



**HOMES ARE  
PRODUCTIVE  
PLACES OF WORK:**  
Evidence from the  
Informal Economy  
Monitoring Study

*Paula Bronstein / Getty Images Reportage*

**Habitat III  
Thematic  
Meeting:  
Informal  
Settlements**

**April 7, 2016**





**763**  
**WASTE  
PICKERS**



**743**  
**STREET  
VENDORS**



**447**  
**HOME-BASED  
WORKERS**

**AFRICA**  
ACCRA  
NAKURU  
DURBAN

**ASIA**  
AHMEDABAD  
BANGKOK  
LAHORE  
PUNE

**LATIN  
AMERICA**  
BELO HORIZONTE  
BOGOTÀ  
LIMA

*Photo Credits:  
Left: Jonathan Torgovnik;  
Center: Jonathan Torgovnik;  
Right: Paula Bronstein  
/ all Getty Images Reportage*

A woman in a vibrant yellow and purple sari is pushing a metal cart filled with various types of waste, including plastic bags, food scraps, and other debris. She is walking on a busy street in an urban area, with other people and vehicles visible in the background. The street is lined with buildings, some of which have signs in Hindi. The overall scene depicts a common sight in informal settlements where waste picking is a source of livelihood.

# Homes are productive assets.

Homes are living spaces as well as **economic spaces** for storage, production and trading of goods.

Informal workers involved in **home-based work, street trading and waste picking** use their living space to facilitate and assist in activities related to their line of work.



**“I buy my materials in downtown Lima; I store and make my products at my own house.”**

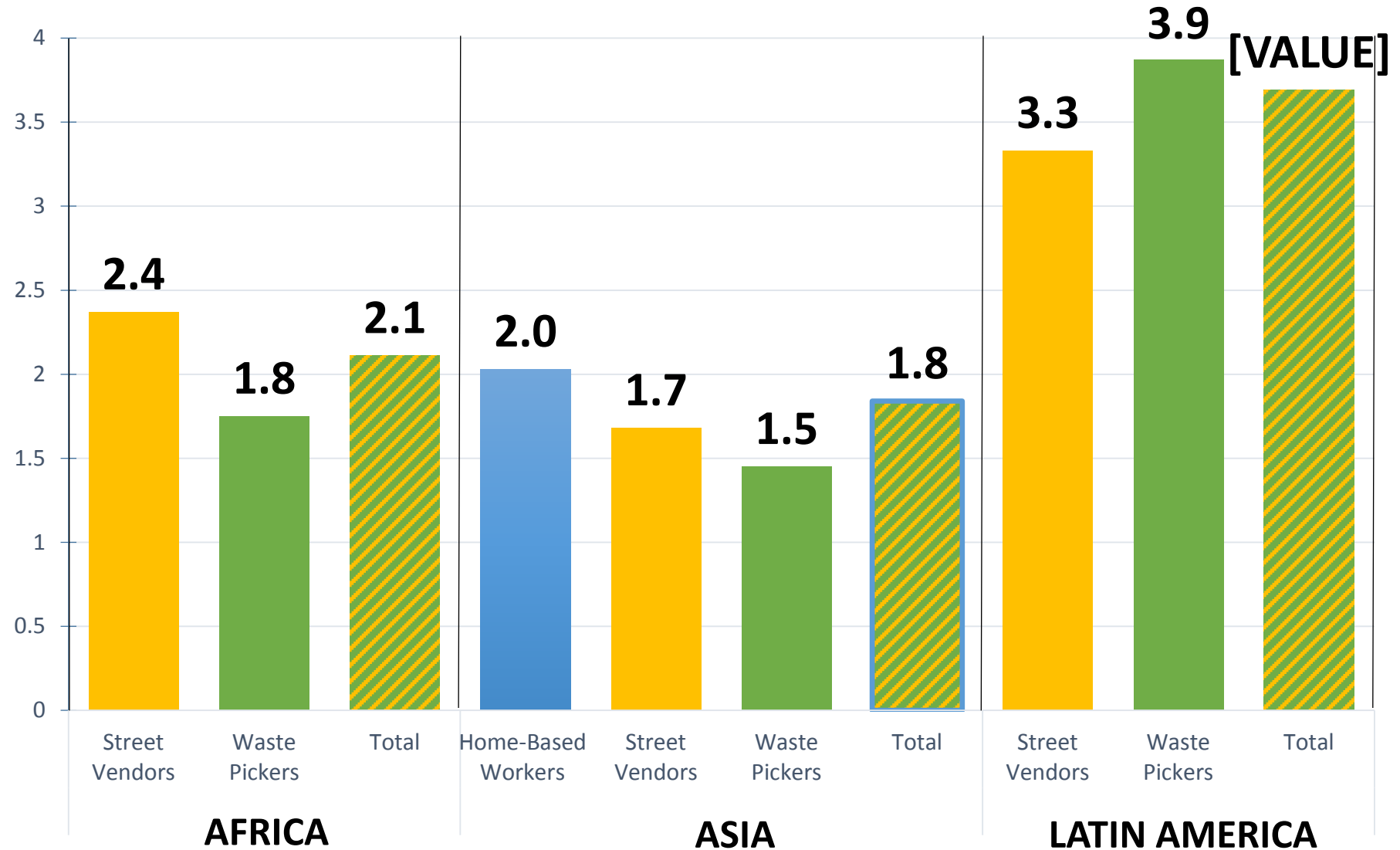
**-- Street Vendor (Acrylics), Lima, Peru**


