



## TWENTY YEARS AND TIME FOR ACTION

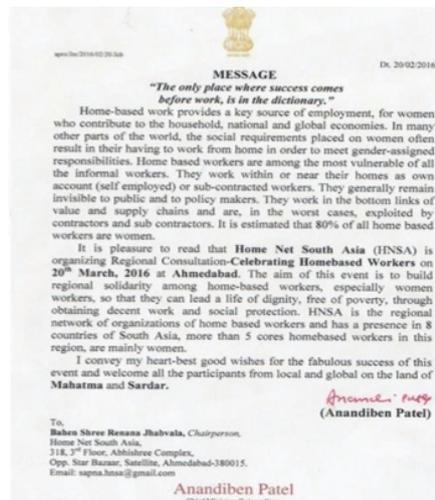
A congregation of 150 individuals from across Asia celebrated the lives and work of invisible home based workers at the event hosted in Ahmedabad – the city where the movement was initiated twenty years ago. Networking and solidarity were the underlying theme of the event.

Home Net South Asia and WIEGO hosted the event to mark and celebrate twenty years of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Convention 177 on 20th March 2016. 26 organisations from 11 countries and 13 partner organisations were present at the event. 60 homebased workers from SEWA also attended the last session.

**The objective of the event was to increase visibility and raise awareness regarding home-based workers (HBWs), deepen their solidarity and celebrate them.**

Participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand shared their achievements and future plans. International experts from ILO (International Labour Organisation), UN Women, SAARC Development Fund and WIEGO shared their experiences from across the globe.

The inaugural session saw important and prominent leaders addressing the audience, who supported and graced the event. Gujarat Chief Minister, Smt. Anandiben Patel's message was presented where she conveyed her best wishes for the event.



**01**  
Celebrating 20 Years  
International Labour  
Organization (ILO)'s  
Convention 177

**07**  
1st Advisory Board  
Meeting of HNSA  
Held on 21st March 2016,  
Ahmedabad

**11**  
Rehabilitation and  
Recovery support  
For earthquake affected  
home based workers Nepal

**12**  
Happenings at  
HNSA  
Event representations  
and research

Ms. Renana Jhabvala, Chairperson of HNSA spoke of the invisibility of Home Based Workers (HBWs) and the need to recognize their contribution in global supply chains, since they are present in large numbers especially in textiles, garments and leather sectors. Ms. Chandni Joshi, Enforcer of Home Net South Asia spoke of how, though no country in South or South East Asia has ratified the convention as yet, their networks have been able to achieve a lot in terms of visibility. Dr. Martha Chen, International Coordinator, WIEGO, spoke of the current situation of HBWs in 2016, where they have secured recognition of their home as a work place, with a stated need for secure housing tenure and basic infrastructure. Dr. Sunil Motiwal, Chief Executive Officer of SAARC Development Fund, said the plight of home-based workers is a cause for concern. He appreciated Home Net South Asia's work, and suggested the formulation of a National Policy for HBWs in India and elsewhere, as well as increased advocacy for the ratification of Convention 177.



Ms. Renana Jhabvala, Chairperson HNSA

## HIGHLIGHTS

“

A global platform is required to raise and address the issues of home based workers. I convey my best wishes for this endeavour and the success of the conference.

Smt. Anandiben Patel,  
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat

“

HomeNet South Asia born out of the Kathmandu Declaration, has played an important role in enhancing the voice and visibility of home based workers through advocacy at policy level, studies, rallies, skill development and capacity building of home based workers.

Ms. Renana Jhabvala,  
Chairperson, Home Net South Asia

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Our networks have been able to achieve a lot in terms of visibility. The women who earlier needed someone to represent them are now capable of lobbying for their rights themselves, taking part in policy- whether it is at Beijing +20 discourse or reviewing the MDGs or incorporating their concerns into the SDGs.

Ms. Chandni Joshi,  
Enforcer of Home Net South Asia

“

The Convention 177 on Home Work was the first international labor convention on a specific category of informal workers. While in 1996, home-based workers and their contribution to the economy were not recognized, today there is far greater recognition of homeworkers and their work, as they are now seen as part of the modern global production system. In 1996, only seven countries possessed statistics on HBWs. Today over 50 countries have official data on home-based workers. The achievements in the last one year include ILO Recommendation 204 and the new Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr. Martha Chen,  
International Coordinator, WIEGO

# COUNTRY PLANS

Each country presented their achievements over the past 5 years (2011-16), with regard to



Future plans as stated by various organisations for their respective countries indicated the high level of dedication, hard work and long-term commitment to the mission of ensuring better lives for home based workers.

