official observer at the ILC. In March of that year during a IUF Congress, SEWA initiated a meeting on behalf of ICC with Sharan Burrows, ITUC General Secretary. SEWA's General Secretary Jyoti Macwan was accompanied by WIEGO ORP representatives. Sharan suggested that the ICC might form the basis of a group working on the issue of organizing workers in the informal economy, and that we might think of signing a memo of agreement that would include ITUC, ICC and WIEGO. However, there was no follow up.

The SEWA General Secretary then wrote an open letter to all ITUC affiliates after attending an ILO tripartite symposium on the informal economy in November 2007, proposing a meeting with the ILO Workers' Group and the establishment of an ITUC Desk on the informal economy. In response, a small seminar was convened in Brussels, where it was decided to create a joint Secretariat and action plan on the informal economy.

In June 2008, the ICC again used the opportunity of the ILC 2008 to convene an international meeting of trade unions, inviting all the trade unionists attending the ILC, to update them on the state of organization of workers in the informal economy since the last meeting in June 2006. The level of interest by trade unions remained strong – and 58 participants from 30 countries and 9 international organisations attended. A first draft of the ICC manual on organising workers in the informal economy (in 6 parts) had been produced and circulated to about 50 trade unions and informal economy organisations for piloting in English, French and Portuguese – copies were available at the meeting – and the Spanish version had just been produced.

By this time, the purpose of convening a third ICC conference in Mexico in 2009 was becoming less and less clear – and changes in the Mexican visa dispensation were threatening its viability, so Nicaragua started to be looked at as an alternative. The meeting discussed the possibility of disbanding the ICC – but it was finally agreed that the ICC should continue its work at least until the proposed ITUC structure on the informal economy had been set up and started to function properly.

By this time the reach which had been achieved in the trade union environment was vastly extended. See the combined register of participants who attended the 2006 and 2008 meetings convened by the ICC (*Annexure 4*) for an indication of the reach which had been achieved by this time.

ICC and WIEGO ORP also met to discuss the role and future of ICC under the circumstances – and agreed to shift strategy, with SEWA taking a leading role now that they were a well-established affiliate of ITUC. Issues of capacity were raised, which were addressed by SEWA hiring an international liaison officer in Geneva – to liaise with GUFs, ILO and represent SEWA. A recently-retired member of the GUF Union Network International (UNI) living in Geneva, Monique Marti, was appointed to this position.

In June 2009 the ICC met in Geneva, and agreed to continue until after the first ITUC Congress in 2010. The agreed strategy was for ITUC affiliates in ICC to lead advocacy processes on organizing workers in the informal economy inside ITUC, i.e. SEWA, Ghana TUC, CROC. It was further agreed that they would jointly prepare and submit a resolution on the setting up of a desk/platform on organizing workers in the informal economy within ITUC.

In effect, however, an easier level of broader cooperation had gradually developed at regional level which enabled all the organisations of the ICC, and also WIEGO ORP, to work together with ITUC regional structures in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Also, ITUC strongly supported the domestic workers in their struggle for a Convention, cooperating with IDWN (*International Domestic Workers Network*) and IUF internationally and in regions. A large IDWN delegation of domestic worker representatives attended the ILC 2009 in order to learn the ropes in preparation for a scheduled two-year discussion (2010 and 2011) on Decent work for Domestic Workers with a view to the adoption of a comprehensive standard (a Convention supplemented by a Recommendation). For their practice-run, the IDWN delegation participated – with full support of the trade union movement – in the first discussion of the Committee elaborating a Recommendation on HIV-AIDS in the World of Work.

In 2010 at the ITUC Congress, SEWA supported by Ghana TUC and CROC Mexico submitted a Congress resolution on organizing in the informal economy as agreed. But the resolution was not tabled in the Congress. Instead, reference to organizing in the informal economy was contained in the general Congress Organizing Resolution and Action Plan. A subsequent meeting of the WIEGO ORP Advisory Committee in October 2010 acknowledged the *de facto* disbandment of the ICC, noting that SEWA had been mandated to run the ICC after 2006 but this had not been effective. “We should not try and revive this committee, but utilize Monique and funds raised to promote the new strategy”¹⁸.

At the ILC 2011, the second discussion on Decent work for Domestic Workers resulted in the adoption of an ILO Convention on Domestic Workers. Many breaks with the normal turgid protocols of the ILC were tolerated as the whole international trade union movement rejoiced with the delegation of IDWN who had fought so hard for the Convention, with colourful banners unfurled inside the meeting halls, etc.

A final international meeting of trade unions to report back on organization of workers in the informal economy was convened at ILC 2011 by Monique Marti for SEWA and Ghana TUC with WIEGO support, chaired by Alison Tate (ITUC Director of External Relations) – see *List of Participants (Annexure 5)*.

By this time, a fairly robust and sustained bottom-up relationship of working class solidarity had been forged between organized workers in the informal economy and the trade union movement. The significance of this achievement was a bit ignored, however, as the collective attention of WIEGO ORP moved into a phase of trying to more strongly influence the ITUC’s policies and institutional mechanisms for organizing workers in the informal economy – and this did not progress very well. Nevertheless, as

¹⁸ Minutes of ORP meeting in October 2010.

the ICC's organisations each continued to work in their own spaces, some of them (such as StreetNet) were able to broaden their working relationships with trade unions not only in ITUC and its GUFs, but also in WFTU – which opened doors to new spaces of international worker solidarity.

In March 2013 the Governing Body of the ILO took a decision to place an item on the agenda of the 103rd and 104th sessions of the International Labour Conference in 2014 and 2015 for the discussion of an instrument on transitions from the informal to the formal economy based on the framework of the 2002 ILO Resolution on Decent Work & the Informal Economy. This was a much more complicated discussion than the one on decent work for domestic workers, as this one had to include a major focus on workers outside of employment relationships, including own-account workers. Nevertheless, the preceding years of groundwork in this terrain equipped WIEGO, StreetNet and the other sectoral networks of organisations of informal workers to spring into action and prepare to participate in this discussion from within the ILO Workers' Group, where they were now well accepted not only as participants but as the most representative group of experts in the topic under discussion, to secure the strongest possible ILO instrument in support of all workers in the informal economy.

By this time, indeed, the ground was already well-laid – and regional preparatory workshops of organisations of workers in the informal economy were held on different continents in 2013 to collect the demands of workers in different sectors of workers in the informal economy for “the formalisation we want”. They also identified the types of “formalisation we don't want”. These were collected and compiled into a Platform on Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy in the Interest of Workers in the Informal Economy.¹⁹

In June 2015 the ILO's Recommendation 204 was adopted with overwhelming support in the ILC plenary.

This is not the end of the story, because the story continues to unfold.

This is a milestone reached in the strategic struggles of organised workers in the informal economy which were waged to open doors to the attainment of international worker solidarity, lest we forget.

What did it take to make change happen?

Looking back, what were the key factors which really brought about the success of the efforts to build working class solidarity between organized workers in the informal economy and the trade union movement – despite the inevitable tensions which surface between them from time to time?

