



Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing



Organizing for Change

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing

Annual Report

April 2018 – March 2019

Contents

WIEGO’s 7th General Assembly: Celebrating Progress, Renewing our Commitment	3
Supporting the Transition to the Formal Economy	6
Counting the World’s Informal Workers—and Creating User-Friendly Snapshots	8
Influencing the Social Protection Agenda	9
Growing WIEGO’s Child Care Campaign	10
Promoting Administrative Justice	11
WIEGO’s Work with Home-Based Workers	12
WIEGO’s Work with Street Vendors	14
WIEGO’s Work with Waste Pickers	16
WIEGO’s Work with Domestic Workers	19
Bringing Informal Expertise to the Global Stage	20
Raising Local Awareness	23
Financial Report	24
WIEGO Publications & Resources	26
Contributions to External Publications	27
WIEGO Board and Team	29

WIEGO’s Mission

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

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

Letter from the Chair of the Board

Dear WIEGO Family & Friends,

WIEGO has entered its third decade with renewed vitality and commitment to the global movement of informal workers. The WIEGO Network has made a real impact in a global context that is becoming more and more challenging for workers. Most importantly, it has done so while maintaining its commitment to keeping informal workers and their organizations at the centre of everything we do.

A central highlight of the past year was coming together in November for our seventh General Assembly. Delegates from our three membership constituencies — membership-based organizations of informal workers, researchers and statisticians, and development practitioners — affirmed and renewed our commitment to recognize the contributions of informal workers to the economy and provide them with the tools to better organize and raise their voices.

Informal workers must have their voices heard in global debates where the policies that affect their lives are made. For this, they need strong, representative global organizations. With WIEGO's support, home-based workers took a major step toward building a global network over the past year by forming a steering committee made up of representatives from five regional networks to make decisions on governance and membership structures and draft a constitution. WIEGO also supported waste pickers' global networking processes and strengthened ties across waste pickers' organizations in Asia and West Africa. WIEGO's work with the International Domestic Workers' Federation moved domestic workers closer to implementing Convention 189, and its work with StreetNet International led to new agreements on public space.

WIEGO is transitioning into a new era with new women in leadership positions. It will change as all organizations change over time. However, we have a strong fundament, shared by all in WIEGO: a commitment to serve informal workers and their representative organizations. This is what has set WIEGO apart in the past and will continue to guide us through decades to come.



Renana Jhabvala
Chair, WIEGO
Board of Directors

October 2019



Letter from the International Coordinator

Throughout 2018-19, WIEGO sharpened its focus on practical ways to advance workers' rights and shone a brighter spotlight on informal workers' contributions and challenges, raising awareness locally and globally.

For example, WIEGO highlighted the importance of workers' access to public space through a partnership with Cities Alliance, culminating in a set of resources for city officials, for street vendors, and for urban planners. Our global Child Care Campaign has begun to influence key international players while having an impact for workers locally in many places.

Our Administrative Justice project empowered street vendors and waste pickers in South Africa, Ghana and Mexico to challenge abuses they face by knowing their rights. And we worked with IDWF to design a toolkit for domestic workers to implement C189 and ensure that domestic workers enjoy legal protections, and with home-based workers to advance the implementation of Convention 177 on home work.

Another highlight was our attendance at the International Labour Conference's discussion of violence and harassment in the world of work in 2018. The incredible work of our members, partners and allies in this forum led to the adoption, in June 2019, of an ILO Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.

WIEGO also succeeded in making informal workers more visible in official statistics through its participation in the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, where the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE) was revised. This was the culmination of years of work within our Statistics Programme, now headed by Françoise Carré, who led the charge on the ICSE revisions.

Our national and local-level work made great strides. In Bulgaria, WIEGO helped homeworkers understand how the ILO's reporting mechanisms could be leveraged to bring about legal protections. Another project, Reducing Waste in Coastal Cities through Inclusive Recycling, is strengthening waste pickers' ability to divert plastics from oceans in Buenos Aires, Dakar and Accra. In Delhi, we helped create a coalition to ensure informal workers' issues are considered in the Delhi Master Plan, and in Mexico City, we organized a photo exhibit on waste pickers as the city's "invisible workers."

Whether on the local or the world stage, this past year brought incredible energy and momentum for the global movement of informal workers, even in an increasingly challenging context of rising inequality and closing space for civil society.

WIEGO is proud to be a part of this dynamic and important global movement, and I feel privileged to be a part of the WIEGO team.



In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally Roever'.

Sally Roever, Ph.D.
International Coordinator

October 2019



Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

At the General Assembly, participants heard a lot about WIEGO's achievements and plans—and they suggested ways that we could better support their efforts with new research and focused action.

WIEGO's 7th General Assembly: Celebrating Progress, Renewing our Commitment

Over 130 people from 41 countries came together for the WIEGO Network's 7th General Assembly: Organizing for Change. Held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 12-14 November 2018, the event gathered worker leaders, activists, researchers and policymakers in the informal economy to recognize past achievements and chart the course ahead.

The General Assembly (GA) convenes our individual and institutional members every four years. During this key pillar of WIEGO's governance structure, the membership reviews our progress, plans and budget; approves candidates for a new Board (see page 29); and endorses the election of representatives to a Nominations Committee.

Renana Jhabvala, Chair of WIEGO's Board, opened the GA, telling the assembled members, "WIEGO has grown bigger and stronger and more effective, and it is thanks to all of you."



Sally Roever was hosting her first General Assembly as WIEGO's International Coordinator. She offered a snapshot of WIEGO: 37 institutional members with 215 affiliates in 90 countries, plus 125 individual members. Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

WIEGO's primary objective, as laid out in its Constitution, "is to relieve the poverty of the working poor in the informal economy," she said. "That is why we are all here. So: how? By conducting and promoting research ... by advancing the education of policy decision-makers... And by helping the organizations of the working poor—which is, of course, the organizations of people in the informal economy."

Then Renana detailed the crucial role delegates—those institutional and individual members of the WIEGO Network—play in verifying that WIEGO continues to act in ways that are relevant to informal women workers.

“ WIEGO has grown bigger and stronger and more effective... ”

Renana Jhabvala

GA participants were shown an overview of WIEGO's five-year strategic plan. This annual report provides a progress report on WIEGO's progress in achieving these outcomes.

Celebrating Solidarity



At a special dinner, informal workers and their representatives who had come to Johannesburg from around the world were celebrated in a ceremony. A [short video](#) was premiered that captures what WIEGO is all about. Photo: Rhiana Chinapen

Empowering Informal Workers, Securing Informal Livelihoods

Overview of WIEGO's 5-Year Plan (April 2018 to March 2023)

WIEGO is a global network focused on securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. We create change by strengthening and supporting informal worker organizations, expanding the knowledge base on informal work, and influencing local, national and international debates.

In 2018 WIEGO has **38 Institutional Members** representing approximately **5 million workers** in **90 countries**, and direct activities in **56 countries** and **6 continents**.

Key Programme Objectives:

- Informal worker organizations and policy makers have access to, and can use, the official statistics** needed to understand the size and significance of the informal economy
- Strong and democratic organizations of informal workers are part of robust networks** that amplify their voices in global policy settings
- Informal workers are able to effectively negotiate for legal and policy change** at the local, national, regional and global levels
- Informal workers are protected from risk throughout their lives through access to social protection**
- Urban informal workers benefit from updated knowledge on the informal economy and tools to effectively engage in the world of work in 21st Century cities**

Planned Activities* by Region

- Asia
- Africa
- Europe
- Global
- Latin America

Planned Activities* by Occupational Sector

- Waste Pickers
- Street Vendors
- Domestic Workers
- Home-based Workers
- Other

*There are approximately 650 discrete activities planned for the 5-yr strategic period.

Listening to the Membership

Parallel constituency meetings at the General Assembly gave WIEGO's members the chance to dig more deeply into the plans for the coming five years, ask questions, and offer ideas to strengthen the plans.

In one room, **researchers, statisticians and development practitioners who are Individual Members** heard about current research directions. They explored how gaps might be addressed—from testing of the new statistical category for dependent contractors to questions around how WIEGO's research could tackle broad issues such as migration, generational dynamics and climate change.

In another room, **delegates from the membership-based organizations (MBOs) who are our Institutional Members** broke into groups to scrutinize the five-year plans of WIEGO'S programmes and the Focal Cities initiative. They were asked to consider the strength of the overall plans and what the priorities of each should be. They also provided some helpful suggestions. These included:

- The group assessing the **Statistics Programme** plan prioritized the need for more accessible and user-friendly materials, adapted for specific audiences. They also expressed the need for better understanding of the “dependent contractor” category.

- The group that tackled **Organization & Representation** wanted more information on WIEGO's activities and more opportunities to engage within WIEGO—increased representation, consultation and participation at the grassroots level, they said, would achieve more meaningful outcomes.
- For the **Law Programme**, the discussion split into English and Spanish groups. The English group wanted the programme to extend its activities into more countries. The Spanish group asked that WIEGO facilitate a forum through which members of all informal sectors can access legal guidance.
- When considering **Social Protection Programme** plans, the group prioritized more toolkits and training on social protection—including the integration of social protection into collective bargaining training so that MBOs can more effectively advocate for better health care, child care and old-age social security. They also emphasized the need to assess the impact of their health interventions, and to build alliances with other national/regional organizations that have more resources to pursue social protection interventions.
- The **Urban Policies Programme** group focused a lot of its discussion on issues central to waste pickers. One main point was that a focus on the closure of dumps should be global, not just local or national.

