WASTE PICKERS COVID19

WORLD BANK ROUNDABLE

Sonia Dias - Waste Specialist, Urban Policies Programme
- **Google survey March** (150 coops): decline in demand/buyers of recyclable materials + drop in prices varying from 8% (paper) to nearly 23% (PET) + 88% of coops no support from local and provincial govts, around 98% of waste picker coops closed (*ABIPHEC* Google survey March, 2020)

- Segregated waste collection: interrupted in some cities, continues under special conditions in others

- National cash grant approved ($120,00)

- Extended Producer Responsibility: additional cash grants + PPE + food baskets

- Greatest concern: dump pickers + non-organized street pickers
COVID19 ACTIONS - BRAZIL

- Participation in WhatsApp emergency relief committees
- Support to and advocacy for cash grants and food security schemes
- Tracking of government policies, impacts, responses and workers’ organizations responses
- **Google Survey** WIEGO- ABIPHEC tracking Health and well-being with 150 coops across 21 states in Brazil
- Drafting guidelines with many partners
- Support to solidarity campaigns: national movement of waste pickers + regional and local waste picker coop networks
- “Possibility thinking”: transformative changes to SW systems with Observatory for Inclusive Recycling (ORIS) and Waste & Citizenship Forum
WIEGO’s Cuidar health risks project: with epidemiologists and labor experts from the University of Brasilia, FUNED, and Waste Workers Occupational Safety and Health working group:

- Guidelines focus on waste pickers’ work areas and personal health.
- Guidelines call for alliances to fight for basic conditions for workers and cash grants to Compensation for waste pickers for their livelihood losses.
- Poster available in more than 10 languages
- Funds raised for US$50 cash grant for Coop members + non-organized pickers
March 23rd: temporary suspension of segregated waste collection performed by cooperatives
**PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE**

- **Recommendation:** to suspend waste picking operations during peak of the outbreak and **buy some time to work on improving safety** – backed by National Sanitation Engineers Association, the National Movement of Waste Pickers (Minas Gerais Chapter), Observatory for Inclusive Recycling.

- **Rationale:** adjusting recycling activities (and workers safety habits) to avoid cross-contamination and infections in the first phase of such a serious outbreak is very difficult.

- **Emergency relief:** food security (food baskets), cash grant, payment of contract.
Municipal Waste & Citizenship Forum - two Covid19 working groups (city officers, coops and their allies such as WIEGO and others):

1) **Relief**: to think about and monitor emergency actions, addressing the difficulties for their effective and comprehensive implementation;

2) **Operations**: to design how to resume waste picker activities in adequate sanitary conditions, addressing prevention measures to be implemented at the household level, collection processes and handling of recyclable materials inside warehouses
**Belo Horizonte Waste & Citizenship Forum - ACTIONS**

- Mapping of how workers are accessing benefits such as basic cash grants, food baskets

- Drafting of an operational manual for resumption of selective waste collection

- Mapping costs, taxes & other expenses that coops need to meet in order to seek out funds to meet these payments

- Designing operational safety measures – short-medium and long term: reframe of collection processes, transportation, storing, sorting, work flows, Urban-collective and personal protection equipments, infrastructure.
BOUNCING FORWARD: REFRAMING SOURCE SEGREGATION SCHEME

1st level of protection: guide households to store materials for 72 hours or during the period that collection is suspended

2nd level: Urban Protection equipment (LEVAs) + Collective Protection equipment (disinfection cabins, conveyor belts, spaced work stations)

3rd level: PPE
Thinking Forward Globally Inclusive SWM 10 Steps Agenda

1. **Build from what already exists**: informal workers can supplement SW systems

2. “Nothing for us without us” – urban participatory SW governance (multi-stakeholders platforms)

3. **Payment** for service provision and for environmental service

4. **Essential Workers** = Occupational Health and Safety + Adequate infrastructure + capacity building for safety

5. **Locally suitable technologies**: pro-poor modernization of SW systems instead of capital intensive technologies

6. **Social protection**: access to health, emergency cash grants, childcare

7. **Gender sensitive policies**

8. **All-inclusive: policies** including non-nationals, organized and non-organized workers

9. **Non-stigmatization of workers campaigns**: in times of pandemics there is a great risk of blaming workers

10. **Sustainable Livelihoods**: plan for livelihoods, monitor and evaluate impacts
THANKS

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