

**STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONS:  
THE CAPACITY-BUILDING AND  
FACILITATION PROGRAMME IN  
GHANA**

DURBAN, MAY 2011



**MEETING WITH STREETNET ALLIANCE EXECUTIVES AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN INFORMAL ECONOMY – WHICH SHAPED THE AGENDA FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN WIEGO AND ILGS (SEPT, 2009)**

## THE RATIONALE

- WIEGO's peculiar focus on awareness of health and safety hazards faced by informal workers and to enable voices of informal workers through dialogues with local governments and those who control OHS institutions as well as improving statistics and dissemination of information and enabling the economic contribution of informal workers to be more visible to policy makers
- Apart from the clear recognition of the need for a mapping exercise, there had to be some visible action, given the opportunities of the times;
- National level advocacy is critical for policy reform and more long-term but it was clear that the municipal level was a clear sphere of operation for day-to-day responsibility for street traders and IE parties to engage.

- A clear need for this kind of engagement but how and from whose perspective?
- In whose interest would it be?
- Who is most likely to take it up and pursue this agenda on a sustained basis?
- Would they have the relevant capacities to identify what is required, which resources to foster change, from whom, by whom and which actions must be undertaken to secure this?
- Where do we start from and what do we tackle?
- The need to augment the capacities and resources of a “WIE-OHS”-oriented organization: partnership as a viable option?

- WIEGO Ghana Coordinator had a strong background in organizational development and recognised the need for some structure and partnership
- Hence a capacity building and facilitation agenda, pursued through partnership and engagement.
- The Ghanaian process was an iterative process – learning as we went along and responding to expressed needs and emerging issues.

## **THE PARTNERSHIP**

- The Facilitator: The Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) is a public management development organization, established by an Act of Parliament, to undertake training and education, research, advisory and consultancy activities but semi-autonomous in its work;

ILGS has

- a mandate to engage with and knowledge about local authorities/ municipalities (which are the immediate governments whose work have implications for informal sector actors)
- Built viable partnerships with several civil society, women's associations and workers organizations:
- Relatively easy access to government organizations and an understanding of how government works – who is responsible for what
- Ability to provide skills building and training; or to secure that training capacity for informal sector operators in ways that would be easy for them to understand and benefit from (tailored and relevant).
- An existing partnership with a WIEGO stakeholder: Streetnet Ghana

- The partnership also fulfilled ILGS' own agenda: promoting gender equitable local governance, local economic development and decent work and interest in MDGs 1 and 3

## **THEREFORE WHAT ILGS as FACILITATOR HAD TO OFFER**

- Skills building and technical backstopping
- Enhancing access to government structures and functionaries (who can make a difference)
- Ability to help find capacity sources to assist WIEGO where it can
- Sustainability as a key issue – to keep the relationship going and providing ongoing assistance as local government by-laws, health regulations, local economic development and social protection issues evolve
- Other partners that WIEGO could work with
- Documentation, relevant research (social security, service provision at the district level, etc) and information dissemination mechanisms

## THE ACTIVITIES IN THE COLLABORATION

- Activity One: Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety Concerns of Informal Sector Operators and Local Government Systems and Structures: **This was essentially a scoping meeting to understand the context and the environment:**
  - What are the OHS concerns? What often happens? What must they do for themselves and as self-employed as employers (of 2 or 3 persons);? What are they entitled to?
  - Who are the authorities responsible for ensuring their well-being and attention to concerns? What has emerged from previous engagements with authorities? What lessons?
  - How is local government constructed in Ghana and how does it work? How does it affect informal sector operators? What are they entitled to? What are their obligations?
  - What further knowledge did they need? What further skills did they require to engage with parties responsible for delivering?



- Built in an ongoing assessment mechanism by harvesting and analysing “fruits” from the expectations-setting, plenary discussion and workshop evaluation sessions;
- Generated critical inputs for the collaboration agenda through which subsequent activities were planned.
- Every subsequent activity has begun with a review sessions to understand how participants have utilised the skills and knowledge gained on the previous programme
- Understanding and defining ILGS role in capacity-building (as going beyond training and skills building to include enhancing access to critical resources and platforms; information, partnerships and now in other ways..
- Understanding ILGS facilitation role: as an enabling one to do what the PRINCIPALS want to do – supportive, presenting the options etc – not what ILGS wants...

**Activity Two:** Workshop to Provide an Encounter with Technocrats and Expert Resource Persons: This was oriented towards

- awareness-creation, knowledge, de-mystification of officialdom:
- Deepening of advocacy skills and development of advocacy plans
- Local government fiscal framework, taxes, levies and obligations
- Encounter with Accra Metropolitan Assembly for fee-fixing, collection of rates and market management responsibilities:

**Activity Three:** Encounter with Service Providers and Technical Departments. clinic format (where the authority provides a brief overview of what it provides and what WIE as “clients and citizens of the city” can expect; followed by questions from participants and answers). Key actors were:

- Social Security and National Insurance Trust
- National Health Insurance Scheme
- Accra Metropolitan Assembly/Authority particularly waste management in the markets.