Worker control

What trade unions have in common with membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy is that they are also membership-based organisations of workers. Working class solidarity, whether it be solidarity between work sectors, or between workers in the formal and informal economy, is based on a relationship between worker-controlled organisations in those respective categories. It is not an affinity based on ideas or issues alone, but on the common working-class identity of struggling for various labour rights against the class on whom they are economically dependent for their income – whether that class is represented by an employer or by another authority on whom they are economically dependent in earning their livelihood.

The deep suspicion of issue-based NGOs harboured by many trade unionists, even while they will also build tactical alliances with NGOs who have much-needed technical expertise in areas which are important for their working class constituencies, is founded on a fear of getting trapped in the hidden

¹⁹ <https://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/WIEGO-Platform-ILO-2014.pdf>

agendas of those who sponsor such NGOs. It is this deep suspicion which lay at the base of much of the hostility which confronted the early organisations of workers in the informal economy who were dismissed as NGOs of the poor and not recognised as workers' unions by many who had not gone to the ground to see their work or the level of worker control in their organizations.

But it was precisely the membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy who were ultimately able to find resonance with the democratic trade union movement – particularly those whose founders had originated in trade unions themselves (like Ela Bhatt, founder of SEWA). The organisations which made up the ICC were either established trade unions who had developed new ways of organizing workers in the informal economy, or membership-based workers' organisations established by trade unionists for organizing workers in the informal economy. (They would not have succeeded if they had just been a group of issue-based NGOs with a lot of technical knowledge about the informal economy.) This was the key to their success.

New organizing strategies in practice

The membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy were using new organising strategies which are more appropriate for workers in the informal economy, documenting and sharing them with trade unionists who were trying to branch out to organize workers in the informal economy. This also meant identifying new negotiating partners (e.g. municipalities in the case of street vendors, rather than employers) and new collective bargaining strategies and demands.

Women leadership: overcoming the traditional male bias in formal sector trade unions in order to have significant leadership by women (who are in the majority, especially in the lowest income-earning work in most sectors) in the informal economy. SEWA provided a powerful example, and showed the way.

Learning from those doing it already: by means of exchange visits or other engagement, unions started to learn from the experiences of those who are already organising in the informal economy, avoid some of the mistakes and replicate the more successful strategies – rather than re-invent the wheel. There were many different models operating in different countries – so sometimes a combination of different models could be applied where no single one fitted exactly.

Organising workers in the informal economy as workers and as equals: because of the greater marginalisation of workers in the informal economy, their often lower levels of formal education, there is sometimes a tendency for formal workers to want to do things on their behalf instead of organising for them to represent themselves and set their own organisational agenda. Formal workers needed to be made conscious to avoid this (*albeit* unintentional) patronizing tendency – and to remember the struggles they themselves previously had to wage to represent themselves instead of being represented by others. Hence the popularity of the battle-cry “**Nothing For Us Without Us!!!**”

South-North geopolitics – Another World is Possible!

In 2003 StreetNet International had discovered the space provided by the World Social Forum (WSF) initially in Porto Alegre in Brazil – organising under the slogan “Another World is Possible!” – and used it to bring street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers to the WSF to engage with other trade union and civil society organizations. To strengthen its alliances in international civil society, StreetNet joined the Decent Work for Decent Life campaign of the ITUC. StreetNet and SEWA also agreed to engage in the Labour & Globalisation (L&G) Network after being approached by some of the more militant trade unions at WSF2007 in Nairobi – which was initiated as a space for trade unions, social movements and other social actors to discuss impacts of globalization on labour and to ensure that the issue of labour would be more visibly and broadly addressed at the next World Social Fora.

Agreed principles:

1. The L&G Network aimed to establish equal relationships between organizations of the south and the north, and to actively work against traditional patterns of northern dominance by having sufficient representation from labour organizations of the south at the international meetings.
2. The L&G Network worked in tandem with the international trade union movement.
3. This was a space where emerging informal workers' organizations could strengthen the relationships between themselves, the mainstream labour movement and social movements in linking labour and livelihood issues with other issues of social and environmental sustainability.

The L&G Network proposed a plan of convergence around the global financial and economic crisis to many organizations and networks in global movements interested in a common space of analysis, discussion and, where possible, of intervention. In particular, it was intended to ensure that informal workers, who have historically been marginalized from global processes, would now be able to participate in these processes and directly make meaningful interventions regarding the ways in which they are affected by globalization. As a result, this was intended to be a space where informal workers' organizations could potentially strengthen the relationships between themselves, the mainstream labour movement and social movements in linking labour and livelihood issues with other issues of social and environmental sustainability. To this end, informal workers' organizations SEWA (India) and StreetNet International were invited to be part of the L&G Network in order to ensure that issues of new forms of organizing workers are prominent on the agenda.

The L&G Network held its first international meeting after the Nairobi WSF2007, at WSF2009 in Belem, Brazil, 27 – 31 January 2009. The objectives of the first international meeting were:

1. To jointly discuss in more depth how globalization is shaping labor relations, including a joint analysis on key policy fields that are of particular relevance;
2. To offer a space for sharing experiences of struggles for labor rights in different regions;
3. To offer a space for trade unions and social movements and other social actors to build new relationships;
4. To develop relationships of North-South solidarity based on functional equality rather than financial dependence;
5. To identify a platform of issues around which such international solidarity can be developed through international campaigns;
6. To discuss the development of the network itself (what working program, what tools to work together etc.)

CUT Brazil was chair of the CMS (*Coordenação de Movimentos Sociais*) consisting of Brazilian trade unions as well as social movements who usually co-operated in hosting international civil society events in Brazil, including the WSF. As host organisation for WSF 2009, CUT solicited inputs from the Labour & Globalisation Forum. To further strengthen the active participation of labour organizations from the South to create a well-balanced North-South solidarity, StreetNet International convened meetings and teleconference consultations in advance with the following:

- SEWA (*India*) September 2008 in Kathmandu
- GEFONT (*Nepal*) September 2008 in Kathmandu
- COSATU (*South Africa*) – December 2008 in Johannesburg
- Ghana Trades Union Congress – by teleconference Dec08/Jan09
- Nigeria Labour Congress – by teleconference Dec08/Jan09

The following possible areas for joint North-South solidarity action emerged from the meetings:

1. Rights of migrant workers – formal and informal;
2. Effects of world trade and bilateral agreements (e.g. between European Union and selected

- countries of the South, e.g. Brazil, India, South Africa) labour standards and livelihoods of workers (formal and informal);
3. Environmental sustainability, ecological crisis and the economy;
 4. Transnational decentralizations and workers' conflicts;
 5. Monetary and financial crisis;
 6. Chinese workers movement and Chinese investment in developing countries.