## 1. Bangladesh was represented jointly by CUP, Nari Uddakta and LIE.



- Campaign for legal recognition of HBWs
- Build an effective national platform for joint advocacy and action on HBW rights
- Strengthen advocacy for social protection and materialisation of labour standards in supply chains



## 2. SABAH Bhutan has 926 registered home based workers who are weavers, tailors, knitters & organic food processors from 16 districts



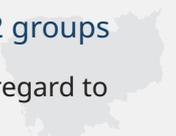
- Create child care areas for children of members at the Trade Facilitation Centre
- Encourage home based workers to start their own enterprises
- Aim to have 100% home based workers on the board of SABAH Bhutan



## 3. Artisans Association of Cambodia (ACC) has organized 500 home based workers into 22 groups



- Set up 'One stop shop' or one window service for HBWs to access information with regard to schemes and programs with a focus on livelihoods, so as to empower them



## 4. India was represented by SAVE, SEWA, ROAD and LEARN.



- LEARN: Focus on lobbying to get live registry of home based workers, minimum wages, and representation in city-planning as well as concentrate on unionizing and strengthening HBWs.
- ROAD: Address electricity and water scarcity issues in consultation with Bhubaneshwar Municipal Corporation (BMC)
- SEWA: Facilitate the provision of Unorganised Workers Identification Number (UWIN) cards (which have been issued to 100,000 workers in Ahmedabad), to HBWs of other states



## 5. HomeNet Indonesia



- Form a National Women Homeworkers Network
- Formulate policies for homeworkers at city, district, province and national levels
- Consolidate home based workers data at national level for policy advocacy



## 6. Maldives Authentic Craft Cooperative Society (MACCS)



- Link home based workers with various economic programs in fishery industry, agriculture and tourism.

## 7. Nepal was represented by SAATHI, CLASS NEPAL and SABAH Nepal



- Consultation and advocacy with employers, government contractors and unions for ratification of C177
- Lobbying with local authorities for basic amenities like electricity, water and drainage
- Dialogue and advocacy with census authorities, Ministry of Local Development and Federal Affairs and Municipalities to include specific questions in census / household inventory, with a view to capture data on home based workers in Nepal

## 8. HomeNet Pakistan, SABAH Pakistan and Home based Women Workers Federation represented Pakistan



- Ensuring that HBWs are included in provincial and national statistics
- Minimum wages of home based workers implemented across sectors
- Stronger and larger advocacy campaigns for the ratification of C 177, national and provincial policies for HBWs in Punjab and Sindh

## 9. Philippines was represented by Home Net Philippines which has a membership of 65,000 members from MBOs, NGOs and Cooperatives. They have participated actively in the crafting of Informal Economy Transitioning Act (IETA).



- Lobbying with the IETA for ratification of C177, the review of order No. 5 on "homework" and for the social pension fund
- Include informal sector workers in the Labour Code

## 10. Sri Lanka was represented by Jantakshan and SABAH Sri Lanka



- Collection of statistics on home based workers
- Action research on opportunities and challenges for HBWs in a transitional economy
- Making finance and technologies work for home based workers
- Inclusion of home based workers into the operationalisation process, post 2015 global development pathways

## 11. Thailand was represented by HomeNet Thailand (HNT) which has a membership of a 5000 members



- Institutionalise HNT and build capacities of second line leaders
- Work with WIEGO and National Statistics Office to incorporate data on 'work place' in their Labour Force Survey to get credible statistics on HBWs
- Advocate for effective enforcement of laws at the local level
- Collaborate with the Social Security Office to develop new benefits for insured persons under article 40 and advocate for homeworkers coverage in the existing social security system

## Ms. Reiko Tshunima, Specialist on Gender Equality and Women Workers at ILO dwelt on entry points to link issues of home based workers with the instruments of ILO.

(a) Non-standard forms of employment: ILO has proposed non-standard forms of employment as the new norm as compared to permanent tenured employment. The tripartite conclusion adopted in February 2015 recommends that all workers irrespective of contractual arrangements should be protected. It states that home-based workers should be incorporated in the category of dependent forms of self-employment which relates to sub-contracted workers.