**Employers drop waste plastic at their homes and pick it up when the sorting process is finished. Most of the focus group use their homes as their workplace except for Yay. She works at her employers' house. Their homes do not have enough space to store waste plastic and each must therefore try to find available space near their houses.**

**-- Waste Pickers Focus Group, Bangkok, Thailand**



# Average Number of Rooms in Dwelling by Region and Sector



A woman wearing a light blue jacket and a grey headscarf is washing a blue cloth outdoors. She is looking upwards and to the right. The background shows a building with large windows and a tiled floor. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Basic services  
are inputs for  
informal  
workers'  
productivity,  
health and  
hygiene.**

Water for preparing food,  
cleaning and disinfection.  
Electricity powers workers'  
tools and machinery.

*Jonathan Torgovnik / Getty Images Reportage*



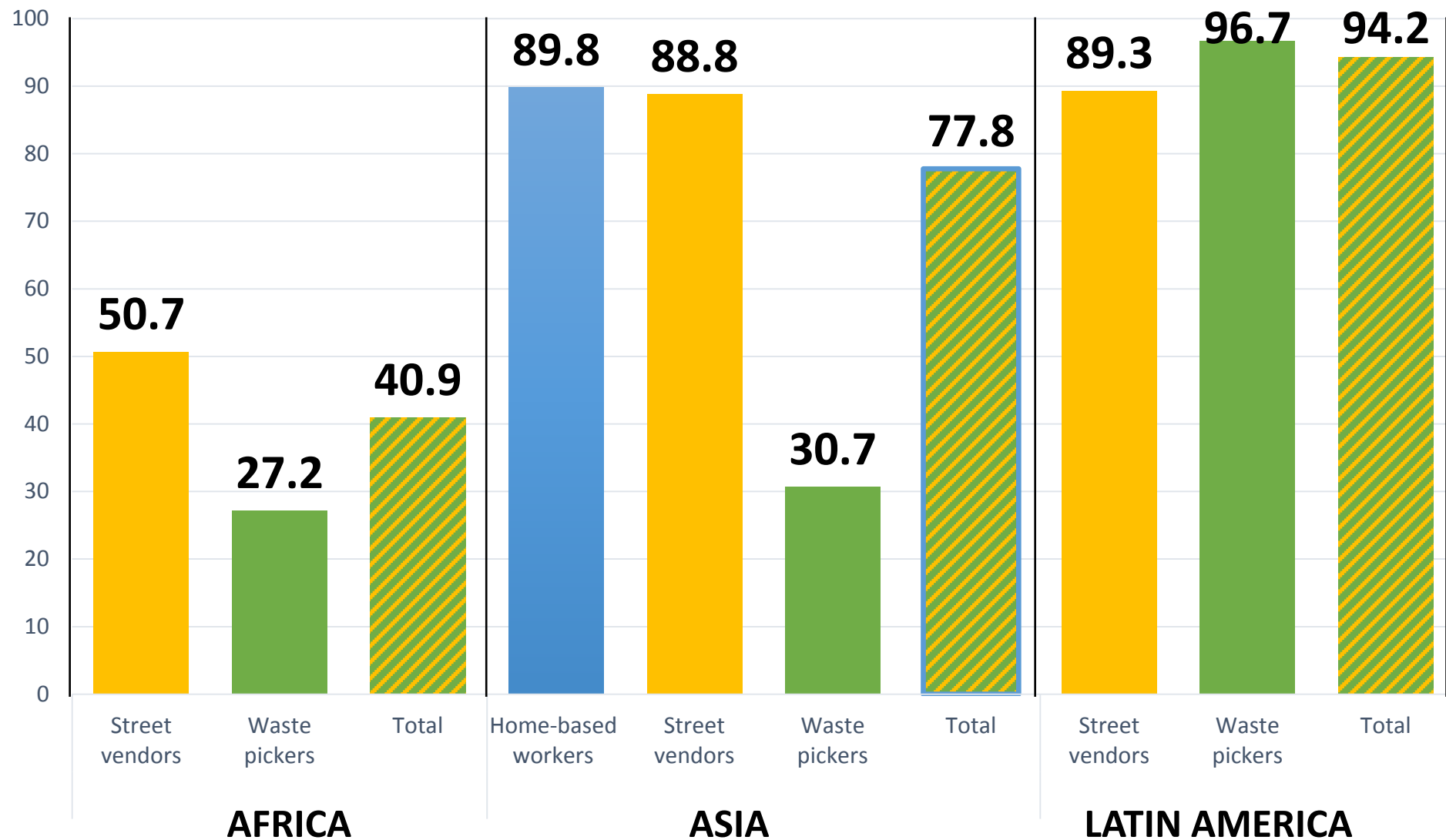
**Cooking at home helped them because they did not have to spend on water, since there's no water in the market stalls or at the market and they would have to buy it in drums. Besides, since their routine is finishing to sell and then going to buy what they need for the following day right there, they save a trip. They don't live too far away, so cooking at home is of help.**

-- Street Vendors Focus Group, Lima, Peru

**"I live near Nueva Esperanza, 12 de Agosto. I bring everything ready from home."**

-- Infusions Seller (Street Vendor), Lima Peru

# Access to Piped / Improved Water by Region and Sector (%)







**“When there is no light, the water motor stops working and there is less water and there is darkness in the house and everything stops.”**