The European L&G Network were now very committed to meeting with a significant presence of unions from the South, and looked for funds to cover travel costs to Belem for unions of the South who wanted to attend. GEFONT agreed to discuss this within their organisation with a view to selecting participants to attend WSF 2009. Already GEFONT had been developing their solidarity with SEWA regarding strategies of organising workers in the informal economy, and wanted to develop solidarity interactions with African and Latin American countries. It was anticipated that the following Latin American trade union organisations could also be brought in (*as they had attended previous World Social Forums*) among others:

- CTA Argentina
- CROC Mexico
- CUT Brazil (*who would also be hosting*)
- FNT Nicaragua (*to which StreetNet affiliate CTCP-FNT was affiliated*)

There were also overlapping platforms of militant South-South trade union and worker solidarity (such as (i) the militant tripartite partnership of COSATU / CUT Brazil / KCTU Korean Confederation of TUs – and (ii) SIGTUR (*Southern Initiative on Globalisation & Trade Union Rights*) – which aimed to “provide visibility for the trade unions of the South that are actively gaining ground in their local spheres, and that remain secondary players in the international trade union sphere”²⁰). They were all open to working with membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy.

The proactive initiatives of trade unions from the Global South combined with those of membership-based organisations of workers in the informal economy (*also mainly based in the Global South*) enabled them to take a lead in giving collective direction in confronting the challenges of globalisation for workers. Globalisation had led to continuing changes in labour markets internationally. Traditional wage labour had already given way to a number of forms of “a-typical”, precarious, vulnerable and other informalised labour. The informalised labour force works under conditions which resemble those of the more traditional types of informal work, such as petty commodity trading and production.²¹ So it was becoming incumbent upon the labour movement to incorporate the changing nature of the working class as a consequence of these changes in the global labour markets, in class struggles. It started to become clear to the labour movement that informal workers could not be dismissed simply as members of the *lumpen-proletariat*. This would have disastrous implications for the future of class struggle as the global labour force continues to become increasingly “a-typical” – and in countries such as India (where 92% of the labour force is in the informal economy) and more than half of the countries on the African continent, it would imply that class struggle is not a feasible possibility.

Thus the international trade union movement had little option but to accept workers in the informal economy as part of the changing global labour market and therefore an integral part of the wider

²⁰ Bruno Dobrusin (2014) “South-South labour internationalism: SIGTUR and the challenges to the status quo” in *Working USA: The Journal of Labour & Society* – 1089-7011 – vol.17

²¹ See description of different kinds of work in the informal economy in “Conclusions on Decent Work and the Informal Economy” adopted at the 92nd session of the International Labour Conference of the ILO in June 2002 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/pr-25res.pdf>

working class. This meant shifting away from the industrial paradigm on which the dominance of the Global North in the formal sector trade union movement is based. And abandoning the trite view of workers in the informal economy merely as the marginalized poor or the *lumpen-proletariat*, and treating them at best as “welfare cases” and victims of the capitalist neo-liberal world order, or at worst as potential enemies of the working class. It raised the challenge of developing different dynamics of organising workers in the informal economy in alliance with the traditionally organized working class.

As a result of the ICC engagements from 2003 to 2006, there were now enough known instances around the world where workers in the informal economy had started to organize themselves collectively (mainly in developing countries, but increasingly now also in the industrialized North) to demonstrate that workers in the informal economy are perfectly capable of organizing themselves as workers and engaging in collective struggles for their rights. In Conakry, Guinée, West Africa, for example, workers in the informal economy played a pivotal role in a protracted general strike which finally saw the capitulation of the State to the demand of the masses for the sacking of unpopular Prime Minister Eugène Camara, in January / February 2007. It was widely acknowledged that the workers in the formal economy would not have been able to secure this outcome without the active participation of those in the informal economy, who both initiated and sustained the strike with their numbers.

The WSF 2011 took place in Dakar, Senegal. This time StreetNet used the space for the more specifically focussed objective of showcasing the cross-sector work being done by their Senegalese affiliates CNTS and SUDEMS in solidarity with the waste pickers’ organization Bokk Diom in Senegal. A joint street vendors and waste pickers’ rally and march were organized by CNTS, SUDEMS, Bokk Diom and StreetNet affiliates from other countries, and a panel on the situation of workers in the sectors of street vending and waste picking in the informal economy – for awareness-raising on:

- Daily reality of workers in these sectors of informal work;
- Problems faced by workers in these sectors of work in the informal economy;
- Policy proposals for the social inclusion of workers in these informal work sectors;
- Inclusive Cities programme and policy proposals for inclusive urban policies;
- Information about existing organizations of street vendors and waste pickers, and their organizing demands and strategies.

The aim was to get the support of other working class civil society organizations, including trade unions, for the daily struggles of street vendors and waste pickers. Again, however, there was no significant immediate follow-up. Nevertheless, the seeds of solidarity which were planted in 2011 resulted in a resumption of joint collaboration between CNTS and Bokk Diom 10 years later, when Bokk Diom reached out to CNTS during the COVID pandemic. CNTS was ready to help Bokk Diom to unionise and to accept them as an affiliate of CNTS, and to facilitate direct bilateral engagement between Bokk Diom leaders and the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development & Ecological Transition with regard to the working conditions of their members.

The WSF and L&G Network spaces did not sustain in the longer term as a space for working consistently with the trade union movement. However, as a moment in time it had served as a space which opened many doors in the trade union movement and created new opportunities for workers’ organisations in the Global South, including those of workers in the informal economy, to collectively think outside the box of established North-South dynamics. And most of the relationships built with the trade union movement in the process remained intact.

Informal economy desks/departments

The structural demand to all union organisations to establish a desk/department to focus on the organization of workers in the informal economy (then also extended to the ITUC when it was launched

in 2006) turned out to be something of a double-edged sword in practice. In the Ghana TUC and ZCTU (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions) “Informal Sector Desks” were established. Initially these Desks were extremely helpful in giving visibility to workers in the informal economy and housing them in collective organisations from where they could develop their plans and strategies and seek funding through the already known trade union organization to which the Desk belonged.

However, over time it started to look like the Desk Officers in some countries were usurping the role of the elected worker leaders of the organisations they were serving. Their *de facto* role as intermediaries between the organisations of workers in the informal economy and other organisations extending invitations to attend conferences, workshops, dialogues and panel discussions resulted in some of them taking on a representative role more properly belonging to the elected worker leadership. This further degenerated into messy conflicts between Desk Officers and worker leaders in the informal economy organisations – usually over access to funds which were being allocated via the Desks. These dynamics did little for the capacitation of workers in the informal economy.

In retrospect, it became clear that there needed to be very clear Terms of Reference demarcating the roles of Desk Officers vs the roles of worker leadership, including a contractual obligation for the staff to capacitate the organisations of workers in the informal economy to attain full worker control and self-sufficiency within specified time-frames. This would mean the Desks being able to move on to focusing on new unorganized sectors of the informal economy after the first organisations moved on to a more independent level of operation.

At the international level, the ICC proposal to the ITUC about establishing a bespoke department/desk on organizing workers in the informal economy showed no signs of being implemented. The experience evolving at country level did not provide a strong motivation to fight for it. Amen.

Inclusion of General *and* Sectoral organizing approaches

The approach adopted on this question was always a simple one of supporting emerging democratic organisations of workers in the informal economy with elected leadership, in whatever form they had decided on, in the interests of inclusive organizing – and then to support them in broadening their membership base and in building organizational self-sufficiency.

