



STREETNET INTERNATIONAL

GLOBAL REPORT

2025



streetnet.org.za

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Foreword by International Coordinator Oksana Abboud

Welcome to the fourth edition of the StreetNet Annual Global Report!

We are proud to introduce to you our fourth edition of the StreetNet Global Report which indicates not only work advanced during the year of 2025 but also a great leadership commitment, strength and resilience of our affiliates as we all aimed at amplifying our Collective Voice, Solidarity and Unity worldwide!



It's a very critical time for all of us in StreetNet family to have this opportunity of reflection and adjusting a way forward while learning lessons from such an interesting even though challenging journey we are going through.

My high appreciation goes to each of StreetNet International Leadership, operational team, partners, funders and allies for all the support, commitment and efforts you contribute to promote the rights and interest of street and market vendors not only in your respective countries, but also at the regional and global level, where collective voice and actions remain essential in defending workers' rights and livelihood, advancing Decent work agenda and promoting economic empowerment, women and youth leadership in the context of social, gender as economic justice.

Despite the fact that last year continued to be full of even more and newly emerging challenges, from socio-economic uncertainties to lasting wars and conflicts, climate crises and its devastating impact on people and our members in particular, we have managed to progress much more in our work and movement development in general.

We continued strengthening our Affiliated organizations and building their capacity, skills and resilience to be able to sustain and rise to a new level of their work, especially at local and national level.

StreetNet Workplan of 2025 which was aligned with a StreetNet Strategic Plan, has been successfully implemented and a huge role and responsibility for its execution was played by our international elected leaders and Regional Focal Points and Affiliates in a daily coordination with staff members and StreetNet secretariat.

This report will also reveal how much we managed to advance in advocacy on social protection, tax literacy, digitalization, urban planning and democratic governance at the same time reflecting on sustainability strategy, including financial sustainability, and a way forward for institutional development.

It will also indicate how essential advancement of youth participation and leadership development is, to ensure a long-term sustainability which requires deeper institutionalization and resource allocation.

The report will also show how StreetNet continues operating in a very complex global context as arising wars and any type of conflicts harmfully affect street vendors and their livelihood.

The rise of authoritarian regimes and pro-right governments enhances additional complications for our work and our affiliates progress. Limitations in freedom of association, restrictions on democratic civic space make it also very hard to organize and advocate for the rights; continuing daily harassment, criminalization and evictions of street and market vendors only increasing and harming street vendors' livelihood along with economic and political instability, inflation, exclusion from public policies and exposure of street vendors to extreme weather conditions due to climate change impact.

In overall, we are proud to celebrate our accomplishments and ready to continue promoting reshaped labour movements' models which should be more inclusive, adaptable and flexible to respond to the current risks and challenges of a modern world of work, where all workers will be united, in solidarity and speak up in one strong collective voice.

With a clear strategic focus, strengthened unity and sustained commitment to its core values, we are keen to promote democracy, advance dignity, rights, and social protection for street and market vendors globally.

Nothing for Us without Us!

Oksana Abboud, StreetNet International Coordinator

Who we are

StreetNet International is a global alliance of organizations of street and market vendors, including trade unions, cooperatives, and associations, founded in Durban, South Africa, in November 2002. In 2025, we had 62 affiliate organizations from 56 countries, representing a total of 866,075 workers.

StreetNet membership is composed of street vendors, market vendors, and hawkers who depend on small-scale trading in public spaces, usually in urban areas. Often not recognized as workers, they are part of the informal economy worldwide. Across cities globally, they provide essential goods and services, support local economies, create jobs, and serve as a vital social safety net for vulnerable populations.

Our mission is to **strengthen and empower member organizations** to organize, protect, and promote street, market vendors' and hawkers' rights and livelihoods, especially of women, through advocacy, capacity building, education, democratic governance, representation, and solidarity, building a strong international movement. We are rooted in internal democracy, international solidarity, and social justice. StreetNet was founded to **organize one of the marginalized categories of workers** and integrate them into the global labor movement. We believe mobilizing these workers is key to ensuring Decent Work for all and reducing poverty.

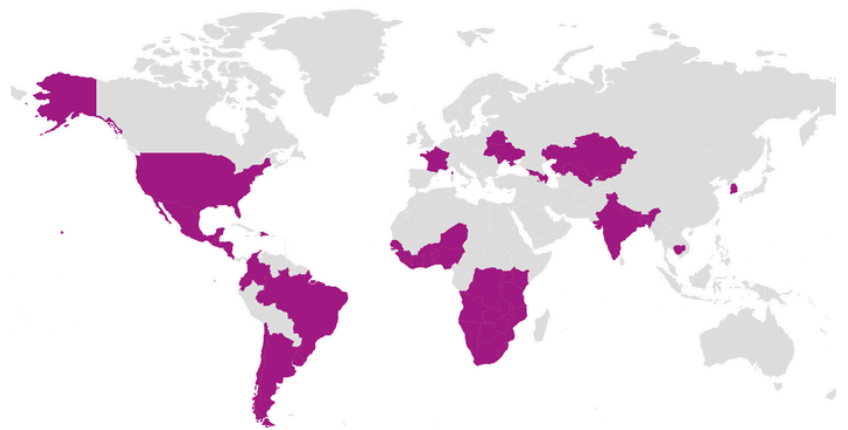
Our impact spans building capacities, movements, and influencing policies. Through training, members gain skills and confidence to advocate and improve working conditions. We unite workers globally, fostering solidarity and collective action, and influence policy at national and international levels, including through engagement with the International Labour Organization and other UN Agencies.

