



Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing



Empowering Informal Workers, Securing Informal Livelihoods

WIEGO
Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing

Annual Report
April 2016 – March 2017

WIEGO's MISSION

WIEGO believes all workers should have equal economic opportunities and rights and be able to determine the conditions of their work and lives. WIEGO works to improve the status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy through increased organization and representation; improved statistics and research; more inclusive policy processes; and more equitable trade, labour, urban planning, and social protection policies.

For more detail on the information in this report and to access publications, presentations, videos and other resources, visit www.wiego.org

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Front cover photo: *In 2016-17, informal worker representatives from the WIEGO network participated in a range of global advocacy processes. Pictured here are scenes from Habitat III and the UN HLP. Photo: WIEGO.*



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Letter from the Chair of the Board and the International Coordinator

Dear WIEGO Family and Friends,

WIEGO is now 20 years old! We are proud of all that WIEGO has been able to accomplish over two decades. Our next Annual Report will feature “WIEGO at Twenty” and a set of events to celebrate our 20th Anniversary. Meanwhile, we would like to take you back to the start of WIEGO, when the founders came together to share a common concern.

In April 1997, at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, a group of ten specialists on the informal economy – labour organizers, researchers, statisticians and development practitioners – met to plan a collaborative initiative in support of women workers in the informal economy. The impetus to convene such a meeting grew out of previous collaborations and a common concern that the informal economy tends to be viewed in negative terms; that economic planners pay little attention to how policies affect informal workers or how the situation of informal workers might be improved; and that official statistics do not adequately count informal workers or measure their contributions, especially in the case of women informal workers. The aim of the meeting was to extend the existing collaborations to a wider group and to plan a multi-year initiative to address these challenges and gaps.

The founders of WIEGO were troubled that *production-enhancing investments* are concentrated at the tip of the economic pyramid – the formal economy – while policy, legal and other *constraints* are concentrated at the broad base of the economic pyramid – the informal economy. Building on this problem-cum-vision statement, the founders of WIEGO took several key decisions that influenced the trajectory of WIEGO over the next two decades. First, they decided that the initiative should be implemented by a *coalition* of organizations and individuals drawn from three constituencies (organizations of informal workers, researchers and statisticians, and development practitioners); and governed by a *steering committee* comprised of the founders plus representatives of these constituencies. Second, they decided that the goals of the initiative were to promote stronger organizations and alliances of informal workers; improved statistics and research on the informal economy; and supportive policies for women workers in the informal economy. Third, they named the project “Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing” (or WIEGO, for short), to highlight that women informal workers are integrated into the global economy and are organizing. In sum, many of the key features of WIEGO today were part of the original plan: notably our goals, our three constituencies, our membership structure, and our name.

WIEGO at 20 far exceeds the expectations of our founders in 1997. Our founders did not anticipate that the initiative they planned would transform into a global action-research-policy network that would continue to grow and evolve over the next 20 years. They did not envision how much the voice and visibility of informal workers would increase over two decades. They did not anticipate that the term “informal employment” which they coined for the WIEGO name would become an official international statistical term and concept; that more than 50 countries would collect data on informal employment; and that WIEGO would be recognized as an authority on statistics on the informal economy and asked to serve on expert groups improving methods to measure and classify the informal economy. They did not dream that more than 200 organizations of informal workers from more than 80 countries would be linked into a growing movement of informal workers or that informal worker leaders would speak at multiple global platforms, including climate change conferences, International Labour Conferences, World Urban Forums and the Habitat III summit.

For a video on what WIEGO does and a timeline of our major accomplishments over the past two decades, kindly click on the WIEGO 20th Anniversary celebratory logo below.

As two of the founding members of WIEGO, we wish to congratulate and thank the WIEGO team, board of directors and membership for their commitment and dedication to our common cause – for the working poor in the informal economy to gain recognition, protection and the ability to shape their work and lives. We wish to thank our partners who have provided financial and moral support over the past two decades: we are particularly indebted to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, the International Development Research Council, the Government of the Netherlands, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.



Renana Jhabvala

Renana Jhabvala
Chair, WIEGO Board,
National Coordinator, SEWA

Marty Chen

Marty Chen
International Coordinator, WIEGO
Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard
Kennedy School

October 2017



Women in Informal Employment
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WIEGO at 20: Looking Forward

Internal Strategic Review 2017

WIEGO kicked off what will be a year-long 20th anniversary celebration with a strategic planning retreat at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center in Bellagio, Italy, from April 24-28, 2017. With three external resource persons from the Indian Institute of Human Settlements, the International Labour Organization, and the World Bank, we explored the future of work and of cities, and the associated opportunities and threats for informal workers and for WIEGO. We reaffirmed our vision for informal workers and their organizations, as well as for our core programmes. We discussed several strategic matters facing WIEGO, our financial position, and our fundraising strategy. We also discussed our plans for working with organizations of informal workers to push for implementation of key provisions in the Sustainable Development Goals, ILO Recommendation 204 on formalizing the informal economy, and the New Urban Agenda. The WIEGO board and team left Bellagio with renewed commitment to informal workers and their organizations and to our vision and model of change.

To mark the beginning of our 20th anniversary celebrations, we also created a [visual timeline](#) spanning 20 years of WIEGO's milestones and accomplishments. The timeline and other 20th anniversary features are available on the WIEGO website.



WIEGO team, board members and external resource persons in Bellagio, Italy. Photo: WIEGO

Advocating Globally: Putting Informal Livelihoods on the Agenda

In 2016 and 2017, members of the WIEGO network made their voices heard during three major global agenda-setting processes: The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (referred to this year as Habitat III), the United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Panel for Women's Economic Empowerment (UN HLP) and the 2016 International Labour Conference (ILC) General Discussion on global supply chains. During these processes, WIEGO provided inputs in the form of policy briefs, statistics, case studies, and collective platforms of demands. Delegations of informal workers facilitated by WIEGO attended consultations and meetings in order to share their experiences, offer examples, and advocate for more inclusive policies and practices. These efforts paid off: the need for cities to support informal livelihoods is recognized in the outcome document of Habitat III, and the economic empowerment of women informal workers is a key commitment in the official reports and action agenda of the UN HLP. Also, the official Conclusions resulting from the ILC recognize homeworkers as being a part of global supply chains. In 2017 and beyond, WIEGO is focused on working with organizations of informal workers and partners to ensure that these global gains translate to meaningful advances at the local level.