Different models already directly encountered by June 2002 when the ILO tabled the discussion on Decent Work and the Informal Economy in the ILC, included the following:

- women’s unions (e.g. SEWA²²)
- women formal and informal workers together (e.g. KEWWO²³, GBENONKPO²⁴)
- national centre and affiliates extending scope (e.g. Ghana TUC – with Informal Sector Desk²⁵)
- sectoral unions incorporating informal associations (e.g. Ghana TUC affiliates²⁶)
- national centres of informal unions (e.g. Benin²⁷)
- extending existing bargaining forums (e.g. UPEU Uganda²⁸)
- national centre establishing association (e.g. OTM and ASSOTSI²⁹)

²² Self-Employed Women’s Association, India

²³ Kenyan Women Workers’ Organisation, p.38, J. Xaba, P. Horn & S. Motala “*The Informal Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa*” – ILO Working Paper on the Informal Economy

²⁴ based in the Pobe area in Benin, *ibid.* p.37

²⁵ *ibid.* p.36, and K. Adu-Amankwah “Trade unions in the informal sector” – ILO Labour Education no.119 Geneva, 1999

²⁶ *ibid.* p.36, K. Adu-Amankwah article in “Trade unions in the informal sector” – ILO Labour Education no.119

²⁷ *ibid.* p.37

²⁸ Uganda Public Employees Union affiliated to NOTU, *ibid.* pp.38/39

²⁹ Associacao dos Operadores e Trabalhadores do Sector Informal, Mocambique, *ibid.* p.40

- associations initiated through workers' education or research projects (e.g. AZIEA³⁰ and ZCIEA³¹)

The self-organising initiatives of workers in the informal economy resulted in many organisations of workers in the same or similar sectors (e.g. street vendors and informal market vendors, or waste collectors, sorters and recyclers, or workers in the informal transport sector) based on the most convenient collective entity for improving their working conditions or resolving their problems at work. In some countries these sectoral organisations were able to merge into one large general organization, or federate into viable multi-sector organisations. In the street vending sector, trade unions were found in many countries where own-account workers enjoyed the right to unionise. In the waste sector, encountered later, many waste pickers grouped themselves into cooperatives, and in some countries waste pickers' cooperatives federated into larger movements of cooperatives (e.g. Brazil). The basis of these different structures was not altogether unlike the basis of the different kinds of structures which had emerged in the formal trade union movement, i.e. craft unions, general unions, industrial unions, etc. – many of which then went on to join national trade union centres for greater working class unity.

A top-down approach of dictating a particular organizational structure was eschewed. It had been observed that one of the factors that caused the exclusion of workers in the informal economy from trade unions was stringent bureaucratic requirements that were impossible to attain (one of the main ones being the legal requirement that all members be in an employment relationship).

The most important thing was for all workers to be organized – in whatever form(s) they freely chose.

Addressing the “petit-bourgeois dilemma” of own-account workers

In 1917, Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Lenin described the peasantry (*self-employed farmers*) as suffering from a petit-bourgeois dilemma, meaning they were constantly torn between wanting to be part of the proletariat (*working class*) or wanting to be part of the bourgeoisie (*capitalist class*). Today, many self-employed workers in different sectors of the informal economy similarly find themselves torn between identifying with the working class where they are located, or identifying with the middle class capitalist entrepreneurs many aspire to be.

Street vendors eke out a living by selling goods and services in public space. Most are self-employed. Waste pickers earn their livelihoods by collecting and sorting waste materials which they sell for recycling. Most are self-employed (*own-account*) workers. The ILO's Resolution on Decent Work and the Informal Economy says: “Most own-account workers are as insecure and vulnerable as wage workers and move from one situation to the other. Because they lack protection, rights and representation, these workers often remain trapped in poverty.”³²

However, it is precisely this category of workers that trade unionists regard with most suspicion as they do not understand the basis of their economic dependence, if it is not on an employer. Hence it was much easier for ITUC to unreservedly support the IDWN in their struggle for the Domestic Workers' Convention C189, than the home-based workers in their struggle for the Homeworkers' Convention C177 – and despite the struggles for their inclusion, C177 excludes own-account workers. Most trade unions fear that unbridled petit-bourgeois tendencies of workers who are not in an employment relationship have the potential to become hidden agendas which can destroy trade unions from within.

³⁰ Alliance of Zambian Informal Economy Associations, *ibid.* p.40

³¹ Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations, resulting from a research project of the ZCTU (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions) supported by the CTUC (Commonwealth Trades Union Congress)

³² <https://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/pr-25res.pdf>, Clause 4

On the other hand, there is no class struggle without contradictions, and the “petit-bourgeois dilemma” is one of those contradictions. It is a deep contradiction, extremely complicated and divisive, as many aspirant entrepreneurs in the informal economy already self-identify as entrepreneurs without having achieved any material access to the means of production as enjoyed by the bourgeoisie. It is therefore incumbent on organisations of workers in the informal economy to understand the “petit-bourgeois dilemma” and to have clear policies and strategies for addressing it whenever it arises within their organisations. As an example, StreetNet International addressed this challenge by adopting a Founding Resolution on Class & Gender at its launch in 2002, committing that *“StreetNet will remain committed to focus primarily on the needs of the poorest street and market vendors and hawkers, including the particular needs of women vendors”* and *“StreetNet will continue to work in alliance with the international trade union movement and its affiliated national organisations, the international co-operative movement, credit organisations and other organizations which are promoting the collective self-empowerment of the poorest workers in the formal and informal economy through democratic accountable membership-controlled organizations”*.

This was followed up by a leadership workshop in 2009 with the following explicit aims:

1. To renew the commitment of StreetNet’s affiliates to implementing and strengthening Class & Gender Organisational Policy founding resolution of StreetNet.
2. To deepen our understanding of the class differences which exist (however subtle) in informal economy workplaces on the streets and in the markets.
3. To provide a class direction to ensure StreetNet’s programmes and activities remain more geared to the empowerment of survivalist street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers (the poorest of whom are majority women) than the entrepreneurial interests of those higher up the class ladder on the way to becoming business operators.
4. To develop appropriate labour standards for the maintenance of fair and just employment relationships between informal traders within StreetNet’s affiliates, and elimination of the high levels of exploitation which often characterise this sector.
5. To develop a class analysis of workers in the informal economy (including own-account workers) based on the nature of economic independence experienced by them in their work, as the basis for StreetNet’s programmes of empowerment of the poorest street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers, including meaningful empowerment of women working in this sector.

At the 6th StreetNet International Congress in 2019, a strongly-worded resolution³³ committing to “strengthen our fight against class capture which is driven by personal self-interest” was passed to strengthen the implementation of the Founding Resolution on Class & Gender in this regard.

Conclusion – what lies ahead?

But this is not the end of the story.

The world of work continues to evolve, throwing up new forms of work which are not characterised by an employment relationship of any sort. New forms of work, such as “platform” work based on internet platforms and easily-accessible popular Apps – which is increasingly common in the services sector – are often called “the new informal” these days. This is due to the fact that these new forms of work are being informalised as soon as they appear – and the fact that governments seem to be generally slow to integrate the emerging new forms of work into their regulatory systems.