We envision a world where street and market vendors and hawkers, selling goods and/or services, are legally recognized workers, empowered, democratically organized, who live with dignity and enjoy Decent Work.

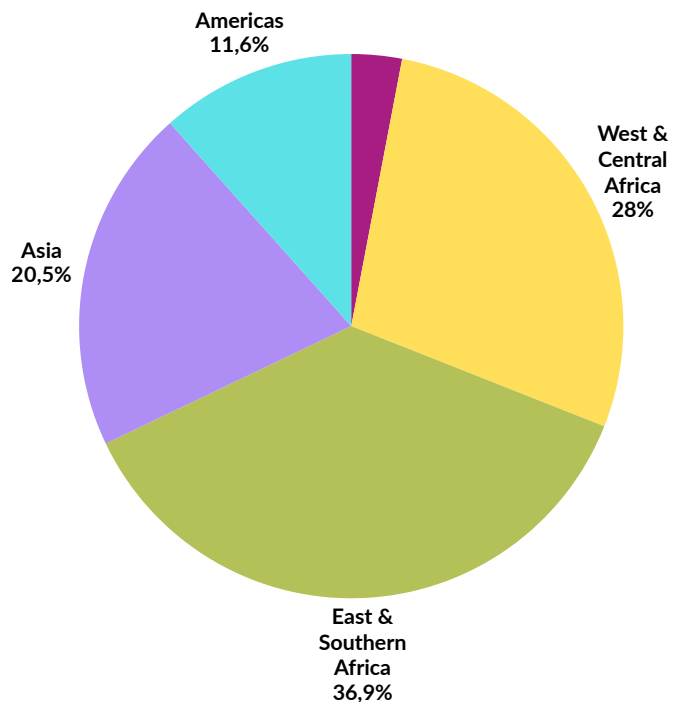


Our membership in 2025

The total membership in 2025 is 866,075 - a slight decrease with respect to 2024, but overall a stable figure over time. Our global alliance is represented across 62 countries in 5 regions: Eastern and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, Americas (north, center and south), Europe and Central Asia, and Asia (comprising South Asia, South East Asia and East Asia).

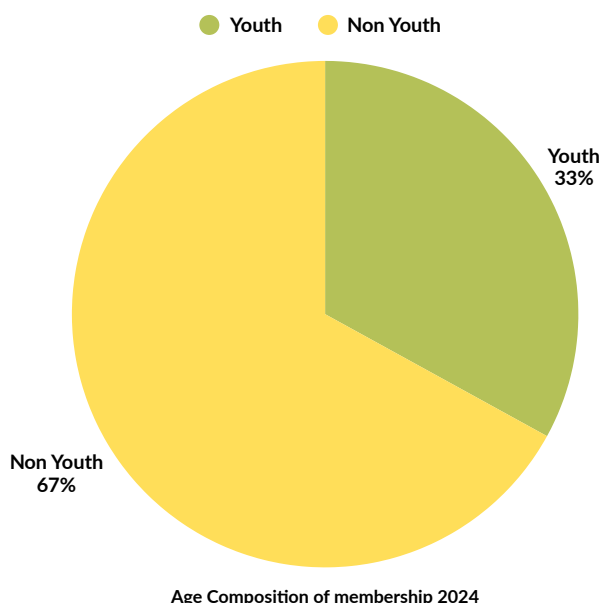


In 2025 we had one new affiliate joining the organisation: **Sintraindepv** (*Sindicato de Trabajadores Independientes de Venezuela - Union of Independent Workers of Venezuela*).



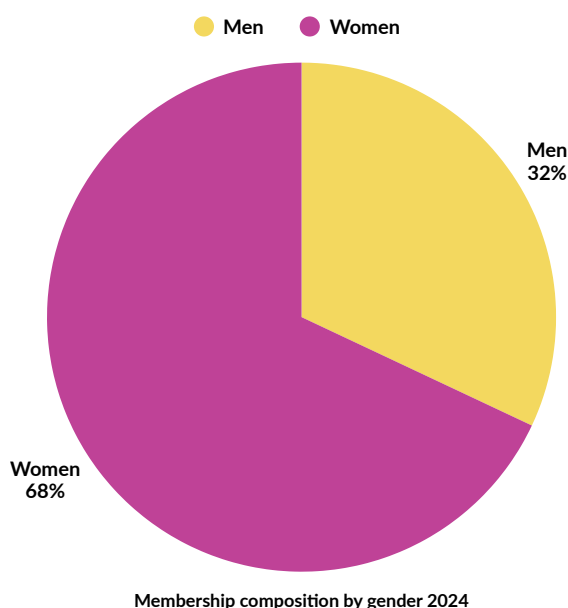
The image shows the regional distribution of StreetNet membership in 2025. East and Southern Africa consistently represents the largest share of total membership, accounting for more than 300,000 members.

Overall membership across the organizations shows moderate growth over the six-year period, increasing from 727,669 members in 2020 to 866,075 in 2025. **This is the first year since the global COVID-19 pandemic that a slight decrease is registered, despite the affiliation of one new organisation, but also lapse of 3 affiliated organizations due to fail of membership fees payment, a Constitutional condition for StreetNet Members.**



In 2025, StreetNet’s membership remains predominantly composed of women, who account for 68% of total members globally (588,924 out of 866,075), confirming the highly feminised nature of the sector. Compared to previous years the overall gender distribution remains relatively stable.

