



DRIVER 7 WORKING GROUP PAPER

STRENGTHENING VISIBILITY, COLLECTIVE
VOICE AND REPRESENTATION



The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General established the High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment in 2016 to bring together leaders from different constituencies—government, civil society, business and international organizations—to launch a shared global agenda that accelerates women's economic participation and empowerment in support of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its promise that no one will be left behind.

The first report of the High-Level Panel (September 2016) examined the case for women's economic empowerment and identified seven drivers for addressing systemic barriers to women's economic empowerment. These seven drivers were further explored by working groups, comprising High-Level Panel members and other stakeholders. Each working group prepared a paper with specific recommendations for transformative change.

The second report of the High Level Panel (March 2017) provided a synthesis of the recommendations of each of the seven working groups within the framework of the essential enabling environment to accelerate and deepen the impact of the seven drivers. In addition to the working group papers, each working group prepared a toolkit, focusing on how to take forward the recommendations of the working group, along with case studies and good practices where relevant.

This working group paper has been prepared by the Working Group for Driver 7—Strengthening visibility, collective voice and representation.

Its companion toolkit is published as a separate document.

High-Level Panel reports and working group papers and toolkits are all available online.

Members of Working Group on Driver 7—Strengthening visibility, collective voice and representation

Co-Leads	Consultant	Working group members
Sharan Burrow , General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)	Elsa Ramos	Martha Chen , International Coordinator, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)
Renana Jhabvala , Chair, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)		Chidi King , Director of the Equality Department, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
Shauna Olney , Chief, Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch, International Labour Organization ILO		Sophie Romana , Director, Community Finance, Oxfam America
		Fionna Smyth , Senior Advocacy Advisor, UN Women

For more information please visit: hlp-wee.unwomen.org

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While staff of the Bretton Woods institutions reviewed and provided comments on the working papers and toolkits in their respective areas of expertise, they were not members of the working groups.

In regard to the recommendations aimed at international organizations in these documents, the Bretton Woods institutions may endorse or support them to the extent these are consistent with their roles and in accordance with their mandate.

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	1
GAP ANALYSIS AND PRIORITIES	1
Organizing, collective bargaining, negotiating and advocacy	1
Lessons from the experiences of women workers organizations and collectives	2
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING VISIBILITY, COLLECTIVE VOICE AND REPRESENTATION	3
NEXT STEPS: PRIORITY AREAS TO GUIDE INTERVENTION	3
Priority 1. Ensure an enabling environment to organize and strengthen women workers' visibility, collective voice and representation, and collective enterprises	3
Priority 2. Recognize and support all forms of women workers organizations at all levels	3
Priority 3. Implement ILO Recommendation No. 204 (2015) concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy	4
COMMITMENTS AND INITIATIVES OF PANEL MEMBERS: MOVING FORWARD TO 2030	4
GOOD AND PROMISING PRACTICES AND DEVELOPMENTS	5
ILO Recommendation Concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 (No. 204)	5
A victory for domestic workers through partnership and strategic alliance	5
SEWA and the power of women organizing women	5
Indigenous Women: Challenges and successes	6
Fight inequality alliance: a global movement to fight inequality	6
Women bee-keepers in Ethiopia: Lobbying for political change	6
ITUC's Decisions For Life Campaign: Empowering young women	7
NOTES	8



OVERVIEW

In its first report, the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel drew attention to the extremely slow pace of progress in expanding women's economic empowerment and closing gender gaps.¹ Progress requires structural transformation in different areas, reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Women's economic empowerment will not happen without their equal and full participation in economic, social, political and cultural life at all levels, including decision-making and leadership. This requires regulations and mechanisms to create space and support women in building their own collective action and power in strong organizations, collectives and movements. Making this change does not rest on the shoulders of women alone: men's role in actively supporting the voice and leadership of women in their social, cultural and political lives and organizations is a key factor as well. Strengthening women's visibility, voice and representation is both an implementation strategy and a key driver of women's economic empowerment.

GAP ANALYSIS AND PRIORITIES

A healthy and vibrant civil society and trade union movement are essential to peace, democracy and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, including gender equality, the economic empowerment of women and decent work for all.² Constraints remain on the space and freedom for civil society to act nationally, regionally and globally. They include restrictions on:

- Access to information
- Access to financial resources (especially from foreign sources)
- Freedom of expression
- Participation in political and policy processes
- Freedom of assembly and peaceful protest
- Freedom of association, including the right to form and join trade unions and to organize and bargain collectively.³
- The right to strike.⁴

Women's economic empowerment is inextricably linked to decent work. Governments can play a critical role in guaranteeing human rights and ensuring that marginalized workers—both women and men, including informal, agricultural, domestic, migrant and indigenous workers—are included in legal frameworks.