Key Strategic Milestones

Our goals are ambitious in the face of current trends and countervailing forces. As we aim to achieve our longer-term objectives, these are the key milestones we seek to achieve to mark our progress.



If we are successful in our work from 2018-2023, highlights of what we would achieve include:

A. Revisions to the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE) which make it possible for national statistics offices to collect improved statistics on informal workers.



B. New knowledge generated on: taxation and the informal economy, constraints on informal worker productivity, the impact of regulation, and the costs of informal work.



C. More dialogue platforms between informal worker organizations and national and local governments resulting in negotiated agreements.



D. More informal worker organizations are able to effectively advocate for health care and child care access.



E. Home-based worker organizations achieve a global presence.



F. MBOs effectively use administrative law to challenge actions and decisions of local authorities that negatively impact their livelihoods.



G. More informal worker organizations understand and can use improved skills in collective bargaining.



H. The global Networks of informal workers (StreetNet, the International Domestic Workers Federation, Global Alliance of Waste Pickers and the regional HomeNets) are stronger and more sustainable.



They also discussed the need for the different sectors within the informal economy to intersect more, and for WIEGO to expand its partnerships to ensure that international conventions translate into change at the local level in more countries.

- Those who assessed the [Focal Cities](#) plan prioritized capacity building of MBOs, negotiation for inclusive solid waste management, and more work with waste pickers in WIEGO's five Focal Cities.

WIEGO Senior Advisor Marty Chen, who led WIEGO for its first two decades, gave the keynote address. She spoke about the progress made by informal workers in creating a more just world over the past 20 years, about the significant challenges that remain, and about her optimism for the future.

- [Listen to an audio excerpt](#)
- [Read the speech](#)



Supporting the Transition to the Formal Economy

In 2015, the International Labour Conference adopted the Recommendation Concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy (No. 204), which recognizes diverse categories of workers in the informal economy and provides guidelines for extending protections to all workers. WIEGO is working with informal workers' organizations in Malawi and South Africa as they navigate—and negotiate—the implementation of R204.

Our Law Programme and our Organization and Representation Programme are collaborating in this work.

R204 in South Africa

Several members of the WIEGO Team are based in South Africa, where the national government has struck a National Task Team, held consultations and begun the process of implementing R204. WIEGO has been actively engaged, delivering vital information to informal worker organizations and providing insight and expertise in the ongoing discussions.

Approximately 120 informal worker leaders across five sectors (street vendors, waste pickers, fishers, taxi workers, and home care workers) and from eight national and local membership organizations participated in national, provincial and/or city workshops convened by WIEGO. The participants now have increased knowledge and understanding of Recommendation 204 and are in a better position to use it to mobilize members in support of specific demands to local and national government authorities.

“R204 was Greek to me before and I didn't know it existed. Also, the information about formal and informal is new to me.... Solidarity is the key.”

~ Workshop participant

Informal workers representing the five sectors have now been included in a multi-stakeholder Task Team. Stakeholders have agreed on a national Roadmap on implementation and, in principle, on the need for labour law reform and social protection reform.

Marlese Von Broembsen, Director of WIEGO's Law Programme, was tasked by the Community Constituency (comprising several membership-based organizations of informal workers) to give technical input on the tripartite legal reform sub-committee in South Africa.

In June 2018, WIEGO and the Open Society Foundations co-hosted a well-attended event called [Working with the Informal Economy: Solutions for Formalization](#). South



Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

Informal workers, government officials and WIEGO Network experts had an impassioned discussion about implementing R204 in South Africa in November 2018.

Africa's implementation of R204 figured prominently in the discussions. Jane Barrett, Director of WIEGO's Organization and Representation Programme, presented on the progress and challenges (see her PowerPoint: [Making ILO Recommendation a Reality in South Africa](#)). Marlese Von Broembsen provided an overview of the legal frameworks (see [ILO Recommendation 204 and South Africa: A Legal Reform Perspective](#)).

Together, Jane and Marlese also wrote the Concept Note that Pat Horn, International Coordinator for StreetNet, tabled at the R204 National Task Team. It now forms the basis of the brief for the legal reform sub-committee. In addition, Marlese wrote the TORs for that sub-committee, which were endorsed by the Task Team.

In November, as part of WIEGO's General Assembly, WIEGO hosted a [Public Dialogue on Forging a Path towards Recognition and Inclusion of Informal Workers](#) in Johannesburg. The event featured informal worker leaders, experts on informal economy issues and government representatives involved in implementing ILO Recommendation 204 (R204) on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy in South Africa.

Rosheda Muller, President of the South African Informal Traders Association (SAITA) who has been involved in national discussions on implementing R204, spoke at the November event. She says the wait for implementation has gone on too long:

"The workforce needs to start pushing and putting more pressure to ensure that the movement of implementation is faster."

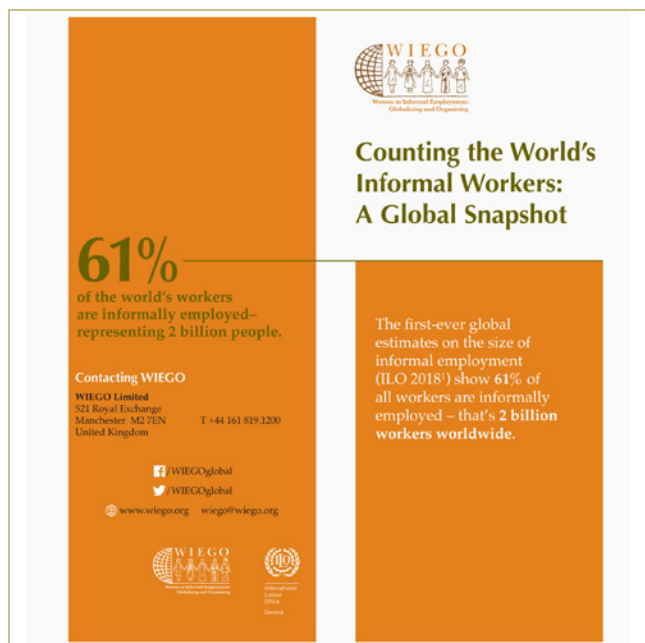
WIEGO has created this [Summary of R204 for membership-based organizations](#) (MBOs).

R204 in Malawi

WIEGO chose to [support the implementation of R204 in Malawi](#) because it is one of a few countries that have allowed informal workers to register a trade union. Malawi Union for the Informal Sector (MUFIS) holds a seat as a workers' representative on the country's social dialogue institution, the Tripartite Labour Advisory Council. The WIEGO Team's collaboration with MUFIS has focused on street vendors, who form the majority of MUFIS' members.

The main aim of the WIEGO-MUFIS partnership is to strengthen MUFIS leaders' capacity to engage in collective bargaining and negotiations with the authorities. This will enable them to articulate their demands for national and local government to implement R204 by addressing issues such as child care, occupational health and safety and social protection for informal workers. WIEGO is also supporting the MUFIS campaign to demand quality child care facilities that are open during the hours that traders must work.

WIEGO commissioned an Informal Economy Budget Analysis (IEBA) in Lilongwe. IEBA's analyze both national and local budgets, as well as the local government institutional framework and budgetary process.



Counting the World's Informal Workers— and Creating User-Friendly Snapshots

In 2018, the International Labour Organization published the first-ever global estimates on the size of informal employment. [Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture \(3rd edition\)](#) shows 61 per cent of all workers are informally employed. That's 2 billion workers worldwide. The estimates reveal a clear relationship between low levels of GDP and high levels of informal employment in countries.

WIEGO subsequently developed two user-friendly pieces that have contributed to the wide use of such key statistics. A pamphlet, [Counting the World's Informal Workers: A Global Snapshot](#) (also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)), offers data by status in employment, age, sex, and branch of industry. [Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Brief](#) by Florence Bonnet, Joann Vanek and Martha Chen, summarizes the key indicators of informal employment from the ILO publication.

A Statistical Brief focused on urban South Africa was also developed. Dissemination of *Informal Workers in Urban South Africa: A Statistical Snapshot* by Mike Rogan led to a meeting with the Statistician General of South Africa, who contacted Mike and requested that the Urban Policies Programme work with the National Statistical Office (NSO) to align gender and employment statistics within the NSO's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) reporting office. As a result, WIEGO's work on local level urban statistics will now inform South Africa's reporting to the UN on its progress towards the SDGs.

Improving Data on Women and Youth in Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS)

In November 2018, WIEGO's Joann Vanek, Senior Advisor, Statistics, joined other experts who focus on employment policy and research for women and youth at the inception workshop of a World Bank project entitled, "Improving the Availability and Quality of Individual-level Data on Women and Youth in Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) surveys."

The workshop was designed to help shape the World Bank's approach as it looks to develop and systematize better methodologies and guidelines for the collection of household survey data on rural women and youth employment in low- and middle-income countries. This will enhance the quality and availability of survey data used to inform policies and programs.

Important Changes to International Classification of Status in Employment

WIEGO had a hand in making big changes to the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE) that could lead to better national policies benefitting informal workers. At the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in October 2018, the new ICSE-18 was adopted. It replaced an outdated international standard that no longer reflected the reality of the global labour force.

Among the most important changes was the addition of the dependent contractor category, which includes

homeworkers. Priority was also placed on the variable “place of work/type of workplace”; this is essential for the compilation of coherent statistics on work relationships and for the identification of groups of workers of concern to WIEGO—domestic workers, home-based workers, street vendors, market traders, and waste-pickers. Also, home-based workers and domestic workers were given priority as categories for the generation of statistics along with the need for additional questions to determine their status correctly.