Youth representation, on the other hand, has increased, with 33% of members identified as young workers, up from 29% in 2024. Notably, this growth is reflected not only in percentage terms but also in absolute numbers, with youth membership rising from 254,317 to 283,421.



Regionally, Asia records the highest proportion of women members (95%), largely influenced by the presence of a women-led organizations such as SEWA (India), while West and Central Africa shows the highest share of youth membership (43%).

57% of organisations report having a youth committee in place, and 18% report being in the process of establishing one.

This process of integrating youth into the organizational structures has been aided by StreetNet, thanks to the project “Youth in action”, supported by SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency).

StreetNet’s membership continues to reflect a high level of diversity, with affiliates representing a wide range of marginalized and vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples, LGBTQ+ individuals, people living with HIV/AIDS, ethnic minorities and internally displaced persons. Among these groups, people with disabilities are the most widely represented (52 organisations report representing them), followed by cross-border traders, who are particularly prominent in West and Central Africa, where all responding organizations report representing them. In 2025, 9 organizations indicated that they represent LGBTQ+ individuals. A notable trend is the significant increase in the number of organizations reporting cross-border traders, rising from 23 in 2024 to 37 in 2025 (approximately +60%).

The reality of street and market vendors and hawkers

Structural Challenges Facing Vendors

Lack of Social Protection

According to our survey, the most frequent challenges faced by street vendors worldwide remains **the lack of access to social protection, as indicated by 20 organisations**. This year, affiliates were asked whether such policies exist in their countries. Responses show that the majority of affiliates across regions (40 out of 54, or 80%) reported that childcare support policies are absent. This finding is particularly significant given that women represent nearly 70% of StreetNet's membership base, and globally **women continue to bear a disproportionate share of caregiving responsibilities**. Lack of access to social protection concerns also elderly vendors who do not have access to pensions, people with disabilities and illnesses.



"I don't have access to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) because I'm over 60, and the government doesn't allow people my age to register. Even if I wanted to contribute and pay the fees, I'm not eligible. I ask the government to reconsider this rule – elderly people also need access to healthcare, and I'm willing to pay contributions if they let me join the system"

Nob Savy, a vendor from Cambodia living with a chronic condition that makes it almost impossible for her to sell goods.

Violence and harassment from authorities

Evictions and removals from workplaces are also a common concern in multiple regions. **When asked if their members faced evictions in 2025, 44 out of 54 organizations (82%) confirmed that they had, the same number as in the 2024 survey, highlighting the persistence of this serious issue and the structural challenges StreetNet members face in securing safe and stable work locations.** The only regional exception is in Europe and Central Asia, where only half of the organizations indicated that their members experienced evictions. In Zimbabwe, the government has continued issuing a series of ultimatums to evict vendors from their workplaces in urban areas.



“Our goods are being confiscated by the city council together with the Zimbabwe Republic Police. Sometimes, when they try to take our goods, we have to run for our lives as they collect the items. We have been trying to engage and negotiate with our local authorities, but the response has been very slow”

A woman street vendor and a member of ZCIEA from Masvingo, who preferred to be anonymous

Licensing barriers

Municipal authorities issuing licenses to work is one of the main ways street vendors can move towards formalisation of their activities - albeit not the only one. **In 2025, 19 organizations reported that new licenses or permits to sell were issued to street vendors during the year.** Some organizations reported particularly significant numbers of new licenses. For example, UCOMTAE in Ecuador reported 3,000 new licenses. USYNVEPID in Benin also reported approximately 3,000 new licenses.

Global Trends Affecting Street and Market Vendors

This year has been marked by shifting global context, significantly shaping the conditions under which street vendors operate and organize.

There have been episodes of **political unrest**, in countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, and Nepal (where we witnessed the mobilisation of the youth against established power) with negative consequences on the access to public space.

They happened alongside **ongoing wars and conflicts** (notably in Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of Congo), as well as other forms of violence impacting vendors' realities. **Organised crime**, often overlooked as a factor, contributes to heightened levels of insecurity, extortion, and territorial control, constraining the ability of street vendor organizations to mobilize.

Instability and territorial insecurity often claim victims among the most vulnerable: **in February a group of food cross border traders from Ghana was murdered by Jihadist during an attack on the border with Burkina Faso.** Our affiliate UNIWA mobilised publicly in support of the traders.

The rise of **authoritarian and right-wing political forces** has been observed across the world. There are notable cases in the Americas, from the United States, to Chile, where in the 2025 General Elections, far-right José Antonio Kast has been elected president. This wave has contributed to a broader shrinking of civic space, limiting opportunities for engagement by progressive actors and the labour movement.

We have also witnessed an **increasing securitization of public space**, where informal economic activities are often framed as public order issues. As a result, evictions and violent interactions with law enforcement remain widespread across regions. In Zimbabwe, the government has been issuing ultimatums to remove street vendors from urban streets, designating many as illegal.

The **global funding landscape** has also undergone notable changes, affecting StreetNet International (SNI) and its affiliates. Resources for labour organisations and progressive forces as a whole have been cut at global level - mainly as an effect of the decision of Western and Global North governments. For the first time since the pandemic years, the network recorded a slight decrease in total membership, reflecting challenges in mobilization and recruitment.