New Urban Agenda Establishes Commitments to Informal Workers in Cities

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, referred to in 2016 as Habitat III, is a consultative process held every twenty years to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development. The WIEGO Network was active throughout the two-year-long Habitat III process, which culminated in the adoption of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) at the Habitat III summit in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. WIEGO's engagement included serving on three of the policy units that produced background reports to feed into the NUA document, serving on the steering committee of the World Urban Campaign, and acting as co-chair of the Grassroots Partner Constituency Group of the General Assembly of Partners. WIEGO also facilitated delegations of informal worker leaders to regional, thematic, and preparatory meetings across the globe.

WIEGO's goals for the Habitat III process were to create spaces for informal workers and their representative organizations to speak to the positive contributions of



WIEGO delegates at WIEGO's exposition booth during Habitat III (sign reads "Include recyclers in solid waste management")

Photo: Jenna Harvey

informal livelihoods to cities, and to advocate for urban policy approaches that result in greater livelihood security for urban informal workers.

The efforts of the WIEGO Network and allies are reflected in the NUA document, which includes key references to the contributions of informal workers to cities and commits to preserving and enhancing their livelihoods:

We commit ourselves to recognizing the contribution of the working poor in the informal economy, particularly women, including unpaid, domestic and migrant workers, to the urban economies, taking into account national circumstances. Their livelihoods, working conditions and income security, legal and social protection, access to skills, assets and other support services, and voice and representation should be enhanced. A progressive transition of workers and economic units to the formal economy will be developed by adopting a balanced approach, combining incentives and compliance measures, while promoting preservation and improvement of existing livelihoods. We will take into account specific national circumstances, legislation, policies, practices and priorities for the transition to the formal economy.

– Excerpt from Paragraph 59 of the New Urban Agenda

Informal worker leaders from Asia, Africa, and Latin America speaking at an event on WIEGO's five-year Inclusive Cities project. Photo: Jenna Harvey



At the Habitat III conference in Quito, a 26-person WIEGO Network delegation made up of 12 informal worker representatives and 14 WIEGO board and team members, hosted and participated in more than 50 events and dialogues, many of which were focused around implementation of the NUA.

The delegation also disseminated a collective platform (developed by organizations of informal workers in the WIEGO Network) offering guidance to local and national governments on implementing the NUA in ways that would be inclusive of informal livelihoods.

The informal worker leaders in the WIEGO delegation – representatives from organizations of street vendors, home-based workers, and recyclers from eight countries – also addressed

implementation of the NUA through sharing examples from their work. Their contributions of concrete strategies and successes (in addition to those of other global grassroots networks such as Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and the Huairou Commission) provided a valuable counterbalance and complement to many of the policy-focused discussions at the conference. WIEGO also hosted two

Voices from the WIEGO Network:



“The phenomenon of informal work is not transitory or passing, it is one that the global economic system produced and it is here to stay. The labour rights that we don’t enjoy should be seen as human rights that all of us have the right to enjoy.”

– Gabi Olguin (pictured left at Habitat III summit in Quito, Ecuador), member of WIEGO delegation and representative of the Confederation of Workers from the Popular Economy in Argentina (Spanish acronym CTEP)

Photo: Jenna Harvey

events at the conference: a special session on the informal economy, and an event where learnings from WIEGO's five-year Inclusive Cities project were shared and discussed. With SDI, WIEGO also co-hosted a roundtable for grassroots stakeholders.

The New Urban Agenda, with both its recognition of informal workers' contributions to cities, and its commitment to a "people-centred" approach to urban development and planning, represents a significant global shift in thinking about cities. It has the potential to be used strategically by informal workers to demand more inclusive urban policies and practices. Going forward, WIEGO aims to actively support informal workers in their efforts to harness this potential, and to hold governments accountable for the implementation of the agenda on the ground.

United Nations High-Level Panel Endorses Economic Empowerment of Women Informal Workers

The United Nations High-Level Panel for Women's Economic Empowerment (UN HLP) was created in March of 2016 by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to identify priorities and actions for improving economic outcomes for women in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. WIEGO was chosen as one of two civil society organizations (in addition to Oxfam) to serve on the Panel, together with private and public sector leaders from around the globe. Renana Jhabvala, Chair of the WIEGO Board, served as a panelist with Marty Chen, WIEGO International Coordinator, as her deputy.



UN HLP Deputies at a September 2016 meeting in New York City, USA. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

Over the course of the Panel, WIEGO advocated for a focus on women informal workers, on collective voice and action, and on the intersection of gender, work status, and class as key determinants of women's economic empowerment. A principal objective of WIEGO on the panel was also to bring the voices of women in the informal economy into the process and to ensure that their perspectives were reflected in the Panel reports.

To this end, WIEGO organized a delegation of informal worker representatives to attend the Latin America Regional Consultation of the UN HLP in San Jose, Costa Rica, in July 2016. In August 2016, WIEGO and the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) took part in hosting their own consultations to provide spaces for informal workers to provide input to the UN HLP process: at SEWA headquarters in Ahmedabad, India, and in Johannesburg, South Africa (in coordination with Oxfam). WIEGO also produced a set of background papers and policy briefs for the UN HLP and provided good practice examples from the WIEGO network.

The first UN HLP report was released during the UN General Assembly in September 2016. The report looked at key drivers of economic empowerment for four worker groups: agricultural workers, informal workers, formal sector workers, and enterprise owners. The report establishes the need for increased voice, visibility, and validity of informal workers and outlines a set of recommendations for improving their economic outcomes, including extension of legal recognition, identity and protection; extension of labour rights; inclusion of organizations of informal workers in rule-setting, policymaking and collective bargaining processes; favourable regulation of public space; and support for training for informal workers.



UN HLP framework outlining four areas of work and seven drivers for women's economic empowerment

"Informal workers are constrained by a lack of voice (in opportunities to exercise influence and bargaining power), visibility (in credible data and evidence on informal work) and validity (in legal identity and recognition). These mutually reinforcing constraints mean that the contributions of informal workers to national and local economies go unrecognized and undervalued."

