

**GLOBAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF THE URBAN POOR:
MOBILIZING FOR INCLUSIVE CITIES**

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REMARKS

- ❑ **Social challenge:** exclusionary cities increasingly evict or relocate the urban poor from informal settlements & informal workplaces
- ❑ **Social movements:** two global social movements of the urban poor mobilizing for recognition and inclusion
- ❑ **Social innovation:** global movements of the urban poor promote policy dialogues between the urban poor and city officials/urban planners + facilitate delegations of urban poor leaders to global forums
- ❑ **Social transformation:** inclusive cities recognize urban poor as legitimate citizens and workers + invite organizations of urban poor to city planning processes + support informal settlements & informal livelihoods

BUT FIRST, SOME TERMINOLOGY

■ **Global Civil Society**

- civil society: includes membership-based organizations (MBOs) + community-based organizations (CBOs) + non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- social movements: seek transformational change, comprised of MBOs, CBOs and/or NGOs
- global social movements = transnational social movements

■ **Informal Settlements**

- mainstream definition: areas where people occupy land illegally and build houses that are not in compliance with planning and building regulations
- alternative definition: areas where the urban poor build their own homes and communities

■ **Informal Enterprises, Informal Employment & Informal Livelihoods**

- informal enterprises = enterprises that are not legally incorporated or registered with the national government (ICL 1993)
- informal employment = wage workers who do not get social protection through work + self-employed in informal enterprises (ICLS 2003)
- informal livelihoods = economic activities of informal wage workers & informal self-employed

AND SOME PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- **I have worked with civil society organizations my whole career**
 - Bangladesh in the 1970s – HELP and BRAC
 - India in the 1980s – Oxfam America
 - US since 1987 – Harvard University
 - Globally since 1997 - WIEGO Network
- **I have worked with the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy my whole career**
 - BRAC – as an activist practitioner
 - Oxfam America - as an activist funder
 - WIEGO Network and Harvard University – as an activist academic

SOCIAL CHALLENGE

▣ **Urban Informal Realities**

- informal settlements: around 30% of the urban population globally lives in slums or informal settlements: 65% in developing countries, 32% in lower middle income countries, 27% in middle income countries and 23% in upper middle income countries (UN 2014)
- informal employment: informal workers comprise 44% of the urban workforce globally: 79% in developing countries, 51% in emerging countries, and 17% in developed countries (ILO 2018)

▣ **Common City Response** – increasingly evict or relocate urban poor from...

- informal settlements ► public housing on periphery of cities at great distance from work opportunities
- informal workplaces ► alternative workplaces on periphery of cities at great distance from suppliers and customers
- **informal livelihoods become less and less viable**

GLOBAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF THE URBAN POOR

- **Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI)**
 - ▣ founded in 1996
 - ▣ network of community-based organizations of slum/shack dwellers in 33 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.
 - ▣ SDI secretariat located in Cape Town, South Africa
- **Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing & Organizing (WIEGO)**
 - ▣ founded in 1997
 - ▣ network of membership-based organizations of informal workers in 90 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean + Europe and North America
 - ▣ WIEGO secretariat located in Rome, Italy

SDI AND WIEGO: COMMON FEATURES

- ▣ organize and mobilize the urban poor transnationally
- ▣ promote improved data: SDI (Know Your City censuses) + WIEGO (official labor force statistics)
- ▣ generate grounded knowledge and policy analysis
- ▣ promote policy dialogues between urban poor & urban planners/city officials
- ▣ facilitate delegations of urban poor leaders to global forums
- ▣ collaborate in grassroots partnerships to influence...
 - UN Habitat III – New Urban Agenda
 - Climate Change negotiations

WIEGO IN BRIEF: WHY & WHO

WIEGO is a membership organization:

- ❑ **goal:** to improve status of the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy through *systemic change* - as laws, policies and support systems tend to be biased against informal workers & their livelihood activities
- ❑ **members from 3 constituencies:** networks/organizations of informal workers + researchers/statisticians + development professionals
- ❑ **representative board:** 3 members, including chair, from organizations of informal workers + 2 each from other two constituencies + 3 ad hoc members = 10 members from 9 countries
- ❑ **committed team:** 54 persons (44 FTE) – 33 programme, 5 programme support, 8 communications, 8 operations – in 16 countries