The vast majority of affiliates report that their members are affected by **climate change** in a negative way. In Asia, these challenges remain especially acute. In India, for example, floods, droughts, and heatwaves (like the 2025 heatwave that hit India and Pakistan between April and July) have severely affected street vendors, disrupting working hours and exposing those without adequate shelter to heightened risks.

Despite these constraints, there are important signs of resilience and progress. **Affiliates continue to engage actively at national and municipal levels on several issues, including social protection and the social and solidarity economy (SSE)**. FIWON launched cooperatives in two additional state chapters - the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) and Oyo State. As a result, members in these chapters have begun enrolling in the cooperatives and are increasingly accessing key benefits. Capacity-building efforts- particularly through negotiation skills workshops supported by StreetNet- have enabled affiliates to achieve concrete material gains. There is also evidence of growing confidence and effectiveness in advocacy and negotiation, reflecting the strengthening of organizational capacities.

According to our latest data, nearly half of the affiliates reported being involved in regular advocacy, dialogue, or negotiations with authorities on key themes: social protection, just formalisation and contrast to violence and harassment in the world of work.

Our Strategy

We developed our Strategic Plan 2025-2028 through a participatory workshop in 2024. [The full Strategic Plan can be consulted at our website.](#) In 2025, we measured key indicators:

🎯 **Strategic Goal 1:** Member organizations influence policy change and attain legal recognition and rights as part of formalization processes.

There are encouraging signs of strengthened advocacy capacity among affiliates. **There has been a notable increase in the number of organizations engaging in negotiations and dialogue with authorities - from 28 in 2024 to 39 in 2025.** 19 organizations reported that new licenses had been issued, in some cases in significant numbers. Although still limited, there are also concrete examples of policy and legislative achievements, particularly in areas such as social protection (8 reported cases) and formalisation (4 cases).

🎯 **Strategic Goal 2:** Member organizations influence policy change and attain inclusion of street and market vendors within existing, or new, social protection schemes and other Decent Work agenda rights as part of formalization processes.

There has been moderate expansion in access to social protection, with **41% of affiliates reporting that vendors are included in relevant schemes.** Organizational initiatives around the social and solidarity economy (SSE) and cooperatives are relatively widespread, with 61% of affiliates engaged in such efforts. 57% report having at least some mechanisms in place to cope with external shocks. However, significant gaps remain: the majority of affiliates still lack access to comprehensive social protection systems, and the near absence of childcare policies—reported by 80% of organizations—points to a critical area of unmet need.

🎯 **Strategic Goal 3:** StreetNet Affiliates have increased a sufficient capacity to build and sustain democratically elected, inclusive and pro-woman governing structures representing street, market vendors and hawkers in local, national and international policy discussions.

A majority of organizations (38 out of 54) are up to date with their congresses, indicating a generally functioning level of internal governance. There has been a significant and positive shift in women's leadership, which increased from 39% in 2024 to 52% in 2025. This marks an important step toward more inclusive and representative leadership structures.

🎯 **Strategic Goal 4:** StreetNet has measurably contributed to building global solidarity and alliances among all workers.

Affiliates continue to demonstrate strong integration within the broader labour movement. Approximately 62% report being part of a trade union centers, a figure that has remained stable compared to the previous year. There is a solid foundation of solidarity across movements, international networks, and we plan on strengthening it over the coming years.

Our Impact

As StreetNet, we believe in the power of storytelling to identify and share our impact. Although we focus on collective action, we ultimately aim to change workers' lives, improve livelihoods and ensure that our members work with dignity and respect. Throughout 2024 and 2025, we collaborated with allied organizations, particularly with Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, to collect stories of members directly impacted by the work of StreetNet and our affiliates. We currently have 31 of such stories from 21 countries available in our website.



Women's Leadership

The struggle began in 2005 when Márcia Medeiros de Andrade and her husband returned to João Pessoa and witnessed widespread police violence against street vendors, including beatings and confiscation of goods. Motivated by shared hardship, Márcia organized a meeting at her home, leading to the creation of AMEG, which quickly grew from a small group into a large association despite ongoing repression.

Members faced continued harassment and organized protests with limited resources, often expressing their demands creatively in public demonstrations. In 2016, when police forcefully removed vendors from an event, one of them punched Márcia in the face; she was nine months pregnant. Márcia said that was a pivotal event: "It strengthened me to continue my fight. It empowered me and it helped me to empower other women within AMEG."

A turning point came when AMEG affiliated with UNICAB and, therefore, became part of StreetNet International in 2018, gaining training in negotiation and a stronger understanding of their rights. This enabled the group to engage with authorities, secure housing initiatives, and improve working conditions. Over time, AMEG expanded its influence through broader networks, improved relations with local government, and achieved better licensing systems and support services, including securing housing for 500 vendors.

Despite progress, challenges remain. Márcia continues to balance leadership, family life, and ongoing advocacy, embodying resilience and commitment while building a stronger, more organized community of street vendors.

Social and Solidarity Economy

In **Rwanda**, initiatives led by SYTRIECI Rwanda in collaboration with StreetNet International and WIEGO are improving the lives of informal economy workers through integrated approaches that combine childcare, savings groups, and collective organization. **The childcare project established early childhood development centers near markets, allowing street and market vendors, especially women, to work with greater security and peace of mind while ensuring their children receive safe and nurturing care.** This has improved productivity, reduced risks to children, and strengthened household well-being. Through **Village Savings and Loan Associations, workers pool resources, access small loans, and build financial literacy, enabling them to better manage daily needs, invest in their livelihoods, and respond to emergencies.** These groups also foster trust, solidarity, and collective decision-making. Savings groups have become entry points for leadership development, women's empowerment, and greater participation in union structures.