³³ Resolution 36: Inclusive Organising <https://streetnet.org.za/document/resolution-31-inclusive-organising/>

Many of those engaged in these new forms of work are hidden in official statistics as unemployed or under-employed workers – who could not find employers to sell their labour power to, nor could they succeed as entrepreneurs in small enterprises. So *de facto*, they have become own-account workers, as they join the growing reservoir of *de facto* own-account workers (irrespective of what the system labels them as – independent contractors, service providers, etc.) as defined in Clause 4 of the 2002 ILO Resolution on Decent Work and the Informal Economy³⁴.

For many years we have talked about the Future of Work, to prepare ourselves for new forms of work. But it apparently took the COVID-19 crisis to fast-track more widespread general realisation that these new forms of work are already upon us. And still, where governments do apply regulation, it is too often to restrict or criminalise new forms of work and the workers engaged in them, rather than to apply appropriate regulation for their recognition, protection and inclusion into the changing world of work.

Nevertheless, new forms of organization of workers in this sector are again emerging, most notably in the transport and food delivery sectors. Also interesting to note is that these new forms of organizing are finding more acceptance, recognition and solidarity from those organisations of workers in the informal economy who have had to struggle so hard for their own recognition as workers. Innovative systems of collective bargaining are also emerging for the negotiation of contracts establishing agreed wages and working conditions in these sectors.

Probably this means that we will witness further rounds, shedding more blood, sweat & tears, continuing to build a bottom-up relationship of working class solidarity between organized workers in the informal economy and new forms of work with the trade union movement.
A luta continua!

September 2024

³⁴ <https://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/pr-25res.pdf>, Clause 4

ANNEXURE 1

Participant list: 2003 Conference on organising in the informal economy

AFRICA

1. Elder Linus Ukamba, *Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)*
2. Abbayo Nuhu Toro, *Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)*
3. Ana Sansao Timana, *OTM (Organizacao Trabalhadores de Mocambique)*
4. Ramos Vasconcelos Marrengula, *ASSOTSI (Associacao dos Operadores e Trabalhadores do Sector Informal) established by OTM in Mocambique*
5. Kofi Asamoah, *Trades Union Congress (TUC) Ghana*
6. F.X. Owusu, Informal Sector Desk, *Trades Union Congress (TUC) Ghana*
7. Bright Yeboah, *CBMWU (Construction & Building Materials Workers Union of Ghana)*
8. Alando Sidik, *GPRTU (Ghana Public Road Transport Union)*
9. Ernestina Offei Ywenkyi, *ICU (Industrial & Commercial Union of Ghana)*
10. Emmanuel Attah, *ICU (Industrial & Commercial Union of Ghana TUC)*
11. Deborah Yemoteley Quaye, *Makola Market Union – Ghana StreetNet Alliance*
12. Emmanuel Tekper, *Outgrowers Association of GAWU (Agricultural Workers Union of Ghana)*
13. Joseph Sackey, *Timber and Wood Workers Union of Ghana*
14. Alfred Mudenda, *ZCTU (Zambia Congress of Trade Unions)*
15. Jonathan Zulu, *AZIEA (Alliance of Zambian Informal Economy Associations)*
16. Elijah Emmanuel Mutemeri, *ZCIEA - Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (established by ZCTU Zimbabwe)*

ASIA

1. Goma Acharya, *GEFONT, Nepal*
2. Ip Pui Yu (Fish), *Hong Kong Domestic Workers Union*
3. Poornima Chikharmane, *KKPKP association of scrap collectors in Maharashtra, India*
4. Pushpa Vyas, *KKPKP (Kagad Kach Patra Kastakari Panchayat)*
5. Jana Ashtul, *KKPKP (Kagad Kach Patra Kastakari Panchayat)*
6. Laxmi Kshirsagar, *KKPKP (Kagad Kach Patra Kastakari Panchayat)*
7. Arbind Singh, *NASVI (National Alliance for Street Vendors of India)*
8. Hie Chul Shin, *NFSVK (National Federation of Street Vendors of Korea)*
9. Primar Jardeleza, *PATAMABA, Philippines*
10. Sripo Wayuphak, *Thai Workers Solidarity Committee*
11. S.N. Thakur, *AITUC (All India Trade Union Congress)*
12. R.K. Ratnakar, *AITUC – All-India Bidi, Cigar and Tobacco Federation*
13. P.K. Ganguly, *CITU (Centre of Indian Trade Unions)*
14. Renana Jhabvala, *SEWA, India*
15. Namrata Bali, *SEWA, India*
16. Manali Shah, *SEWA, India*
17. Mirai Chatterjee, *SEWA, India*
18. Sanjay Kumar, *SEWA Bharat, India*
19. George Gomes, *Tamil Nadu Manual Workers Union, India*
20. M. Shankar, *Tamil Nadu Manual Workers Union, India*
21. D. Elizabethrani, *TNGOU (Tamil Nadu Govt. Officials Union) India*
22. N. Rajakumari, *TNGOU (Tamil Nadu Govt. Officials Union) India*
23. Sujata Gothoskar, *CAW (Committee for Asian Women)*

24. Pravin Sinha, **FES (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung) India**
25. Rakawin Leechanavanichpan, **HomeNet Thailand**
26. Tamaki Endo, **HomeNet Thailand**
27. Jae Yeon-Jin, **People's Solidarity for Social Progress, Korea**
28. Hyun ju Kang, **People's Solidarity for Social Progress, Korea**

AMERICAS

1. William Conklin, **AFL-CIO (but based in Sri Lanka)**
2. Phil Fishman, **AFL-CIO**
3. Tyrone Freeman, **SIEU (organising contingency workers in the USA)**
4. Jose Del Valle, **CROC (Confederacion Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos) Mexico**
5. Salim Kalkach Navaro, **Vanguardia Obrera (affiliated to CROC) Mexico**

EUROPE

1. Natalia Subochi, **Trade Union of Moldova (Business-Sind)**
2. Wilma Roos, **FNV, Netherlands**

INTERNATIONAL

1. Harcharan Kaur, **IFBWW (International Federation of building & Wood Workers)**
2. Elizabeth Tang, **IFWEA (International Federation of Workers Education Associations)**
3. Anneke van Luijken, **IRENE, Netherlands**
4. Nishi Kapahi, **ITF (International Transport Workers Federation)**
5. Meena Patel, **IUF**
6. Pat Horn, **StreetNet International**
7. Monique Marti, **UNI (Union Network International)**
8. Marty Chen, **WIEGO**
9. Chris Bonner, Organisation & Representation Programme, **WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalising & Organising)**

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 60

ANNEXURE 2

Workshop on Organising Workers in the Informal Economy: 7 June 2004, Geneva
List of Participants

