



Research Conference, Cape Town, March 2011

**Research Gaps – Waste Pickers
Sonia Dias**





Introduction

Context



- Little reliable socio-economic or statistical information exists. Brazil the only country to have wps in its official databases (PNAD etc).
- Most studies for this sector are of a qualitative nature (ethnographies or social profiles of workers for particular cities/sites).
- In the case of existing quantitative studies, they are frequently based on very small samples, making generalizations difficult.
- Different conceptual frameworks: posing difficulties for comparative studies across countries.
- **Specific research agendas:** physical elements of solid waste systems, policy, institutional, and governance frameworks are different across countries and also the level of organizing.

Africa



- Analysis of the recycling industry: how it relates to local and global production processes.
- Historical analysis of role and conditions of waste pickers during apartheid and how this has changed with removal of restrictions on movement.
- Socio- economic and demographic profiles.
- Analysis of municipal SW policies and its effects on waste pickers.
- Organising: forms, demands, its politics

Asia



- Profile of waste pickers: numbers, earnings, work conditions, ethnicity.
- Organising: nature, history, achievements and vision of existing wps organisations.
- Value chain analysis.
- Analysis of legal framework- subsidies for integration models.
- Analysis of niches for integration within current SW systems


Latin America

- Comparative research on advantages/disadvantages of different organisational forms (associations/coops/micro enterprises/unions).
- Analysis of existing inclusive legislation in some countries.
- Economical and environmental role of waste pickers -subsidies advocacy at municipal level.
- Profile: numbers, earnings etc.
- In the case of Brazil, gender analysis of income for waste pickers at PNAD's database, refinement of PNAD and RAIS databases (triangulation with other databases + qualitative research)
- Framework for sustainability assessment of municipal recycling programs partnered with MBOs
- Links between organised and non-organised pickers and also with the industry

Different agendas but also commonalities



- Global and local Value chain analysis is important to secure the livelihoods of wps in recycling market.
- Deepening the understanding of the varied labour relationships established within the waste pickers groups across countries/continents is important and also on the impact of laws and public policies in shaping these relationships.
- Analysis of new policies such as “payment for environmental services” in its (potential) effectiveness of addressing the issue of income distribution from capital to Labour might be useful for guidelines of similar frameworks for other contexts.

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- Research agenda informed by policy agenda.
 - Agenda covers some issues raised at Conference: the role of the State, formal/informal linkages, the role of organizing (constraints on collective action/capacities)
 - Concept of Citizenship – the perspective of a waste picker leader:

DE ONDE EU VIM, ONDE EU ESTOU, HOJE TENHO CIDADANIA

WHERE I CAME FROM, WHERE I AM NOW, I AM A CITIZEN

(Dona Geralda, ASMARE leader)





Thank You

[E-mail: Sonia.Dias@wiego.org](mailto:Sonia.Dias@wiego.org)

www.wiego.org