

## WIEGO Newsletter: June 2011

Covering the period July 2010–June 2011

### Highlights

- **Victory for Domestic Workers on the Global Stage: ILO Convention Adopted!**
- **Assessing the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Informal Workers**
- **Waste Pickers: Raising Voices and Visibility**
- **Setting the Research Agenda**

### Programme Headlines

- **Global Projects**
- **Regional Activities**
- **Special Initiatives**
- **Board Meeting**
- **Team News**
- **Communication, Dissemination & Outreach**
- **Publications & Presentations**



*Domestic Workers and Organizers  
Celebrate Victory With ILO  
Director General Juan Somavia*

photo by Sofia Treviño

## Highlights

### **Victory for Domestic Workers on the Global Stage: ILO Convention Adopted!**

History was made on June 16 when governments, employers and workers from around the world adopted the Convention and accompanying Recommendation on Decent Work for Domestic Workers at the 100th International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva, Switzerland.

This victory is a leap forward for an estimated 50–100 million people worldwide who work in the homes of their employers. The Convention recognizes the “significant contribution of domestic workers to the global economy” and says this work is “undervalued and invisible, and is mainly carried out by women and girls, many of whom are migrants or members of disadvantaged communities.” Support at the ILC was overwhelming, with more than 83 per cent of votes cast in favour of adoption.

The momentous event was the result of years of coordinated effort, which saw the formation of an International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) in 2008. The IDWN is made up of domestic workers’ unions and associations from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, North America and Europe.

WIEGO is proud to have played a role in the formation of the IDWN and in its campaign for this Convention. A collaborative partnership between WIEGO and the International Union of Food and Allied Workers (IUF)—the first formal collaboration between a global union federation and an NGO—established the IDWN Project. Support provided through this project included helping raise funds and providing fund-raising training. Karin Pape, WIEGO's Regional Advisor, Europe, was seconded to serve as the Interim Coordinator for the IDWN. WIEGO also helped domestic worker organizations to mobilize and network; advocated with trade unions, governments and employers to get support for the Convention and for domestic workers' representation at the ILC; and fostered alliance-building with supportive NGOs and researchers.

At both ILC 2010 and ILC 2011, WIEGO provided financial and technical support to IDWN delegates who participated in the tripartite discussions. WIEGO team members—including researchers, trade unionists and communications/media specialists—were in Geneva to provide technical support and to share in the excitement.

The campaign for domestic workers' rights will continue. This Convention places a duty on governments to ensure domestic workers enjoy fundamental rights and effective protection against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence. Domestic workers will continue their organizing efforts at the national level to advocate for ratification of the Convention and its implementation in the laws of each country.

For more:

- visit the IDWN blog at <http://idwnilo.wordpress.com/> for news and pictures from the exciting ILC victory
- follow the IDWN on [Twitter](#) (@IDWN2011)
- see the text of the [Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers](#)
- read the pamphlet IDWN prepared for the ILC: [Myths and Realities about Domestic Workers](#)

read the news on the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) website ([www.ituc-csi.org](http://www.ituc-csi.org)): New International Convention on Domestic Workers Rights Must Be Respected by Governments.

### **Assessing the Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Informal Workers**

When the international financial community began to talk about recovery from recession in 2010, it spoke only of formal economic measurements. WIEGO and its Inclusive Cities partners were able to augment the discussion by disseminating findings from two rounds of research into the impact of this crisis on informal workers and their families.

Findings from the first study, completed in 2009, were captured in [No Cushion to Fall Back On: The Global Economic Crisis and Informal Workers](#). Soon after completing that report, the partners undertook a second round of research designed to assess lingering impacts of the crisis and to look for signs of recovery. This research also sought to identify and prioritize policy responses and other interventions.