“Being part of a savings group and having access to a childcare center has changed my life in so many ways. As a single parent, I used to struggle a lot to provide my children with a good education and meet their daily needs. Now, with my children safely cared for while I work, and with the ability to take loans through the savings group, I can better support both my business and my family.”

Mukamana Beata, a market trader at Kagugu Market

When Kamal Siddiki visited India in 1990, he was inspired by how street vendors organized their work and returned to **Bangladesh** to help build similar collective structures. In 1991, he founded the Bangladesh Chinnomul Hawkers Samity to advance the rights of hawkers and improve their working conditions. Over time, his efforts, in collaboration with partner organizations, contributed to the development of a model hawkers' community in Nayaranganji near Dhaka. This community integrates housing, childcare, healthcare services, and opportunities for home-based work for families of hawkers, many of whom are women.

The initiative has strengthened livelihoods by providing more stable living conditions, improved access to essential services, and opportunities for income generation within households. It has also supported community organization, enabling hawkers to access shared resources, coordinate collectively, and improve their overall well-being. In addition, related initiatives have helped expand access to identity cards, financial support mechanisms, and training that improves business practices such as pricing.

Together, these efforts demonstrate how collective organization and community-driven solutions can enhance economic security, dignity, and access to essential services for informal economy workers while fostering long-term resilience and cooperation within the community.



Youth Power

Yerlin Narváez, a long-time vendor and activist from Medellín, Colombia, began working in street vending as a child and joined Unión General de Trabajadores Informales at around age 15. She has since progressed through various leadership roles and now serves as president of her city chapter, while also representing informal economy workers in committees that influence public policies affecting their livelihoods. Her trajectory reflects both personal commitment and the broader importance of organizing within the informal economy.

As a young woman leader, Yerlin has faced structural barriers to participation, including limited access to decision-making spaces and the challenges of being heard within established leadership structures. She explains how respect for senior leaders can sometimes limit younger members' voices: "We are often excluded from decision-making in our organization because we do not have the experience. So many times, out of respect for our leaders, we do not say what we really think." Despite this, she has taken on coordinating roles and worked to sustain youth engagement within her organization and beyond.

Through initiatives such as StreetNet International's "Youth in Action" project, Yerlin strengthened her leadership skills, built confidence, and connected with other young activists across regions. These experiences enabled her to support peer organizing and contribute to a growing network of youth leaders advocating for change within their unions.

Balancing activism, leadership, and motherhood presents ongoing challenges, particularly in terms of time, financial constraints, and social expectations. "The biggest challenge I face is... having to split yourself between all of this," she notes. Nevertheless, Yerlin continues to expand her role in local politics and international coordination, demonstrating resilience, growth, and a sustained commitment to empowering young informal economy workers.

Our Work in 2025

Education

Trainings

Negotiation skills workshop are a core of our work. They enable our members to engage authorities as credible partners, articulate demands, and secure agreements that protect livelihoods. They strengthen participation in planning, improve outcomes on markets and services, reduce exclusion, and ensure representation, including women, so street and market vendors can influence decisions affecting their work and rights. In 2025, we conducted three negotiation skills workshops in Ghana, Lesotho and Chile. We also delivered a follow-up course in Lesotho and an advanced negotiation skills workshop in Senegal. **In total, we trained 113 workers.**

Along with WIEGO, we also delivered an Urban Planning online training, which involved 12 leaders from the Americas region.



Senegal, December 2025



Chile, July 2025

Throughout 2025, we also regularly organized **Discussion Clubs**, virtual meetings where our affiliates gathered to reflect and exchange with experts on topics such as digitalisation and transition from the informal economy to formality. In total, we organized 4 Discussion Clubs that involved 410 participants.

Finally, a new education initiative was launched in the Americas, led by the workers themselves. **Idas y Vueltas** (Comings and Goings), where leaders from Americas shared best practices from their respective countries, included a total of 5 sessions throughout the year.

Research and Knowledge Production

Street Vendors' Barometer

Developed by StreetNet with the Global Labour Institute (GLI) and piloted with StreetNet affiliates UTEP (Argentina) and ZCIEA (Zimbabwe), the participatory research project documents working conditions, livelihoods, and key challenges faced by street and market vendors while building the capacity of workers' organizations to conduct their own research. The approach treats workers as equal partners rather than subjects, involving them throughout design, fieldwork, and analysis. Findings from the research in both Zimbabwe and Argentina highlight persistent challenges such as **limited access to sanitation, electricity, and safe working conditions, alongside barriers to formalisation, including complex licensing systems and high fees.** Workers also remain largely excluded from decision-making processes.



Workers engaged in participatory research for Street Vendors' Barometer. Zimbabwe, January 2025



Launch of Social and Solidarity Economy Toolkit for Street and Market Vendors. Zambia, April 2025

Social and Solidarity Economy Toolkit for Street and Market Vendors

StreetNet and WIEGO have launched a social and solidarity economy toolkit designed for street and market vendors, developed through a two-year participatory process drawing on experiences from countries such as India, Nigeria, Colombia, and Rwanda. The toolkit reflects a collective effort built by workers for workers, grounded in solidarity and shared learning. Building on StreetNet's longstanding commitment to the social and solidarity economy, the toolkit translates past resolutions and workshops into practical guidance. **A key insight is the role of savings and credit groups as an entry point for organizing, enabling collective resource pooling, accountability, and improved livelihoods.**

Weathering the Change: How Street Vendors are Shaping Their Future in the Face of Climate Challenges in ASEAN

Developed under an Oxfam project, these case studies examine climate risks affecting street vendors in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Researchers documented impacts on livelihoods, health, and businesses, highlighting women's vulnerability. The study identifies coping strategies and proposes recommendations to strengthen resilience and improve social protection for street vendors facing climate change and extreme weather.