The new ICSE-18 replaced an outdated standard that no longer reflected the reality of the global labour force.

WIEGO’s Françoise Carré and Joann Vanek played key roles in attaining changes to the ICSE as members of the multi-year working group preparing recommendations. Françoise became WIEGO’s Director of Statistics in November 2018, when Joann Vanek stepped down after two decades at the programme’s helm. Going forward, both will serve on an ILO working group formed to review the definitions for “informal sector” and “informal employment” for consideration by the next meeting of the ICLS in 2023.



WIEGO Blogs: [Major Step forward for Informal Workers with New ILO Employment Categories](#) by Leslie Vryenhoek (October 24, 2018)

[Understanding the statistical term “Dependent Contractor”](#) - A Q&A with Firoza Mehrotra (February 12, 2019)



Joann Vanek, Marty Chen and Françoise Carré
(shown l-r) represented WIEGO at the ICLS in October.
Photo: Simel Esim

Influencing the Social Protection Agenda

The first draft of the OECD paper on social protection for informal workers references many WIEGO working papers on defining the informal economy, statistics, and social protection for informal workers (i.e. child care, OHS, and health care).

Social Protection Director Laura Alfes was asked to provide comments on the first draft, which will lead to a broader joint publication between the ILO and the OECD on extending social protection to informal workers. The final report maintains many of the original WIEGO resources cited. Some of WIEGO’s policy positions are reflected in a [recent OECD blog](#).

In February 2019, [Rachel Moussié](#), WIEGO’s Deputy Director of Social Protection, attended the high-level conference [Together to achieve Universal Social Protection by 2030](#) in Geneva. The conference, organized by the EU and the ILO with support from the OECD, brought together governments, multilateral actors and national, regional and international

organizations. It sought to encourage governments in the global South to commit to achieving universal social protection as outlined in the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and encouraged countries to adopt the [USP Call to Action](#). Rachel presented on extending social protection across the lifecycle and shared WIEGO’s expertise about the challenges informal workers face in accessing social protection and what governments can do about this.

Early in 2019, the Social Protection Programme launched a podcast to bring new ideas on the informal economy to global audiences. Monthly episodes, about 20-25 minutes long, explore social protection and other topics of informality. Listen here: <https://soundcloud.com/informaleconomypodcastsp>.



WIEGO Blog: [How the Draft WDR 2019 Got it Wrong: Rethinking and “Relinking” Social Protections for the Future of Work](#) by Laura Alfes (July 25, 2018)

Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

At the General Assembly, Paola Caviedes Martinez from the Confederación de Trabajadores de la Economía Popular (CTEP) in Argentina explained how her local waste pickers' organization negotiated a space for daycare with the city. Now there are two centres caring for about 335 children under the age of 14. The child care workers in these centres are women who were previously waste pickers.

Growing WIEGO's Child Care Campaign

WIEGO's Child Care Campaign grew out of demands from MBOs to look at child care as an issue that affects women's ability to earn a livelihood worldwide. Since the campaign kicked off a few years ago, many MBOs have signed on and implemented the campaign in ways that are tailored to local realities.

The campaign has been having a local impact. Laundresses in Dakar used the Child Care Campaign to begin engagement with city officials around child care in 2018. And at WIEGO's General Assembly, Vida Tangwam from the Informal Hawkers and Vendors Association of Ghana said the presence of child care in markets in Accra has gone a long way to increase the income of women workers.

But, she said, more advocacy is needed to increase the number of child care facilities, especially those with room for infants and toddlers. "Without child care centres we mostly lose income," she said. "If we don't demand these, all we do will be in vain as our health decreases from overwork. For women, it is a question of our lives."

The visibility of our child care initiative over the past three years has had an influence on decision-makers. For example:

- Our child care work was cited in the ILO's report: [Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work](#).
- The early childhood development community (such as the Bernard van Leer Foundation and The Children's Investment Fund Foundation) and the maternal and infant health community at the World Health Organization (WHO) are realizing the importance of working with women informal workers and have reached out to WIEGO to explore possible collaborations.
- Efforts to engage global unions in the child care campaign in 2017 led to an invitation to the first global unions meeting on the care economy in October 2018 with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF).
- At their second congress in November 2018, IDWF adopted a resolution on child care, which WIEGO helped the Jamaica Household Workers Union develop and table.



Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

In Durban's Warwick Junction, Tina Mteshane is a vendor and tour guide with Asiye eTafuleni (AeT). In 2019, AeT was a finalist for the WRI Ross Prize for Cities, the premier global award celebrating transformative projects that have ignited sustainable change. [Read the blog Against the Odds.](#)

Promoting Administrative Justice

Many of the challenges that informal workers face result from decisions made by local government authorities, who control public space and access to waste and land. However, government officials must comply with the overarching principles of administrative justice, which require them to follow due process.

WIEGO's Law and Organization & Representation Programmes are working together to build the capacity of informal worker organizations to challenge decisions where they violate due process.

In 2018-19, the Administrative Justice Project rolled out in South Africa, Ghana and Mexico. Participatory workshops were held in each country with a total of 88 informal worker leaders, and worker education materials were developed, including a guide that presents the law in a worker-friendly manner. The [workers' guide for South Africa](#) is available online; final versions of the Accra and Mexico City guides are in production.

In the year since the South African workshop, WIEGO has learned of six instances in which street vendors have successfully used administrative law to challenge local

authority decisions. In one case, for example, a new by-law was negotiated; in another, vendors stopped the relocation of their trade.

Thanks to the workshop I realize that the abuse of power happens because of a lack of information and that we do have tools to defend ourselves.

~Street-market vendor (tianguista) in Mexico

In Mexico, the Law Programme established relationships with lawyers from three pro-bono clearing houses and secured commitments from their Managing Directors to provide pro bono services in Mexico City.

In Ghana, our commissioned research revealed that vendors are regulated by 14 different regulations ranging from nuisance law to environmental law. WIEGO's analysis of these laws and how they relate to one another will be captured in a paper and will help inform not just the administrative justice strategy, but our broader work at the city level.

Building on its work in South Africa, WIEGO met with the South African Street Informal Traders Alliance (SAITA) in February 2019 to develop a plan to undertake training with affiliates in three cities and sensitize local authorities to their responsibilities under the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000.



Photo: Violeta Zlateva

A homemaker and member of Bulgaria's Home-Based Workers' Association (HBWA) stitches slippers in her home.

WIEGO's Work with Home-Based Workers

Helping Homeworkers Seek Legislative Protection

WIEGO's Law Programme and its Organization & Representation Programme helped UNITY (the Bulgarian Trade Union of Self-employed and Informal Workers) use the ILO reporting mechanisms as part of a strategy to hold its government accountable for its commitments under C177.

Bulgaria ratified the Home Work Convention 177 (C177) in 2009. Since then, the Bulgarian government has amended its Labour Code so that homeworkers are treated on equal terms with other employees, in accordance with C177. But the government then argued the legislation did not apply to homeworkers who do not have contracts.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) requires a country that has ratified C177 to submit a report on the Convention's implementation within two years, and every five years thereafter. The most representative trade union – in this case, UNITY – and employer organizations can comment on their government's report as well as submit their own independent reports.

UNITY had until 1 September 2018 to send a report to the ILO Committee of Experts on the Applications of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR).

WIEGO's Karin Pape, Deputy Director of our Organization & Representation Programme, and Marlese von Broembsen, Director of the Law Programme, held a three-day [workshop with UNITY for homeworkers](#) in August in Petrich, Bulgaria. Homeworkers learned how the law should protect them and about the ILO reporting mechanisms. Then homeworkers formulated their demands and drafted a report.

The ILO also requested that the government submit any official research on homeworkers' terms and conditions of work. Since there was no official research, WIEGO interviewed 30 homeworkers and held focus groups with homeworkers who make shoes for Italian firms and who pack socks for Greek firms. WIEGO submitted its research findings to the CEACR. The CEACR used UNITY's report and WIEGO's research as a basis for its [comments and questions to the Bulgarian government](#).

In addition, the process opened a space for UNITY to participate in social dialogue with the government and with CITUB, the trade union federation. Previously, CITUB had supported the government position that homeworkers are independent contractors unless they have employment contracts. After WIEGO pointed out that the legislation, amended post ratification of C177, fails to reflect C177, and once the CEACR asked CITUB to respond to UNITY's report, CITUB changed its position to support UNITY's argument.

Organizing Gains Ground in Africa

In South Africa, progress was made in building a national network of home-based worker member organizations through an exchange that introduced home-based workers in the Province of Kwa Zulu Natal to home-based workers in Cape Town. Home-based worker leaders in Kenya also gained a broader understanding of the value of organizing through a national workshop hosted by WIEGO in partnership with the Kenyan Federation for Alternative Trade (KEFAT) in March 2019. Discussions centred around the development of a national network of Kenyan Home-Based Workers. Then the learning spread to other countries when 42 participants from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and South Africa gathered in Nairobi for the HBW Africa Regional Meeting, which focused on building and strengthening HBW organizations from the countries represented and across Africa.

Building Toward an International HomeNet

A landmark event in May 2018 saw home-based worker representatives from organizations and networks in five regions come together in Stockholm, Sweden to discuss the formation of HomeNet International. They agreed to a process for establishing a global network and established an International Working Group which now meets regularly. WIEGO is helping to coordinate the process.