Under the guidance of WIEGO project coordinator Zoe Horn and a technical advisory committee, a second round of interviews and focus groups were held from March–July 2010 with home-based workers, street vendors and waste pickers in 13 locales across nine African, Asian and Latin American countries. This was mainly the same sample of individuals who had, in the first round, reported experiencing declining demand, increased competition and limited access to emergency or recovery measures. The second round research suggested there was a lag in recovery for

informal workers, despite improvements. Some respondents reported growing demand over the previous year, but many continued to face low levels of sales or orders. Incomes had risen for some in absolute terms to mid-2009 levels, but not to pre-crisis levels and not at the rate of rising living costs. High inflation—affecting food and fuel prices in particular—intensified pressure on family budgets. Respondents continued to restrict their families' diets. School withdrawals, not common in the first round of study, appeared to be on the rise by round 2.

While the global economic crisis brought new challenges, it also exacerbated existing problems. Many informal workers were already living in a state of "crisis" and struggling to provide for their families. The round 2 report, [Coping with Crises: Lingering Recession, Rising Inflation, and the Informal Workforce](#) (published March 2011), contains recommendations made by participants and argues for a new stance that places informal workers at the centre of economic policies, urban planning, and social protection measures. By sharing their experiences, the 219 study participants provided important perspectives to the global discussion.

Reports on findings from both rounds of the study were widely disseminated and received considerable attention. For example, the first round findings were referenced in the UN Secretary General's report *Voices of the Vulnerable: The Economic Crisis from the Ground Up*, and findings were presented in articles featured by the *Women's Policy Journal of Harvard* (vol. 7) and *Gender & Development* (vol. 18, no. 2). Articles based on the study's findings were also selected for inclusion in three books: *Gender and the Economic Crisis* (Oxfam/Practical Action Publishing); *Poverty and Sustainable Development in Asia: Impacts and Responses to the Global Economic Crisis* (Asian Development Bank); and *The Global Economic Crisis in Latin America* (Routledge).

Round 2 study findings were covered in articles by the Agence France-Press (AFP) ([World's poorest workers fall further behind: study](#)) and the Global Herald ([Global Economic Recovery Provides Little Relief to Informal Workers](#)), producing press coverage in Australia, Borneo, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, UK and the USA. As well, the research found an audience through blogs, Twitter and Facebook postings.

WIEGO was asked by UNICEF-led Recovery with a Human Face Network to submit content to its ongoing e-discussions, reaching 1,500 members. In July 2011, Zoe Horn will present the study findings in Perth, Australia at the World Planning Schools Congress, a significant opportunity to influence the curricula for urban planning students. *Coping with Crises and the Global Economic Crisis Study model* will also be highlighted in conferences in Montreal and Ottawa, Canada this summer.

WIEGO and its Inclusive Cities partners have decided to carry out a study of the state of the urban informal workforce in cities around the world on a regular basis. This research will provide an empirical foundation on which to build a local, national, and global call for the integration of urban livelihoods and informal workers into urban planning and economic policies.

### **Waste Pickers: Raising Voices and Visibility**

Over the past year, the newly-formed Global Alliance of Waste Pickers and Allies, of which WIEGO is a founding member, has brought waste pickers from Latin America, Asia and Africa together with support organizations and environmentalists to raise the visibility of this sector's significant contribution to the environment and their fight for real solutions to climate change.

The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers and Allies has taken part in several international climate change conferences and events, including the [Tianjin Climate Change Conference](#) in October 2010. At the [United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancun](#) (COP 16), December 2010, the delegation of waste pickers garnered media attention through a press conference and participated in two Klimaforum events.

COP 16 allowed the waste pickers to reiterate the demands articulated at COP 15 in 2009, when they met with key climate change negotiators, including Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) authorities, and asked them to:

- recognize the crucial role that the informal recycling sector plays in climate change mitigation and a healthy economy
- approve a fund to invest in resource recovery programs that are directly accessible by waste pickers and other informal economy groups
- exclude waste disposal technologies (such as incinerators) from the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and other climate funds, as these both pollute and destroy valuable, reclaimable materials, taking income from workers

In June 2011, a delegation of waste pickers is in Bonn, Germany to take part in [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (UNFCCC), a two-week conference essential to advancing the general climate negotiations. The delegation is arguing for, among other things, the inclusion of a true accounting of emissions from incinerator burns. GAIA has also made public submissions to the Transitional Committee to advocate for waste pickers' access to the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

For more information and updates, visit Waste Pickers and Climate Change on the [Inclusive Cities website](#) or follow waste picker activities on the [Waste Pickers and Climate Change blog](#).