- Excerpt from the first report of the UN HLP, "Leave No One Behind"

The second and final UN HLP report was released during the 61st Session on the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2017. The report provides more specific recommendations and action steps for advancing women's economic empowerment, including eradicating the stigmatization of informal workers, recognizing and supporting informal workers' organizations, reforming procurement laws and regulations to create a more enabling environment for informal and agricultural workers to bid for contracts, and reforming legal frameworks in line with ILO Recommendation 204. Both reports include quotes and case study examples from members of the WIEGO network.

"Reducing discrimination against the informal economy, where most women workers in developing countries are engaged, is critical. This requires granting legal recognition and identity to informal workers; extending legal protection in the form of enforceable contracts, property rights and work rights; providing for equal treatment in terms of taxes and fees; and reforming negative laws, regulations, policies and practices that penalize and undermine their livelihoods."

- Excerpt from the first report of the UN HLP, "Leave No One Behind"

Voices from the WIEGO Network:



"Each time that you want to create public policies there has to be a dialogue with organizations of domestic workers. Remember the creation of ILO Convention 189 that we — organizations of domestic workers — worked on. Not one law without us!"

- Marcelina Bautista, Founder/Director of Center for Support and Training for Domestic Workers (Spanish acronym CACEH) and member of the WIEGO Delegation at the Latin America Regional Consultation of the UN HLP

Photo: Jenna Harvey

Homeworkers Recognized as Part of Global Supply Chains at 2016 International Labour Conference

Throughout 2016, homeworker organizations used the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the ILO Convention on Home Work (C177) to raise awareness about the continued challenges they face. As a result, when “decent work in global supply chains” was announced as the topic of the General Discussion for the 2016 International Labour Conference (ILC), homeworker organizations saw a strategic opportunity. In the lead-up to the ILC, WIEGO, HomeNet South Asia, and HomeNet Southeast Asia brought together homeworkers from 18 countries to develop a collective platform that outlined their demands for recognition, wages equal to factory workers, and the rights and entitlements outlined in C177, including the right to collective bargaining. At the ILC (held at the International Labour Organization in Geneva, Switzerland), a delegation of homeworkers and organizers from Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, supported by WIEGO team members, disseminated the platform and participated in the General Discussion.



WIEGO Delegation at the 2016 International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. Photo: WIEGO

As a result of interventions by the WIEGO delegation, the official Conclusions of the General Discussion recognize homeworkers as workers who are part of global supply chains. The Conclusions also acknowledge C177 as one of the instruments that the ILO should use as a guide in developing an action plan for advancing decent work in global supply chains.

Also during the 2016 ILC, the Workers' Group of the ILO organized a special event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of C177. WIEGO and homeworker representatives participated in the event, where panelists discussed progress on country ratifications of C177 and positive examples of legislation protecting homeworkers. Participants also discussed the relevance of C177 today, and new and emerging forms of homework in the context of an increasingly digital economy.



Panelists at the 20th anniversary event (from left) Chidi King of ITUC, Jyoti Macwan of SEWA and Manuela Tomei of the ILO. Photo: WIEGO.

After the ILC, the WIEGO Law Programme produced a paper for the Global Labour University (GLU) evaluating existing national and global governance mechanisms of supply chains in terms of their potential to realize decent work for homeworkers. The paper was workshopped with trade unions, the Trade Union Advisor to the OECD, and homeworker organizations from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Nepal, and Pakistan in October 2016. The workshop was the first step in a larger process of engaging homeworker organizations in the process of establishing the responsibilities of corporations to identify, prevent, and remediate human rights abuses in their supply chains. Also through the GLU, the WIEGO Law Programme contributed to the inclusion of homeworkers in the revised OECD Due Diligence on Responsible Supply Chains.

Voices from the WIEGO Network:

"We would like to remind the ILO that this year is the 20th anniversary of Convention 177 on homeworkers, but only 10 countries have ratified. So it's important that the ILO and international organizations put pressure on governments to ratify this convention, especially in those countries where the number of homeworkers is high. Ratification gives homeworkers legal status, which means core labour rights, including freedom of association and collective bargaining, are more likely to be realized for them.



Any standard on supply chains must include homeworkers. Failure to recognize the economic contribution of homeworkers as part of global supply chains will simply mean that the bottom of the supply chain remains unregulated."

- Zehra Khan, General Secretary, Home-Based Women Workers Federation from Pakistan and member of the WIEGO Delegation at the 2016 ILC

Photo: WIEGO

Acting Locally: Influencing Policy and Practice to Support Informal Workers

WIEGO continues to engage in focused efforts to support informal workers in selected cities through our Focal Cities initiative. In 2016, in Lima, Peru, and Accra, Ghana, local WIEGO team members supported organizations of informal workers in advocacy efforts with major political parties during national elections. Since elections have concluded, results of the advocacy are already visible – through increased recognition of informal workers from newly elected parties, and through concrete policy changes (e.g. the plans to lift a punitive toll on market porters in Accra and an incentive to employers to register domestic workers in Lima, described below).

The Focal Cities initiative expanded in 2016-17 to include new projects in Bangkok, Thailand; Dakar, Senegal; Delhi, India; and Mexico City, Mexico. In line with the Focal Cities approach, these projects will aim to build the capacity of informal worker leaders and their organizations, and to foster dialogue between informal workers and government authorities.

Punitive Toll on Market Porters to be Abolished as a Result of Sustained Advocacy in Accra, Ghana

In 2016, membership-based organizations (MBOs) of informal workers, with support from WIEGO's Focal Cities Project in Accra, Ghana, mobilized to influence the political manifestos of the major political parties in the 2016 national elections. In August, MBO leaders met with representatives from four of the main political parties in a town hall meeting where the representatives presented their proposals for policies and programmes supportive of the informal economy. The MBOs responded by outlining their own proposals and concerns. Among these was the suggestion to abolish a toll being imposed on market porters (known as *kayayei*) in Accra.