Capacity-Building

Youth in Action

StreetNet's flagship project for young workers capacity-building, Youth in Action, had its first in-person workshop in Guatemala, where 13 young people from across the Americas strengthened leadership, communication, and organizing skills. The workshop supported the creation of an **Americas Youth Manifesto** and encouraged participants to articulate shared demands for rights, social justice, and inclusion in decision-making spaces within their organizations and countries. During 2025, we also started the Africa edition of the project.



Youth in Action workshop in Guatemala, in March/April 2025.

StreetNet Media Network

For years, we have invested in worker-led communication, enabling street vendors to tell their own stories and advocate for change. We expanded our efforts by creating the StreetNet Media Network in 2024, which brought media activists from over 30 affiliates, who received training in strategic communication, storytelling, and digital engagement. In 2025, we partnered with Picture People MSP to deliver a first in-person **Visual Storytelling Workshop** in Harare, where 12 of the Media Network learned video production, ethics, and narrative techniques, and applied their skills by documenting the lived realities of street vendors in Zimbabwe. Through interviews and short films, participants highlighted challenges such as lack of access to water, sanitation, and childcare, as well as exposure to harassment and precarious working conditions. Following the workshop, we also hired 5 of the participants to become **Regional Communicators** for StreetNet, furthering decentralizing our media and communication efforts.



Media Activists conducting interviews with workers in Zimbabwe, February 2025.

Advocacy

International Labour Conference

StreetNet International participated at the 113th International Labour Conference (ILC), the global tripartite forum where governments, workers, and employers negotiate international labour standards. Accredited since 2004, we have consistently advocated for the inclusion of informal economy workers, contributing to broader recognition of collective bargaining and advancing concepts such as own-account workers. At the 113th session, our diverse delegation was composed by Vice-President Alberto Santana, Secretary Jamaladdin Ismayilov, Member Auditors of the Executive Committee Lameck Kashiwa and Maya Gurung, International Council member Martha García Santoyo, Gladys Mponda, with International Coordinator Oksana Abboud and Communication Manager Margarida Teixeira. Alongside allied organizations of informal economy workers, engaged in key committees including the **General Discussion Committee on Promoting Transitions towards Formality** and the **Standard-Setting Committee on Biological Hazards**.



For the first time, we organized a side event titled **“Pathway to Formalization: Street Vendors Leading the Way Towards Inclusivity,”** held at the Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum and attended by ILC delegates and key partners. The event opened with contributions from representatives of the ILO ACTRAV, the International Trade Union Confederation, and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). We presented our position on the formalization we want, followed by a panel discussion showcasing research and practical experiences. This included examples such as heat stress insurance initiatives, findings from research on climate impacts on vendors in the ASEAN region, and insights from the Street Vendors’ Barometer project with the Global Labour Institute.

Human Rights of Street and Market Vendors

We joined different projects across the world focused on the human rights of street and market vendors, marking a shift in our approach to advocacy which was generally more labour rights-focused. We collaborated with WIEGO Law Programme contributing data from Guatemala, Honduras, Brazil, and Argentina, for a report to be presented to the Special Rapporteur on ESCER at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

We also engaged in the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** standard-setting process, supporting guidelines and developing a joint position paper and explainer video on informal economy workers' rights.

International Solidarity and Building Alliances



We participated in a range of international solidarity and advocacy events in 2025.

In March, we attended the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. In July, we joined the webinar of the ILO Cooperatives Division in celebration of the International Day of Cooperatives. **In September, we participated in the ITUC Africa Youth Conference in Lomé, Togo.**

In October, we engaged in the **Global Social Economy (GSE) Forum** in Bordeaux, France, presenting the **Social and Solidarity Economy Toolkit**. We also joined the **AI and Digital Technologies Conference** in Nairobi, Kenya, and we followed a training in Benin on monitoring innovative social protection financing strategies.

In November, we took part in Mozilla Festival in Barcelona on a safer internet, the Financing Social Protection training and sectoral advocacy workshops in Laos and Malaysia, the Oxfam Annual Regional Meeting in Malaysia, Street Vendors Day celebration in Cambodia, COP30 and the People's Summit in Belém, Brazil, and the G20 People's Summit in South Africa.

We concluded in December with participation in the GLI School in France, strengthening exchanges with global trade union movements.

Press and Media

In 2025, we mostly focused our campaigns on key dates relevant to our work: International Women’s Day, on March 8th ; International Workers’ Day, on May 1st; World Day for Decent Work, on October 7th, and, as always, we celebrated with our global membership International Day of Street Vendors, on November 14th.

We organized **two webinars**: one focused on child care around the celebrations for International Women’s Day, entitled “Caring in the Informal Economy: Childcare Services and Women’s Rights for Street and Market Vendors” and one to disseminate the results of our participatory research: Data is Power Webinar | Launch of Street Vendors Barometer in Argentina and Zimbabwe.

We further strengthened our media work via a **collaboration with GRAIN and FIAN International and jointly developed Supermarket Watch**, a quarterly bulletin for social movements about developments in food retail and distribution in the world.

