

**March 2011 Issue**

*In each newsletter, we will feature the work of several Institutional Members of WIEGO.*

*Your work is inspiring!*



Photos above taken by members of HomeNet South Asia

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# WIEGO MBO Newsletter



Women in Informal Employment  
Globalizing and Organizing

## A Newsletter for Institutional Members of WIEGO and Other Membership-Based Organizations of Informal Workers

Greetings! On behalf of WIEGO, we write to you with the first **WIEGO MBO Newsletter** of 2011: a newsletter written especially for Institutional Members of WIEGO and other membership-based organizations (MBOs) of informal workers.

While we have met a few of you or your members, we would like to formally introduce ourselves to you all. Julia, WIEGO Secretariat Manager, began working for WIEGO in July 2010. Karen, WIEGO Administrative Assistant, joined in November of that year. As in the past, we will be sending you newsletters throughout the year.

We have updated our newsletter goals—now threefold—based on your feedback from the 2009 MBO Newsletter Evaluation: **Goal 1: to ensure that WIEGO’s resources are readily available** to you. To start, we’d like to provide each of you with a USB of publications (as explained below). Materials

can also be found online at [www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org) (English, some French and Spanish). **Goal 2: to share current information and updates** about the great work all of you are doing; we will begin by featuring two or three institutional members per newsletter. **Goal 3: to strengthen our communication** with each of you; please help us by regularly giving feedback—good or bad, we welcome it all!

These three goals culminate in our ultimate hope to be a valuable resource and support to each of you and your organizations. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments at any time, please do let us know (contact details to the left). Here’s to a fruitful 2011!

In Solidarity,

*Julia Beth Martin &  
Karen McCabe*

## Resources for Institutional Members

Participating MBOs at the March 2011 MBOs Workshop in Bangkok received a USB containing WIEGO publications and resources. While these materials may also be found online, your feedback from the 2009 evaluation indicated that not everyone has easy and reliable internet access. We also appreciate that it may be more helpful to have all of your resources, WIEGO and non-WIEGO, in one place!

Also on the USB, you will find a Microsoft Word document entitled “Table of Contents.” This document lists all of the materials on the USB, and is meant to function as a guide for you when searching for information.

We hope that these materials will help you in your important work. In addition, please feel free to distribute or share these documents with others!



Photos above taken by members of NASVI

*Equality of treatment shall be promoted, in particular, in relation to:*

*(a) the home-workers' right to establish or join organizations of their own choosing and to participate in the activities of such organizations;*

*(b) protection against discrimination in employment and occupation;*

*(c) protection in the field of occupational safety and health;*

*(d) remuneration;*

*(e) statutory social security protection;*

*(f) access to training;*

*(g) minimum age for admission to employment or work;*

*and*

*(h) maternity protection.*

C177 Home Work Convention, 1996. Article 4. No. 2.

*"Poverty is a form of violence; it does not respect human labor; it strips a person of humanity, and it takes away their freedom... Our fight is for fairness through self reliance."*

— Ela Bhatt, 11/2010 during her acceptance speech for the Global Fairness Initiative Award

## MBO Spotlight: National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI)

Over the past year, **NASVI** has continued to advocate for street vendor (SV) rights in India, and to represent their united voice in various events. In a Jabalpur workshop about national policy for SVs, NASVI's National Coordinator Arbind Singh reminded participants of the dire need to improve working conditions for SVs. NASVI also enjoyed victory after a conference in Bulandshahr, where SVs had

been previously been evicted from their marketplace; in a subsequent meeting between SVs and city administration, they decided to re-open the market after two months. On 20 January 2011, NASVI celebrated Vendors' Day –as they have annually since 2004 – by calling for legislation to protect the livelihood and social security rights of SVs, and by organizing a huge, State level conference in

Patna. The conference was attended by many SVs, NASVI leaders, government ministers and others. Among the key speakers was NASVI Program Manager Ranjit Abhigyan, who presented a five point resolution to improve conditions for SVs; it was passed by vendors amidst thunderous applause.

For more information about NASVI, visit their website at [www.nasvinet.org](http://www.nasvinet.org).

## MBO Spotlight: HomeNet South Asia (HNSA)

Representing the collective voice of home-based workers (HBWs) across Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan & Sri Lanka, **HNSA** continues to advocate for their rights and recognition. HNSA is currently promoting the inclusion of HBWs in both National Policy and the planning of urban cities by focusing their efforts on the sensitization of policy makers and city officials. In August 2010, HNSA co-hosted

a joint conference-workshop with HomeNet South-East Asia entitled, "Building Visibility and Voice through Responsive Home based Workers' Organizations in Asia: Focus on ILO Convention 177 on Home Work." Since the event's conclusion, HNSA has continued to advocate for the ratification of the ILO Convention 177 (see left column), which protects the rights of HBWs. Aside from advocacy,

HNSA is currently collecting data on HBWs, building membership-based organizations of HBWs, enhancing its network, and working to improve the livelihoods of HBWs through the formation of the company, SABAH (SAARC Business Association of Home-based workers).

For more information about HNSA, visit their website at [www.homenetsouthasia.org](http://www.homenetsouthasia.org).

## WIEGO News and Updates

We'd like to share with you some recaps, news and updates of our own. Last year, WIEGO:

- celebrated its Fifth General Assembly in Brazil.
- partook in the Fourth Congress for Waste Pickers of Latin America and the Caribbean
- joined in various campaigns, including "Decent Work for Domestic Workers", the "Ratification of ILO Convention 177", and the "World Class Cities for All" campaign.

We've just concluded the **2011 MBOs Workshop** in Bangkok, and now look forward to several upcoming events: a **Research Conference** will be held later this month to set the agenda for future research based on past experiences and new trends in

the informal economy. Also this March, participants from the 2007 **Exposure Dialogue Program (EDP)** will return to South Africa for another EDP, and will lodge with the same hosting families from four years ago. For more information about WIEGO, please refer to our website: [www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org).

We are also pleased to announce that two of our leaders, Marty Chen and Ela Bhatt, have recently been honored for their work.

**Marty Chen**, WIEGO International Coordinator, has been awarded a Padma Shri by the Government of India, one of the country's highest civilian awards. The Padma Shri is one of three Padma Awards, and is given for distinguished service in one's field. The Padma Awards will

be conferred by the President of India during a commemoration held at Rashtrapati Bhawan this April. To view the press release about the 2011 Padma Awards, please visit: <http://www.pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=69364>.

**Ela Bhatt**, Founder of SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) and Founding Chair of the WIEGO Board, was awarded the first Global Fairness Initiative Award in November 2010. Ela-ben has worked for over 30 years, and continues to work, to improve the lives of poor women in India and internationally. To read more about the Global Fairness Initiative Award, please visit: <http://www.globalfairness.org/fairnessaward/Home.html>.