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# WIEGO MBO Newsletter



A Newsletter for Membership-Based Organizations of Informal Workers

## GREETINGS FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES!

In addition to the articles that follow, please check out some of these great online resources!

### Manuals/Guides:

[The Only School We Have: Learning from Organizing Experiences Across the Informal Economy](#)  
[Achieving decent work for domestic workers - An organizer's manual to promote ILO convention 189 and build domestic workers' power](#)

[Decent work for domestic workers in Asia and the Pacific: Manual for Trainers](#)

[Promoting the ILO Home Work Convention \(C177\) and the Rights of Homeworkers: A Manual for Workers' Educators and Facilitators](#)

[Making Agricultural Value Chain Programmes Work for Workers: A Practical Guide for Development Donors and Practitioners](#)

### Newsletters:

[WIEGO Occupational Health and Safety Newsletter, October 2012](#)

[Global Alliance of Wastepickers Newsletter, September 2012](#)

[National Association of Street Vendors of India \(NASVI\) Newsletter, October 5, 2012](#)

[International Domestic Workers Network \(IDWN\) Newsletter, September 2012](#)



Above: WIEGO ICA Expo Booth with banner reading, "Cooperatives for Informal Workers' Rights and Sustainable Livelihoods!"

Below: Mittal, SEWA, presenting at the ICA Expo

Photos by WIEGO



Representatives from the ILO and Cooperatives College at the ICA Expo  
Photo by WIEGO



## Informal Workers and Co-operatives: Influencing the Global Agenda

2012 is the International Year of Co-operatives. As part of the celebrations, the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) organized an "Expo" called Co-operatives United. The event was held in Manchester, England from October 31- 2 November. WIEGO attended in partnership with representatives from SwaCH, a co-operative of waste pickers in India; Ourinhos Recyclers Co-operative from Brazil; Machakos Co-operative Union from Kenya; and SEWA, a trade union that organizes over 100 co-operatives of informal workers in India.

WIEGO is an associate member of ICA. We were at the Expo to get across the message that co-operatives are an important vehicle through which informal workers can improve their livelihoods and organize to raise their collective voices in the fight for recognition, political and economic power, social protection, gender equality and decent work. Just as pooled resources can achieve better economic outcomes and offer more

stable livelihoods for informal workers, united voices can create political change and improve social standing.

WIEGO set up a stall with a slide show and videos, banners, posters and a map of the co-operatives with which we work. We produced and made available fact sheets on WIEGO and its perspective on co-operatives, and on the four partner organizations. Visitors to the Expo were attracted to our stall (thanks to the work of the Communication Team), but it was clear that few understood about informal workers and the role that co-operatives can play in improving their lives. Our delegation, assisted by Manchester Office team members, worked hard to get our message across.

In Manchester, we also organized two events: an official workshop at the Expo and a joint seminar with the Co-operative College at an outside venue. Representatives from the informal worker co-operatives presented case studies

that made a big impact on participants at both events. At the seminar, they shared their knowledge and experience of informal workers in co-operatives, adding depth to the research findings presented by the Co-operative College, the perspectives of the ILO represented by its Co-operative Branch Chief, Simel Esim (a long-standing WIEGO member) and participants from NGOs. The exchange of ideas and information was very fruitful, and a number of recommendations emerged on what we could do or strive for in the future.

Importantly, this event was the first step in what promises to be an ongoing, helpful relationship between the Co-operative College in Manchester, the Co-operatives Branch of the ILO and WIEGO. It was also a first step in raising awareness among members of the co-operative movement globally of the important role co-operatives play in improving the lives of informal workers. For more information on the WIEGO delegation at the Expo see our webpage.



Above and Below: Home-based workers commemorate Home-based Workers Day in Multan  
Photos by HomeNet Pakistan



A few of the SMS Messages sent out by HNP:

“Vote to influence Government to declare 20 October as Home Based workers day in Pakistan. Visit the link below and vote: <http://www.homenetpakistan.org>”

“Home Based workers demand speedy approval of home based workers policy in Pakistan.”

“Government should recognize home based workers as ‘workers.’”

“Access to the Social Protection is the right of Home Based workers.”



News Clipping from the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Multan Newspaper featuring the events around Home-based Workers Day

## HomeNet Pakistan Commemorated Home-Based Workers Day, 20 October

During a strategic visioning workshop of HomeNet South Asia in 2010, participants celebrated 10 years since the passing of the Kathmandu Declaration on October 20, 2000. There and then, October 20<sup>th</sup> had been declared “Home-based Workers Day” for South Asia. HomeNet Pakistan (HNP) has been observing the day ever since, determined to form laws and legislation to strengthen the informal sector in general, and for home-based workers in particular.