### Setting the Research Agenda

In March 2011, WIEGO convened a two-day international Agenda-Setting Research Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. Sixty researchers from 17 countries took part in the conference that focused on informality from the perspective of different disciplines, countries, themes, and sectors. From all accounts it was a great success, in part because the design called for reflections rather than presentations, and in part because the participants were willing to reflect individually beforehand and collectively at the conference on a common set of questions and issues. The calibre of the participants and the quality of debate were very high, leading to an important set of questions and themes for future research.

The conference generated interest in further collaboration—to be facilitated by an internal interactive website that WIEGO will set up and manage—and in specific follow-up research projects. As well, ideas for future statistical analyses and related data collection emerged. Ultimately, the conference helped crystallize a research agenda around informality not only for WIEGO but for the broader group, and drew a new group of researchers into the WIEGO network.

### Programme Activities

#### Organization & Representation

The programme continued to meet with informal workers, their representatives and organizations to help them gain strength and to build linkages.

#### Workshop to Enhance Membership-Based Organizations (MBOs)

In March 2011, WIEGO's Organization and Representation Programme partnered with HomeNet Thailand to organize an MBO Workshop in Bangkok. The theme, Organizing Informal Workers: Building and Strengthening Membership-Based Organizations, drew 50 participants (32 women, 18 men) from 24 countries to exchange experiences about building democratic organizations.

The event helped WIEGO strengthen its relationship with sector networks and some affiliated organizations, while providing an important opportunity for MBOs to network with each other. The day before, WIEGO offered a fund-raising seminar for interested participants.

### **Ghana-Liberia Project**

A cooperative partnership has been established between the Ghana Trades Union Congress, the Liberian Labor Congress, StreetNet International, and WIEGO to provide support to the organizational development and capacity of the National Petty Trader Union of Liberia, which represents street vendors and market traders in Monrovia. In October 2010, Dave Spooner presented at a workshop organized by Realizing Rights in Liberia, and met with key players. In May 2011, together with these partners, WIEGO co-organized a workshop in Monrovia on Organizing Street Vendors in Liberia, which fostered stronger organization among Liberian street vendors and established plans for long-term partnership support.

### **Relationship Building**

- Cooperation has been strengthened between WIEGO, ILO ACTRAV and the International Cooperative Alliance to assist the development of informal economy workers' unions and cooperatives. Other work with trade unions and cooperatives has included strategy development and a draft resolution developed for ITUC Congress with WIEGO members; links built with national trade union centres (including DGB in Germany and AFL-CIO in USA); partnership discussions with the International Cooperative Alliance; and a visit by Programme Director Chris Bonner to KKP KP (Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat) in Pune, India in November 2010.
- The Organization and Representation Programme is allocating resources to help in the development of HomeNet International. This includes working with HomeNet South Asia to engage a coordinator.

### **Law and Informal Economy Project**

This project aims to aid the development of an enabling legal and regulatory environment for informal workers, especially women, and to build the capacity of informal worker organizations to engage effectively in processes leading to their legal empowerment. In India, a review of how laws and regulations affect four groups of informal workers was completed. The development of a web microsite, a conceptual note on law and the informal economy, and a listing of court judgments have been undertaken. In Colombia, reports have been done on informal mining and on waste pickers. Now a three-country study on Law and the Working Poor has begun in Thailand, Ghana and Peru, coordinated by two lawyers who were involved in the India pilot.

### **Solidarity Center Project on Organizing in the Informal Economy**

WIEGO's International Coordinator, Marty Chen, was approached by the Solidarity Center to assist with research on what is known and should be known about organizing in the informal economy. The research is part of a larger five-year Global Technical Program of the Solidarity Center, of which organizing in the informal economy is one theme. Initial discussions have taken place between the Solidarity Center, WIEGO, Rutgers University, and the International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA), and a list of publications/papers for a literature review has been compiled. A related conference will take place in December 2011.