(b) Recommendation #204: This proposes a transition of HBWs from the informal to formal economy where there is a scope to include self-employed home based workers as part of 'economic units owned by individuals working on their own accounts' as well as sub-contracted homeworkers under 'workers in unrecognized or unregulated employment relationships'. The strategy document on recommendation #204 provides support to 10 pilot champion countries to formulate and implement an integrated policy for transition from the informal to the formal economy. Nepal and India are part of these ten countries.

© Centenary Initiatives: To mark 100 years (2019), ILO is encouraging 'centenary conversations' around four themes: (1) decent jobs for all (2) work and society (3) the organization of work and production (4) the governance of work. Each conversation is to be synthesized into reports and publications. A general survey on Convention 177 should be undertaken in countries by ILO to understand the reasons for not ratifying the convention.

## Ms. Wilma Roos, Policy Adviser from FNV

Companies must be made responsible for the whole value chain; however, there are considerable apprehensions that must be understood and tackled. The multi-stakeholder dialogues initiated by the Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands which resulted in the first draft convention on the garment sector, was stated as an exemplary success story. There is an increasing need to support informal workers' rights in the value chain. Sectoral approaches need to be developed to learn how value chains are operating and how sourcing companies can be linked to the sub-contracting agencies. This should be supported with research to prove sub-contracting exists. She referred to the denial by the exporters and suppliers of having home-based workers in their supply chains which renders them invisible. FNV believes that companies must be made responsible for the whole value chain even though they might not be ready to shoulder this responsibility.

## INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Dr. Martha Chen chaired this session; in which 4 distinguished panelists from ILO, UN Women, FNV and SAARC Development Fund presented their perspectives on HBWs.



## Ms. Subhalakshmi Nandi, Programme Specialist, Women's Economic Empowerment, UN Women

There are multiple challenges associated with devising policies around value chains, especially where women homeworkers are part of multiple value chains as suppliers across countries. Goal Five of the recent Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) was a result of sustained global lobbying of member states and a review of global women's movements. It focuses on 3 aspects: voice, choice and security. Besides recognition, there is a need to invest in human capabilities, in skills, in women's access to technology and their security from violence - all of which are fundamental to women's well-being and empowerment. The Government of India's 'Make in India' initiative presents an opportunity to highlight the issues of women home based worker and their implications for production and trade. This is especially applicable in the garment, textiles, leather, and food-processing sectors, as women home based workers are present in large numbers in these sectors.

## Dr. Sunil Motiwal, CEO, SAARC Development Fund

He emphasized on how the regional movement of HBWs can grow within the SAARC region and receive more support from all member states. He assured the commitment of SDF to home-based workers in the region and invited proposals to SDF, particularly on micro finance which can help home-based workers and further the cause of regional integration and regional cooperation.

The session on voices of home based workers opened with Ela Ben and one delegate from each country coming on to the stage and lighting a floating candle symbolically inaugurating the 'Celebration' and exemplifying hope and light. Earlier in the day, delegates had put their handprints in different colours and written short messages on white sheets to express solidarity with the movement of home-based workers.

Legendary leader of the informal sector movement and the founder of the homebased workers movement said she wears homemade things and supports those who are poor and working in their homes as piece-rate workers. Campaigning towards the Homeworker's Convention in Geneva, she emphasized how statistics, provided by Martha of WIEGO, played a key role in convincing the various constituencies of the need for such a convention, which finally led to the passing of the Convention 177. She lauded the work of WIEGO in this regard and the power of statistics, and suggested they continue this work.

She mentioned that not only has the informal sector grown in the last couple of years but has resulted in an increase of Corporate power and a more vulnerable informal work force. Real economic growth is realized when the formal and informal sectors co-exist and work in tandem. According to her, the requirements of capital, management and labour cannot be emphasized enough to achieve the goals of a better and secure future for women home based workers. Organising and developing strong networks is the most essential component to establish the collective strength of organisations to make a dent in the current exploitative, discriminatory and disadvantaged condition of informal economy workers across the world.



## CELEBRATING HOME BASED WORKER'S 'VOICE', NETWORKS AND SOLIDARITY

'Knitting ball game' signifying our network, connectivity, solidarity and strength. The different colours of the wool/ribbon symbolized different trades, experiences and resources, all with a view to 'Celebrate Homebased Workers.



Smt. Ela R Bhatt was felicitated for her lifelong contribution to the movement



Handprints and short messages of delegates expressed their solidarity with the movement of home-based workers.