Name	Position	Organisation	Country
Mario Raimundo Siteo	International Relations Secretary	Mozambique Workers Organisation (OTM)	Mozambique
Mody Guiro	Secretary General	CNTS	Senegal
Assogba Nicodeme	Secetaire General	UNSTB	Benin
Ouid Mohamed Abdallahi	Secetaire General	Confederation Generale de Travailleurs	Mauritania
Austin Kalimanjira	Secretary General	MCTU	Malawi
Tos Anonvevo	Program Coordinator	FES	Philippines
Laurent Ouedraobo	SGC/CMTB Burkina	CNTB	Burkina Faso
Catherine Vaillancourt-LaFlamme	Integration ILO	ILO	Switzerland
Abdou Maigandi	Secetaire General	USTN	Niger
Lestari Dewi	Secretary	IMWU	Hong Kong
Bishnu Rimal	Vice Chairman	GEFONT	Nepal
Shin Hee -Chul	International Director	NFSVK	Korea
A.L.Diallo	Advisor	OATUU	
H.A.Sunmonu	Secretary General	OATUU	Ghana
D.M.Saleshando	ILO Official	ILO	Switzerland
Sue Longley	Agric Coordinator	IUF	Switzerland
Manali Shah	Vice President	SEWA	India
Gilberto Vazquez	Leader	CROC	Mexico
Alas Hernandez	Leader	CROC	Mexico
Wellington Chibebe	Secretary General	ZCTU	Zimbabwe
Dan Gallin	ExCo Member	WIEGO	Switzerland
Jurgen Eckl	Secretary	DGB	Germany
Wahyu N.P.	Former Chairperson	Indonesia Migrant Workers Union –IMWU	Hong Kong
Hounsinou Gratien	Secetaire General	CSPIB	Cotonou, Benin
Ould Boubou	Secetaire General	UTM	Mauritanie
Joyce M. Freeman	President General	USPOGUL (Liberian Fed. of Labour Unions)	Liberia
Pravin Sinha		FES	India
Naoko Otobe	Senior Gender & Employment Specialist	ILO	Switzerland
Hugo Rendon	Coordinador de agenda do politica internacional	CROC	Mexico DF
Thampan Thomas	President	HMS	India
D.P.A. Naidu	Specialist	ILO	Philippines
Iwata Yukio	Deputy SG	Zenroren	Japan
Fuse Keisuke	Organization Bureau	Zenroren	Japan
Mary Kawor	Gender Specialist	ILO	Switzerland
Soffo Salifou	Secetaire General	UGTN	Niger
Chris Bonner	Program Director: ORP	WIEGO	South Africa
Renana Jhabvala	National Coordinator	SEWA	India

Name	Position	Organisation	Country
Karin Pape	ILC worker delegate	DGB	Germany
Koffi Zounhadsala	ILC worker delegate	CSTT	Togo
Nama Mamadou	ILC worker delegate	USTB	Burkina Faso
Misheck Musonda	Chairman General	Cross Border Traders Association & AZIEA	Zambia
Carmen M. Solinap	Member Executive Board & Chair Women's Committee	TUCP	Philippines
Olaitan Oyerinde	Head, International Department	NLC	Nigeria
Mahan-Gaye Basile	Secrétaire General	Dignité	Cote d'Ivoire
Evelin Toth Mucciacciaro	Head International Department	UATUC	Croatia
Jose de Valle	Secretario de Asuntos Internacionales	CROC	Mexico
Carlos Morales Mireles	Secretario General	Federacion Nacional de Organizaciones de Trabajadores No Asalariados –FNOTNA (<i>affiliate of CROC</i>)	Mexico
Pat Horn	International Coordinator	StreetNet International	South Africa
Kofi Asamoah	Deputy Secretary General	TUC Ghana	Ghana
Brahim Ben Said	President	Confederation Libre des Travailleurs du Tchad	Chad
Giovanna Rossignotti		ILO	Switzerland
Monique Marti	Women's Officer	UNI	Switzerland
Huseyin Polat	Senior Specialist	ILO	Switzerland
Keth Thapper	International Secretary	LO-Sweden	Sweden
Habiba Zahi	Membre du Bureau Executif	Confederation Democratique du Travail	Morocco

International Coordinating Committee (ICC) of worker organisations organising in the Informal Economy
 Secretariat: c/o Pat Horn, International Coordinator, StreetNet International, stnet@iafrica.com

ANNEXURE 3

Participant list: 2006 Conference on organising in the informal economy

International Participants

NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
Pascaline Dzidzome	UNSTB (<i>syndicat Boulangerie</i>)	Benin
Emmanuel Zounon	UNSTB	Benin
Clarisse Gnahoui	USYNVEPID	Benin
Chretien K. Bango	SYNAZEB	Benin
Paul Nowark	TUC	Britain
April Lai	HKDWGU	Hong Kong
Arbind Singh	NASVI	India
Kim Heung Hyun	KOSC	Korea
Grace Mulima	MCTU	Malawi
Mwanda Chiwambala	MUFIS	Malawi
Seydou Diarra	UNTM	Mali
Eugenio del Valle	CROC	Mexico
Gilberto Vasquez	FNOTNA	Mexico
Yali Harouna	USTN	Niger
Saley Seydou	USTN	Niger
Nuhu Toro	NLC	Nigeria
Muctarr Williams	SLLC	Sierra Leone
Nfe Alie Kamara	MD>WU	Sierra Leone
Sam Jalloh	MASSIT (<i>social security</i>)	Sierra Leone
Fatoumata Binetou Yafa	CNTS	Senegal
Tadeo Taruvinga	AZIEA	Zambia
Beauty Mugijima	ZCIEA	Zimbabwe
Morgan Moss	Observer	USA

Ghanaian Participants

NAME	ORGANISATION
Yaw Baah	Ghana TUC (facilitator)
Akua Britwum	CDS/UCC(facilitator)
Angela Akorsu	CDS/UCC(facilitator)
Diana Gakpetor	GFL
Benjamin Mingle	GFL
Teye Ocansey	Ablekuma Grasscutter
J.K Nyame	ACFA Banquase Cassava
P.M.K Quainoo	CBMWU
Yaw Asare	CWU
Nana Owusu Djan	Darkuma Container

Comfort Zormelo	GAWU
Andrews Tagoe	GAWU
Susan Naa Sekyere	GBC
William Addo	Global Handicraft
J.K Okudzeto	GPRTU
Cecilia Hoggar	GSPD
Alexander Tetteh	GSPD
Franklin Owusu Ansah	HSWU
Monica Annan	LGWU
Bio Enoch	Madina Shoe Sellers
Juliana Afari Brown	StreetNet/Makola Union
Yemoteley Quaye	Makola Union
R.E.K Mensah	MDU
Isaac Impraim	NUS
P.S. Baiden	PUWU
Richard Okine	REU
Alfred Walden	StreetNet Ghana
M.S. Bogobiri	TEWU
Joseph Sackey	TWU
Michael Kwame Williams	UNICOF

Global Union Participants

NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
Jean Francois Bouda	DOAWTU	Togo
Emmanuel Nzunda	ICFTU- Afro	Kenya
Crystal Dicks	IFWEA	U.K
Adwoa Sakyi	IUF	Ghana
Ann Amoah	OATUU	Ghana
Michael Besha	OATUU	Ghana
Kofi Takpo	OATUU	Ghana
Abdulaye Diallo	Consultant ILO – Geneva	Guinea