This meeting was followed by a Conference on Long-term Perspectives on Home-based Work in Stockholm, jointly organized by the Swedish Labour Movement's Archives and Library (ARAB), WIEGO and Centre for Women's

Development Studies (Delhi). The conference included a wider audience of academics. Research presented at the event helped build the knowledge base on home-based workers around the globe. Papers were presented by WIEGO on statistics and supply chains, with WIEGO International Coordinator giving a keynote address.

HomeNet South East Asia and Universal Health Care

Thailand is considered a world leader in the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) movement. Because the unique needs of informal workers must be considered when designing health programmes, HomeNet South East Asia (HNSEA) hosted a workshop in September 2018 where WIEGO's Social Protection Director Laura Alfors presented on good practices. The workshop brought representatives of worker organizations—including HomeNets in Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, and Philippines—together with national health policymakers, civil society groups and allies in the field. The aim was to raise awareness and commitment to UHC, map out the possibilities for alliances/coalitions, start developing key policy messages on UHC from an informal worker perspective, and develop a workplan and strategy for both national and regional advocacy engagements.

The workshop led to a major decision for HNSEA to focus its advocacy efforts on UHC.



WIEGO Blogs: [Sisterhood: How Solidarity Led Indian Women to Take on Gender Discrimination](#) by Avi Majithia and Carlin Carr (March 5, 2019)

[Think Rain, Not Robots: Shaping the Future of Work for Women in Informal Employment](#) by Sally Roever (April 30, 2018)

Changing Perspectives

In a [Devex online interview](#), Ruth Levine, outgoing program director of the Global Development and Population programme at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, explained how WIEGO has helped her understand “how fundamental to sustained social change it is to support the capacity of self-led organizations.”

In an interview with Catherine Cheney, Levine referred to WIEGO's work with informal workers—mentioning specifically street vendors, waste pickers and domestic workers—and said this:

“WIEGO helps them organize and advocate within its own cities and countries and even in the halls of the United Nations and the International Labor Organization for its rights. And in two decades or more working in international development, I had literally never been exposed to groups like that.

It and other grantees really opened a window for me of how important it is to support groups who are comprised of people who are fighting and working on behalf of themselves and their children...”



WIEGO's Work with Street Vendors

Promoting Public Space for Everyone

Public space is a public good for all city residents to access and enjoy, whether for leisure, transportation or to earn a livelihood. However, competing uses of public space cause conflict, and often it is the most vulnerable users—informal workers—who are excluded. WIEGO believes regulated public spaces offer possibilities for diverse uses to co-exist, ultimately making cities more vibrant and inclusive.

The [Public Space for All](#) project was launched in 2018 to support city officials, informal workers and other stakeholders in realizing the potential of inclusive public spaces. The project, done in partnership with the Cities Alliance Joint Work Programme on Equitable Economic Growth in Cities, involved a series of public consultations in WIEGO's five Focal Cities and the development of new resources:

[Inclusive Public Spaces for Informal Livelihoods: A Discussion Paper for Urban Planners and Policy Makers](#) presents research findings and case materials that illustrate the struggles of the urban working poor in accessing public space and the challenges faced by city governments in regulating access to public space for competing users.

Working in public space: A manual for street vendors - is for individual street vendors and their organizations to

use in reflecting on their contributions and challenges working in public space and to build their capacities to defend their livelihoods.

[Supporting Informal Workers in Public Space: A Toolkit for Local Authorities](#) helps local authorities adopt an inclusive approach to managing public space that considers urban informal workers. The toolkit includes guidelines to gather evidence for planning, principles for inclusive legislation and regulation, and recommendations for engaging street vendors and community stakeholders in the planning and design.

 **WIEGO Blog:** [How Cities Can Achieve Public Space for All](#). by Jenna Harvey (November 22, 2018)

Reaching Audiences

A WIEGO Focal Cities delegation launched the tools at [Africities 2018](#) in Marrakech, Morocco in November 2018. The event, hosted by the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG), brought together local authorities, financial institutions, development partners and civil society stakeholders from across Africa. In addition to presenting the Public Space resources, WIEGO delegates shared their experiences supporting informal workers organizations in negotiating with city authorities over the right to work in public space.

Findings and key messages from the public space project were incorporated in a United Nations Capital Development Fund report on [public land and space in](#)

[secondary cities in Uganda](#). Subsequent dissemination and advocacy resulted in endorsements by the Ministry of Local Government and the Urban Authorities Association of Uganda.

WIEGO's work on public space has also influenced Cities Alliance, the leading urban institution that commissioned the project. Fredrik Bruhn, a Programme Leader at Cities Alliance, has expressed that WIEGO's work will inform upcoming programmes aimed at supporting local governments to create more inclusive approaches to public services for informal workers.

Negotiating a Turning Point in Monrovia, Liberia

Street vendors in Liberia's capital city of Monrovia faced harassment from public authorities, as they do in many cities. But then the vendors organized, formed the Federation of Petty Traders and Informal Workers Union of Liberia (FEPTIWUL), and began to gain the respect of officials at the Monrovia Municipal Corporation. In 2018, a new city administration led by mayor Jefferson Tamba Koijee opened the door to new possibilities.

After intense negotiations, FEPTIWUL signed a landmark MOU with the municipality in September 2018. WIEGO's Sarah Orleans Reed and Mike Bird detailed how this major turning point came about, and what it could mean for including street trade as part of the city's future in the January 2019 blog [Liberia's Street Vendors Pioneer New Approach with City Officials](#).



A member of NAPETUL, a StreetNet International affiliate, in Monrovia. Photo: M. Agyemang

WIEGO's work with StreetNet and FEPTIWUL in Liberia has been funded through a grant from the Cities Alliance, of which WIEGO is a member.

Increased Negotiation Skills, Solidarity and High-Level Meetings for Accra's Vendors

In August 2018, WIEGO's Focal City Accra offered a training on collective bargaining and negotiations with affiliates of the Informal Hawkers and Vendors Association of Ghana (IHVAG) and the Greater Accra Markets Association (GAMA). Participants learned about the benefits of unity and the factors necessary for a strong, democratic organizations, and about the types of negotiating and how effective bargaining with officials can bring desired outcomes, such as access to services and health coverage. The trainings also helped to foster solidarity between the two vendor groups.

Street and market vendor representatives in Accra met with the First Lady of Ghana.

After the training, GAMA was approached to meet with the First Lady of Ghana to discuss the issues they face in markets. GAMA invited IHVAG representatives to plan for and attend the meetings. Together, they met with the First Lady of Ghana in November 2018. It was an opportunity to discuss the contributions that informal workers make to local and national development. During the meeting, the First Lady also affirmed her commitment to child care provision for informal workers.

 **WIEGO Blogs:** [Partnering with Street Vendors Led One Indian City to Model a Way Forward](#) by Randhir Kumar (July 31, 2018)

[Bangkok's renowned street vendors march against evictions – and rally widespread support](#) by Chidchanok Samantrakul and Sarah Orleans Reed (September 8, 2018)

[Informal Workers and Taxes: What Tax Justice Looks Like from Below](#) by Mike Rogan (July 18, 2018)

[“Take away these tolls”: How Accra's poorest market workers got their wages back](#) by Carlin Carr (May 8, 2018)



Waste pickers in Buenos Aires, Accra, and Dakar are building skills and strengthening organizations through a project that aims to improve the environment and waste pickers' incomes.

WIEGO's Work with Waste Pickers

WIEGO's Organization and Representation Programme is working intensively to support waste picker organizing and representation in Accra, Ghana; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Dakar, Senegal; Johannesburg and two adjacent cities, South Africa; and Bogota and other cities in Colombia.

Reducing Waste in Coastal Cities through Inclusive Recycling

The ReWCC Project is improving the capacity of waste picker organizations to be formally integrated into solid waste management in their cities. Waste pickers worldwide help prevent ocean waste pollution by recycling and reusing materials that would otherwise end up in the environment. In many cities, these informal workers are the only form of waste management.

Through this project, waste pickers in three coastal cities – Buenos Aires, Argentina; Accra, Ghana; and Dakar, Senegal – are building their skills and strengthening their organizations. Organizational strength will enable waste picker groups to collect more materials using more

environmentally sound processes and with maximum economic benefit to workers.

Since the project launched in June 2018, significant outcomes have been achieved. For example:

Buenos Aires, Argentina – In Buenos Aires, the Argentine Federation of Waste Pickers and Recyclers (Federación Argentina de Cartoneros, Carreros y Recicladores) has integrated 6,000 workers into formal recyclable waste collection and processing. The ReWCC project is supporting this strong organization to end the practice of collecting materials and sorting them at home, creating micro-landfills that can contaminate neighbourhoods. By March 2019, 1,215 waste pickers had been transitioned into a new plant with a semi-industrial, standardized processing system. Initial measurements indicate that waste processing in the new Green Center increased 174 per cent and plastic recycling has grown accordingly. By eliminating micro-landfills in neighbourhoods, the new system prevents about 8.5 tons of plastic from ending up in waterways every month.

Since the beginning of the ReWCC project, nine co-ops from Buenos Aires and Santa Fe have either acquired basic machinery to process plastic or negotiated deals with local governments granting them access to fully equipped Green Centers. New plants and machinery, along with training through the project, has dramatically improved working conditions for more than 2,000 waste pickers and also serves to further their inclusion into local solid waste management (SWM) systems.

Accra, Ghana – In Accra, the Kpone Landfill Waste Pickers Association and the Biakoye Street Pickers Association have both developed a stronger organizational identity and sense of solidarity through ReWCC. Biakoye Street Pickers Association now reports regular meetings, payment of membership dues and the careful selection of logos for membership cards and creation of organizational songs. Kpone’s leaders are now democratically elected. Following elections, and with support from WIEGO, the membership adopted a slogan—“Zaya: Members Only”—a logo, and a system for paying dues.