## Statistics

The Statistics Programme continues to work to develop statistics on informal employment/informal sector and their contribution to GDP as an integral part of official labour statistics by:

- providing technical advice on data collection, tabulation and analysis through its membership on the International Technical Advisory Committee of the project Poverty and Growth: Labour Markets in China and India. This contributes to ensuring that data collection and tabulation, especially in the China component of the project, are consistent with the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) recommendations.
- promoting improved and greater availability of statistics on informal employment and employment in the informal sector in national surveys by providing technical advice to countries, regional and international organizations, and ad hoc groups.
- preparing text for the new WIEGO website, including material on Statistical Concepts, Definitions and Methods, as well as on methods for measuring types of informal employment, that will serve as an essential, user-friendly resource while offering the underlying ICLS and International Labour Organization (ILO) recommendations.

To meet its goal of preparing statistics and analyses that are readily accessible to researchers, policymakers and advocates, the Statistics Programme:

- engaged in the planning and preparation for the update of the 2002 ILO report, Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture. This joint ILO/WIEGO report, to be published in October 2011, will be the preeminent source of international statistics on informal employment and the informal economy.
- provided technical advice to the Inclusive Cities Project in the development of statistics on informal employment in urban areas, within specific cities, and on specific categories of informal workers (home-based workers, waste pickers, and street vendors).

## Global Trade

### Fair Trade for Women Producers

This project set out to highlight the key success factors in organizing women informal producers for export production, and how others can learn from those successes. It allowed women producers to tell their own stories through a facilitated process of action research that included photo journals, murals, film, songs, embroidery and words.

The Global Trade Programme completed case studies in seven countries, where WIEGO entered into a partnership agreement with fair trade producers:

1. India – Fair Trade Forum India (FTFI)
2. Kenya – Kenya Fair Trade Network (KEFAT)
3. Mexico – Ya'Muntsi Behna, a cooperative of indigenous women artisans and Ñepi Behña, their support organization
4. Nepal – Fair Trade Group Nepal (FTGN)
5. Nicaragua – PRODECOOP, a second level cooperative of coffee farmers
6. Tanzania – Tanzania Network for Fair Trade (TANFAT)
7. Uganda – National Association of Women's Organizations in Uganda (NAWOU)

Policy Round Tables were held during February-April 2011 in most of the countries. In Mexico, a sharing, learning and dissemination workshop was held in March, visits were made to three remote communities, and an open-air dissemination and sharing forum, attended by 275 people, was held in April. A further workshop was held in Nicaragua with representatives from eight cooperatives. In May, another workshop was held in Mombasa, Kenya with representatives from partners in India, Kenya, Nepal, Tanzania and Uganda. There, sharing of information was particularly important in helping women see similarities across countries and share fair trade strategies.

The Mombasa workshop was held on the eve of the biennial global conference of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO). At the conference, WIEGO organizers presented on the project and ran two workshops. Documentaries made as part of the project in India were played (these had previously been screened in India and Central America). The films stimulated much discussion about the project and questions about the lives of poor women workers and the role of fair trade. Significantly, this was the first time gender had been on the WFTO agenda. During the closed regional meeting, project partners from India and Uganda called for the introduction of a gender resolution within the WFTO, which was voted on and approved at the plenary. Our project blog – <http://fairtrade4womenproducers.wordpress.com/> – provides videos and more information.

### **Other Global Trade Activities**

- Global Trade Director Elaine Jones sits on the Board of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), allowing WIEGO to contribute to the development of new ways of working to make ETI more effective. This has resulted in a shift from thematic programming to a sector approach, within which specific supply chains will be the focus of activity. WIEGO's contribution to programme work is to ensure that informal workers are identified and included in specific supply chains.
- As part of its participation in the ETI, WIEGO engaged in an experimental project with a High Street retailer of fast fashion to analyze the impact of purchasing practices on working conditions in one factory in Turkey. WIEGO then worked with the company to establish a series of work-streams with a team of "ethical champions" who came up with solutions to change the way business was done.
- A worker education manual for homeworkers has been produced and is available for download and printing from the WIEGO website. [We Are Workers Too!](#) is designed to be a first stepping-stone towards helping home-based workers to organize themselves.