Support Organisation Participants

NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
Marie-Helene Bonin	CLC	Canada
Susan Gravgaard	LOTF	Denmark
Marianne Holst	LOTF	Ghana
Ntwala Mwilima	Larri	Namibia
Wilma Roos	FNV Mondiaal	Netherlands
Chris Bonner	WIEGO	South Africa
Robinson H. Sikazwe	LO Norway	Zambia

ANNEXURE 4

**ICC Meetings on Organising Workers in the Informal Economy:
5 June 2006, 4 June 2008, Geneva
Consolidated List of Participants**

Name	Position	Organisation	Country
Kofi Asamoah	Deputy SG	TUC Ghana (ICC)	Ghana
Pat Horn	International Coord	StreetNet International (ICC)	South Africa
José del Valle	Sec. de Asuntos Politica y Internacional	CROC (ICC)	Mexico
Dr M. Liagat Adill	S.Vice President	AAFTU	Afghanistan
Kaddous Hadja	Directrice Institute Formation Syndicale	UGTA	Algeria
Maria Fernanda Carvalho Francisco	Deputy General Secretary	UNTA-CS	Angola
Md Zafrul Hasan	General Secretary	Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal – BJSB	Bangladesh
Bridget Rauch	International Secretary	International YCW	Belgium
Bart Verstraeten	Coordinator	Social Alert International	Belgium
Thiruvalluvar Yovel	International President	International YCW	Belgium
Colette Gaba	Representative	SYNAVAMAB	Benin
Japhta Radibe	President	BFTU	Botswana
Clair Ruppert	International Dept.	CUT	Brazil
Nama Mamadou	Superviseur Syndicat/EI	Centrales Syndicale du Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
Ruvari Mathias	Sécrétaire Général	Confédération Syndicats Libres du Burundi	Burundi
Isaac Bissala	President	UGTC	Cameroun
Luis E M?		Federacion de Colombianos Fetuabos CGT???	Colombia
Assetou Haidara	Formatrice (ITF)	Syndicat chauffeurs de taxis UGTCI/SCTCI	Côte d'Ivoire
Alfredo Vazquez	Sindicalista	CTC	Cuba
René Olsson	<i>student</i>	Nordic School	Denmark
Tzeggai Mogos	Deputy GS	NCEW	Eritrea
Petra Hyvarinen	Teacher	Nordic Folk High School	Finland
Nina Wessberg	<i>student</i>	Nordic Schoool	Finland
Alberta Laryea Djan	A.G. Head International Affairs	Ghana TUC	Ghana
Jerry Addo	GS	Ghana TUC	Ghana
Anita Adjel	2 nd Vice-Chairperson	Ghana TUC	Ghana
John G Akoid	General Secretary	HSWU of GTUC	Ghana
Kofi Davoh	GS UNICOF	UNICOF / Ghana TUC	Ghana
Serah Rabiadou Diallo	Sécrétaire Générale	CNTG	Guinée

Name	Position	Organisation	Country
Yamoussa Touré	SG Adjoint	CNTG	Guinée
Ibrahima Fofana	Sécrétaire Général	USTG	Guinée
Aminata Keita		USTG	Guinée
Jurgen Eckl	Sec. International	DGB	Germany
Bianca Kuhe	Political Advisor on ILO and Handicapped people	DGB	Germany
Sigurdur Magnusson	Secretary General	MATVIS	Iceland
Jakobina Porda	<i>student</i>	Nordic School	Iceland
Pall Svavarsson	<i>student</i>	Nordic School	Iceland
Jyoti Macwan	General Secretary	SEWA	India
H.Mahadevan	Deputy General Secretary	All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)	India
Nahid Jaladi	Workers Group	Islamic Labour Council	Islamic Rep. of Iran
Aiko Kimura	President	Int. Research Institute on Human Environment	Japan
Kim Heung Heun	President	StreetNet International	Korea
Kim Seok	International Relations Director	Korean Government Employees Union	Republic of Korea
Ban Myoung Ja	First Vice President	Korean Government Employees Union	Republic of Korea
Park Jung Gyu	First Vice President	Korean Federation of Transportation, Public & Social Services Union	Republic of Korea
Ho Joong Kim	President	FKTU	Korea
Lee Kyn Park		FKTU	Korea
AbedLlatif ALTeryaki	General Secretary	Union of Syndicates of Workers & Employees	South Lebanon
E.T. Ramochela	Secretary General	LECODU	Lesotho
Jerry Duplaye	Sec. General	Public Service Union Liberia	Liberia
Gracatee Kpaan	President	Dock Workers Union Liberia	Liberia
Austin Kalimanjira	Secretary General	MCTU	Malawi
Thomas L. Banda	President	Congress of Malawi Trade Unions COMATU	Malawi
Moussa Kanoute	Secretaire	UNTM	Mali
Gilberto Vazquez Muro	Secretario General	FNOTNA / CROC	Mexico
Hugo Rendon	Coordinador de Programas	CROC	Mexico
Eugenio del Valle	Human Rights & Environment Coord	CROC	Mexico
Mario Raimundo Siteo	Int. Relations Secretary	OTM-CS	Moçambique
Francisco F. Mazoio	Secretary Legal & Social Affairs	OTM-CS	Moçambique
Pemba Lama	International Affairs	GEFONT	Nepal
Binod Shrestha	Secretary General	GEFONT	Nepal

Name	Position	Organisation	Country
Manju Bhattari	Exec. member	NTUC	Nepal
Laxman B. Basnet	President	NTUC-I	Nepal
Anneke van Luijken	Domestic Work Network Co-ordinator	IUF	Netherlands
José Antonio Zepeda Lopez	Vice-Coordinator	FNT	Nicaragua
Abdou Maigandi	Sécrétaire Général	USTN	Niger
Mariko Salamitou	Sécrétaire Générale	UGSEIN	Niger
Hans Holt	Teacher	Utdannings forbundet	Norway
Jorn Pedersen	<i>students</i>	Nordic School	Norway
Stine Korhn-Dale			
Tanya Aanes	Nordic School - <i>student</i>	Utdannings forbond	Norway
Graciela Congo	Secretario de Educacion y Cultura	CUT-Autentica CCS-Py	Paraguay
Pedro Parra	Secretario de Relaciones Internacional	CNT-CCS-Py	Paraguay
Fatounata Bintou Yafa	Presidente des femmes de la CNTS	CNTS	Sénégal
Claudette Etnel	Secretary General	C-U7	Suriname
Jan Sithole	Secretary General	SFTU	Swaziland
Robert Perfect	International work	I F Metall	Sweden
Malin Jensen	<i>student</i>	Nordic School	Sweden
Oscar Englund	<i>student</i>	Handels	Sweden
Peggy Hamberg	<i>student</i>	Sif/TCO	Sweden
Dan Gallin	Chair	Global Labour Institute	Switzerland
Karin Pape	Reg. Advisor (Europe)	GLI / WIEGO	Switzerland
Eliane Schenk	President	ONG Prince Chang Yang International	Switzerland
Dodziko Genevieve Aouissi-Akouete	Presidente du Comite National des Femmes	CNTT	Togo
Nasreddine Sassi	Co-ordinator	UNI	Tunisia
Annie Watson	Consultant	TUC	UK
Wellington Chibebe	Secretary General	ZCTU	Zimbabwe
Beauty Mugijima	President	ZCIEA	Zimbabwe