This year, HNP observed the day with various stakeholders, civil society organizations and the media to raise the voice of home-based workers and advocate for their rights, facilitating a number of nationwide activities. HNP published and distributed brochures in English and Urdu, included updates and information on their website, and facilitated various meetings, seminars and other activities throughout Pakistan. They also used mobile technology to advocate, sending over 100,000 SMS messages to civil society organizations, parliamentarians, lawyers, trade unions, labour leaders, government officials, political leaders, home-based work-

ers and membership-based organizations, educators and the media – a very effective and innovative strategy!

In addition, HNP held two press conferences: the first at Lahore Press Club on 17 October and the second at Jhang Press Club on 20 October. Key objectives of the conferences were to raise the concerns of home-based workers – including policy formulation, recognition in labour laws and national statistics, skills development opportunities, access to credit schemes and markets, social protection and livelihood security – and to emphasize the official observance of Home-based Workers Day by the government. Also raised was a ban on kite-flying and kite-making. While HNP fully supported the government ban on Dor, razor-sharp kite-string, which has caused many deaths and injuries, they assert that it is also important to consider the thousands of women home-based workers who made kites who have thus become jobless and now need to be given some alternative skills and provided with work to earn a livelihood. The press conferences were attended by current and former

government officials, senior representatives of NGOs and civil society organizations, and the media.

Two Press Forums were also held with the leading National Urdu newspapers on 18 and 31 October. Key issues discussed included policy formulation, decent livelihood and the adverse affects of the kite-making ban on home-based workers. The forums were attended by HNP staff, home-based workers and other partner organizations. In addition, a number of articles in leading national newspapers and magazines featured home-based workers.

Two radio events – a discussion and radio play – featured the concerns of home-based workers and advocated for their voice and rights. The discussion was attended by HNP and other civil society organizations; the play, written by HNP Senior Program Officer M. Javed Pasha, covered issues of education and well-being of women and girls.

For more details and information, please read the [full report](#).

## Waste Pickers Negotiate with Bogotá District Government for Waste Management Contract

When the Bogotá district government opened bidding for waste management and collection services in 2011, they did not include the waste pickers – usually referred to in Colombia as recyclers – who had been doing this work for years. Since 2003, the district administration had been required by law to ensure the inclusion of recyclers. The Association of Recyclers of Bogotá (ARB) went to work filing a motion against the district. The Constitutional Court ordered the district government to propose a waste management plan that includes waste pickers and that not only dignifies this work, but also promotes regularization of recyclers’ work in recycling, transporting and processing waste.

The district responded by developing an Inclusion Plan as a sub-policy of the “Zero Waste” programme that is part of the Bogotá Human Development Plan. Goals of the Inclusion

Plan include educating the public about source separation of recyclables and improving access to facilities for recyclers (e.g. creating storage facilities and recycling parks). Additionally, they want to make clear that waste and recycling are collected separately, and to ensure that waste pickers are officially recognized as the exclusive collectors and processors of recyclables. While both of these would improve the situation for waste pickers, and offer everyone environmental protection and improved sanitation, it is not known if implementation will progress smoothly. For example, people will have to become accustomed to sorting their own waste; it is not clear if there will be fees for not doing so. Also, the work will be more cooperative and waste pickers will be encouraged to join Authorized Recycling Organizations (ORA). The plan is for each ORA to have its own recycling facilities, routes for pickup of materi-

als, trucks for transporting and safety equipment.

While each part of the district may be starting from different levels of waste picker participation in the waste and recycling processes, the plan stresses that existing waste picker organizations should be included in the effort so that the city can build on the existing organizations’ current knowledge and capacity.

The ARB believes that the Inclusion Plan needs operational and budgetary adjustment. They are also calling for other public policies to be harmonized with this policy (for example, urban land use policies). The ARB and its supporting entities have submitted several proposals for adjustments, which are still to be approved or arranged by the district administration.



Women Waste Picker participants at Workshop  
Photo by WIEGO



Guillermina Castellanos receives the *Inspiration Award* at the Leading with Love event for her dedicated leadership and 10 years of community work.  
Photo by WIEGO

### **Platform of Rights and Guarantees**

(1) *transparency in the bidding process and future administration of Maracana;*

(2) *social participation at all stages of the bidding and in the future administration – taking into account that when the stadium was built in 1947 there was popular consultation about the site and size of the stadium;*

(3) *subsidized prices for elderly and handicapped, as guaranteed already in various national, state and municipal laws;*

(4) *public and free use of the stadium for sporting, cultural and educational events, as is presently the situation;*

(5) *right to decent working conditions for the construction workers who are currently renovating the stadium and who have been on strike a number of times to protest occupational health and safety risks and other issues;*