### **Social Protection**

#### **Conference of the International Social Security Association**

In December 2010, WIEGO's Social Protection Director, Francie Lund, played a large role at the Conference of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) held in Cape Town. The ISSA, which resides inside the ILO, is the international association of mainly official social security organizations. In 2010, its biennial General Assembly was hosted by the Department of Social Development, South Africa, and was positioned as a World Social Security Forum. About 1,000 people from 110 countries attended. Lund chaired a plenary session, "Addressing the Challenge of Extending Social Security Coverage," designed to identify how the ILO and ISSA could better work together to address the "global social floor" adopted by UN agencies in response to the economic crisis. She also facilitated the panel of Ministers of Social Security/Labour on social protection policy reforms and served as a panellist on a parallel ILO session to present the WIEGO approach to social protection.

### **Social Protection for South African Workers**

Francie Lund is serving as lead consultant on an Oxford Policy Management study for the South African government: "Incorporating Informal Workers in Reforms to Retirement Provision Policy in South Africa." Her role includes identifying informal economy literature and perspectives; monitoring and editing research reports; design and oversight of focus group discussions with informal workers (done through Asiye eTafuleni, a South African NGO partner of WIEGO); and oversight of interpretation of results. The South African government has asked for further research with other sectors of informal workers.

### **Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Project**

WIEGO's Social Protection Programme has launched an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) project in Ghana, Tanzania, India, Brazil and Peru, as well as a microsite about the OHS project on WIEGO's website.

A draft case study on the Ghana National Health Insurance Scheme, the first in a planned series on promising approaches to health insurance for the working poor, has been completed by Laura Alfes. Early participatory research indicated the MBOs lacked knowledge about local government and their rights in relation to sanitation and health services, and had a lack of focus. "Practice Policy Dialogues" were held in Ghana between WIEGO and the Institute for Local Government Studies (ILGS), attended by StreetNet Ghana Alliance, Makola Market, Indigenous Caterers Association of Ghana, and local government officials. Workers learned more about structures in local government, and how to interact with authorities. ILGS has sought formal collaboration with WIEGO. The OHS Project has given informal workers a focus to organize around and helped them connect with other organizations. Reports from Dorcas Ansah (the facilitator working with the MBOs) indicate increasing participation, and enthusiasm about the role WIEGO plays, as well as growing worker confidence in challenging authorities. In Tanzania, participatory research was completed in collaboration with three unions: Conservation, Hotel, Domestic and Allied Workers Union (CHODAWU) with regard to domestic workers; Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO) to reach street vendors; and Tanzanian Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (TPAWU) to reach informal agricultural workers. The research gave the more opportunity for union workers to connect with informal workers' groups they have been working to organize. Vicky Kanyoka, the Regional Coordinator for Africa of the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) and WIEGO's OHS Project Coordinator in Tanzania, used the research report on OHS and domestic workers at the ILO discussions on the Domestic Workers Convention in June 2011. As well, background papers were researched and written, and a draft case study of female seaweed farmers in Zanzibar was done.

In Brazil, the PISAT (workers health research programme in the Federal University of Bahia's department of health) has focused energy on informal workers, who have for some years been acknowledged as important in the economy. Specific studies had previously been done by Vilma Santana and colleagues, but the OHS project brought this into sharper focus. Advocacy work was carried out in collaboration with the Salvador municipality on street vendors and hearing loss. Participatory research with domestic workers, street traders and waste pickers has been written into a final report, and feedback meetings have been held with MBOs and members of the national/local government health services. As well, WIEGO produced two background papers.