INTERNATIONAL

Name	Position	Organisation	Region
Abdoulaye Diallo	OATUU/OUSA Permanent Rep. at ILO	OATUU / OUSA	Continent Africa (Suisse/France)
Evelyn Benjamin-Sampson	Gender / Youth Coord	OATUU / OUSA	Continent Africa (Ghana)
M.P. Basha	Asst. Secretary General	OATUU / OUSA	Continent Africa (Ghana)
Charles N. Kumbi	Project Co-ordinator	ITGLWF	Continent Africa (South Africa)
P. Kamalam	Director Equality Dept	ITUC / CSI	International (Belgium)
Jim Catterson	Energy Officer	ICEM	International (Suisse)

Bettina Martens	Project Manager	UNI	International (Suisse)
Omara Amuko	OHSE Coordinator	IUF/UITA	Continent Africa (Uganda)
Barbro Budin	Equality Project Officer	IUF / UITA	International (Suisse)
Azita Berar	Director Employment Policy	ILO	International (Suisse)
Bonnet Florence	SEC / SOC	ILO	International (Suisse)
Philippe Marcadent	ED / PROTEC	ILO	International (Suisse)
Chris Bonner	ORP Director	WIEGO	International (South Africa)

ANNEXURE 5

Meeting on Organising Workers in the Informal Economy: 3 June 2011, Geneva
List of Participants

Name Nom Nombre	Position Cargo	Organisation Organización	Country Pays País
CHAIR			
Alison Tate	Director of External Relations	ITUC	
AFRICA			
Kaddous Hadja	Director of Training Institute	UGTA	Argelia/Algeria
Benmouhoub	National Secretary	UGTA	Argelia/Algeria
Zounon Emmanuel	GS	UNSTB	Benin
Isaac Bissala	President	UGTC	Cameroun
Louis Sombes	General Secretary	CSAC	Cameroun
Kofi Asamoah	Secretary General	Ghana TUC	Ghana
Bah Asmaou Doukouré	Member of Gen. Food Federation	CNTG - OUSA	Guinea
Mohamedou Bewah	GS	UGNTM	Mauritania
Lahrech Touriya	Executive Bureau Member	Confédération Démocratique du Travail	Morocco
Fatoumata Bintou Yafa	Présidente des femmes de la CNTS	CNTS	Senegal
Bayla Sow	Confederal Secretary	CNTS	Senegal
Hezekiel Mabuna	Vice President	FESBC	Swaziland
Ghislaine Broohm Saizonoy	Senior Officer Equality & Social Protection	ITUC Africa	Togo
Aguigah Novissi	President Women's Committee	UNSI	Togo
Wilson Akolé Kpetemey	Economist & President Women's Committee	Confédération Générale des Cadres du Togo)	Togo
Melanie Habwe Dickson		ILO	Ghana Kenya
AMERICAS			
Prima Ocsa	Federal Secretary	Fed. Bolivia	Bolivia
Daniela Quanta	Executive Secretary	Federación Nacional de Trabajadoras del Hogar	Bolivia
Maria Noeli dos Santos	Director	Sindiacto dos Trab. Domésticas	Brasil
Oscar Ya.....???	GS	ASEMU ???	Chile
Ruth Olate	President	Sintracop	Chile
Luzdary Camayo	Secretary	Asociación UTRAHOGAR	Columbia
Nixon Torres Carcamo	Technical Advisor	CUT-CTC	Columbia
Maria del Carmen Cruz	Secretary of the Management Board	Astradomes	Costa Rica
Manuel Montero		CTC	Cuba
José del Valle	Secretario de Asuntos y políticas internacionales	CROC	Mexico
Marcelina Bautista	General Secretary	CONLACTRAHO	Mexico

Marcelino Santos Guevara	External Relations Secretary	CROM	Mexico
Angelica González	Legal Advisor	CONLACTRAHO	Mexico
Lucía Fuentes Góngora		SUTERM	Mexico
Ernestina Ochoa	Sec. Defensa	SINTRAHOL and IDWN	Peru
Shirley Pryce	President	Jamaica Domestic Workers Association	Jamaica
Brenda Cuthbert	CEO	Jamaica Employers Fed	Jamaica
Ida Le Blanc	General Secretary	National Union of Domestic Employees	Trinidad & Tobago
Carla Walcott	Assistant GS	NUDE	Trinidad & Tobago
Karen Neilsen	Attorney	National Labor Relations Board (<i>ILO secondment</i>)	USA
Barabara Byers	Executive Vice-Pres	CLC	Canada
ASIA PACIFIC			
Ingrid Landau	Research Officer	ACTU	Australia
Induk Lee	Internat. Director	FKTU	Korea
Nalini Nayak	Secretary SEWA-Bahrat	SEWA	India
Sumitha Shaanthinni Kishna	Advisor	MTUC	Malaysia
EUROPE			
Noël Bernard	National Secretary & President	CGSLB ASBLMSI (cooperat.)	Belgium
Esther Lynch	Legal Advisor	ICTU	Ireland
Yasmine Soraya		IMWU	Netherlands
Anne-Marie Zaak	Spokesperson	Sundjata (NGO)	Netherlands
Carina Bergqvist	Trade unionist	Lararforbundet (Teachers Union)	Sweden
Boris Engelson	Media		Switzerland
Nicola Piper	Senior Researcher	Freiburg University	
ILO			
Souaré Mamadou		ILO-Actrav	Guinea
Armas Boucher Amandine	Intern	ILO Sector	Belgium/Peru
Da Silva		ILO	Switzerland
Christopher Ruck	Intern	ILO	UK
Laurence Bunet	Lawyer	ILO	Canada
Gaëlle Laroque	Lawyer	ILO	France
Prasad	Economist	ILO	
Muresu Giorgia	Programme ResMob ?	ILO	Italy/Bosnia
Anita Berar	Director Employment Policy	ILO	
Sriani Ameratunga Kring	Employment Policy	ILO	
Juan Hunt	Officer in charge Pardev	ILO	Spain
Andrea Betancourt	Intern – Green Jobs Programme	ILO	
Kees Van Der Ree	Green Jobs Programme	ILO	Switzerland
Perthuis Corinne	Communication	ILO	
Sarna	Economist	ILO	India
Ebisui	Social Dialogue Technical Officer	ILO	Japan
Rafael Crowe	Snr Gender Specialist	Gender Bureau ILO	HQ Suisse

INTERNATIONAL			
Dan Gallin	Chair	Global Labour Institute	Switzerland
Karin Pape	Coordinator	IDWN/IUF/WIEGO	Switzerland
Chris Bonner	ORP Director	WIEGO	South Africa
Sofia Trevino	Global projects officer	WIEGO	Canada
Monique Marti	Internat. Liaison Officer	SEWA	Switzerland