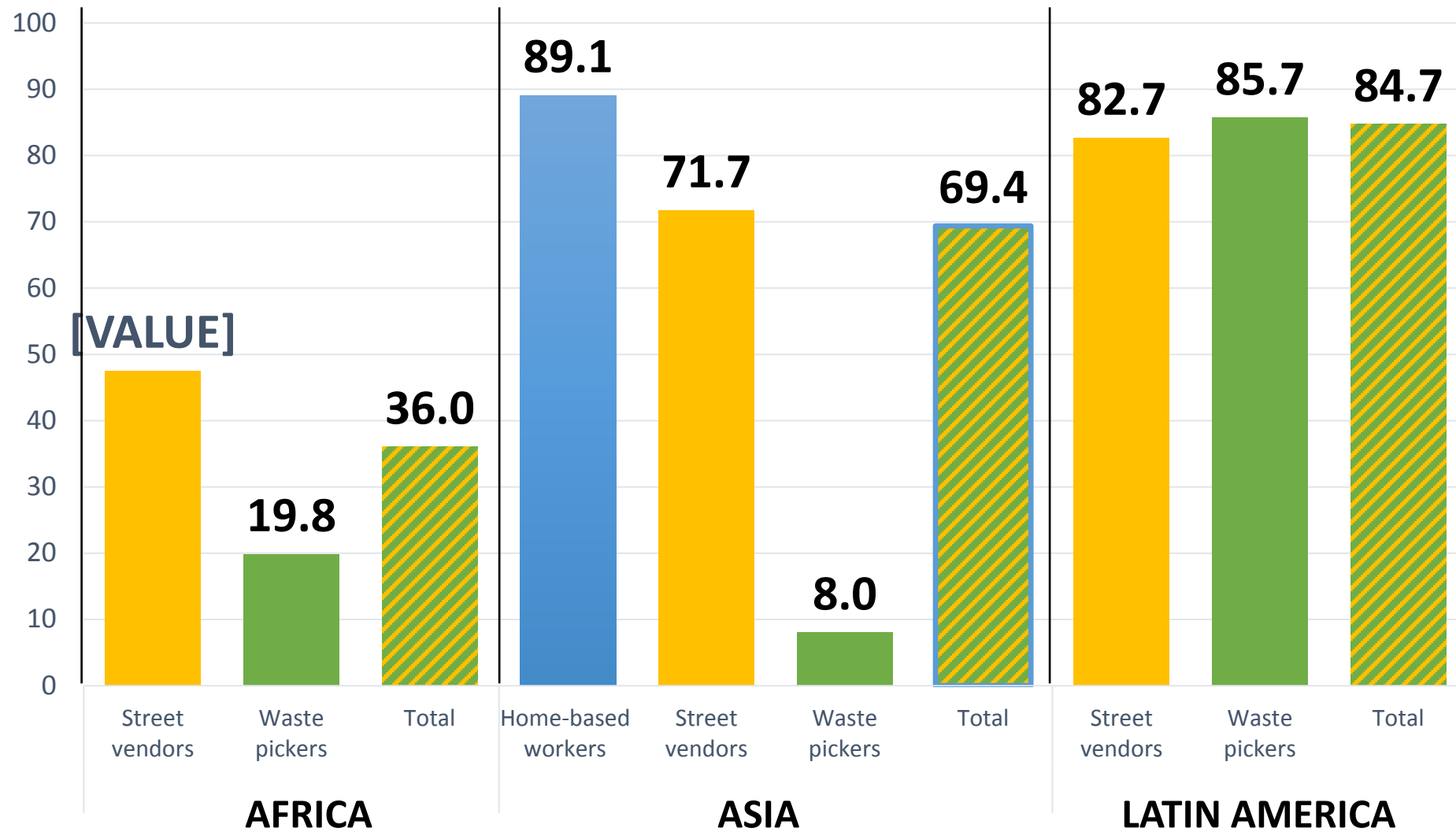
-- Garment Worker, Lahore

**“When there is no electricity they cannot make dye and we receive the work late and then our own electricity fails and we have to work around electricity schedule which is erratic.”**