We also secured **nine press mentions across a range of international outlets**. Throughout the year, we adopted a more strategic approach to media engagement, working closely with specialized communication agencies, particularly those focused on environmental issues. This decision was driven by our intention to increase visibility around our research on street vending and climate change. **We also highlight the opinion article by our President Lorraine Ndhlovu with Negar Mohtashami Khojasteh, acting researcher with the Women’s Rights Division at Human Rights Watch.**

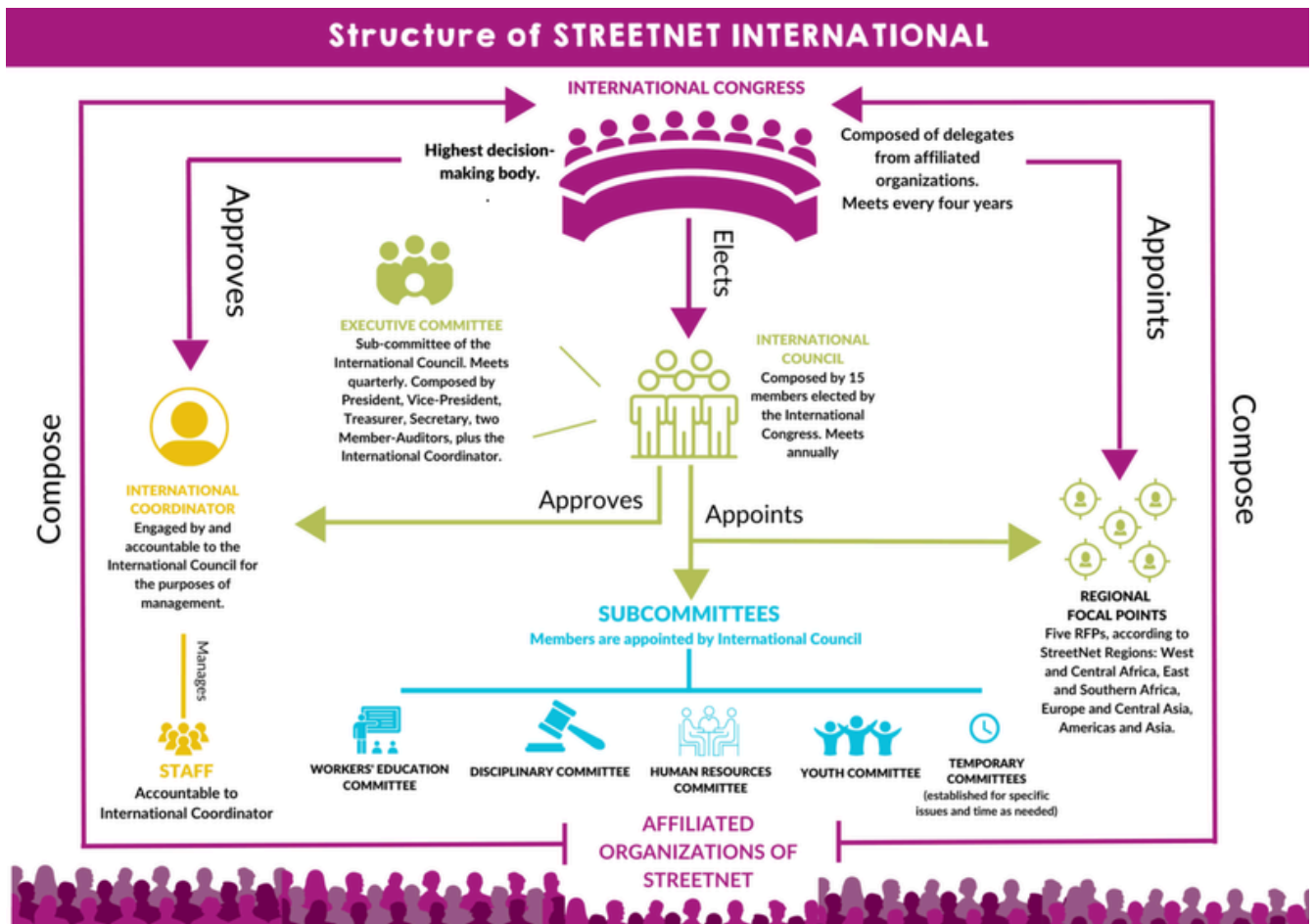


Governance

As a worker-led global alliance rooted in democratic principles, governance is always one of our main focus to ensure we continue to be representative of street and market vendors worldwide. **Our governance structure continued to ensure democratic decision-making, accountability, and regional representation throughout 2025.** Guided by the International Congress mandate, the elected International Council, reflecting geographical diversity and maintaining majority women representation, convened from 7-11 April in Zambia to review progress, approve strategic priorities, and strengthen coordination across regions.

The Executive Committee met quarterly in February, April, August, and November, providing oversight on organizational implementation and financial management alongside reflecting on a report from the International Coordinator.

Governance support structures remained active throughout the year, with the Finance Review Panel meeting quarterly, the Interim Resolutions Committee convening bimonthly, and the Workers' Education Subcommittee meeting in April, August, and November. Weekly Management Team meetings and monthly staff meetings strengthened operational coordination, while fundraising meetings were held bimonthly. We highly appreciate the important role of the Ford Foundation in the infrastructure building of our movement and to ensure our representative democratic governance in order.