Kpone Landfill Waste Pickers Association has instituted and is enforcing a new health and safety policy for members: after an occupational health and safety training facilitated by WIEGO, no waste pickers are permitted to work at Kpone without the proper safety gear—boots, hats, reflector vests and gloves. In addition, the association has put in place measures for mutual financial support of members in the case of injury or loss of work due to pregnancy.

At the start of the ReWCC project, Accra’s waste pickers reported feeling unsupported by government. However, after WIEGO helped develop a series of recommendations on Ghana’s Draft Plastics Policy, the Ministry of Environment incorporated some of the recommendations into the draft policy, which has since been sent to Cabinet for review and approval.

In Dakar, Bokk Diom members now describe themselves as environmental workers and actively discuss how to improve their environmental impact.

Dakar, Senegal – Bokk Diom, the association of waste pickers who work at the Mbeubeuss dumpsite, elected new leadership in August 2018; membership has grown considerably, and meetings and workshops are reported to be more productive. The establishment of a Women’s Bureau of Bokk Diom has dramatically increased the participation of women. Now 65.6 per cent of Bokk Diom members are women (up from 47 per cent). Also, relationships with state, national and municipal public officials have been enhanced, enabling regular interactions between the association and the authorities who make decisions that impact waste pickers’ livelihoods.

Furthermore, training, developed as part of ReWCC and delivered in 2019, has shifted perceptions and improved safety. Bokk Diom members now describe themselves

as environmental workers and actively discuss how to improve their environmental impact. This awareness has been enhanced by a partnership with Zero Waste Senegal, which is helping orient Bokk Diom toward concepts of waste prevention (like reducing single-use plastics at trainings). On a visit to Mbeubeuss in March, Project Coordinator Taylor Cass Talbot observed a marked increase in Bokk Diom members wearing safety gear.

Bokk Diom has also established a partnership with the Yoff Fishermen’s Association to explore collaborations in beach cleaning and recycling of plastic litter.

Global exchanges – The project has hosted two exchange visits. The first was held in Buenos Aires in November 2018 and brought together leaders from the three cities. The next exchange was held in Dakar in early April 2019. Both have resulted in significant gains as waste pickers shared knowledge and experiences and took what they had learned back to their organizations.

ReWCC receives funding from Sweden’s SIDA.



WIEGO Blog: [New Project Explores How Waste Pickers Can Help Solve the Ocean Plastics Waste Crisis](#) by Taylor Cass Talbot (Feb 28, 2019)

[Senegal’s Dump Upgrading Doesn’t Have to Displace Waste Pickers](#) by Jenna Harvey and Dr. Sonia Dias (October 1, 2018)

[In India, Pune’s Poorest Operate the World’s Most Efficient Waste Management Models.](#) Q&A with Lakshmi Narayan, co-founder of [SWaCH Waste Picker Cooperative](#) in Pune. (Feb 20, 2019)

Helping Colombian Waste Pickers Gain Income – and Face Threats

In Colombia, the number of cities that include waste pickers in the SWM system—including by paying them—jumped from 9 to 25 in 2018-19. In these cities, in addition to income earned from selling recyclables, waste pickers receive between USD 127 and USD 253 per month for their services. The inclusion and remuneration of waste pickers has led to a measurable rise in the volume of recyclables collected in Colombia. To participate, waste pickers’ organizations must meet a certification of competencies. WIEGO has been providing support to the [Asociación Nacional de Recicladores \(ANR\)](#) in the certification process.

However, 45 cities remain outside of the inclusion model, despite a Constitutional Court ruling that directs municipalities to include them. And there have been

recent setbacks. New national tax policies have burdened waste picker organizations with onerous financial reporting requirements and very high taxes, causing some smaller organizations to become unsustainable.

In Bogotá, the sudden installation of thousands of garbage containers across the city—placed without educating the public on how to use them—has led to trash littering the streets and a reduction in the amount of material available to waste pickers. WIEGO has empowered waste pickers with information to help them deal with these threats. Also, waste pickers have become more visible in the eyes of the public through WIEGO's participation in various public and academic forums as well as radio and television interviews.

 **WIEGO Blog:** [In Colombia, a Global Model for Inclusive Recycling is under Threat](#) (June 24, 2019) by Federico Parra

Strengthening the Role of South African Waste Pickers

WIEGO's work in South Africa has concentrated on strengthening the role of informal waste pickers in Johannesburg and nearby Sasolburg and Pretoria. The [Waste Integration in South Africa](#) (WISA) project has helped waste pickers negotiate with municipal authorities. Waste pickers have formed a new organization, the African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO), and the registration of waste pickers has begun. Conflict has been reduced; evictions of waste pickers from public spaces have been stopped through interventions, including media attention and negotiations with local police and residents. Also, WIEGO has helped women waste picker leaders be empowered through gender training and support.

Securing Livelihoods when Dumps Close

Members of WIEGO's Urban Policies Programme (UPP) also work with waste pickers to ensure they are recognized for their work. Changing policy and practice in the waste sector in Brazil resulted in better terms for waste pickers. In 2017- 18, UPP was a member of the Estrutural Dump Closure monitoring committee, which worked alongside the Brasilia Sanitation Department to design and monitor a waste picker livelihood protection plan during the closure of the dump. This process led to a change in both practice and policy that accounts for the improved livelihoods of waste pickers and their families in this transition process.

With the materials and technical expertise developed through the Estrutural Dump Closure process, waste picker groups in Johannesburg, Dakar and Accra have

taken up the experience and lessons and are using them to influence policies on dump closures in their cities.

See [WIEGO's Position on Dump Closures](#) (also available in [French](#), [Portuguese](#) and [Spanish](#))

Photo Exhibition Sheds Light on the Work of Waste Pickers in Mexico City

On September 25, 2018, the exhibition "Invisible Workers" opened at el Museo de Memoria y Tolerancia (the Museum of Memory and Tolerance) in Mexico City. This photographic exhibit reveals the precarious working conditions in which the informal waste pickers who clean Mexico City work. The photos were taken by Dean Saffron. The Focal City Mexico City team facilitated his work, and put together an [e-book](#) (in Spanish) that explains the situation of informal recyclers in the city. This initiative raised public awareness about the contributions of informal recyclers in the city and their need for protection and compensation for the services they provide. The launch was a show of solidarity — the majority of people in attendance were informal workers from different sectors who came to show support for the waste pickers.



The exhibition "Invisible Workers" reveals the precarious working conditions that informal waste pickers in Mexico City face. Photo: Dean Saffron.

Watch the video [Exposición Trabajadores Invisibles en la CDMX](#) (Invisible Workers Exhibition at the CDMX, in Spanish).

Photo: Jennifer Fish



The IDWF second Congress, held in Cape Town, South Africa in November 2018, brought together 107 delegates from IDWF affiliates around the globe, as well as observers and allies from trade unions, labour NGOs, funders and others. At the Congress, Myrtle Witbooi was re-elected IDWF's president. She is pictured here (left) with Sally Roever, WIEGO's International Coordinator.

WIEGO's Work with Domestic Workers

Helping Domestic Workers' Understand their Rights

In Africa, domestic work is one of the largest employment sectors for women. The International Domestic Workers' Federation (IDWF) and its affiliates in Africa have highlighted the need to build the capacity of its affiliates to use ILO Convention 189 (C189) on Decent Work for Domestic Workers in their struggles for domestic workers' rights.

In June 2018, WIEGO and the IDWF convened the *Domestic Workers and Convention 189: Making it Real* workshop, hosted in Nairobi by the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA). The workshop brought together 28 organizers and educators from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe.

After attending the workshop, Guinea's domestic workers' union Syndicat National des Employés de Maison de Guinée (SYNEM-GUINEE) and its federation drafted a proposal to bring the national law closer to C189, which Guinea has ratified. Modelled on Morocco's law on domestic work, the proposal recommends regulation of

issues such as working hours, annual leave, family leave, employment agencies and child labour.

The workshop was an opportunity to demonstrate that C189 addresses the challenges that domestic workers experience and can improve the lives of domestic workers if it is ratified and implemented. The workshop also emphasized that domestic workers can play a critical role in implementing C189 by negotiating directly with their employers to gain the rights in the Convention, such as for written employment contracts.

Launching a Domestic Workers Legal Toolkit

The Law Programme and Organization and Representation Programme at WIEGO also partnered with IDWF to develop a Domestic Workers' Toolkit, which was improved by feedback from participants at the June 2018 workshop.

The [Domestic Workers' Legal Toolkit](#) contains an organizers' manual that provides key information on the ILO Domestic Workers' Convention (C189) and its accompanying Recommendation (R201). There is also a pamphlet for workers that gives a brief overview of C189.

The Toolkit was officially launched at the [second IDWF Congress in Cape Town](#), South Africa in November 2018. It is available in English, Portuguese, French and Swahili. A Spanish version will be developed following consultation with IDWF and its affiliates in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A Kenyan participant reported how she had used the toolkit after the training:

All the things are written here which will help to protect us from mistreatment.....When the Estate manager where I work called the police when I was recruiting other domestic workers to the unions, I showed this book to the police and said this is my right, and if I have done anything wrong, then take me to jail now. The police then released me.



WIEGO Blog: [What's Changed for Domestic Workers since the C189? Our Legal Team Unpacks the Progress](#) by Pamhidzai H. Bamu-Chipunza. (June 12, 2018) [Spanish](#).