In India, as in Brazil, the OHS Project is feeding into established OHS/informal worker programmes, including those initiated by KKP and SEWA to design protective tools for wastepickers, papad rollers, embroiderers, and agricultural workers. Professional needs assessments conducted by the staff at the Maharashtra Institute of Technology have been done with these groups; results will help define interventions. SEWA posters on health risks faced by agricultural workers were field tested with the women workers in Viramgam Taluka for appropriateness. Education on primary health and reproductive health care was conducted for two groups of waste pickers in

Giridharnagar in Ahmedabad city; health education was also provided to adolescent girls from this area on primary health and hygiene, tuberculosis and reproductive health.

In Peru, where the project is in its infancy, an institutional analysis paper on OHS for Informal workers is in draft form.

A mid-term project Learning Meeting was held in Durban in May 2011. The researchers and coordinators from the five countries, as well as some WIEGO staff and advisers, came together south of Durban for three days to share, at a deep level, learning from the country projects so far, and to adapt their plans in line with the new learning. They were joined by two staff from Asiye eTafuleni, and Poonsap Tulaphan from HomeNet Thailand (a WIEGO member that has done a lot of OHS work). Everyone agreed it was a dynamic and exciting opportunity for cross-country learning. Watch for the third newsletter of the OHS project, due out in mid-July.

### **Joint Learning Network for Extending Universal Health Coverage to the Informal Sector**

Francie Lund attended a meeting of the [Joint Learning Network](#) for Extending Universal Health Coverage to the Informal Sector, June 7-10, in Mombasa, Kenya. The JLN is a network of countries who have already established universal health schemes, or are interested in doing so. WIEGO's interest in this particular meeting was the focus on informal workers, and the political and technical problems of improving their access to health services, as has happened in Ghana, Thailand and India. Francie Lund was also invited to contribute to the [JNL Blog](#).

## **Urban Policies**

### **Statistical Profiles and Case Studies**

In concert with the Statistics Programme, Urban Policies commissioned statistical profiles and detailed case studies to estimate the size and contribution of urban informal work both in countries and specific cities.

- Argentinean Labour Economist Valeria Esquivel completed a research report on Buenos Aires.
- Using the revised labour force survey data, Debbie Budlender, a South African statistician, updated Gabi Will's analysis of the South African Informal economy that had been published in the Urban Policies Research Report series in early 2010.
- Drawing on data work that James Heintz did, as well as her own analysis of the South African case, Budlender also completed fact sheets on informal employment in Brazil, Kenya, Ghana and South Africa.
- Jeemol Unni did a preliminary analysis of Indian data using the national sample survey. Dr G. Raveendran assisted in compiling the final set of tables.
- The French institute DIAL completed analyses of the informal sector and economy in 11 developing cities on which they had data. This contributes significantly to knowledge about city level informal work.

Additional fact sheets are underway and in-depth country studies have been commissioned.

### **Sector Work**

*Home-based workers* - Sector Specialist Shalini Sinha and Ratna Sudarshan of the Institute of Social Studies Trust in India collected and synthesized all existing research on home-based work in South Asia, and compiled it in a research report that also identifies research gaps for policy and advocacy work. Shalini has also been documenting SEWA interventions to support home-based workers.

*Street vendors* - Sector Specialist Sally Roever oversaw the compilation of a digital database on street trade in Latin America. She also completed two briefing notes documenting innovative organizational practice in Peru, as well as a guide on how to conduct street vendor censuses (see Publications & Presentations). Sally and Caroline Skinner have also sat on the reference group for StreetNet's census of street traders in the Durban Metropolitan area. As well, an analysis of the implementation of India's national street trading policy was written by Shalini Sinha.

*Waste pickers* - Sector Specialist Sonia Dias drafted a research report on Brazil, where municipalities have incorporated waste collectors into municipal waste management schemes. She has also written four briefing notes on inclusive policies, programmes and laws in Belo Horizonte and disseminated this information through presentations (see Publications & Presentations).

*Weekly news round-ups:* Since October 2010, Sally Roever and Sonia Dias have been doing weekly on-line tracking of news about street vendors and waste pickers worldwide in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Updates are posted on [www.Inclusivecities.org](http://www.Inclusivecities.org) and [www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org), and the Inclusive Cities blog, [www.inclusiveCities.net](http://www.inclusiveCities.net). Alerts regarding availability are sent via Twitter.