The toll, which taxes *kayayei* on a daily basis for operating in and around markets, was introduced as part of a policy to mobilize more internally generated revenue by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). The toll assumes the market porters are self-employed, when actually they are wage workers hired by market traders and customers. Their earnings are low and inconsistent, and they are among the most vulnerable workers in Accra. Studies have shown that the *kayayei* do not benefit in any way from the taxes being collected from them by the municipality.

The newly elected party — the New Patriotic Party (NPP) — committed to abolishing the toll during the electioneering campaign. The NPP also outlined additional proposals meant to benefit informal workers, including a



Market porters (*Kayayei*) in Accra, Ghana. Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik/ Getty Images Reportage

capacity-building project for market porters, development of funds for delivery of credit to market traders, upgrades and improvements to market infrastructure, and the development of insurance policy schemes for informal workers.

In December 2016, the NPP were declared the winners of the 2016 national election and the *kayayei* immediately started the process of engaging with the new government and reminding them of their election promise by organizing a march through the streets of Accra. Their efforts paid off: in March 2017, the new government made good on its promise and announced the lifting of the toll.

Public Campaign Increases Access to Social Benefits for Domestic Workers in Lima, Peru

**De la mano para poder trabajar
y de nuestros hijos y hogar, poder cuidar**



*Graphic from the campaign,
displaying its tagline: "Hand in
hand to work together and take
care of our children and homes"*

Since 2014, WIEGO's Focal Cities Project in Lima, Peru, has supported a collaboration between government representatives and two national federations of domestic workers on a public campaign to increase the number of domestic workers with access to work-related social security in health and pensions. The campaign "Hogar que Valora" (home that values) aimed to encourage households in the district of San Borja in Lima to register their domestic workers with the tax office in order to initiate the payments of health and pension benefits that they are entitled to under law. The campaign lasted two months, from mid-July to mid-September 2016, and was popular on social media across Metropolitan Lima. It incorporated humour and highlighted the positive aspects of workers and employers working together as partners in caring for their families and homes. At the close of the campaign, an additional

5,500 domestic workers had been registered in Metropolitan Lima. The Social Security Department will continue to use the WIEGO campaign materials, and there are plans with the Ministry of Labour to scale-up the campaign to the national level.

Soon after the close of the campaign, the newly elected national government adopted an income tax reduction to incentivize employers to make payments toward domestic workers' benefits. Under the unique new policy, payments made towards domestic workers' social benefits can reduce the amount of income tax to be paid in an amount equal to the contributions made – providing a significant incentive for employers to register their domestic workers and contribute to their social security. While the policy cannot be directly attributable to the campaign, it is likely that the momentum, collaboration, and increased attention to the issue of domestic worker rights contributed to its adoption.

In addition, in 2015-16, the Focal Cities team in Lima worked with organizations of informal workers and allies to engage in advocacy with competing political parties during the lead-up to the 2016 national elections. Since then, the team in Lima has worked to set up meetings and dialogue sessions with the new government, particularly to discuss the government's set goal of reaching 60 per cent formal employment by 2021.

Strengthening Networks: Organizing, Learning and Building Capacity

Trans-National Exchanges Promote Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration

Exploring Inclusive Solid Waste Management Strategies in Africa and Latin America

In August 2016, WIEGO and the Association of Recyclers of Bogota (ARB), hosted a learning exchange visit in Bogota, Colombia, between members and partners from the WIEGO Network, Shack / Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and Avina. The exchange aimed to create an opportunity for the three organizations to share experiences around advocacy efforts and mobilization strategies.

The exchange in Bogota (sponsored by Cities Alliance, of which WIEGO is a member) provided a space for leaders from WIEGO affiliates South African Waste Picker Network (SAWPA) and Red Nacional de Recicladores de Ecuador (RENAREC) along with participants from Durban-based NGO Asiye eTafuleni, Avina, and SDI to learn from the experiences of the ARB. Presentations from ARB members were complemented by field visits to ARB collection routes and recycling centres to learn about the ARB's operational model and the model of waste picker inclusion in Bogota.

In November 2016, WIEGO team members Sonia Dias and Federico Parra continued dialogue and knowledge sharing around inclusive waste management at an international exchange in Johannesburg with waste pickers and municipal authorities. Sonia and Federico shared lessons from their extensive experience organizing and working with waste pickers in Brazil and Colombia, particularly in the area of waste picker integration into municipal waste management systems.

Demanding Rights for Domestic Workers in Latin America

The Regional Exchange of Domestic Workers' Experiences: Convention 189 and Social Security, was held in Mexico City, Mexico, in February 2017. The workshop was jointly organized by WIEGO, the Institute of Leadership Simon de Beauvoir, the Center for Support and Training for Domestic Workers (Spanish acronym CACEH), and the National Domestic Worker Trade Union (Spanish acronym SINACTRAHO). Over 45 domestic workers from Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, and Uruguay met to share experiences and discuss advocacy



Learning exchange participants visit the Association of Recyclers of Bogota headquarters in Bogota, Colombia. Photo: WIEGO



Exchange participants posing with gloves from CACEH's campaign for domestic worker rights: "Put on your Gloves for Domestic Workers". Photo: WIEGO

strategies around social security legislation and ratification of ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers (C189). The meeting also provided an opportunity for domestic workers from across Latin America to share legislative advances in their respective countries as a way to support Mexican domestic workers in strategizing how to advance their own struggle for rights and protections.

During the meeting, participants worked together to develop a policy platform outlining a set of demands for the Mexican government, which they subsequently presented in the Senate of the Republic on 29 March 2017 – on the eve of Mexico’s Domestic Workers’ Day.

“We, the united women domestic workers, have identified systematic violations of our economic and social rights in different degrees and contexts, and their inter-dependence with the right to work, a dignified salary, and social security, as well as the rights to food, education, housing, care and health, in particular sexual and reproductive health. As domestic workers, we want to raise awareness of the situation in which we work and subsist, and thus the demands we present, so that our rights are guaranteed, and our reality can improve. For that purpose, we demand that the problems we face be recognized and that our demands be met. We demand to be recognized as workers with full rights.”