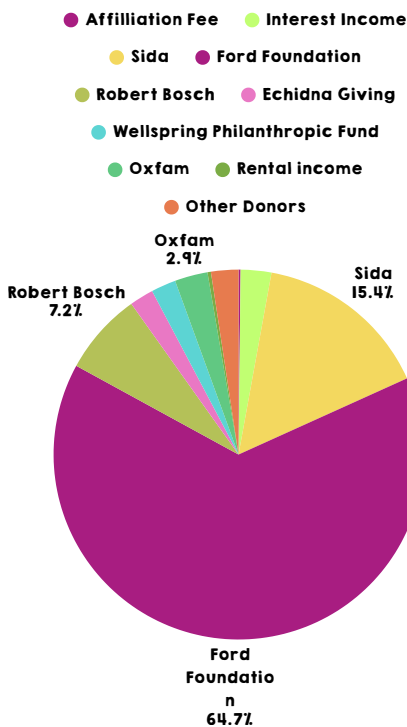
Our Financial Capacity

In 2025, our expenditure totaled 189,009,40.58 South African Rands and our income was 240,293,08.53 South African Rands. Most of our expenditure was devoted to Operations, Communications and Direct Project Costs, as well as Office Admin and Finance and Governance (mostly institutional meetings such as the convening of our Executive Committee and International Council).

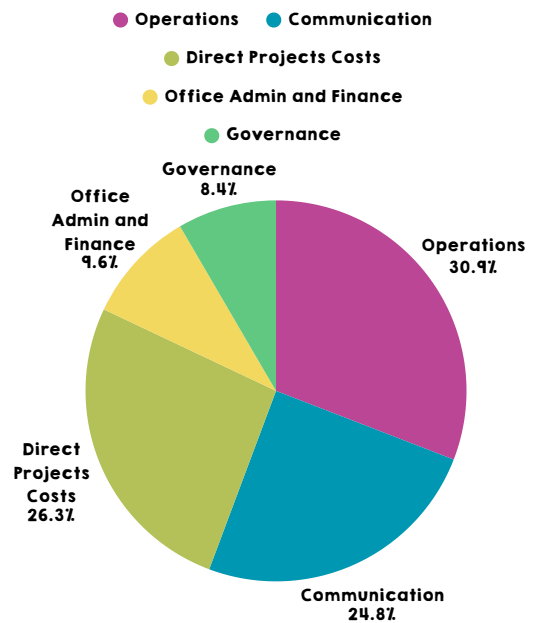
In terms of income, we received some derived from interest, rental and affiliation fees but we remain mainly dependent on funders. We are currently working with the following partners:

- Ford Foundation
- Swedish Agency for International Development (SIDA)
- Robert Bosch Stiftung
- Oxfam Belgium
- Echidna Giving
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

Income



Expenditure



Conclusion by President Lorraine Ndhlovu



As economies continue to shift, so too does the status of millions of workers worldwide, many of whom are being pushed from formal into informal employment. In this changing landscape, StreetNet Global remains committed to advocating, engaging, and working alongside governments and stakeholders to advance the formalization of the informal economy. This transition is complex and challenging in an ever-evolving world, but it is both necessary and urgent.

A central pillar of this effort is the expansion of social protection. While recent global discussions have increasingly recognized the importance of extending social protection to informal economy workers, much more remains to be done. We will continue to advocate, engage, and demand that social protection be extended to all workers—especially vulnerable and informal economy workers—until it is no longer a demand, but a guaranteed right for all.

We also acknowledge the growing role of the Social and Solidarity Economy as a pathway toward greater inclusion and dignity. Collective approaches, such as cooperatives and other solidarity-based enterprises, offer informal economy workers opportunities to access rights, recognition, and forms of protection that are often unattainable when working individually. These models demonstrate practical pathways toward formalization that are rooted in solidarity and shared benefit.

At the same time, we must confront the reality that a significant proportion of those in the informal economy are young people. Many are entering labor markets characterized by limited job opportunities, inadequate access to education, and persistent exclusion. Any meaningful strategy for formalization must take into account the needs, aspirations, and vulnerabilities of this growing youth population.

As we move forward, our advocacy must continue to be grounded in evidence—through data, lived experiences, and the voices of informal economy workers themselves. Informality should not only be seen as a challenge, but also as a space where, with the right policies and protections, decent work and sustainable livelihoods can be built.

Finally, we emphasize that formalization must go beyond fiscal objectives. It should not be reduced to mechanisms of taxation or revenue generation. Instead, it must be anchored in human dignity, workers' rights, and improved working conditions. True formalization is one that delivers tangible benefits to workers—ensuring that rights, protections, and opportunities are at the center of all efforts. StreetNet Global remains steadfast in its commitment to this vision: a world where all workers, regardless of their status, enjoy full rights, protection, and dignity.



How to join StreetNet

If you are a representative and democratic membership-based organization of informal traders with a clear internal policy and at least 500 members, you can apply to join StreetNet! Contact us to access the affiliation application form and we will initiate the application process. All applications are considered by the StreetNet Executive Committee and approved by the International Council or the International Congress.

Contact us at:

media@streetnet.org.za

 media@streetnet.org.za

 [@StreetNetInternational](https://www.facebook.com/StreetNetInternational)

 streetnet.org.za

 [@street_net_international](https://www.instagram.com/street_net_international)

Picture (front) vendor Jomara Dessano by Andrea Ocker (2023)

Picture (back) vendor Kudzai Majoko by Nancy Likiripa (2026)