WIEGO IN BRIEF: WHAT & HOW

WIEGO is a global action-research-policy network:

- ❑ **4 key sectors:** domestic workers + home-based workers + street vendors + waste pickers ► sector-specific networks with more than 500 affiliates in over 90 countries
- ❑ **5 core programmes:** Organization-Representation + Statistics + Law + Social Protection + Urban Policies
- ❑ **4 core functions:** networking/capacity building (of organizations of informal workers) + statistics/research + policy analysis and dialogues + good practice documentation
- ❑ **defining features:** bridge ground reality of the working poor & mainstream disciplines and discourses + combine social movement & think tank functions

WIEGO IN BRIEF: WHERE



WIEGO MODEL OF CHANGE

INCREASED VOICE

+

INCREASED VISIBILITY



VALIDITY

INCREASED VISIBILITY **IN OFFICIAL STATISTICS**

- 118 countries now directly measure informal employment & share their micro-data sets with the ILO
- ILO generated first-ever global estimates of informal employment using cross-country harmonized criteria
 - *61% of all workers worldwide* are informally employed
 - a total of *2 billion workers*

Source: ILO 2018. *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*, 3rd. Edition
+ user-friendly *Statistical Brief* by ILO and WIEGO

SIGNIFICANCE OF INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT:

Informal Employment as % of Total, Rural & Urban Employment

Countries by income level *	Total	Rural	Urban
World	61	80	44
Developing	90	90	79
Emerging	67	83	51
Developed	18	22	17

Source: ILO 2018

*2018 World Bank definitions based on country levels of gross income per capita

COMPOSITION OF INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT: BY STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT & SEX

Countries by income level	Employers			Employees / Wage Workers			Own Account Workers			Contributing Family Workers		
	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
World	3	1	3	36	34	37	45	36	50	16	28	9
Developing	2	1	3	21	17	25	54	51	57	22	31	14
Emerging	3	1	3	37	36	38	44	34	50	16	29	8
Developed	6	4	8	51	57	47	36	28	42	6	10	3

Source: ILO 2018

COMPOSITION OF INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT:

% of Informal Employment in Agriculture, Services & Manufacturing

Countries by income level	Agriculture	Services	Manufacturing
World	38	44	18
Developing	69	21	10
Emerging	36	46	19
Developed	10	71	19

Source: ILO 2018



**INCREASED VOICE
THROUGH
ORGANIZATION &
REPRESENTATION**

INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS FEDERATION (IDWF)

- **67 affiliates in 54 countries:**
 - Africa: 18 affiliates
 - Asia: 12 affiliates
 - Europe: 6 affiliates
 - Americas /Caribbean:
19 affiliates (1 in USA)



HOME-BASED WORKERS: 4 REGIONAL NETWORKS (32 countries)

**HomeNet
Eastern
Europe**

Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria,
Georgia, Kyrgyzstan,
Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia,
Turkey, Ukraine + 3 countries in
Central Asia

**HomeNet
South Asia**

Afghanistan, Bangladesh,
Bhutan
India, Maldives,
Nepal, Pakistan
Sri Lanka

**HomeNet
Latin
America:**
Argentina
Brazil
Chile
Nicaragua
Peru
Uruguay



Africa:

South Africa, Kenya, Uganda,
Egypt, Ethiopia

**HomeNet
SE Asia**

Cambodia, Indonesia,
Laos, Philippines,
Thailand

STREETNET INTERNATIONAL

- **52 Affiliates in 49 countries**
 - Africa: 25 affiliates
 - Asia: 6 affiliates
 - Europe & Central Asia: 7 affiliates
 - Americas: 14 affiliates (1 in USA)



GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF WASTE PICKERS

A networking process supported by WIEGO involving 100 waste picker organizations in 31 countries in (mainly) Latin America plus Asia and Africa.



