

Our Board

Renana Jhabvala (Chair)

Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)/India

Juliana Brown Afari

StreetNet International/Ghana

Barbro Budin

International Union of Food and Allied Workers (IUF)/Switzerland

Debra Davis (Treasurer)

Independent Consultant/UK

Ravi Kanbur

Cornell University/USA

Vicky Kanyoka

International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)/Tanzania

Lin Lim

Independent Consultant/Malaysia

William Steel

University of Ghana/Ghana

Jeemol Unni

Institute of Rural Management, Anand/India

Carmen Vildoso

Independent Consultant/Peru

Our Team

The WIEGO Team has grown to include eight employees and 33 contracted consultants working in 14 countries around the world. Senior members of our team include:

Marty Chen, *International Coordinator/USA*

Jane Barrett, *Director, Organization & Representation/ South Africa*

Marlese von Broembsen, *Director, Law/South Africa*

Sally Roeber, *Director, Urban Policies/USA*

Joann Vanek, *Director, Statistics/USA*

Gisèle Yasmeen, *Director, Social Protection/Canada*

Laura Alfery, *Deputy Director, Social Protection/ South Africa*

Karin Pape, *Deputy Director, Organization & Representation/Switzerland*

Rhonda Douglas, *Programme Strategy Advisor/Canada*

Françoise Carré, *Research Coordinator/USA*

Demetria Tsoutouras, *Communications Manager/ Canada*

Mike Bird, *Operations Director/UK*

Jacqui Fendall, *Financial Controller/UK*

Photo Credits: Front: Street vendors in Ahmedabad, India. Photo from SEWA. Inside: Waste picker delegates at COP16, Cancun, Mexico, 2010. Photo by Sofia Trevino. Home-based worker, Cambodia. Photo by Leslie Tuttle.



Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

A global action-research-policy network that seeks to improve the status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy.

Our Major Concerns

Our name reflects our major concerns:

- **WOMEN** Women are over-represented in the informal economy, particularly in the activities with the lowest returns and highest risks.
- **INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT** The informally employed include wage workers in unprotected jobs as well as the self-employed in small unregulated enterprises.
- **GLOBALIZING** The working poor in the informal economy are integral to the global economy and are affected by global integration and trade liberalization.
- **ORGANIZING** The working poor, especially women, need to organize at local, national, and international levels in order to seize the opportunities and address the negative impacts associated with today's global economy.



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Our 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.

Our Goals

In all of our activities, WIEGO seeks to help the working poor in the informal economy, especially women, achieve increased:

- **VOICE** by fostering more and stronger organizations of the working poor in the informal economy and promoting their incorporation into policy-making and rule-setting processes.
- **VISIBILITY** by improving statistics and promoting research, policy analysis, and good practice documentation on the informal economy.
- **VALIDITY** by highlighting that the working poor in the informal economy contribute to the economy and to society and by promoting them as legitimate targets of economic as well as social policies.

Our Programmes and Projects

WIEGO has five core programmes as well as special projects and initiatives.

- **ORGANIZATION AND REPRESENTATION** works to strengthen membership-based organizations (MBOs) of informal workers, especially those that involve women as members and leaders, and to build sector-specific networks of such organizations.
- **STATISTICS** encourages the collection and use of data on the informal economy as an essential component of official statistics; works to improve classifications, concepts and methods for estimating the size, composition, and economic contribution of the informal economy; and makes data and analysis available to policymakers, researchers and advocates in accessible formats.
- **LAW** analyzes and improves legal and regulatory frameworks for informal workers and empowers workers' organizations to fight for their recognition and rights as workers on a local and international level.
- **SOCIAL PROTECTION** examines the specific risks faced by informal workers, particularly women, and promotes innovative approaches to extending social protection coverage to informal workers, including occupational health and safety.
- **URBAN POLICIES** promotes inclusive urban planning, policies, and practices towards the urban working poor through research, good practice documentation, and policy dialogues.
- **FOCAL CITIES INITIATIVE** works with MBOs of informal workers in selected cities to build their capacity to advocate for their issues and negotiate with government.
- **OTHER SPECIAL INITIATIVES** include technical and policy dialogues; collaborative research and advocacy; commissioned research for international agencies; and conferences or public events.

Our Activities

We pursue our programme objectives through a mix of the following activities:

- Helping build and strengthen networks of organizations of informal workers.
- Undertaking policy studies, statistical research, and data analysis on the informal economy.
- Providing policy advice and convening policy dialogues on the informal economy.
- Documenting and disseminating good practice in support of the informal workforce.

Our Network

WIEGO is a global action-research-policy network that builds alliances with and draws our membership from three constituencies:

- **MEMBERSHIP-BASED ORGANIZATIONS** of informal workers, such as unions, cooperatives and associations.
- **RESEARCHERS AND STATISTICIANS** who carry out research, data collection, or data analysis on the informal economy.
- **PRACTITIONERS FROM DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES** (intergovernmental, governmental, non-governmental) who provide services to or shape policies towards the informal workforce.

As of March 2016, the WIEGO network had 34 Institutional Members and 163 Individual Members from 44 countries.

Our Key Funders

The Ford Foundation

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Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

Two Decades of Partnership, Research, and Action

Since 1997, the WIEGO network has been working to improve the status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. Milestones include:

- WIEGO fostered the growth of two national networks of street vendor organizations (in India and Kenya), three regional networks of home-based worker organizations (HomeNet South Asia, HomeNet Southeast Asia, and HomeNet Eastern Europe), a global network of street vendor organizations (StreetNet International), a global federation of domestic worker organizations (International Domestic Workers Federation, IDWF), and a global alliance of waste picker organizations.
- WIEGO has provided technical and capacity building support to delegations of informal worker leaders at successive climate change negotiations, International Labour Conferences and World Urban Forums. WIEGO also supported the successful campaign by the International Domestic Workers Network (now IDWF) for adoption of the ILO Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
- WIEGO has worked closely with the ILO Statistics Bureau and the International Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (the Delhi Group) to advocate for an expanded statistical definition of informal employment that includes self-employed in informal enterprises and wage employment in informal jobs (for informal enterprises, formal firms, and households). This expanded definition was endorsed by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2003.
- WIEGO prepared *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*, the first international compilation of statistics on the informal economy, for the ILO in 2002. An updated version of this publication, jointly prepared by the ILO and WIEGO, was published in 2013.
- WIEGO prepared flagship publications for both the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNIFEM on the links between informal employment, poverty, and gender. These publications presented statistical as well as policy-related analysis on these linkages.
- WIEGO coordinated, with our partners in the Inclusive Cities project, two rounds of a study on the impact of the global economic crisis on workers in the urban informal economy in 10 cities in developing countries. Building on the insightful findings and effective methods of this study, WIEGO carried out the Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS), a study on the state of the urban informal economy in 10 cities with our Inclusive Cities partners.
- WIEGO adapted and piloted an Informal Economy Budget Analysis (IEBA) tool that examines how government budgets address informal workers and helps identify opportunities for them to participate in budget processes.
- WIEGO developed a project designed to rethink and reform occupational health and safety to recognize the unique conditions and locations of informal work.

To learn more about WIEGO's partnerships and work, visit our website: www.wiego.org