(6) *respect for the rights and dignity of the shanty town residents in the zone known as Metro Mangueira Stadium, where FIFA plans to build a car park.*

## **Gender and Waste Project in Latin America**

Despite the growing number of studies that focus on solid waste, there are very few that seek to understand the gender dynamics and sexual division of labour involved in waste picking activities. WIEGO has partnered up with NEPEM-UFMG in Brazil, and RED-LACRE/MNCR to embark on a new Gender and Waste Project to examine the activities carried out by waste pickers through a gender perspective. The project will be carried out in an initial phase in Brazil and later in other countries in Latin America, and will explore:

1. multiple dimensions of subordination of women on various fronts
2. ways men and women naturalize their social relations
3. threats and opportunities that men and women experience in their jobs
4. sexual division of labour
5. how the marginalization of waste pickers, particularly

women waste pickers, impedes access to greater economic independence

6. how gender stereotypes are often employed as a means of discouraging women's participation, especially at more formal levels

The Gender and Waste Project seeks to understand the dimensions of gender discrimination women waste pickers face (1) at home, (2) at work, and (3) as leaders within their networks and in the movement. In addition, the project intends to map out what would be the practical strategies, in terms of professional and/or educational qualification, that women waste pickers need in order to attain economic and political empowerment.

The project will have four phases:

**Phase 1 (completed):** During this initial learning phase, a literature review was conducted by research-

ers, who also consulted women waste picker leaders.

**Phase 2 (Early 2013):** Workshops will be held in five locations in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais to attempt to identify the limitations and problems that women waste pickers face.

**Phase 3:** A tool kit will be created to help waste pickers deal with gender and waste picking activities, and a final post-workshop meeting will be held with some of the women waste pickers.

**Phase 4:** The toolkit will be disseminated to cooperatives, NGOs who are partners of the waste picking cooperatives, universities and local governments in Brazil and Latin America.

Look out for updates in future MBO Newsletters as well as on the WIEGO website!

## **Leading with Love: An Evening with the NDWA**

On November 14, the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) of the USA hosted Leading with Love, a gala event to celebrate five years of work and

achievements. WIEGO Research Coordinator Françoise Carré and WIEGO Manager, Global Projects Sofia Trevino joined hundreds of people at the National Museum of

Women in the Arts in Washington, DC to celebrate the NDWA's victories and honour domestic worker leaders at the forefront of the NDWA's movement.

## **World Class Cities for All Campaign in Brazil**

The voice and visibility of street vendors continues to grow thanks to the StreetNet World Class Cities for All Campaign in Brazil. The situation of street vendors has been highlighted for the first time, as part of a campaign to protest against the privatization of the main stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

O Meu Rio is an alliance of civil society organizations, urban planners and academics, concerned with promoting civic participation in urban planning. It describes itself as a "laboratory of new inter-faces" and is working on a range of urban issues, including transparency and social control in public administration, power relations in slum areas, electoral participation, public transport, education, and pollution and the environment.

Recently, Meu Rio launched a campaign to oppose the privatization of the flagship football stadium in Rio, known as the Maracana. The stadium will host the Final of the World Cup on 13 July 2014. It is currently closed for renovations, at an estimated total cost of R\$860 million (US\$412.5 million), although this figure is expected to rise. Maracana is a state-owned stadium, and the renovations are paid from public funds. Through a freedom of information request, the Rio Committee for Clean Games has found out that the State Government plans to hand over the administration to private ownership and will open a bidding process in late 2012.

The O Meu Rio campaign has called for a public consultation about the proposed privatization plan and has drawn up a platform of rights and

guarantees (see side bar). O Meu Rio criticizes the FIFA policy of imposing commercial exclusion zones around the World Cup Stadiums, and thus preventing hundreds of families from earning their livelihoods. The campaign opposes the removal of the street vendors who have traditionally worked around the stadium and say they should be given permission to work on a regular basis and in a dignified manner, without persecution from the public authorities. A letter with these demands was sent to the State Secretaries for Public Works, Culture & Sports, Planning, Budget & Management and for labour as well as the Governor and Mayor of Rio de Janeiro.

[More information](#) (available only in Portuguese).

*"We argue that FIFA, the Local Organising Committee and the Host Cities should recognise their responsibility for the potential negative impact of the World Cup on the livelihoods of street vendors. Now is the moment to think again and act differently."*

- Vagner Freias de Moraes, President of the United Centre of Workers.

*"Brazil still has time to construct a World Cup based on social inclusion and not the profits of FIFA and its commercial partners. But for that to happen, it is necessary to ensure decent working conditions for all who are involved in the building of the World Cup, respecting human rights and developing a sense of citizenship, not restricting rights."*

- Victor Baes Mosquera, General Secretary of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas.