A lack of government support hampers women's ability to exercise their fundamental human rights, such as freedom of association and of assembly, and leaves them without access to remedies when their rights are violated. Without the fulfilment of association and assembly rights, and the right to

decent work, women workers have little leverage to change the terms and conditions that entrench poverty, fuel inequality and limit democracy.⁵

Women are concentrated in sectors characterized by poor working conditions, precarious employment and informality—as in part-time or on-demand work, home-based work and domestic work. These sectors have also been particularly difficult to organize. Women experience discrimination and segregation in the labour market not only on the basis of their gender, but also on the basis of their class, race and ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, HIV status and migration status. Persistent gender-based violence is often used to suppress the individual and collective assertion of rights to resist exploitative and abusive employers or state authorities or to keep women from receiving their fair share of the rewards.

Despite seemingly insurmountable systemic challenges, women are far from powerless to exert their voice, agency and autonomy and to transform their living and working circumstances.

ORGANIZING, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, NEGOTIATING AND ADVOCACY

The rights to freedom of association, to peaceful assembly and to organize and bargain collectively lie at the heart of strengthening the visibility, collective voice and representation of all workers, especially those of the poorest and most marginalised groups of women: in the informal economy, agricultural workers, domestic workers and migrants.

More than 70 million women are organized in trade unions today, and many millions more in cooperatives, collectives and other worker, human rights and women's rights associations. Women workers—whether nationals or migrants, public or private sector, formal or informal, in agriculture, manufacturing, trade or services—organize at all levels: local, national, regional and international and by sectors.

Collective organization through trade unions and other membership-based organizations and collectives enhances women's ability and capacity to negotiate terms and conditions of employment; to access markets and supply chains; and to influence policies that may have a direct bearing on their lives, through tripartite dialogue and through collective bargaining and other forms of negotiations.

The organizations also galvanize women's ability to challenge social norms that constrain their time, mobility and access to resources—and economic policies that ignore or undervalue their economic activities and contributions.

When organized into cooperatives or producer groups, self-employed women are better able to access markets and global supply chains and to bid for government procurement contracts. Being organized into collective enterprises allows women to pool their assets, skills and other resources to produce goods and services of higher quality and quantity.

Employer organizations have a role to play in supporting their members along the journey to promoting gender equality. While many organizations are already implementing gender equality policies and increasing the number of women in leadership and among their members, others are still unaware of the benefits of promoting diversity and gender equality. Women's business associations can advocate for changes in laws that constrain women-owned businesses—and can provide services to women business owners, including access to information and facilitation of credit. Employer organizations and women business owners can strengthen links and alliances to exchange and support good practices in advancing gender equality in companies.

Trade unions and their allies advocate for measures to address occupational segregation, the gender pay gap, gender-based violence and harassment, and the need to balance work and family responsibilities, as well as women's equal participation in decision-making. They also promote women's access to social protection and sexual and reproductive health services. Advances on these issues, while essential for women, will benefit all workers. Collective bargaining and a broader social dialogue promote issues central to women's economic empowerment. Women also need to be sufficiently represented in negotiating teams and on tripartite bodies. For instance, the Jamaican Household Workers Association (JHWA), a registered trade union advocating for fair and just wages and working conditions for domestic workers, is a partner in the national Minimum Wage Advisory Commission.⁶

Union membership has been linked to higher wages for women workers, stronger labour and social protection and increased access to and participation in state and employer-provided pension plans and health insurance. In the United Kingdom, for example, the wages of women union members are on average 30 percent higher than those of nonunion women. In the United States, the wage gap between men and women is 11 percent for union women, compared with 22 percent on average. Union women in the United States also have a higher weekly wage, earning on average 31 percent more per week than nonunion women. Even higher gains are seen for Latino women and African-American women when compared with their nonunion counterparts.⁷ Women's structures in trade unions have been vital to increasing their representation and voice and to advancing gender equality in the bargaining agendas of unions.