Participants singing 'We shall overcome' in different languages, expressing solidarity and determination.

# FIRST MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF HOMENET SOUTH ASIA 21st March 2016, Ahmedabad – India

The first meeting of HNSA's advisory board saw the participation of 14 board members 3 trustees and some special invitees. It was organised at a very appropriate time i.e. right before the 2016 International Labour Organization's (ILO) Conference, the theme of which is "Decent work in global supply chains". The one day meeting was divided into four sessions

- 1 Deliberation on the International Labour Conference and Global Supply Chains
- 2 Introductions and story sharing among representatives of different countries
- 3 Discussions on the organisational structure of HNSA and the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Board
- 4 Review of the 2016 Annual Plan of HNSA



## SESSION 1

### Deliberation on the International Labour Conference and Global Supply Chains

Dr. Martha Chen of WIEGO initiated the session. She highlighted that homeworkers are involved in global supply chains of multiple sectors and spoke of the two broad types of production models that home based workers are engaged in. The difficulties faced in tracing contractors, companies and suppliers that the home based workers work for, were discussed. She stressed on the issues faced by home based workers like low wages, unfair deductions, irregular work and delayed payments, along with the downloading of costs in the form of all non-wage costs of production, which are grossly unfair and have to be exposed.

Karin Pape from WIEGO revealed details of the 2016 International Labour Conference on the theme of 'Decent work in global supply chains', and informed the participants that the discussion will explore the issue from the perspectives of trade unions, employers

and governments. She mentioned that ILO has collated info on the subject and compiled a report available at [http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/105/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS\\_468097/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/105/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS_468097/lang--en/index.htm).

The key discussions at the conference would centre on the regulation and accountability of multinational enterprises, which have cross-country supply chains, at the end of which are homeworkers. According to her,

**Dr. Martha Chen of WIEGO stressed on the issues faced by home based workers like low wages, unfair deductions, irregular work and delayed payments, along with the downloading of costs in the form of all non-wage costs of production, which are grossly unfair and have to be exposed.**



while there are many regulations already in place, workers want soft laws to be converted into hard laws. Additionally, an important aspect to be considered is the lack of an international body to frame, regulate and enforce laws related to issues and problems faced by home-based workers across the world.

Chris Bonner from WIEGO presented information on the delegation attending ILC-2016. She stated that the delegation will include two persons each from South East Asia and South Asia and one each from Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa. SEWA has a formal status and voice in the union delegation. Since the discussions are not focussed on hbws alone, but rather on various facets of global supply chains, the delegation shall advocate home based worker rights in union discussions

Representing HNSA, Ms. Firoza Mehrotra acquainted participants with the status on the study of homeworkers in global supply chains in South Asia to be conducted by HomeNet South Asia. She mentioned that about 2 global supply chains / brands / sites each would be studied in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, with a view to understand where women homeworkers are located in these global supply chains, what work they do and under what conditions. Participants were asked to suggest trades in their respective countries to undertake the study.

Dr. Quratulain, co-chair, concluded the discussion by stating that globalisation is growing at a rapid pace, the home based workers movement is at a very crucial stage and the achievements of the last thirty years should be built on. She said she would like to look at the 'global supply chain' more as a 'life chain for homebased workers'. She highlighted the important role the advisory board and support organizations play in addressing the challenges faced by homebased workers.

This session ended with participants divided into three groups. The groups discussed the platform of demands to be presented at the ILC 2016 for the discussion on 'Decent Work for Homeworkers in Global Supply Chains'. The draft was developed based on various consultations and discussions over the last few years, the Asian Cities Declaration of May 2014 and the Delhi (Global) Declaration of Homebased Workers of February 2015.

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### Introductions and story sharing among representatives of different countries

**Members of the Advisory Board introduced themselves by sharing their stories on their motivations, achievements, learning, innovative interventions, programs and issues faced while working in the sector.**

Ms. Bijaya Rai Shrestha (SABAH Nepal) spoke of the relief work after the earthquake, while Mr. Aminur Rashid Ripon (Labour at Informal Economy (L.I.E)), mentioned that organizing HBWs is difficult but retaining them in networks is also an important and challenging task. Ms. Goma Pandey (Class Nepal) shared details on their initiative of social media marketing for HBWs in Nepal, which has helped them share information about themselves and their work.. Ms. Quazi Baby (Coalition of the Urban Poor (CUP), Bangladesh) felt marketing was the prime need of HBWs and Ms. Saira Feroze (Home Based Women Workers Federation (HBWWF) Pakistan) stressed on putting up a joint front and being persistent to achieve results for home based workers.