*"This is a real opportunity for Mayoral candidates to re-think urban policies for the poor. Instead of treating street vendors as quasi-criminals, it is possible to include street vendors in the trading opportunities offered by the World Cup and provide longer-term solutions to improve their livelihoods."*

- Nora Wintour, StreetNet International Campaigns Coordinator.

*"I'm really proud that StreetNet is celebrating the first International Street Vendors Day and its 10th Anniversary during my Presidency. StreetNet has dramatically increased its membership in these ten years to become a truly world-wide organisation. It is recognized as the voice of street vendors and respected for its policies, programmes and campaigns. Long live StreetNet!"*

- Oscar Silva, President of StreetNet, from SIVARA, Argentina

*"The International Street Vendors Day was first discussed at the StreetNet Congress in 2010. We see it as an opportunity to bring street vendors together across the globe and realize that we have common challenges and needs. At national level, the affiliates are planning events, marches and meetings to mark the day. We are busy preparing to make it a very special day for our sector!"*

- Clarisse Gnahoui, member of the SN International Council, WIEGO Board, and from USYNVDPID, Benin

## KENASVIT Fights Political Corruption

On 14th The leadership of KENASVIT, the Kenya National Alliance of Street Vendors and Informal Traders, recently called off internal elections in Embu town in light of allegations that some local politicians had given out money in order to influence the outcome. KENASVIT National Chairman Simon Sangale ole Nasieku reported to local media that he and other KENASVIT

election officials discovered that politicians had tampered with the election process and attempted to use traders as a stepping stone to acquire or retain power. National elections in Kenya will be held in March 2013.

KENASVIT is committed to maintaining itself as a non-political organization, and to preventing politi-

cians from infiltrating its activities. In order to move forward with the election process, a team was picked from among the 600 members who attended the election. It is hoped that the decision to abort the election rather than allow for the possibility of fraud will be an example for other MBOs, which commonly face attempts at political interference.

## StreetNet Sends Letters to 84 Mayoral Candidates in Host Cities of Brazil

One month prior to the Brazilian Mayoral elections in October, StreetNet International, trade unions and social partners wrote to 84 candidates in the host cities to call upon them to score a goal for their country by creating decent work opportunities for street vendors.

The letter is signed by the United Trade Union Centre (CUT), the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA/CSA), the Building and Wood Workers International (BWI), the General Union of Workers, and the Popular Committees of those Affected by the World Cup, together with StreetNet International. It asked candidates to make a public pledge that they will work toward creating decent work for all workers, including street vendors.

The proposals in the letter include the following:

(1) that the municipal authorities use existing – or establish new – bargaining forums to dialogue with the representative organizations of all informal vendors in the different host cities;

(2) that within the Fan Miles around the stadiums and in the Fan Parks, 50 per cent of the stands are reserved for local informal traders who sell typical handicrafts, food and drink from the region; these should be allocated to the informal traders through a participatory process as established by the bargaining forums and at affordable prices, giving priority to cooperative or other social economy initiatives of traders who may otherwise lose their spaces, whether or not they possess valid licenses;

(3) that appropriate alternatives for informal trade in each municipality are developed in

a consultative manner; these trading sites should be conceived as long-term solutions and should be operational both during and after the World Cup for ordinary games or events around these stadiums and Fan Miles and Fan Parks, so that there is a social legacy of the World Cup for the informal traders as well.

The letter concludes: "We believe that as a candidate for the position of Mayor, you have an exciting and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to put your city on the world map. By developing policies of social inclusion, respect for human rights and decent work, you can provide a global example of a sustainable World Cup legacy and pave the way for others to follow."

Look out for updates in future MBO Newsletters as well as on the WIEGO website!

## StreetNet International celebrates the First International Street Vendors Day and 10th Anniversary of StreetNet

On 14th November 2012, StreetNet affiliates and partners around the globe celebrated the 1st International Street Vendors Day, which coincided with the 10th Anniversary of StreetNet. The International Street Vendors Day will be celebrated on an annual basis from now on. It will be a day to celebrate the contribution of street vendors to national development and to call attention to issues of particular concern.

Throughout the world, street vendors face many similar problems,

including the lack of fixed trading places and licenses, harassment and extortion, a lack of access to credit and lack of organization, representation and social protection. It seems fitting that StreetNet celebrate a global day of action to highlight these common challenges.

This year the theme identified by the International Council is "Street vendors are workers with the same right to organization, representation and social protection as other workers!" StreetNet has produced a poster and leaflet in English,

French, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian, and especially for this year, established a fund to allow affiliates to produce T-shirts for the day. The response has been extremely encouraging - over 80 per cent of StreetNet affiliates indicated they will take part in the day of action.

The materials can be viewed here: [Poster](#) [Pamphlet](#) [Blog](#)