Bringing Informal Expertise to the Global Stage

Around the world every year, WIEGO Team and Network members share expertise, knowledge and experience from our work. The goal is always to bring a perspective that includes informal workers on the agenda. Here are just a few highlights from this participation in 2018-19.

International Labour Conference 2018

In 2018, “Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work” was on the agenda for the first time at the 107th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC). The Standard Setting Committee held discussions with a view to establishing a new international labour standard in 2019.

WIEGO’s delegation to the ILC in Geneva included informal worker leaders who shared the experience

Helping Domestic Workers Access Social Security Scheme in Mexico

In 2018, the Supreme Court (SCJN) ruled that within three years, all domestic workers in Mexico must be enrolled in a robust social security scheme to ensure that domestic workers have access to sickness, maternity and health care, disability, retirement benefits and life insurance. The court ordered the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) to implement a pilot program. This was launched in March 2019; employers can now enroll their domestic workers in social security coverage for a monthly fee (which will vary depending on how many days per month they employ a domestic worker). WIEGO has consulted with domestic worker organizations CACEH and SINACTRAHO. At their request, our Mexico team has begun work with local consultants to develop a “domestic worker toolkit” that explains why it is important for employers and domestic workers to register and how to complete the process.



Photo: Sofia Trevino

WIEGO’s delegation to the ILC included informal worker leaders who shared the experience of violence and harassment in their sectors.

of violence and harassment in their sectors – street vending, waste picking, and home-based work. Our ally, the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), highlighted what domestic workers face on the job.

These informal workers’ organizations made eloquent appeals for an international convention, supplemented by a detailed recommendation, to help prevent violence and harassment in the world of work—one that specifically includes informal workers and their disparate workplaces and issues.

That groundwork resulted, a year later, in the adoption of a historic instrument on Ending Violence and Harassment

in the World of Work has been adopted (the vote: 439 for, 7 against, 30 abstain) at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva. This marks a significant victory for informal workers—especially women—whose organizations advocated tirelessly to ensure ILO Convention 190 can protect some of the world’s most vulnerable workers. ILC in June 2019, they Convention



WIEGO Blog: [Workplace Violence and Harassment: Informal Workers Also Need Protection](#) by Karin Pape & Leslie Vryenhoek (May 27, 2018)

Commission on the Status of Women

Several members of the WIEGO Network participated at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2019 in New York. The [Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](#) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The CSW’s annual session centred this year on the theme “Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.” Representatives of UN Member States, civil society organizations and UN entities discussed progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and [Platform for Action](#), the key global policy document on gender equality, and the 23rd special session of the General Assembly held in 2000 (Beijing+5), as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Participants included WIEGO Social Protection Programme Director [Laura Alfery](#) and representatives from the [International Domestic Workers Federation \(IDWF\)](#) and the [Self Employed Women’s Association \(SEWA\)](#) of India. The Gender Minister of Ghana invited WIEGO’s Coordinator for Focal City Accra, Dorcas Ansah, along with Greater Accra Markets Association President Mercy Needjan to join the Ghana delegation.

WIEGO co-hosted, with UN Women, the high-level panel “Social Protection, Public Services and Sustainable Infrastructure: Policy coherence for the empowerment of women in informal employment.”

WIEGO was also invited to participate in others’ events, including:

- “Promoting Rights-based Social Protection Policies for Gender Equality: A Prerequisite for Social Justice and Sustainable Development” – This panel discussion was organized by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). Laura Alfery presented on the rights

of informal workers in the provision of rights based social protection from a gender perspective.

- “Creating Shared Strategies for Sustainable Development: A Multi-Stakeholder Workshop” - The Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund hosted a discussion on grassroots organizing and invited WIEGO to share its experience of working with women informal workers and their organizations. WIEGO members discussed emerging outcomes of our child care campaign.
- “Dignifying Lives and Empowering Women in Waste Management” – Practical Action, a UK development charity, hosted this side event to share gender-sensitive learning and recommendations from work with informal waste workers in Nepal, Kenya and initial findings from Bangladesh. WIEGO’s Global Focal Cities Coordinator, Jenna Harvey, brought spoke on WIEGO’s work mobilizing women workers to advocate for their economic rights and the power of collective action among women waste pickers.

Spotlight on Including the Excluded in Cities

WIEGO played a role in writing and launching a working paper in the World Resources Report series *Towards a More Equal City*. “[Including the Excluded: Supporting Informal Workers for More Equal and Productive Cities in the Global South](#)” was co-authored by Martha A. Chen and Victoria A. Beard (Fellow at WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities). It reveals how cities in the global South can create policies, legislation and practices that support informal workers while promoting economic productivity and environmental sustainability. The May 2018 launch event involved a panel discussion on the findings and recommendations outlined in the paper.

- Related WRI blog: [Informal Workers Make Cities Work For All: 3 Stories from Thailand, India and Colombia](#)

The Right to the City

The United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development Goals took place in New York in July 2018. Tania Espinosa, Focal Cities Coordinator for Mexico City and formerly a member of WIEGO’s Law Programme team, attended on behalf of WIEGO as part of the Global Platform of the Right to the City (GPR2C). During the HLPF, the government of Mexico spoke about the inclusion of the right to the city in Mexico City’s legislation. The right to the city was also discussed during the side events that the GPR2C organized, which also explored the interlink between the sustainable development goals and the [New Urban Agenda](#).

Sharing Workshop on Informal Workers in Hanoi

The first-ever international workshop on informal workers in Vietnam, co-organized by the Network of Action for Migrant Workers (M-Net), Oxfam Vietnam and WIEGO, took place in Hanoi in March 2019. Participants included Vietnamese migrant worker leaders from four sectors—domestic workers, waste pickers, street vendors, and home-based workers—and representatives from the WIEGO Network: the International Domestic Workers' Federation, HomeNet Southeast Asia and HomeNet Thailand, Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP) and StreetNet International.

The workshop's purpose was to build an understanding of the vital need in Vietnam to consolidate existing activities related to informal labour, to strengthen action and research networks, and to establish avenues for worker representation.

During the event, Vietnamese informal worker leaders shared information about the context of their work, and the unique challenges facing migrant workers, including lack of access to residence-linked health and social benefits, higher fees for basic services charged by landlords, and national policies that provide little support for informal workers. Despite these specific issues, sector-specific challenges facing Vietnamese workers echo those faced by informal workers around the world. International participants were able to offer global perspectives on worker movements in these key occupational sectors.

After two days of learning exchanges, M-Net and Oxfam Vietnam hosted a public event on 13 March with government, international agencies, and non-governmental organizations to share local and global knowledge on informal employment. Panels focused on formalizing the informal economy, as defined by ILO Recommendation 204, WIEGO's Network Platform, and the Vietnamese Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLISA); and on Social Protection for informal and migrant workers. International speakers explained how waste pickers in Pune, India gained access to public contracts and benefits through their work and how informal workers in Thailand gained access to Thailand's universal health coverage system.

Sector-specific challenges facing Vietnamese workers echo those faced by informal workers around the world.

The workshop concluded with informal worker leaders sharing recommendations developed through the proceedings. These focused on labour code revisions to improve legal protections, improvements in communications and knowledge sharing for informal workers, expanding access to social protection, skills training, and clear regulations related to family violence and sexual harassment for domestic workers.

Helping Educate a New Cohort of Researchers on the Informal Economy

WIEGO's Urban Policies Programme works with graduate students, contributes to curricula, and influences key researchers. Increasingly, the programme's messages on the informal economy are becoming more visible through the work of students and researchers.

In recent years, this work has included working with 19 Brazilian and international undergraduate and graduate students; supervising five South African graduate students at University of Cape Town and Rhodes University, and sharing WIEGO's data with six students in the USA at Yale, Harvard and the University of California. Some of the students' work includes understanding decent work and informal employment in Zimbabwe; informal employment transitions in South Africa; the spatial practises of street vendors in Gaborone; and the nature of the street vending

economy in Harare. All of these students are using WIEGO materials and methods.

At the University of Zambia, UPP's [informal economy teaching toolkit](#) and WIEGO publications on the informal economy are a key component of a new masters programme in spatial planning. The programme is the flagship of the African Association of Planning Schools curriculum renewal initiative.

"The WIEGO resources are very useful for us in the MSc in Spatial Planning Programme at the University of Zambia. We use the materials to popularize the subject of urban informality (informal economy), gender issues in city planning and urban livelihoods."

Gilbert Siame, PhD Lecturer & Researcher,
University of Zambia, Department of Geography
& Environmental Studies



Photo: Rashmi Choudhary

Workers' Share Their Stories with Rapt Audience - On March 7, Focal City Delhi organized a "Worker's Narrative" event at the prestigious India Habitat center. Moderated by WIEGO Senior Advisor Marty Chen, the annual event featured seven informal workers from Delhi to tell their own stories to a large, rapt audience. Marty captured the stories in this Delhi Diary post.

Raising Local Awareness

Informal Workers' Issues Gain Traction Before and After Lima's Municipal Elections

Informal workers' issues were on the radar of politicians running in Lima's municipal elections, due in part to the concerted efforts of the WIEGO Focal City Lima team over the past many years. Three weeks before the October 2018 Municipal Elections, all the main parties running for the municipal government were invited to participate in a public dialogue with informal workers, where MBO leaders presented a platform of proposals and demands. The dialogue received media coverage and was well attended—including by members of the WIEGO Team, who were holding their annual meeting in Lima.