### **The Impact of Mega Events on the Urban Informal Workforce**

Caroline Skinner and Glen Robbins in South Africa, and Shalini Sinha in India (assisted by Sriranjini Vadiraj), monitored the impact of the Soccer World Cup in South Africa and the Commonwealth Games in Delhi respectively. James Duminy compiled a comprehensive literature review on the impact of mega events with a particular focus on the working poor (not yet published). In support of StreetNet's World Class Cities Campaign in Brazil, Sally Roever drafted a background note describing the urban policy environment for street vending in the 12 FIFA host cities for 2014, while Sonia Dias facilitated a range of meetings for the first trip to Brazil of StreetNet's international campaign coordinator.

### **Enhancing Urban Planning Curricula**

Urban Policies has undertaken a process to better influence planning curricula. Professor Vanessa Watson, head of the University of Cape Town's Planning School, produced a report outlining trends and identifying how to influence the development of planning curricula that better equips the next generation to manage and support the informal economy. James Duminy completed an annotated bibliography identifying key literature on planning and informality. Caroline Skinner has drafted an informal economy toolkit for the African Planning Schools Association (AAPS), which has over 40 members across the continent. In the upcoming year, the toolkit will be refined and a monitoring process put in place with schools using the materials.

WIEGO has signed a memorandum of understanding with AAPS to consolidate and extend existing collaboration, and has also facilitated discussions between StreetNet and AAPS to foster collaboration.

### **Dissemination and Networking**

Urban Policies' institutional networking efforts have concentrated on UN Habitat and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), which promotes democratic local governance and has a membership from 40 countries. With UN Habitat, Inclusive Cities/WIEGO has observer status on new World Urban Campaign Committee. Alison Brown represented WIEGO at the UN-HABITAT Governing Council Meeting in March 2011. She also attended the 2011 CLGF Congress and presented on "Mainstreaming the Informal Economy: Local Government and IE Workers," which will be included as a chapter in the book 21<sup>st</sup> Century Local Government. A presentation on the Inclusive Cities network was also made to the main conference.

## **Regional Activities: Latin America**

Carmen Roca, WIEGO's Regional Advisor for Latin America, has been coordinating a project called "Strengthening the Voice of Informal Workers in Social Policy Decisions in Latin America." Designed to promote social policies that better address the needs of the poor by integrating representatives of informal workers into policy and decision-making, and expanding their organizational capacity, the project was initiated in Peru in 2009, Mexico in 2010 and Colombia in 2011.

## **Special Initiatives**

### **Cornell-SEWA-WIEGO Exposure Dialogue Programme (EDP)**

In March 2011, members of the EDP group returned to Durban, South Africa, where they spent one day and night with the original hosts they had stayed with in 2007. Subsequently, the EDP Group decided the Cornell-SEWA-WIEGO EDP had been successful in bridging the differences in perspective on labour and poverty of neo-classical economists and more heterodox thinkers, and that they would not continue the EDPs, but rather bring them to a satisfactory close with the publication in 2012 of an edited volume of the technical notes and personal reflections written by the EDP group members after the five Exposure Dialogues and two technical dialogues. While in Durban, the group also attended the official launch of South Africa SEWA (SASEWA), an MBO of working poor women in the informal economy that was started by former leaders of SEWU (the Self-Employed Women's Union).

### **WIEGO Board Meeting**

The first physical meeting of WIEGO's new Board, elected at the General Assembly in April 2010, took place in October in Madrid. Reports on programmes, activities and financial matters were followed by a discussion on future strategic direction for WIEGO. There was a wide ranging discussion about the strategic issues to be reviewed, including:

- the need to continue to build strong networks of membership-based organizations of the working poor (MBOPs)
- the desire to forge stronger collaborative links with the formal trade union movement
- the need to clearly define the alliances we strive to make
- the desire to create a network of researchers
- the need to continually define WIEGO's position and role in regard to emerging issues relating to informality around the globe
- sustainability and succession issues within the organization

A working group was formed to review strategic questions, analyze the case studies from the recent external review, consider an appropriate internal review process and suggest alternative scenarios for the future of WIEGO. This working group will work closely with a parallel staff working group and report back to the Board as it looks toward a strategic planning session in 2012.