– Excerpt from the Political Platform for the Rights of Domestic Workers in Mexico (developed during the exchange)

Planning for Inclusive Cities in India and Thailand

In March 2017, a delegation of informal worker leaders and municipal officials from eight Thai cities traveled to Ahmedabad, India, for a learning exchange with the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA). The exchange built on the long-standing relationship between HomeNet Thailand, SEWA, and WIEGO.



The exchange challenged participants to reflect about how cities and informal worker organizations can more effectively collaborate. During the visits, SEWA members shared their experiences – both successful and challenging – of working with the municipality to create more inclusive processes, particularly around street vending and solid waste management.

Thai delegates visit the Self-Employed Women’s Association in Ahmedabad, India. Photo: WIEGO

Strengthening Capabilities through Training and Certification

Workshop on Collective Bargaining Developed for Street Vendors

In March 2017, WIEGO provided support to StreetNet International to convene a global workshop on collective bargaining for 18 of its affiliates. The workshop was held in Dakar, Senegal, and was attended by representatives of StreetNet affiliates from three regions (Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America). WIEGO's Organization and Representation Programme provided support to StreetNet International Coordinator Pat Horn in the planning, facilitation, and documentation of the workshop.

The workshop was designed to be highly participatory and practical; it aimed to strengthen participants' negotiation skills and covered topics such as: how to keep members on board, how to draft a simple agreement, and how to enforce an agreement. The convening also included site visits to the local Rufisque Market outside of central Dakar, and to the fish market, where participants had the opportunity to engage with workers and market administrators. The two sites offered an interesting contrast – while the Rufisque Market has a permanent negotiating forum, operating with mixed results, the fish market has no permanent forum, with very little consultation or negotiating taking place between vendors and authorities. Participants discussed and reflected on lessons from both visits and used this information in the development of plans for advancing the establishment of permanent negotiating forums in their respective countries.

Waste Picker Certification and Formalization Process Expands Throughout Colombia

For the past two decades, the Association of Recyclers of Bogota (ARB) has, through organizing, political advocacy and legal battles, fought for an enabling environment for waste pickers and their organizations in Colombia. One of the most significant victories in this struggle came in 2011, when the Colombian Constitutional Court passed legislation supporting the role of waste pickers as public service providers. In 2013, after submitting a successful bid, ARB members began to receive payments from the municipality for the waste management services they provide. In 2016, the Court passed Resolution 276 on integrated solid waste management – supporting the replication of the model developed in Bogota throughout the rest of the country. Since then, the ARB, together with the National Association of Recyclers (Spanish acronym ANR), with support from WIEGO, have worked to expand the inclusive model of solid waste management developed in Bogota to other areas of Colombia.

A key step in this process has been the professionalization of informal waste pickers through a certification programme. The programme was developed in 2015 by the ANR and WIEGO, together with Colombia's National Training Service, and was initially made available to waste pickers in Bogota. In 2016-2017, it was expanded to serve waste pickers in 18 additional municipalities. In 2016, 454 women and 438 men received certification in the core competencies of recycling through the programme. Certification is a critical step in the process of formalization – which is achieved when waste pickers gain formal recognition and registration as public service providers to municipalities. During the period 2016-2017, WIEGO provided accompaniment and support to nine organizations of waste pickers in completing the formalization process.

Expanding the Knowledge Base: Driving Debates about Informal Workers

A major objective of WIEGO is to expand conceptual frameworks, policy approaches, and statistical norms to include the unique realities of informal workers. In this process, WIEGO works to bring the lived experiences of the workers in our network into mainstream academic or policy debates. To this end, in 2016-17, WIEGO has been working on multiple fronts – on the revision of an outdated international classification of status in employment, on the analysis and dissemination of findings from research with informal workers on child care, and on the publication of special issues of academic journals on informal livelihoods.

WIEGO Participates in the Revision of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93)

The International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93) is the current international standard for statistics on the employment relationship. It classifies jobs by type of work arrangement or contract – either explicit or implicit – between workers and the economic units that employ them. The 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2013 decided that ICSE-93 needed to be revised to better reflect changing labour markets and contractual arrangements. Subsequently, a tripartite working group was established and charged with developing a proposal for a revised classification, to be presented at the 2018 ICLS. WIEGO is an active member of this working group.

As of April 2017, the ILO has convened three meetings of the working group and presented preliminary proposals for discussion. These include a conceptual framework covering all statuses of work (to reflect the new definition of work adopted by the 19th ICLS) and a classification for status in employment, which is a subset of the former. Regarding status in employment, salient issues for analysis include: how to address the situation of workers employed as contractors who do not fit within existing statuses (wage employee or self-employed); how to include homeworkers as a subset of contractors who are economically dependent on another entity for getting work; and how to define sub-categories within employees and contributing family workers.

WIEGO has a particular interest in the classification of homeworkers and independent home-based workers and of other contractors who are economically dependent. We are also focused on the classification of sub-categories within the category of “Employees” for workers who have less social protection due to their employment arrangement, including domestic workers. Finally, we have a specific commitment to making sure that place of work is taken into account in the revised standard (please see [WIEGO Statistical Brief No. 17](#) on WIEGO’s main categories of concern in the revision process).

Child Care Initiative Underscores Need for Public Child Care Provision

In response to demand from membership-based organizations (MBOs) of informal workers, the Social Protection Programme at WIEGO started up the [Child Care Initiative](#) (CCI) in 2014. One of the initiative's first actions was to conduct focus group discussions with informal women workers, in collaboration with MBOs from five countries, to explore the links between child care responsibilities and income earning work. In September 2016, the CCI launched its first report detailing the findings of these discussions. The report outlines the difficulties that informal women workers face balancing remunerative work with child care responsibilities in the face of limited or no options for care provision. Specifically, the report details how low earnings, long working hours, and no social protection often leave informal women workers with little time or resources to care for children. In turn, child care responsibilities can constrain income earning potential and accumulation of assets. The report argues that the provision of good quality, accessible public child care services is a key policy intervention which has the potential to greatly improve the productivity and incomes of women working informally, while ensuring better health and education outcomes for their children.

In September 2016, a WIEGO Network delegation attended the 13th International Forum of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) held in Bahia, Brazil. WIEGO used the opportunity to disseminate and discuss the report findings with labour rights and women's rights organizations.