Informal workers, their organizations and their collectives are often invisible to government and in national statistics, leaving them with fewer opportunities to shape official government policy. However, dialogue, advocacy and campaigning by organizations of informal workers have helped in some instances to bridge relationship and communication gaps between local government and informal economy workers. And they have led to the inclusion of the informal economy in local government policies, regulations and planning processes. The world's largest trade union of informal workers, SEWA in India, with 2 million members, has gained its reputation as the most influential organization of informal workers worldwide, actively involved in developing policies, norms and practices at the local, national, regional and international

levels.⁸ Political engagement and advocacy by women workers' organizations, such as StreetNet and three regional HomeNets, with support from WIEGO, have also secured better working conditions and revenues for informal women workers, including improved occupational safety, health and hygiene, access to credit and microinsurance, and innovative social security schemes.⁹

Alliances that enable women from all walks of life and with multiple and intersecting identities to consolidate power within their movements and to nurture collective power with other social movements point the way forward for a transformative agenda on women's economic empowerment. Alliances between trade unions and organizations of informal economy workers, for example, led to the adoption in 2015 of ILO Recommendation No. 204 Concerning Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy.¹⁰

A powerful example of a cross-movement alliance that has given voice and visibility to a highly exploited, largely hidden, predominately female and often migrant workforce is the domestic workers' movement, which led to the historic adoption of the ILO Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers No. 189 in 2011. The voice and representation of domestic workers as workers and as labour leaders within this alliance fostered the founding of the International Domestic Workers Federation, which represents some 500,000 domestic workers as well as the extension of law and policy to domestic workers in some 50 countries, including 23 new ratifications of ILO Convention No. 189. Their participation in social dialogue in countries around the world is ensuring that policies reflect their needs and demands.¹¹

The powerful alliance of organizations of women informal workers in the Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) network has led to positive changes in laws, policies and regulations in support of domestic workers as well as home-based workers, street vendors and waste pickers around the world.¹² Another example of powerful alliance-building stems from the cross-movement dialogue launched in 2016 by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and the Solidarity Center, which brings together trade unionists, women workers, feminists, Indigenous and Black women, LGBTQI activists and human rights defenders to develop shared understandings and common strategies in their struggles for women's rights and economic and gender justice.¹³ Other notable examples are the ongoing partnerships and alliances of indigenous peoples organizations with trade unions and human rights and environmental organizations in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Latin America.

Increasing women's voice and agency in service-user groups, both private and public, further strengthens women's economic empowerment. Examples of such groups include water user associations, community development committees and user associations of transit systems.¹⁴

LESSONS FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN WORKERS ORGANIZATIONS AND COLLECTIVES

The following important features and lessons are drawn from the rich and varied experiences of women workers organizing

in trade unions and membership-based, democratic and independent organizations and collectives:

- Promoting a collective approach to empowerment: women coming together, supporting each other and exerting influence as a collective.
- Ensuring the leadership, voice and representation of women workers in organizations.
- Stressing the links between political voice, economic autonomy and decisionmaking capacity and leadership roles.
- Maintaining sustained pressure to hold governments accountable for the implementation and enforcement of labour laws, especially on the right to organize and bargain collectively and on gender equality at work.
- Building solidarity and strengthening alliances across sectors, at all levels and with other social movements.
- Developing and promoting proactively their own agendas, particularly in mixed organizations, while raising the awareness of men.
- Demonstrating that supporting issues of importance to women workers promotes decent work for all.
- Developing inclusive economic alternatives that put rights, justice and caring at their core.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING VISIBILITY, COLLECTIVE VOICE AND REPRESENTATION

- **Ratify and implement ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).** Governments should guarantee and protect the human rights to freedom of expression and assembly—and support international labour standards on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work.
- **Reform legal frameworks to protect informal workers and promote the formalization of their work in line with ILO Recommendation No. 204 Concerning Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy.** Governments should provide legal identity and recognition of workers in the informal economy, especially women, and include informal worker representatives in rule-setting and policymaking. They should ratify and implement ILO Convention No. 177 (1996) and Convention No. 189 (2011) setting labour standards for home workers and domestic workers.

NEXT STEPS: PRIORITY AREAS TO GUIDE INTERVENTION

Here are more specific recommended actions under three priority areas targeting governments, intergovernmental organizations, workers' and employers' organizations and civil society organizations.