31 countries represented

101 organizations

(1 regional, 77 local, 23 national)

260,000+ members
(minimum)

24 newsletters circulated
(4 per year since 2012 in 4 languages)

20 global gatherings
(2 per year since 2008)



GLOBAL MOVEMENT OF INFORMAL WORKERS

- ❑ **over 500 affiliated organizations in 90 countries with a total of around 5 million members**
- ❑ **common strategies:**
 - consolidating and extending network
 - meetings and workshops
 - field visits & educational activities
 - information sharing
 - leadership training
 - building alliances within and across sectors and with other stakeholders
 - promoting forums for collective bargaining and negotiation at the national and local levels
 - facilitating delegations of informal worker leaders to global forums
 - campaigning for social protection + labor rights + fair/just laws and policies + inclusive cities
 - promoting & disseminating research on the working conditions and contributions of informal workers; and documentation of their struggles and victories



**INCREASED VALIDITY
= VICTORIES AT
GLOBAL, NATIONAL & LOCAL
LEVELS**

GLOBAL VICTORIES

- **Convention 177 on Homework and Convention 189 on Domestic Work:** global campaigns for ratification with support from ITUC and ILO.
- **2002 ILC General Discussion on Decent Work and the Informal Economy:** recognition of own account workers & contributing family workers as vulnerable workers in Conclusions
- **2014-15 ILC Standard Setting Discussion on Formalization of the Informal Economy:** key provisions for informal workers, including **regulated access to public space**
- **2016 ILC General Discussion on Global Supply Chains:** inclusion of homeworkers in Conclusions
- **Habitat III:** inclusion of **urban informal workers mandated in New Urban Agenda**

NATIONAL & LOCAL VICTORIES FOR HOME-BASED WORKERS: THAILAND

HomeNet Thailand negotiated successfully for:

- ❑ **Home Workers Protection Act B.E.2553** (2011) – based on ILO Convention 177
- ❑ **Occupational Health & Safety Project** (2012-2015) for home-based workers
- ❑ **Bus Services** for home-based workers relocated to periphery of Bangkok
- ❑ **Pedestrian Bridge** for home-based workers relocated to far side of large highway



LEGAL VICTORIES FOR STREET VENDORS: INDIA

- **Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI)** plus other organizations advocated for national policy and then law in support of street vendors
- **Street Vendors Act 2014**
 - recognition of contribution of street vendors
 - Town Vending Committees
- **SEWA supported re-location of 372 evicted street vendors to original market area converted into heritage plaza**



CITY CONTRACTS FOR WASTE PICKERS: COLOMBIA

Asociacion Recicladores Bogota (ARB) (founded in 1990)
co-founded by Nohra Padilla and Silvio Ruiz



Legal Campaign (20 years)
technical support from pro bono lawyers and NGOs led by
Nohra Padilla who wrote many legal briefs



First Global Waste Picker Conference, Bogota (2008)
hosted by ARB, organized by international planning committee



Constitutional Court Victory (2011)
right of waste pickers to bid for solid waste management contracts



Successful Bid for Solid Waste Management Contract (2012)
technical analysis of appropriate costs for waste services
research on conditions and trends in the waste picking sector
policy dialogues with mayor and city officials



Waste Picker Integration Model Launched in Bogota (2013)
Goldman Environmental Award to Nohra Padilla (2013)
**National Ruling to Replicate Bogota Model throughout
Colombia** (2014) ► 25 cities across Colombia



WAY FORWARD

- **Future of Work** = largely informal
 - informal employment is, and will remain, the norm
 - informal workers should not be ignored or stigmatized - but supported
- **Social Justice for Informal Workers** – depends on increasing their
 - Voice: through organization & representation
 - Visibility: in official statistics & among policy makers
 - Validity: through legal recognition & recognition of their contribution to cities, economies, societies

ORGANIZING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

5-minute video prepared for WIEGO's 20th. Anniversary celebrations in 2017:

<https://youtu.be/oj-8huJKxzo>



THANK YOU!!!
LOOKING FORWARD TO
YOUR QUESTIONS & COMMENTS!!