Through the CCI, WIEGO members and partners are starting to explore how child care can be integrated into their organizing efforts. To this end, the CCI released a follow-up report in March 2017 on how women informal workers are mobilizing for child care. Using examples of different child care strategies from Brazil, Ghana and India, the report discusses what advocacy and implementation actions MBOs can take to address their members' child care needs. It concludes that quality child care requires public financing support to be accessible for informal workers and their children.

In the coming years, the CCI aims to build up national and international coalitions that bring together labour, women and child rights advocates, social protection networks, researchers, and supportive international institutions. National and international advocacy initiatives will aim to position child care as a core component of social protection for all workers in the hope of expanding child care provision with the support of governments and employers.



Graphic from the Child Care Initiative's Public Child Care Campaign

Special Journal Issues Highlight Informal Livelihoods

Environment & Urbanization



Special Issue of Environment & Urbanization on Cities and Informal Livelihoods

WIEGO was invited by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to edit a special issue of *Environment & Urbanization* on Urban Livelihoods, which was published in October 2016 to coincide with the Habitat III summit in Quito, Ecuador. The articles in this issue draw on WIEGO's wealth of urban informal economy research, policy, and advocacy work to argue for an expanded conceptualization of informal livelihoods, and a people-centred approach to planning for and with urban informal workers. The issue synthesizes findings on home-based workers, street vendors, and waste pickers working in urban environments and presents lessons from projects on workplace health and safety and technology as they relate to informal work. The issue was dedicated to Zodwa Khumalo, a respected traditional healer and powerful worker leader — fondly referred to as “MaDlamini” — from the Warwick Junction market in Durban, South Africa, who had passed away in July 2016. Her picture is on the cover of the volume.

Special Issue of New Solutions on Health and Safety for Informal Workers

New Solutions is a journal on occupational health with a progressive worker-oriented focus. WIEGO was invited to co-edit a special issue of the journal on the health and safety of informal workers, published in August 2016. The volume, which drew on WIEGO's collaborative work on occupational health and safety (OHS) for informal workers in six countries, outlines both the challenges and opportunities for achieving safer working environments for informal workers. Specifically, the issue outlines several examples of innovative OHS interventions spearheaded by organizations of informal workers, alone or in collaboration with formal trade unions or municipal authorities.



Highlights of WIEGO Publications, Blog Posts and Resources from 2016-17

Publications and Resources

Alfers, L. 2016. WIEGO Child Care Initiative Research Report: [“Our children do not get the attention they deserve.”](#) Cambridge, MA, USA: WIEGO.

Alfers, L. 2017. [The Informal Workers Health Project](#). Cambridge, MA, USA: WIEGO.

Carré, F, R. Negrete and J. Vanek. 2016. [“Relating Quality of Employment to Informal Employment.”](#) WIEGO Statistical Brief No. 15. Cambridge, MA, USA: WIEGO.

Chen, M. 2016. [Inclusive Cities and the Urban Working Poor: Informality, Gender and Empowerment](#). WIEGO.

Chen, M. 2016. [Expanding the Economic Potential of Informal Workers](#). Policy brief prepared for the UN HLP.

Chen, M. 2016. [Women Own Account Workers](#). Policy brief prepared for the UN HLP.

Eaton, A., S. Schurman and M. Chen. 2017. [Informal Workers and Collective Action: A Global Perspective](#). Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. (Full publication must be accessed through Cornell University Press).

Harvey, J. and R. Jhabvala. 2016. [Financial and Digital Inclusion](#). Policy brief prepared for the UN HLP.

Moussié, R. 2017. [Women Informal Workers Mobilizing for Child Care](#). Cambridge, MA, USA: WIEGO. Also available in available in [Spanish](#) and [French](#).

Moussié, R. 2016. [Child Care](#). Policy brief prepared for the UN HLP.

[Organizing for Change: Workers in the Informal Economy](#) (video).

Roever, S. and M. Rogan. 2016. [Improving Pay and Working Conditions](#). Policy brief prepared for the UN HLP.

[The Warrior Within](#) edited by Rhiana Chinapen in coordination with Sonia Dias and Ana Carolina Ogando (video).

von Broembsen, M. and M. Chen. 2016. [Eliminating Legal Barriers](#). Policy brief prepared for the UN HLP.

WIEGO. 2016. [Decent Work for Homeworkers in Global Supply Chains: Platform of Demands](#)

WIEGO. 2016. [Implementing the New Urban Agenda: How Local and National Governments Can Support the Urban Informal Economy](#). Cambridge, MA, USA: WIEGO.

Harvard University South Asia Institute, HomeNet South Asia and WIEGO. 2016. [Empowering Home-based Workers in India: Strategies and Solutions](#).

WIEGO Blog Posts

[Can Informal Employment Actually Reduce Poverty?](#) by M. Rogan and P. Cichello, 16 February 2017.

[Child care for women informal workers proves essential to earning power](#) by R. Moussié, 31 August 2016.

[Five Case Studies that Illustrate Steps Towards an Inclusive City](#) by R. Douglas, 28 October 2016.

[Four Strategies to Integrate Waste Pickers into Future Cities](#) by S. Dias, 28 February 2017.

[‘It’s a Win-Win:’ How a Street Vendor Leader Used Recommendation 204 to Change Policy in Costa Rica](#) by J. Harvey, 13 March 2017.

[Our role has been to make the informal economy visible and give it validity](#) Q&A with R. Jhabvala, 21 September 2016.

[Response to Zero Draft Of The New Urban Agenda: Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing \(WIEGO\)](#) 6 June 2016.

[‘You don’t need Facebook to tell you how to pick waste’](#) by S. Roever, 21 December 2016.

For a complete list of our blog posts please visit wiego.org/blogs.

Governance, Operations and Finance

Four Focal Cities Coordinators Chosen to Lead New Projects

Focal Cities is the term used to designate those cities where WIEGO has 1-2 team members who work with organizations of informal workers to build their capacity to engage with municipal authorities and other actors on issues relating to their livelihoods. In 2016-17, WIEGO started new Focal Cities projects in four cities: Bangkok, Thailand; Dakar, Senegal; Delhi, India; and Mexico City, Mexico.