PRIORITY 1. ENSURE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT TO ORGANIZE AND STRENGTHEN WOMEN WORKERS' VISIBILITY, COLLECTIVE VOICE AND REPRESENTATION, AND COLLECTIVE ENTERPRISES

1. Intensify concerted national campaigns for immediate ratification and implementation of the ILO Freedom of Association and Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), as well as the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), including the right to organize and collectively bargain; and for adoption at the national level of gender-responsive laws and policies that cover all workers.¹⁵ (Link to Drivers 1 and 2)
2. Protect and promote the right to organize and collectively bargain of all women, particularly the poorest and most marginalized; develop innovative strategies to raise awareness and understanding among women workers, including indigenous women, of their human and labour rights, particularly in agriculture and the informal economy. (Link to Drivers 1 and 2)
3. Integrate decent work, particularly freedom of association issues, in training and advocacy programmes for women in the informal economy, indigenous women, domestic workers, migrant women and those in hard-to-organize sectors (such as export processing zones). (Link to Drivers 2, 3, 4 and 5)
4. Support an international labour standard(s) on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, and take measures to ensure that all workplaces are free from discrimination, exploitation, violence, sexual harassment and bullying. (Link to Drivers 1, 2 and 5)
5. Guarantee the freedom of speech, assembly and association of civil society organizations. (Link to Drivers 2 and 3)
6. Intensify efforts for mainstream media and new communication technologies to promote a balanced, nonstereotyped, realistic and positive portrayal of women and their role in economic social, political and cultural development at all levels. (Link to Driver 1)

PRIORITY 2. RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT ALL FORMS OF WOMEN WORKERS ORGANIZATIONS AT ALL LEVELS

1. Support the leadership, voice and representation of women, particularly the poorest and most marginalized (informal workers, agricultural workers, domestic workers, indigenous women, migrants), and actively support representative organizations to negotiate with local and national government authorities and employers for decent work. (Link to Drivers 1, 2 and 5)

2. Extend support and resources for the formation and strengthening of organizations of women workers, particularly the poorest and most marginalized.
3. Actively promote and strengthen the solidarity of all women workers within and outside of their organizations to achieve decent working conditions and combat inequality and injustice; build partnerships, alliances and coalitions at all levels.
4. Draw attention to the experiences of organizations and collectives of informal workers and cooperatives whose lack of visibility to government and in national statistics inhibits their ability to shape official government policies.
5. Support the scaling up of successful models of organizing informal workers (such as SEWA India and IDWF) through international sharing and exchanges
6. Encourage and support women's participation, leadership and decision-making in trade unions, organizations of informal workers, employer and business organizations, and collectives, including through training, mentoring and affirmative action measures (e.g. gender parity quotas). (Link to Drivers 1 and 5)

PRIORITY 3. IMPLEMENT ILO RECOMMENDATION NO. 204 (2015) CONCERNING THE TRANSITION FROM THE INFORMAL TO THE FORMAL ECONOMY

1. Campaign to ratify ILO Convention No. 177 (1996) and Convention No. 189 (2011) setting labour standards for homeworkers and domestic workers, respectively. (Link to Drivers 2, 3, 4 and 5)
2. Reform legal frameworks to protect informal workers and their livelihoods as a key pathway to formalization (ILO Recommendation No. 204) (Link to Drivers 2 and 4)
3. Support collective organizations of self-employed women and agricultural workers to be able to compete on fair terms in domestic markets and global value chains. (Link to Drivers 4, 5 and 6)
4. Encourage governments to provide legal identity and recognition of workers in the informal economy, especially women, and to include informal worker representatives in rule setting, policy-making, and collective bargaining processes. (Link to Drivers 1, 2 and 4)
5. Recognize and support organizations of women informal workers, both all-women organizations and mixed-membership organizations with women leaders. (Link to Drivers 1 and 5)
6. Strengthen union coverage and collective bargaining rights for all workers, including informal workers.

COMMITMENTS AND INITIATIVES OF PANEL MEMBERS: MOVING FORWARD TO 2030

ILO. Standard-setting process on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work for the adoption of a convention or recommendation; Women at Work Centenary Initiative; promoting the ratification and implementation of Conventions No. 87 and No. 98; developing training and training material on collective bargaining and the promotion of equality; supporting young women unionists on leadership skills; implementing the strategy on decent work for domestic workers; supporting women in business and management, including a handbook for national employer organizations and the dissemination of good company practices.

ITUC. Campaign for the ILO convention on violence against women and men at the workplace; continued commitment to increasing women's voice, participation and representation in leadership positions within trade unions; strengthening of strategic alliances with other social movements; UN-endorsed wage floor and universal, gender-sensitive social protection; regulation of working conditions in global supply chains and the on-demand economy; focus on women's share of income to bridge the inequality gap and regions of inequality.