The press sought out WIEGO multiple times in the lead-up to the elections for expertise in the informal economy. Focal City Lima Coordinator Carmen Roca participated in a TV show where she was asked to evaluate candidate's proposals on themes relevant to informal workers, and both Roca and a street vendor leader participated in a TV interview.

In March 2019, the newly elected city government for Metropolitan Lima (including the managers of economic development, women's affairs, fiscalization and social development) agreed to meet with leaders from informal workers' organizations representing seven sectors. At the meeting, workers presented their priorities and proposed sustained dialogue with the new administration.

The efforts seem to be paying off. In March 2019, for the first time in four years, the new city government reinstated the Mesa of Competitive Retail Markets together with the Market Workers Federation.

Coalition Puts Forward Informal Issues for Delhi's Master Plan

In 2021, a new Master Plan for Delhi will come into force that will determine the broad parameters of city development for the next two decades. In a unique initiative, Focal Cities Delhi helped form a broad-based coalition of groups and individuals to demand that issues of livelihood, gender and habitat for the urban poor are adequately addressed in the plan. The Delhi Master Plan Coalition defined a platform for taking the effort forward. Community meetings, crowdfunding and a campaign—"I Too am Delhi"—are part of the plan. The campaign's core message: *"The aim is to speak about the whole city and all urban issues, even as we remain rooted and focus on our core issues of workers and those excluded from the current imagination of urbanization."*



WIEGO Blogs: [The Truth about How Dakar's Clothes Get Cleaned](#) by Carlin Carr & Gabriella Tanvé (April 3, 2019)

[In Lima, modernization makes work harder for some](#) by Leslie Vryenhoek (November 6, 2018)

Financial Report: Year ended 31 March 2019

Financial Summary

The total incoming resources were US \$8.94m for the financial year ending 31 March 2019 compared to US \$2.35m in the previous year. Total resources expended were US \$6.873m, compared to US \$4.252m in the previous year.

The figures for 2018-19 are extracted from the statutory accounts approved by the Directors on 5 August 2019. The full statutory financial accounts, on

which the auditors, Crowe U.K. LLP (previously Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP), gave an unqualified opinion, were delivered to the Registrar of Companies. These extracts may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the company.

The auditors have confirmed to the Directors that the 2018-19 figures extracted from the statutory financial accounts are consistent with the statutory financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019.

BALANCE SHEET	2018-19	2017-18
CURRENT ASSETS	US \$000	US \$000
Accounts Receivable	223	286
Cash at bank	4,001	4,973
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	4,224	5,259
CREDITORS		
Accounts Payable	-664	-3,772
NET ASSETS	3,560	1,487
FUNDS		
Restricted Funds	498	260
Unrestricted Funds	3,062	1,227
	3,560	1,487

Source: Extract from the statutory accounts

For further information, the full statutory accounts should be consulted together with the Auditors' Report and the Directors' Report. These are available from the Company Secretary at the company's registered office in Manchester, UK (see back cover of report).

Financial Governance

The Finance Committee of the WIEGO Board reviews the budgets and reports of all WIEGO funds and accounts. Budgetary and financial controls are reviewed continuously to reduce the risks of under or overspending and to mitigate the effect of a drop in income in any

one financial year. This risk is further mitigated by the building of **designated** reserves, which currently stand at a level of \$671k. The Finance Committee reports to the WIEGO Board for final decisions on budgets and risk management.

Revenue and Expenditure

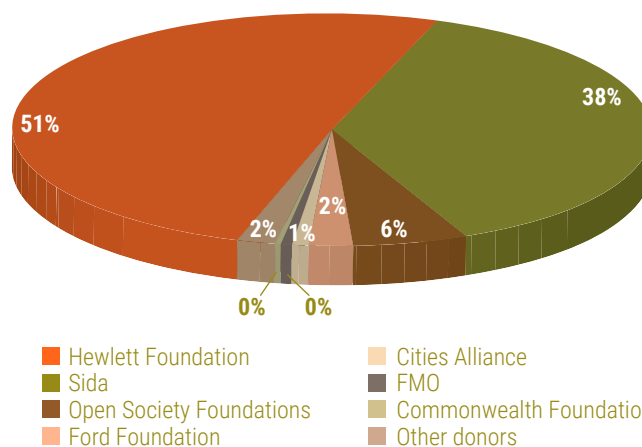
This report combines the income received and expenditure incurred through our accounts in the UK and reflects the organization's results overall.

Source of Funds for Year 2018/19

Source of Funds 2018-19

We are very proud of the number of funders who generously support WIEGO in our efforts to empower informal workers around the globe.

Our thanks to these organizations, foundations and governments for their generous financial support of WIEGO programmes and projects.



SOURCE OF FUNDS	2018-19	2017-18
	US \$000	US \$000
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	4,517	105
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	3,365	922
The Rockefeller Foundation	-	375
The Ford Foundation	200	300
Open Society Foundations	502	299
Cities Alliance	84	60
FMO	50	50
The Commonwealth Foundation	32	39
Comic Relief	-	7
Other Sources	149	182
TOTAL FUNDING	8,899	2,339

Source: Extract from the statutory accounts

Use of Funds 2018-19

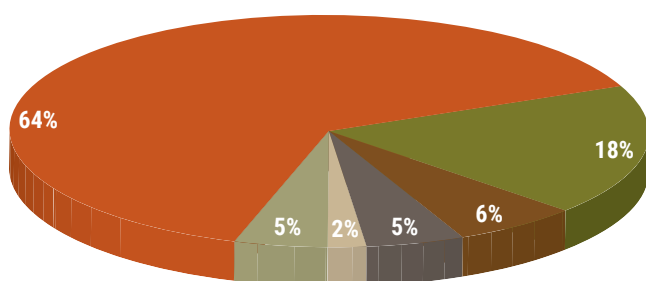
The expenditure charts summarize expenditure on the core categories of the organization and a breakdown of the core programmes.

WIEGO's strategy is designed to ensure the maximum possible resources are channelled directly into programmes

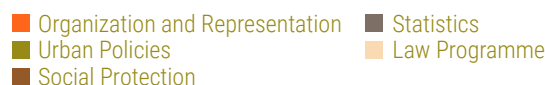
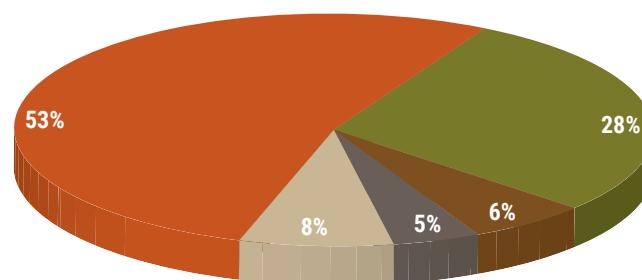
to meet the objective of delivering quality improvements in research, policy advocacy and capacity building.

Urban Policies includes the work in Focal Cities.

Use of Funds for Year 2018/19



Programmes Expenditures for Year 2018/19



Note: This chart represents all expenditures - planning, implementation and monitoring - for the five core programme. Focal Cities is included in Urban Policies.



Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

WIEGO Publications & Resources

WIEGO produces a wide range of publications, from books to briefs to blogs. These can all be found in WIEGO's new Publications Catalogue, now available online. Compiled by WIEGO's Urban Research Director, Caroline Skinner (pictured above), and Communications Manager Demetria Tsoutouras, the catalogue showcases the vast array of our work on the informal economy—and makes it easily accessible to users with just a click.

WIEGO Publication Series

WIEGO Working Paper Series

- Alfery, Laura, Francie Lund and Rachel Moussié. 2018. [Informal Workers & The Future of Work: A Defence of Work-Related Social Protection](#). WIEGO Working Paper No. 37.
- Carré, Françoise, Pat Horn and Chris Bonner. 2018. [Collective Bargaining by Informal Workers in the Global South: Where and How It Takes Place](#). WIEGO Working Paper No. 38.

- Coggins, Thomas. 2018. [Informal Work and the Social Function of the City: A Framework for Legal Reform in the Urban Environment](#). WIEGO Working Paper No. 39.

WIEGO Briefs

- Alfery, Laura and Chidchanok Samantrakul. 2019. [Integrating Occupational Health into Public Health Provision: The Case of HomeNet Thailand](#). Policy Brief (Social Protection) No. 18.
- Castaño, Pablo. 2018. [Laws, Legitimacy and Ongoing Struggle: Lessons from Bolivian Policies on Domestic Workers' Rights](#). WIEGO Policy Brief (Urban Policies) No. 17. Also available in [Spanish](#).
- Castaño, Pablo. 2018. [The Mobilization of Bolivian Domestic Workers](#). WIEGO Organizing Brief No. 10. Also available in [Spanish](#).

WIEGO Resource Documents

- Bamu-Chipunza, Pamhidzai H. 2018. [Promoting Decent Work for Domestic Workers: Lessons From Five Countries](#). WIEGO Resource No. 8.
- Carrillo-Rodriguez, Jorge and Sarah Orleans Reed. 2018. [If Street Food Disappears — Projecting the Cost for Consumers in Bangkok](#). WIEGO Resource Document No. 9.
- Horn, Pat. 2018. [Street Vendor Licensing and Permits — Reflections from StreetNet International](#). WIEGO Resource Document No. 10.