Ms. Manali (SEWA India) recounted the story of SEWA's 17 year long and persistent battle with the Provident Fund Commissioner to get dues for bidi workers and the problems faced by them in terms of identity creation. Ms Ume Laila Azhar (HomeNet, Pakistan) shared the struggles of setting up the organization and spoke of the tremendous learning she has had through HBW networks across South Asia. Mr. Karamat Ali (SABAH Pakistan) made a plea for regional solidarity in South Asia, including a 'South Asia Union' to tackle poverty and inequality. Ms. Dhaneshwari (ROAD India) shared how constant follow up, perseverance and solidarity, helped them liaison with the government on the grant assistance offered to parents of two children in cases where the second delivery is of twins. Mr. Jayanta (Chairperson, SABAH Sri Lanka) mentioned his keen interest in research to gather more details on HBWs, their work and lives. Ms. Sonam Choden (SABAH Bhutan) spoke of traditional skills that exist in remote areas and what must be done to ensure they remain visible and valued.



Ms. Firoza Mehrotra (HNSA) mentioned about her first introduction to HBWs and how the figures of '100 million HBWs globally and 50 million in South Asia' enthused her to work in this sector. Ms. Aminath Abdulla (Maldives Authentic Craft Cooperative Society (MACCS)) talked about the awareness campaigns of her organisation on the dying skill of making reed mats, while Ms. Zehra Khan (HBWWF Pakistan) shared her achievements of getting her organization registered as a federation of 3 trade unions of 4831 home based workers at the provincial as well as national level. She also spoke of their work in registering trade unions in Karachi for stitching workers and Zardozi workers. She narrated the instance of a Hyderabad bangle union comprising of male home based workers wanting to join her federation, which for her is a very significant achievement in a male dominated society. Mr. Ranga (Janatakshan, Sri Lanka) recounted how his organization had introduced the use of LED bulbs to homebased workers engaged with food processing to

cut down on high electricity costs and the related successes. He also narrated how a woman home based worker monopolized the sale of LED bulbs and exploited home-based workers who worked for her. Ms. Renana Jhabvala (President, HNSA) narrated three incidents explaining how electricity impacts the livelihoods of HBWs. She mentioned the benefits experienced by HBWS on adopting solar energy that has been observed to double their incomes. Dr. Qurat (Trustee of HNSA) related an entrepreneurship story of 4 women from Balochistan (a tribal backward region), and an act of courage of one of these entrepreneurs who went against her husband who was selling their daughters for money.

## SESSION 3

### Discussions on the organisational structure of HNSA and the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Board

Mr. Jingree, Trustee of HNSA chaired this session.

**Ms. Firoza Mehrotra of HNSA made a presentation on the Structure of HNSA, the need for an Advisory Board and the draft Terms of Reference of the Advisory Board.**

It was clarified that there is a thin line between duties and functions, with functions being broad-based while duties are micro level responsibilities. She pointed out that many members were in arrears of paying their membership fees and requested Advisory Board members to follow up with those organisations in their respective counties. Finally, after discussions on progress monitoring and the role of the Advisory Board in decision-making, the Board approved the Terms of Reference.



Ms. Manali Shah, SEWA

## SESSION 4

### Review of the 2016 Annual Plan of HNSA

The final session was chaired by Ms. Renana Jhabvala, at which Ms. Firoza Mehrotra and Ms. Sapna Joshi presented the draft Annual Plan (Jan 2016 to March 2017) of HNSA.

**The session addressed the limited project funding available to HNSA and focus areas of work which centered around 3 main functions – expansion of HNSA's membership and networking, programs to further the cause of home based workers and strengthening HNSA as a network.**

The proposed outcomes and activities as given in the agenda papers were discussed and members were requested to share possible ways of collaborations, organisational value addition and contributions to the overall achievement of outlined outcomes.

The meeting ended with a traditional garba dance by all participants and a vote of thanks by Sapna, Regional Coordinator of HNSA, to all the participants for their constructive and useful inputs.

Advisory board report can be accessed at: <http://www.homenetsouthasia.net/>

# REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY SUPPORT FOR AFFECTED HOMEBASED WORKERS-NEPAL

Responding to the devastating earthquake, which hit Nepal on April 26th 2015, HNSA undertook a rapid assessment study with the support of its member organizations in Nepal, to learn the need of home based workers who were victims of this tragedy.