SEWA. Ongoing mobilization of and support to women members of SEWA; ongoing promotion of representation of SEWA members in relevant rule-setting, policymaking and collective bargaining processes; ongoing work to develop scalable models for child care, financial services, business development services and collective enterprises.

WIEGO. Ongoing support to build and strengthen organizations and networks of women informal workers in four sectors—domestic workers, home-based producers, street vendors and waste pickers—and promoting representation of worker leaders from these organizations in relevant rule-setting, policymaking and collective bargaining processes (locally, nationally and globally); ongoing collaboration with the ILO, the UN Statistical Commission, the UN Statistical Division and national statistical offices to further improve labour force and other economic data on women informal workers.

Oxfam. System innovation for women's empowerment in agriculture.

UN Women. Advance women's political empowerment and leadership through the Women's Political Leadership Flagship Programme Initiative, focusing on four priority areas requiring actions by a coalition of partners:

- Support development and implementation of robust legal frameworks and administrative arrangements, including reforms to constitution, laws, regulations or party statutes, and policy.
- Expand and diversify the pool of qualified and capable women to run for elections, including through programmes that boost women's confidence and capacity to

lead, enhancing their campaign strategies and techniques and promoting linkages with supportive CSOs.

- Transform gender norms so that women are accepted as legitimate and effective leaders, including through campaigns that sensitize the media and electorate and by working with men and male champions.
- Support women leaders in gender-sensitive political institutions, including parliament, political parties and election management bodies.

GOOD AND PROMISING PRACTICES AND DEVELOPMENTS

ILO RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE TRANSITION FROM THE INFORMAL TO THE FORMAL ECONOMY, 2015 (NO. 204)

A groundbreaking step in the international normative framework on labour and economic rights for workers in the informal economy was the adoption in 2015 of the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation (No. 204) by the International Labour Conference. Over the years, there has been a growing consensus among governments, workers and employers that the right thing to do is to move people from informal to formal employment.

Adopted with a near unanimous vote, the Recommendation is based on strong tripartite consensus of government, worker and employer organizations, following a two-year process of consultations, including organizations of informal workers. It provides strategies and practical guidance for member states to facilitate the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy, while respecting workers' fundamental rights and ensuring opportunities for income security, livelihoods and entrepreneurship; to promote the creation, preservation and sustainability of enterprises and decent jobs in the formal economy and the coherence of macroeconomic, employment, social protection and other social policies; and to promote regulated access by informal workers to public space and natural resources and prevent the informalization of formal economy jobs. (Source: ILO Web page, 15 January 2016, http://www.ilo.org/employment/units/emp-invest/informal-economy/WCMS_443501/lang--en/index.htm.)

A VICTORY FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP AND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Following the historic adoption of ILO Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers in June 2011, the International Domestic Workers Network and their allies seized the momentum to push for its ratification by ILO member states. On 12 December 2011, the ITUC launched the 12 by 12 campaign in partnership with the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF). The campaign set ambitious goals: 12 ratifications of Convention No. 189 by the end of 2012 and organizing, building and strengthening unions of domestic

workers and achieving reforms to national labour laws to extend labour and social protection to domestic workers.

This campaign joined hands with a social movement comprising trade unions, domestic workers associations, human rights, women's rights and migrants' rights organizations. It inspired thousands of domestic workers to speak up, join and build unions and added significant strength to the national advocacy and organizing campaigns in more than 90 countries, which included organizing high-profile public events, formal and informal meetings with parliamentarians and labour ministries, tripartite meetings and getting high-profile figures to champion the cause. Since the campaign—and the founding of the International Domestic Workers Federation in 2013—an estimated 15 million domestic workers have won the right to organize, form trade unions and engage in collective bargaining and have seen their rights in law improve thanks to labour reforms in 50 countries, 23 ratifications of ILO Convention No. 189 by 2016 and stronger unions of domestic workers (over 100,000 joined a union, and new unions have been created in many countries including Angola, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Lebanon, Lesotho, Pakistan, Paraguay, Sri Lanka and Swaziland). (Source: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/five-years-of-progress-for>).

SEWA AND THE POWER OF WOMEN ORGANIZING WOMEN

The largest union of informal workers in the world, the Self-Employed Women's Association in India was started by Ela Batt in 1972 as a trade union. Within a few years, it had formed a women's cooperative bank and a number of artisan cooperatives. This set the path for SEWA to pursue a joint strategy of "struggle" (collective bargaining, negotiations, campaigns and advocacy) and "development" (forming organizations such as cooperatives for direct interventions in the market and the provision of various kinds of services).