**Activity Four:** Encounter with Service Providers and Technical Departments (clinic format):

- The Fire Service (Ga East District Official- Madina Market)
- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS): business licencing and
- The National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) (**April 2011**) for skills building and technical support available

**Activity Five:** May 2011:

- Developing the policy issues and preparing for the multi-stakeholder meeting (what time is being still explored given the parties being targeted)
- Refinement of policy brief to include emerging concerns such as demolition of structures, terrorization, health insurance and tax reforms, and the government's local economic development responsiveness agendas

**Activity Six:** 3rd Quarter of 2011: the multi-stakeholder meeting  
**Then evaluation of relationship?**

## **THEREFORE THE STRENGTHENING THAT HAS OCCURRED**

- Building relevant skills and knowledge: lobbying, advocacy, understanding policies and how they affect WIE; negotiation skills; presentation skills; some health management awareness-raising: stress management, preventive health techniques, STDs etc;
- Linkage to other players with common interests: WIEGO was already working with Streetnet Alliance; but through the relationship with ILGS, became linked with West African Women's Renaissance (WARWAR)
- Opportunities to input into national policy making eg decentralization policy review process of 2009; presentation on Urban Platform in 2011
- Exposure to potential resources eg consideration for Urban Back-Up and Cities Alliance projects as a key ILGS partner in its women's rights and decent work agenda (MDGs 1 and 3)

## The Challenges

- The attitude of central level agencies (defensiveness or derision) and local authorities in OHS for IEs (as nuisances or welfare recipients rather than employment creators, tax payers etc) ***Reference to Laura's presentation and Edith's comments***
- Resource challenges of local authorities to support IE stakeholders and fostering an innovative orientation towards IE including helping to promote OHS as decent work
- Organised labour: moving beyond talk to properly and clearly supporting IE Stakeholders/beyond organising them: **putting their money where their mouths are**
- Absence of some critical systemic linkages (eg no functioning of Labour Department, Factories Inspectorate etc at the district level; tussle between MOH and MLGRD about district environmental health staff) but also the institutional environment is changing and we can take advantage of that

## Challenges continued

- Multiplicity of entities “supporting” IE (NBSSI, Department of Cooperatives etc) yet almost all of them poorly resourced and most not communicating with each other
- Policy thrust for IE and SME support is to support their productivity and profits often not taking social and decent work aspects sufficiently into account
- Keeping the agenda as a joint interest: WIEGO and ILGS
- Costs of the approaches: current processes of mobilization, feeding, venues etc can we find other creative, low-cost approaches? Can we bring in other sources of funding/resources into the processes? Can we have capacity building that takes account of the time constraints of operators?
- Illiteracy, socialization and making policy, legislation, critical documentation and record keeping as well as engagement with public officials accessible to informal sector actors

## Opportunities

- Renewed interest in local economic development (LED) and employment creation within which OHS should be actively promoted
- Existence of WIEGO and potential for collaboration with the media; journalists associations can be worked with. Journalists for Business Advocacy under the Ghana Journalists Association ,for instance ...
- New legislative instrument (LI 1961) integrating government departments at the local level which creates a district level Department for Trade and Industry with responsibilities for supporting local businesses where OHS can be part of that agenda –( since they are now being set up, requires a discussion with the central level Factories Inspectorate, Labour Department, OHS and EPA to help set their agenda)

- Reformulation of curricula for district level Environmental Health Functionaries; opportunity to review their training for OHS to be more facilitative, supportive rather than punitive and policing – their initial training by MOH and employment by MLGRD ***so this can be influenced.***
- Strong emerging emphasis and programme support for Urban Development: Huge World Bank Project, GIZ and Cities Alliance within which WIEGO's work can be presented
- Taking advantage of the extension of the ILO Decent Work Project to 40 districts to integrate a “WIEGO” agenda (there, the local level “tripartite” consists of Small Business Associations (SBAs), Local Authorities, and Support Institutions/Technical Departments)
- Growing interest in electronic information dissemination and advocacy: can we use WIEGO materials more creatively? Highlight the work in Ghana within Ghana? Something?



## The Way Forward?

- Taking advantage of the opportunities outlined above in a systematic way – an agenda/plan of work; limited in what we can do about most of the challenges because they are national level, institutional reform issues but WIEGO can participate in coalitions that undertake advocacy at that level
- Building **Needed Skills**: Building oral and written presentation; managing our organizations and associations; social accountability techniques; resource mobilization and investment for promoting OHS; facilitation skills; coalition building; Women Health, Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDs;
- Linkage to other ILGS partners with like interests: eg Resources for Urban Agriculture (RUAF); WARWAR, Department of Community Development, Urban Backup, Urban Platform
- Following up with those Service Providers who have engaged with WIEGO – “what are you doing for us, now that you know what you know, following your session with us?”

## Lessons

- There must be an interest on both sides and a need to keep the relationship going: these needs, expectations and results have to be clarified on an ongoing basis
- The partners must invest in resource, funding- and support identification together
- A multi-level approach to intervening must be outlined – national level as well as district level
- There is considerable quantitative and qualitative data available – just that there isn't an interest in analysing it (by state entities) nor the capacity to do so (by IE principals for advocacy purposes): Need to invest some energy in this
- In addition to the single, over-arching reference group: Multi-level, multi-interface reference groups must be found; national level/district level; to disaggregate the OHS needs of different Informal Sector Workers
- Need to invest in educating professional bodies/occupational associations for advocacy: architects, planners, health practitioners et (hence the Urban Platform)