The study revealed that these women were left in a pitiable condition owing to not only losing their relatives and families, but also their equipment, sources of livelihood and houses. HNSA began relief and humanitarian efforts for home-based workers in partnership with the American Jewish Foundation and initiated a rehabilitation program for its members in Nepal.

Key interventions of the program included

- Establishment of a community center and a childcare center
- On-job-training programs for livelihood enhancement
- WASH trainings
- Counseling sessions

After completion of one year of the project a focus group discussion was organised by SABAH Nepal, SAATHI, CLASS Nepal and Home-based Workers Concern Society on April 26th 2015. Interventions undertaken were discussed with the beneficiaries, who acknowledged the positive influence the programs have had on their lives and livelihoods.

The discussion validated that the program has been a blessing for home-based workers in Nepal. According to them, the community center has emerged as a platform to showcase their products and develop market linkages through regular exhibitions and visits of buyers, thereby increasing their bargaining power. The center also serves as a meeting place for home-based workers to interact, share and exchange knowledge and ideas, and access information on government programs and schemes. Since the community center arranges skill development and on-the-job training programs for home-based workers, the women stated that they are able to learn new skills, increase their productivity, build individual capacities, understand various market opportunities and get regular incomes.



**Ramila,**  
Homebased worker,  
Nepal

*"The childcare center provides our children with a supportive, safe and hygienic environment where they can access education and recreational facilities while their mothers are at work. This helps us to focus on our work without having to worry about the safety and progress of our children."*

To avoid post earthquake related epidemics and illness, awareness programs on health and hygiene, sanitation and water, waste management, menstrual hygiene and uterus prolapse were conducted for the women. The sessions were greatly appreciated by them and they all believed that it has had a positive effect on their lives. The discussion also revealed that the counseling and interactive sessions organised for women to deal with loss and grief and gain support and encouragement from each other has helped to build their resilience and strength.

# EVENTS REPRESENTATION & RESEARCH



## THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Ms. Renana Jhabvala, National Coordinator of SEWA and Chairperson of HomeNet South Asia, attended the first inaugural meeting of the High level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. The panel is backed by UN Women, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, with support of the UK Department of International Development. The panel was commissioned in the context of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. It aimed to provide recommendations on improving economic outcomes for women and to promote women leadership in driving sustainable, inclusive and environmentally sensitive economic growth. Addressing a room of prominent leaders from governments, industry, academia and civil society, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the group has tremendous potential to collectively lead the charge for women's economic empowerment.



## THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

A delegation from WIEGO and HomeNet South Asia would be attending the International Labour Organisation conference scheduled from 29th May to 10th June. The theme of the conference is "Decent work in global supply chains". Discussions will centre around regulation of multinational enterprises who have cross country supply chains, and their engagement and impact on homebased workers. Fact sharing based on research and deliberation on the status and involvement of homebased workers in global supply chains, will be undertaken with worker groups, representing homebased workers.



## AAWAZ WOMEN COMMUNITY LEADERS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Ms. Chandni Joshi, Enforcer of HomeNet South Asia was invited to attend the two-day event held on 27-28th January 2016 in Islamabad. The conference was a pre-cursor to the 2016 SAARC summit scheduled to be held in Pakistan. The objective of the conference was to initiate discussions among SAARC member states on women community leaders and strengthen regional cooperation for empowerment of women leaders including community leaders. It also sought to identify and promote the role of intermediaries like civil society and others, to cultivate synergies for common goals for the empowerment of women. The two-day conference led to two chief recommendations – a) Formation of a regional alliance of women community leaders and, b) Setting up an SDG desk at the SAARC secretariat.



## STUDY ON GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

The study focuses on homebased workers of Nepal, India and Pakistan to understand the supply chains in which they are working. Key areas of enquiry include mapping the global supply chains of seven international brands (IKEA, VERO MODA, Hello Kitty, KAPPA, FILA, YD and Lindex) and understanding how workers are engaged in the supply chains and in what capacities. Questionnaires were scheduled with multiple stakeholders like suppliers, industries and home based workers. Detailed focus group discussions were also organised to understand homebased worker perspectives. The findings of the research shall be presented at the International Labour Conference in Geneva this year. The reported will be compiled and updated on [www.homenetsouthasia.net](http://www.homenetsouthasia.net) in mid June.