Additional WIEGO Publications

- Abizaid, Olga. 2019. [Building a More Inclusive and Prosperous Dakar: Recommendations from Informal Workers](#). WIEGO.
- Chen, Martha A. and Victoria A. Beard. 2018. [Including the Excluded: Supporting Informal Workers for More Equal and Productive Cities in the Global South](#). World Resources Institute.
- Dias, Sonia. 2018. [WIEGO's Position on Dump Closures](#). WIEGO Position Papers. Also available in [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#), & [French](#).
- Espinosa, Tania, Dean Saffron and Olga Abizaid, with Lucía Fernández. 2018. [Trabajadores invisibles dentro del servicio de limpieza de la CDMX](#).
- Orleans Reed, Sarah, Ana Carolina Ogando, Poonsap Suanmuang Tulaphan, Chidchanok Samantrakul and Pannee Towakulpanich. 2018. [Informal Workers in Bangkok, Thailand: Scan of Four Occupational Sectors](#). WIEGO and HomeNet Thailand.
- WIEGO. 2018. [A Crucial Service: Three Child Care Centres in Bangkok](#).
- WIEGO. 2018. [Balsevikas: Serving Children, Families and Women Informal Workers](#).
- WIEGO. 2018. [The Balsewa Benefits: SEWA's Innovative Child Care Centres and Workers](#).

- WIEGO. 2018. [Projeto Cuidar: Mapeamento de Riscos de Saúde de Catadores\(as\)](#).
- WIEGO. 2018. [Violence and Informal Work - Briefing Note \(May 2018\)](#). WIEGO. Also available in [Spanish](#), [French](#), [Russian](#).

WIEGO documents produced in partnership with other organizations

- WIEGO and IDWF. 2018. [Your Toolkit on ILO Convention - The Domestic Workers' Convention](#). Also in French, Portuguese, Swahili
- WIEGO and ILO. 2018. [Cooperatives Meeting Informal Economy Worker's Child Care Needs](#).
- WIEGO Law and ORP. 2018. [Using South Africa's Administrative Law to Protect the Rights of Informal Workers](#).
- WIEGO with informal worker organizations. 2018. [Propuestas y demandas de las trabajadoras y los trabajadores en empleo informal para el nuevo gobierno de la Ciudad de Mexico](#).

WIEGO Blog

The WIEGO Blog highlights the latest research, activities and leading-edge thinking on the informal economy. We published 45 English blogs, 11 blogs in Spanish and 9 in French in 2018-19 and saw a 108 per cent increase in readership.

Read them all at www.wiego.org/blog

Contributions to External Publications

Members of the WIEGO Team frequently contribute to scholarly publications.

Monographs

Chen, Martha and Victoria Beard. 2018. *Including the Excluded: Supporting Informal Workers for More Equal and Productive Cities in the Global South*. 2018. Washington, DC, USA: World Resources Institute.

Journal Articles

Bamu, Pamhidzai H. 2018. "[Extending Occupational Health and Safety Law to Informal Workers: The Case of Street Vendors in South Africa](#)." *University of Oxford Human Rights Hub Journal*, Vol. 1.

Bamu, Pamhidzai H. 2018. "[A Pluralistic Approach to Organizing Migrant Domestic Workers: The Case of the Zimbabwe-South Africa Global Care Chain](#)." *International Journal of Comparative Labour Law and Industrial Relations*, 34, Issue 3.

Moussié, Rachel and Laura Alfers. 2018. "Women Informal Workers Demand Child Care: Shifting Narratives on Women's Economic Empowerment in Africa." *Agenda*, 32 (1).

Rogan, Michael, Sally Roever, Martha Chen and Françoise Carré. 2018. "Informal Employment in the Global South: Globalisation, Production Relations and 'Precarity'." *Research in the Sociology of Work*, Vol. 31.

Shezi, B., R. Naidoo, S. Muttoo, A. Mathee, L. Alfers, R. Dobson, P. Ndlovu and R. Street. 2019. "[Informal Sector Occupational Hazards: An Observational Workplace Assessment of the Traditional Medicine Trade \(South Africa\)](#)." *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*.

Von Broembsen, Marlese. 2018. "Constitutionalizing Labour Rights: Informal Homeworkers in Global Value Chains." *International Journal of Comparative Labour Law and Industrial Relations*, Vol. 34, Issue 3.

Book Chapters

In [The Routledge Companion to Planning in the Global South](#). 2018. Edited by Gautam Bhan, Smita Srinivas and Vanessa Watson. London and New York: Routledge.

- Bonner, Chris, Françoise Carré, Martha A. Chen and Rhonda Douglas. "Informal Worker Organising and Mobilisation: Linking Global with Local Advocacy"
- Skinner, Caroline and Vanessa Watson. "The Informal Economy in Cities of the Global South: Challenges to the Planning Lexicon."

In [The South African Informal Sector: Creating Jobs, Reducing Poverty](#). 2018. Edited by Frederick Fourie. South Africa: HSRC Press.

- Chen, Martha Alter. "The South African Informal Sector in International Comparative Perspective: Theories, Data and Policies."
- Cichello, Paul and Michael Rogan. "Informal Sector Employment and Poverty Reduction in South Africa: The Contribution of 'Informal' Sources of Income."
- Rogan, Michael and Caroline Skinner. "The Size and Structure of the South African Informal Sector 2008-2014: A Labour-force Analysis."
- Skinner, Caroline. "Informal Sector Policy and Legislation in South Africa: Repression, Omission and Ambiguity."

In [The Handbook of Social Policy & Development](#). 2019. Edited by James Midgley, Rebecca Surender and Laura Alfars. London: Elgar.

- Alfars, Laura. "Social Movements, Social Policy & Development."
- Lund, Francie. "The Informal Economy."
- Rogan, Mike and Laura Alfars. "Employment-based Social Protection: 'Productivism', Universalism and Social Citizenship."

Dias, Sonia Marie. 2019. "Roadmap to Inclusion in Urban Solid Waste Management - A Tale of Three Cities," in Paquette, Catherine, [La ville durable, moteur de transformation sociale ? Regards croisés entre l'Europe, l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes](#). Retour sur le Colloque de 2018 organisé par l'Institut des Amériques, l'Agence française de développement et la Fondation EU-LAC.

Parra, Federico. 2019. Chapter 8: La formalización de los recicladores en Colombia como prestadores del servicio de aseo en el componente de aprovechamiento: logros retos y amenazas ["Formalizing waste pickers in Colombia as Recycling service providers: achievements, challenges and threats"]. En : Estándar Ambiental y Derechos Ambientales en posacuerdos de Paz: Algunos Estudios de Caso/Gregorio Meza Editor; Grupo de

Investigación en Derechos Ambientales y Colectivos GIDCA. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia. Facultad de Derechos, Ciencias Políticas y Sociales. Instituto Unidad de Investigaciones Jurídico Sociales Gerardo Molina (UNIJUS).

Skinner, Caroline. 2018. "Informal Retail in Africa: Understanding Contributions and Exclusionary Policy Practice." In Battersby, J. and V. Watson (eds.) [Urban Food Systems Governance and Poverty in African Cities](#). London: Routledge.

Roever, Sally and Caroline Skinner. 2018. [Women's Informal Employment in Africa: New Terrain of Worker Struggles](#). The Future of Women's Work in Africa, BUWA, A Journal of African Women's Experiences. Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, Issue 9, December 2018.

Von Broembsen, Marlese and Harvey, Jenna. 2019. [Decent Work for Homeworkers in Global Supply Chains: An Analysis of Existing and Potential Mechanisms for Worker-Centred Governance](#). Global Labour University/ ILO No 54.

Other Publications

Karin Pape, Deputy Director of the Organization and Representation Programme, contributed an article to the publication (German) [Wünsche für die Zukunft. Was ExpertInnen der ILO empfehlen](#) ("Wishes for the Future - What experts recommend to the ILO").

Videos

- WIEGO. 2018. [The Legacy of John Makwicana, South African Street Trader](#)
- WIEGO. 2018. [This is Recycling - A Johannesburg Reclaimer Explains His Work](#)
- WIEGO. 2018. [GA 2018 - Marty Chen's Keynote Address](#)
- WIEGO. 2018. [Celebrating 20 Years of Organizing for Change](#)
- WIEGO. 2019. [Whose Space is Public Space? Street Vendors in Accra](#)



Photo: Rhonda Douglas

The WIEGO Team held its annual meeting in Lima, Peru in October 2018. Pictured (left to right): Joann Vanek, Olga Abizaid and Jane Barrett.

WIEGO Board and Team



The Team meeting is a crucial opportunity for a farflung team to meet face-to-face to plan and exchange ideas. Pictured (left to right): Marlese von Broembsen, Sonia Dias and Ana Carolina Ogando. Photo: Rhonda Douglas

Board of Directors

- Renana Jhabvala** (Chair)
Self-Employed Women’s Association, India
- Barbro Budin**
International Union of Food and Allied Workers (retired), Sweden
- Gabriela Calandria Alvarez**
StreetNet / AFFE, Uruguay
- Debra Davis** (Treasurer)
Independent Consultant, UK
- Luciana Itikawa**
Independent Consultant, Brazil
- Lin Lim**
Independent Consultant, Malaysia
- Uma Rani**
International Labour Organization, India
- William Steel**
University of Ghana, Ghana

A Growing WIEGO Team

WIEGO Team	March 2019	
Segment of Team	Number	FTEs
International Coordination	2	2
Operations Office (UK)	6	5
Programme/Projects (global)	34	26
Communications Team (global)	7	5
Total	49	38



Photo: Jonathan Torgovnik

Over 130 people from 41 countries came together at WIEGO's 7th General Assembly. A team of translators ensured the diverse group could share, plan and develop relationships that strengthen the global movement of informal workers.

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing

Annual Report

April 2018 - March 2019

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Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing