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*Women of MUFIS celebrating International Women's Day by sweeping Manase Market in protest of the city's neglect  
Photo by MUFIS*



*Sweeping MUFIS women approaching the pile of refuse in the Market  
Photo by MUFIS*



*MUFIS women cleaning Manase Market  
Photo by MUFIS*



# WIEGO MBO Newsletter



Women in Informal Employment  
Globalizing and Organizing

A Newsletter for Membership-Based Organizations of Informal Workers

GREETINGS FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES!

First and foremost, WIEGO is pleased to announce that **La Red Latinoamericana de Recicladores (Red Lacre)**, **L'Union Générale des Syndicats de l'économie informelle du Niger (UGSEIN)** and **Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA)** are new Institutional Members of WIEGO – welcome!

We are excited to share with you this year's first WIEGO MBO Newsletter, featuring an abundance of information and article submissions from your MBO colleagues! In this issue, we offer exciting news and information from each of the following four worker sections: home-based workers, waste pickers, street vendors and domestic workers. We also received a very interesting piece from MUFIS in Malawi about how they commemorated International Women's Day.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and useful. Before you read all of the interesting articles to follow, we'd like to take a moment to ask you a few questions.

To add to its value, we also think it could function as a platform for MBOs to help each other and share resources. To help us determine the best way forward, please fill out this short survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8Y3TJQS>

Also, we'd really like to feature and/or promote your organization's upcoming events. **Please email to us your organization's upcoming event information** and WIEGO will help you to promote your events through Facebook and Twitter.

## **MALAWI UNION FOR INFORMAL SECTOR (MUFIS)**

### **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY – 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2012**

In recognition of International Women's Day 2012, women from the Malawi Union for Informal Sector (MUFIS) led a "sweeping" demonstration at the Manase Market in Blantyre, followed by a meeting with the people.

The City Council of Blantyre has neglected the Manase Market for a long time, and it is the women workers who suffer the most. The market lacks many necessities, including toilets and running water. In addition, because the City Council has not collected refuse from the market, women workers are forced to trade on the floor beside the heap of garbage.

With this year's theme of inspiring the nation to respect the rights of women at

work, and in society, economics and development, the MUFIS women felt it was important to demonstrate that women need to trade in an environment conducive to working.

After the sweep, the women from MUFIS led a meeting, during which MUFIS members delivered short speeches. One member from the market expressed her disappointment in the City Council's abhorrent neglect of the market's sanitation and workers' needs. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairperson for Women thanked all those who participated in the events, and encouraged everyone to remain united in all union activities.

Commemorating this year's International Women's Day in style, MUFIS wants people to know that although women often do not receive the respect they deserve from their countrymen, it is undeniable that they – *the women* – contribute greatly to develop Malawi.



*Waste Pickers Conference  
Photo by Lucia Fernandez*



*Head table of panelists included  
leaders of waste pickers, environ-  
mental minister and supporters  
Photo by Lucia Fernandez*



*Waste pickers signing first MOU  
with the Municipality  
Photo by Lucia Fernandez*



*RedLacre receiving the "Key of  
Managua" from the Mayor  
Photo by Lucia Fernandez*



*Women waste pickers taking control  
of the assembly to discuss gender  
issues  
(Photo credit unknown)*

## SPOTLIGHT

### WASTE PICKERS: NICARAGUAN WASTE PICKERS CONFERENCE

For first time ever, 160 waste pickers from 17 countries came together this February for a most successful, three-part conference in Nicaragua to discuss key issues and strategies for the region. The main discussion topics were integration into the regional MBO La Red Latinoamericana de Recicladores (RedLacre), problems faced in respective countries, and ways to strengthen organizations. The conference was attended by Avina, RedLacre, GAIA, StreetNet, IDB Fomin, IIED and WIEGO. Waste pickers from six new countries attended the event as a result of the Centro-American Mapping conducted and coordinated by Asociacion Recicladores de Bogota (ARB) as the International Secretariat of RedLacre, supported by Avina, StreetNet and WIEGO. This event marked the first time StreetNet members and staff participated in such an event in Latin America. This was also the first time that the gender component was taken into consideration by the Latin American Network of Waste Pickers.

During the **Centro-American Congress**, waste pickers from RedLacre received the "keys of Managua" from their Mayor, and the nascent women waste pickers' cooperative from Bluefields (supported by MIT) signed an MOU with their Municipality. The subsequent **RedLacre Assembly** resulted in new structure, composed of four committees in addition to three secretariats:

Secretariats:

1. International Affairs (Uruguay)
2. Communications (Dominican Republic)
3. Management (Nicaragua)

Committees:

1. Global Committee (Brazil, Colombia, Chile)
2. Climate Change and Livelihoods Protection (Brazil, Colombia, Bolivia, Chile)
3. Gender and Social Inclusion Committee (Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Paraguay)
4. Management Committee (Brazil, Bolivia, Peru)

One of the most momentous occasions during the assembly – and the history of the Network – occurred when the women waste pickers took control of one session to discuss the gender issues they face at work and at home. Many of their male counterparts were brought to tears by their stories of struggle.

An **Allies Coordination Meeting** between RedLacre, Avina, Streetnet, GAIA, and WIEGO marked the end of the conference. For more information about RedLacre visit <http://www.redrecicladores.net>



*New IDWN International Coordinator Elizabeth Tang  
Photo by Sofia Trevino*



*"12 by 12" Campaign in South Korea  
Photo © ITUC*



*"12 by 12" Campaign in Colombia  
Photo © ITUC*



*Meeting with the Arab Women's Network supporting the ITUC "12 by 12" Campaign  
Photo © ITUC*



*Caribbean Domestic Workers Network (CDWN) launch—Photo by UN Communications Specialist*

## SPOTLIGHT

### DOMESTIC WORKERS: INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS NETWORK (IDWN) AND INTRODUCING CARIBBEAN DOMESTIC WORKERS NETWORK (CDWN)

After the adoption of the ILO Convention for the protection of domestic workers (C189), the IDWN is entering into a new phase, headed by the new international coordinator, Elizabeth Tang.

The IDWN Steering Committee met in Accra, Ghana from 9-11 December 2011 and agreed upon a three-year action plan. The main areas of activities are a ratification campaign and formalizing the structures of IDWN.

In addition to the target countries of the ITUC "12 by 12" campaign (meaning 12 ratifications by 2012), IDWN will lobby in other countries that have been supportive towards the adoption of the ILO convention and where there are domestic workers' organizations.

With regard to formalization of the structures, there is a broad consensus that IDWN will become a membership-based organization, based on democratic principles. A membership form and criteria for membership will be further discussed so that domestic workers organizations can soon be invited to become members of IDWN.

Further, domestic workers organizations in all regions need to be strengthened. There is also a need for training on labour rights, basic trade union training as well as leadership training and development.

The continuous support for the ILO Convention and for the protection of domestic workers by WIEGO and the IUF was appreciated and welcomed.

Also new for domestic workers is the creation of a Caribbean Domestic Workers Network (CDWN). Established at a meeting in Barbados of domestic workers from the region, CDWN is the result of a foundation of work by the National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE) in Trinidad and Tobago and the Jamaica Household Workers Association (JHWA), Jamaica. Shirley Pryce is the President of the JHWA. Ida LeBlanc is the General Secretary of NUDE and now the IDWN Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean. The launch of the Caribbean regional network is very exciting and the result of hard work by many members. More information about the launch is in the press release, available at [http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/magazines/allwoman/Caribbean-domestic-workers--network-launched\\_10194896](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/magazines/allwoman/Caribbean-domestic-workers--network-launched_10194896)

For more information about the "12 by 12" Campaign, please visit : [www.ituc-csi.org/domestic-workers-campaign-12-by-12.html](http://www.ituc-csi.org/domestic-workers-campaign-12-by-12.html)

For more information about the IDWN, please visit : <http://www.idwn.info/>





*Teak Sin Khang Thbong village  
slum area in the rainy season  
Photo by AAC*



*Jewelry (above) and handbags  
(below) produced by the Angkor  
Khmer Silk Women Light Handicraft  
Association  
Photo by AAC*



*Association members and their  
children in a leadership training  
Photo by AAC*



*Association members in a product  
development training  
Photo by AAC*

## SPOTLIGHT

### HOME-BASED WORKERS: ANGKOR KHMER SILK WOMEN LIGHT HANDICRAFT ASSOCIATION

Sapna Joshi from HomeNet South Asia sent us three inspiring case-studies about MBOs of home-based workers as part of the *Inclusive Urban Planning Project (IUP)* under the Inclusive Cities Project. One of these case-studies featured the Angkor Khmer Silk Women Light Handicraft Association, conceptualized and led by the inspiring Ms. Keo Sinith. Despite many obstacles – including losing her husband, living with HIV, and struggling with discrimination and poverty – Sinith not only turned her life around, but also led the way for other poor and HIV-positive women in her community to live and work with dignity.

Sinith established the Association in Siem Reap province, Cambodia in May 2010. She began by mobilizing group members using her home-based worker contacts, especially those living with HIV. She facilitated procurement of common spaces, such as at night markets and the Angkor Wat temple, where the workers can collectively sell their products. In addition, she helped to establish a management system.

Today, the Angkor Khmer Silk Women Light Handicraft Association includes many programs, such as group savings schemes, education, agriculture, food, and handicrafts. In the handicraft section, the members produce many different types of products from recycled materials, which are sold to middlepersons at “Night Markets.”

Some of the organizational goals achieved and techniques utilized by Sinith and her members are as follows:

- providing handicraft skills and leadership trainings
- creating and strengthening market linkages to increase product sales
- providing educational classes and leveraging financial support for members’ children
- leveraging food support and clean water for members
- obtaining flood relief services (food and medicine)
- securing legal protection and moral support from Siem Reap provincial authorities
- forming a group savings scheme
- meeting with local governor on behalf of the group
- leveraging group access to credit from Siem Reap city hall and Urban Poor Development Fund Program
- motivating members to increase social participation

One of the biggest challenges faced by the Association was the need for technical assistance to develop their skills in order to penetrate the market. The Association mostly sells to occasional visitors, which is not a large enough market outlet; many group members require alternative income, such as through waste collection. The Association appealed for help from the Inclusive Urban Planning project under Inclusive Cities, which resulted in a meeting on program promotion, and trainings on leadership and needs assessment. A customer demonstrated the training’s immediate impact when he doubled his order: “*We are improved because after training we got order which at first [was] 200 pieces and now is 400 pieces.*” (Ms. Keo Sinith)

Because they are organized, The Association is also now a member of the *Artisan’s Association of Cambodia (AAC)*. AAC offers cooperative sales services for members, including selling products on their behalf and hosting a large trade show every year that brings in buyers and tourists and showcases the producers’ products. Workshops and training opportunities are part of the fair’s value to producers.

To learn more about **AAC** go to <http://www.aac.org.kh/>

To learn more about **IUP** go to [http://www.homenetseasia.org/new\\_iup.html](http://www.homenetseasia.org/new_iup.html)



*Street Vendors in Zambia  
Photo © Sustainable Sanitation*



*Caribbean Domestic Workers  
Network (CDWN) launch,  
Photo by UN Communications  
Specialist  
See p 3 for more information*

## HBW EVENT

### WORKSHOP ON MAPPING OF SUPPLY CHAIN OF HOME-BASED WORKERS

HomeNet South Asia, HomeNet Pakistan and WIEGO will organize a workshop on mapping of supply chain of Home-based Workers. The workshop will take place in April, 2012 in Lahore-Pakistan. For more information, please see the event notice here:

[http://  
www.homenetsouthasia.net/](http://www.homenetsouthasia.net/)



*Congratulations to Arbind Singh, National Coordinator of National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) for earning the Skoll Foundation Social Entrepreneurship award!*

*Photo from NASVI*

## SPOTLIGHT

### STREET VENDORS: NEW ALLIANCE IN ZAMBIA

Street vendors from several cities across Zambia are joining forces in an alliance to counter the unstable policy environment they have faced over the past several months. City councils in Ndola, Chipata, Kabwe and elsewhere issued ultimatums to street vendors in November, stating that vending is illegal and ordering vendors off the streets. Then, in December, Zambian President Michael Sata ordered councils countrywide to stop harassing vendors and concentrate on their core functions. This presidential directive allowed the vendors to continue to trade temporarily.

The November conflict between city councils and street vendors was especially tense in Ndola, where street vendors fought running battles with national and local police who tried to prevent them from working in the city centre, according to news media reports. Police used tear gas and live ammunition to disperse vendors, according to the Lusaka Times, prompting the Local Government Minister to order police to act more carefully and to order city councils to form task forces to manage street vending.

In a parliamentary session on December 23, 2011, the Vice President stated that the government's intention is to have all street vending take place in properly designated areas, and that although it had not arrived at a permanent solution, it did not intend to use force or unnecessary cruelty in dealing with vendors. Nonetheless, street vendors are concerned about the possibility of another reversal, given the lack of order in the sector at present.

Street vending organizations in various locales continue to monitor the situation. In Kitwe, the Kitwe Street Vendors Association has pledged to work with the Kitwe City Council to ensure that vendors' trading places are kept clean. Meanwhile, the Watch Your Life Movement in Ndola, an affiliate of AZIEA, is participating in the effort to form a countrywide alliance and advocating on behalf of street vendors with disabilities, following on KENAS-VIT's effort to mainstream the issue in Kenya.

The Alliance has almost concluded drafting its constitution and is in the process of looking for resources to hold a national meeting to adopt the constitution and discuss other pertinent issues. They would like to bring onboard street vendor leaders from all nine provinces of Zambia.

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STREET VENDORS OF INDIA (NASVI)

In honor of his work as an activist for the informal sector, Arbind Singh of NASVI was awarded the Skoll Foundation Social Entrepreneurship award in March 2012. WIEGO sends many congratulations on this well-deserved award! NASVI has been very accomplished in increasing their social media presence. See below for a list of NASVI web links:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/nasviindia>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Nasviindia>

Google Plus: <https://plus.google.com/102075639496180058623/posts>

Friend feed: <http://friendfeed.com/nasviindia>

Picasa Photo album: <https://plus.google.com/photos/102075639496180058623/albums>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NasviIndia/>

Digg: <http://digg.com/nasviindia>

Reddit: <http://www.reddit.com/user/Nasviindia/>

Delicious: <http://www.delicious.com/nasviindia>

Stumble: <http://www.stumbleupon.com/stumbler/nasviindia>

Blog: <http://nasviindia.wordpress.com/>

Web: <http://www.nasvinet.org> and <http://nasvi.in/fka/>