In Bangkok, the work will be led by Sarah Reed, who has lived and worked in Southeast Asia since 2011. Sarah is working in support of WIEGO's partner and institutional member, HomeNet Thailand. She has extensive experience providing analytical and strategic support to international organizations in the region, particularly in the area of inclusive urbanization and climate resilience.

In Dakar, the work will be led by Adama Soumaré, an activist who has worked with both waste pickers and street vendors for over 25 years in Senegal. Adama is experienced in capacity-building and training, facilitation and mediation, as well as action-research, advocacy, and project management.

In Delhi, the work will be led by Shalini Sinha, who has been involved with WIEGO in several different capacities for over ten years. In 2008, she became the Home-based Worker Specialist for WIEGO's Inclusive Cities project and subsequently joined the Urban Policies Programme team. Shalini has expertise in the area of home-based workers, urban development, and gender.

In Mexico City, the work will be led by Tania Espinosa, who joined WIEGO in 2015 as the Law Programme Coordinator for Latin America. Tania was born and raised in Mexico City, has expertise in the area of waste pickers and human rights, and currently serves as a board member on the Mexico City Human Rights Commission.



Board of Directors

The current Board was established at the WIEGO General Assembly in 2014.

Directors

Renana Jhabvala (Chair), Self-Employed Women's Association, India
Juliana Brown Afari, StreetNet International, Ghana
Barbro Budin, International Union of Food and Allied Workers, Switzerland
Debra Davis (Treasurer), Independent Consultant, UK
Ravi Kanbur, Cornell University, USA
Vicky Kanyoka, International Domestic Workers' Federation, Tanzania
Lin Lean Lim, Independent Consultant, Malaysia
William Steel, University of Ghana, Ghana
Jeemol Unni, Institute of Rural Management/ Anand, India
Carmen Vildoso, Independent Consultant, Peru

WIEGO Team

The WIEGO team has 45 members, only six of whom work full-time for WIEGO. The rest work anywhere from one-third to four-fifths time for WIEGO; many have other affiliations (such as academic institutions), and some have chosen reduced hours to achieve a work-life balance.

| WIEGO Team | March 2017 | |
|------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Segment of Team | Number | FTEs |
| Secretariat (USA) | 3 | 2.6 |
| Operations Office (UK) | 6 | 5.3 |
| Programme/Projects (global) | 30 | 21.5 |
| Communications Team (global) | 6 | 4.6 |
| Total | 45 | 34 |

Financial Report: Year ended March 31, 2017

Financial summary

During the year, WIEGO received the final tranche of core funding (\$4 million) from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation from a total grant of \$7 million and the final tranche of our grant from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) (SEK 8 million) from a total grant of SEK 24 Million. Both grants cover a period of three years, commencing on April 1, 2015 and ending in March 2018. These grants will enable WIEGO to further the objectives set down in the five year Strategic Plan, 2013-2018: increasing the voice, visibility and validity of the working poor, especially women.

The total incoming resources were \$6.079m for the financial year ending March 31, 2017 compared to \$4.755m in the previous year. Total resources expended were \$4.706m, compared to \$4.708m in the previous year.

The figures for 2017 are extracted from the statutory accounts approved by the Directors on August 14, 2017. The full statutory financial accounts, on which the auditors, Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP, gave an unqualified opinion, were delivered to the Registrar of Companies. These extracts may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the company. For further information the full statutory accounts should be consulted together with the Auditors' Report and the Directors' Report.

The auditors have confirmed to the Directors that the 2017 figures extracted from the statutory financial accounts are consistent with the statutory financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2017.

The full annual accounts, together with the Auditors' Report and Directors' Report are available from the Company Secretary at the company's registered office in Manchester UK, and are also posted on the WIEGO website.

Revenue and expenditure

The report combines the income received and expenditure incurred both in the US and the UK. The tables making up this report reflect the organization's results overall. We are very proud of the number of funders continuing to support WIEGO. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has been one of our main sources of funding this year as well as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, Cities Alliance, the Commonwealth Foundation and Comic Relief, have continued to contribute generously to the funding of WIEGO's core programmes and overall network and programme coordination.

The expenditure charts summarize expenditure on the core categories of the organisation and a breakdown of the core programmes.

Financial governance

WIEGO's financial strategy is designed to ensure the maximum possible level of resources is channelled directly into programmes with the objective of delivering quality improvements in research, policy advocacy and capacity building.

The Finance Committee of the WIEGO Board reviews the budgets and reports of all WIEGO funds and accounts. Budgetary and financial controls are reviewed

Supporters

Our thanks to the following organizations, foundations and governments for their generous financial support of WIEGO programmes and projects:

The William and Flora
Hewlett Foundation

Swedish International
Development Cooperation
Agency (Sida)

The Rockefeller Foundation

The Ford Foundation

Cities Alliance

The Commonwealth
Foundation

Comic Relief

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Netherlands

Solidarity Center of the
American Federation of Labor

continuously to reduce the risks of under or overspending and to mitigate the effect of a drop in income in any one financial year. This risk is further mitigated by the building of designated reserves which currently stand at a level of \$621k. The Finance Committee reports to the WIEGO Board for final decisions on budgets and risk management.