The next physical Board meeting will take place in October 2011. However, the Board met by teleconference in February 2011 and will meet again by teleconference in July 2011.

## WIEGO Team News

### Awards

In 2011, Martha Chen, WIEGO's International Coordinator and a lecturer in public policy at Harvard Kennedy School, was awarded a Padma Shri by the Government of India in recognition of her work around issues of employment, poverty, and gender in India. Padma Awards are India's highest civilian awards.

### Additions and Transitions

In mid-2010, the WIEGO Secretariat said goodbye to Mary Beth Graves, who had been the Operations Manager at the WIEGO Secretariat for five years, and to Szelenia Gray (both moved on to other positions at Harvard University). In July 2010, Julia Beth Martin joined as Secretariat Manager. Karen McCabe, who has been an intern in the Secretariat for the past year, has just been hired as Secretariat Assistant.

In mid-2010, the WIEGO UK office said goodbye to Dave Spooner, who had been the Operations Manager, and to Susan Cosgrove, who had been the Financial Controller. In September 2010, Mike Bird joined as Operations Manager. Manda Mistry served as Interim Financial Controller for most of the 2010/11 financial year until Jacqui Fendall came aboard as Financial Controller in December 2010. Henrial Yaidoo and Sarah Berry also joined as Finance Officers in 2010.

Other new WIEGO Team Members include Ricardo Valencia Ramírez, Latin America Regional Coordinator of Waste Pickers, and Leslie Vryenhoek, Copy Editor and Writer.

Carmen Roca and Caroline Skinner will be on maternity leave in the coming months.

## Communication, Dissemination & Outreach

WIEGO has expanded its Communications team's capacity to help meet its goals of producing user-friendly publications and improving how it disseminates information. In addition to this WIEGO newsletter, produced twice annually, and the Inclusive Cities newsletter, an OHS project newsletter was also issued in October, 2010 and again in February, 2010 to all stakeholders. As well, a newsletter for and about our institutional members and other MBOs is being distributed three times per year to facilitate the exchange of information, successes and events. Contact Julia Martin ([julia\\_martin@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:julia_martin@hks.harvard.edu)) at the WIEGO Secretariat if you wish to receive this MBO newsletter, or have news to contribute.

These newsletters are available at [www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org).

Ongoing translation of materials has allowed key materials to be introduced simultaneously in multiple languages. As well, we have integrated interpretation as needed at all WIEGO-sponsored meetings. Subsequent bi-annual issues of this newsletter will be produced in English, French and Spanish.

WIEGO's website ([www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org)) is currently being redesigned with a more appealing look, user-friendly navigation, and revised and updated content. The new website will have more comprehensive information on the informal economy, including the history of the concept, statistical measurement of informal employment, poverty, growth, and economic crises. Information on the size and significance, challenges and current organizing activities of many occupational groups are also being incorporated.

New social media vehicles such as blogs and Twitter are allowing WIEGO to share information with far-flung partners/members. This has included expanding the “voice” of our members and partners by pushing through what they post. Follow us on Twitter: @WIEGOGlobal and @InclusiveCities. Read the [Inclusive Cities](#) blog.

## Publications & Presentations

### Publications

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- . "The Informal Workforce in a Global Economy: Pre-Crisis Trends and Post-Crisis Prospects." Georgetown Labor Center, November 2010.
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#### Contact WIEGO

WIEGO Secretariat  
Harvard Kennedy School  
79 John F. Kennedy Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138 USA

Email: [wiego@ksg.harvard.edu](mailto:wiego@ksg.harvard.edu)  
Telephone: 617 496.7037  
Fax: 617 496.2828  
Web: [www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org)