-- Garment Worker, Lahore



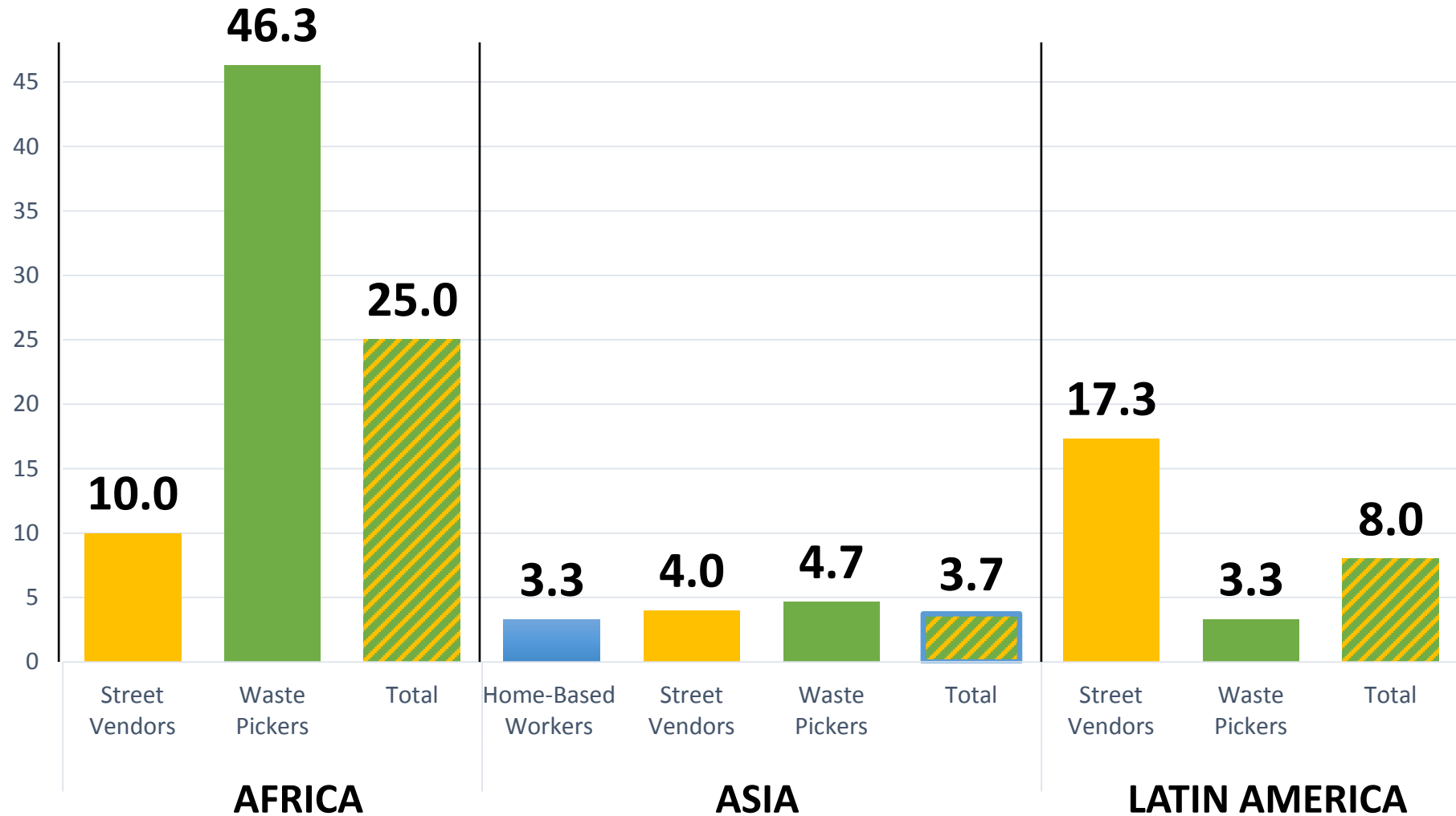
# Improved Sanitation: Workers Who Live in Dwelling Unit with a Toilet by Region and Sector (%)



Source: IEMS data (WIEGO)



# Workers Who Live in Dwelling Unit with Dirt Floors by Region and Sector (%)





# Conclusions

Livelihood plays a direct role in access to decent housing.

Homes are living spaces, and productive assets and essential for work.

Basic services are essential inputs for informal workers' production, health and hygiene.

Vulnerable livelihoods are strongly linked with lower standards of housing.

*Photo Credits:*

*Left: Jonathan Torgovnik; Center: Jonathan Torgovnik;*

*Right: Paula Bronstein / all Getty Images Reportage*

A woman in a blue shirt and patterned headscarf is carrying a large, heavy metal pot on her head. She is standing in a busy outdoor market with many other people and stalls in the background. The sky is overcast.

**THANK YOU**

[www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org)  
[www.inclusivocities.org](http://www.inclusivocities.org)