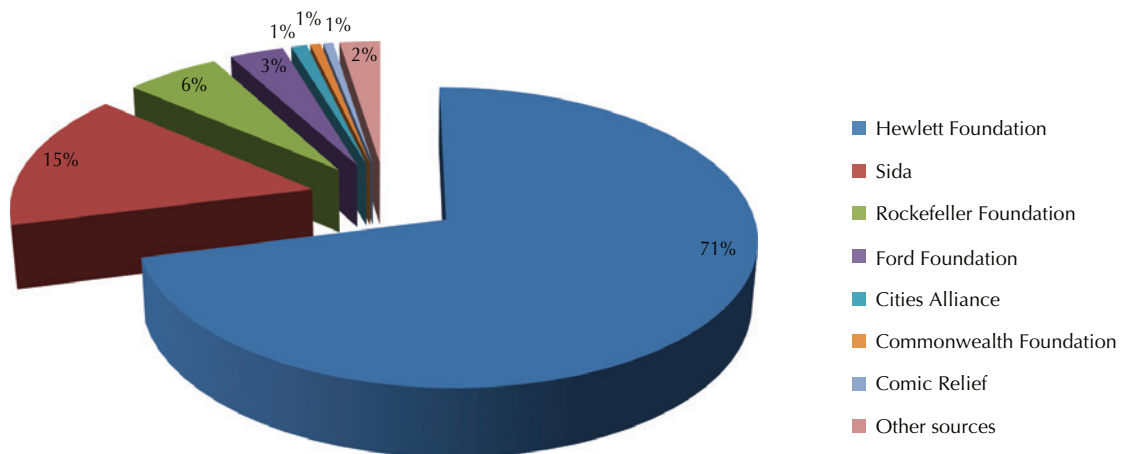
In addition to funds managed by the WIEGO office in the UK, WIEGO has a fiscal sponsor in the USA – Harvard University. The WIEGO accounts at Harvard University are audited each year as part of the annual financial audit of Harvard University.

| SOURCE OF FUNDS | 2017 | 2016 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | US \$000 | US \$000 |
| Hewlett Foundation | 4,312 | 3,000 |
| Sida | 925 | 948 |
| Rockefeller Foundation | 350 | 12 |
| Ford Foundation | 200 | 225 |
| Cities Alliance | 59 | 0 |
| The Commonwealth Foundation | 39 | 0 |
| Comic Relief | 37 | 67 |
| Government of the Netherlands | 0 | 475 |
| Solidarity Centre US | 0 | 10 |
| Other Sources | 150 | 12 |
| TOTAL FUNDING | 6,072 | 4,749 |

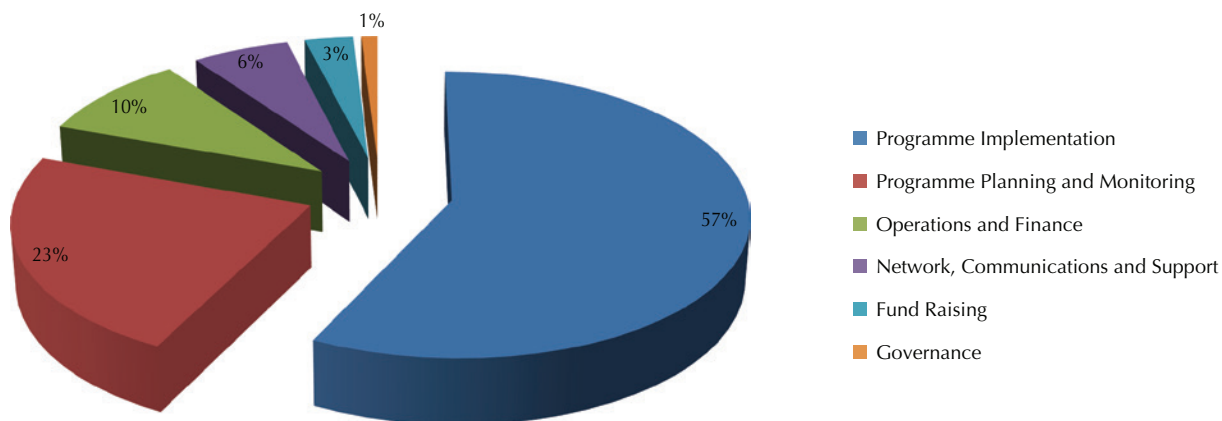
| BALANCE SHEET | 2017 | 2016 |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | US \$000 | US \$000 |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Accounts Receivable | 138 | 322 |
| Cash at bank | 3,767 | 2,159 |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | 3,905 | 2,481 |
| | | |
| CREDITORS | | |
| Accounts Payable | -515 | -464 |
| | | |
| NET ASSETS | 3,390 | 2,017 |
| | | |
| FUNDS | | |
| Restricted Funds | 280 | 61 |
| Unrestricted Funds | 3,110 | 1,956 |
| | | |
| | 3,390 | 2,017 |

Source: Extract from the statutory accounts

Source of Funds for Year 2016/17

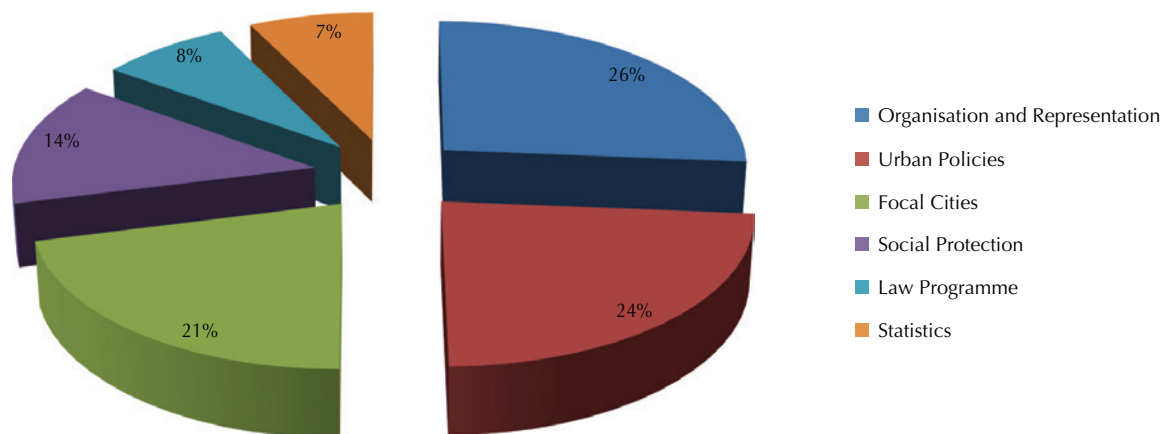


Use of Funds for Year 2016/17



Note: This chart includes payments to Subgrantees of \$347k

Programme Expenditures for Year 2016/17



Note: This chart represents all expenditures – planning, implementation and monitoring – for WIEGO’s five core programmes and Focal Cities initiative.



WIEGO team. Photo: WIEGO

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing

Annual Report

April 2016 – March 2017

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