SEWA stresses self-reliance, both individual and collective, and promotes organizing around four sources of security: work, income, food and social security. Its 2 million members, poor women in the informal economy, are drawn from multiple trades and occupations and from all religious and caste groups. They include women in agriculture and those owning small businesses. A pioneering leader of the labour, women's, cooperative and micro-finance movements, SEWA has gained its reputation as the most influential organization of informal workers worldwide, influencing policies, norms and practices at the local, national, regional and international levels.

In August 2016, SEWA and UN Women India hosted a consultation of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (HLP) to give HLP members the opportunity to hear directly from women informal workers themselves about how they define, experience and struggle for economic development. Underpinning all of the field visits, discussions and information sessions was an emphasis on a collective, rather than an individual, approach to empowerment. The HLP members were able to observe that SEWA's dual strategy of struggle and development is meant not only to increase women's access

to resources and services, but also to strengthen their collective ability—through organizing and advocacy—to exercise influence over the policies, laws and norms that shape their work and lives. A collective analysis session at the end of the consultation discussed lessons learned and how these could translate to recommendations for the HLP. (Source: *Women's Voices from the Informal Economy*, a report on consultation that the HLP on Women's Economic Empowerment jointly hosted by UN Women India and the Self Employed Women's Association, Ahmedabad, 4–5 August 2016, SEWA and UN Women.)

INDIGENOUS WOMEN: CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

Indigenous women all over the world contribute greatly to their communities and to the world of work. However, they experience discrimination, not only because of their sex but also because of their indigenous identity, ethnicity, colour and religion. This compound discrimination is particularly evident as they enter and advance in the labour market. Over the past decades, the livelihoods of indigenous women have undergone major changes as their people have increasingly lost control over their ancestral lands. As a result, to supplement their household income and survive, more indigenous women are entering the formal and informal labour market as self-employed workers or wage earners, taking up casual wage labour near their homes; as day labourers or farm workers; or as traders and small-scale commodity producers. Local job opportunities are often limited, however, and for many women migration to urban areas in search of work remains the only alternative.

For many years, indigenous women have been forming and joining organizations and building coalitions and alliances—with trade unions and women workers and labour rights organizations at all levels—to promote their human and labour rights. Their collective voice is strong in the trade union and indigenous people movements (as in Bolivia, Canada, Honduras, Peru and New Zealand), and their leaders are taking the frontline in hitherto unorganized sectors—a notable example is Marcelina Bautista, leader of the National Union of Domestic Workers of Mexico.

The ILO has been engaged with indigenous and tribal peoples' issues since the 1920s. It is responsible for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), the only international treaty open for ratification that deals exclusively with their rights. To date, 22 countries have ratified the Convention. (Source: D. Vinding and E. Kampbel, 2012, *Indigenous Women Workers: With Case Studies from Bangladesh, Nepal and the Americas* (Working paper), Geneva: ILO International Labour Standards Department and Bureau for Gender Equality, and <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/lang--en/index.htm>.)

“There is need to apply a cross-cutting methodology to the question of indigenous women who face the triple discrimination of being women, being poor and being indigenous, placing them in a situation of high vulnerability and deprivation of opportunities. This is reflected in the invisibility of the value of their work in the sector of domestic workers, their weak participation in political decision-making, lack of social

security coverage, and domestic violence.” (Statement on the strengthening of alliance between the trade union movement and the Indigenous Peoples, Lima, 15 September 2014). (Source: *Alianzas entre sindicatos y pueblos indígenas: experiencias en América Latina*, ILO-ACTRAV Lima, ILO, Geneva, 2015.)

FIGHT INEQUALITY ALLIANCE: A GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO FIGHT INEQUALITY

The Fight Inequality Alliance is a new and growing group of leading international and national nonprofit organizations, human rights campaigners, women's rights groups, environmental groups, faith-based organizations, trade unions, social movements and other civil society organizations that have come together to fight the growing crisis of inequality. The Alliance was formed to ensure a more concerted and effective response to this crisis, which undermines global efforts to end poverty, discrimination and marginalization; advance women's rights; defend the environment; protect human rights and democracy; prevent conflict; and promote fair and dignified employment. It seeks to have a greater impact by working together and by taking joint action where appropriate. It is united in the belief that only a fully inclusive global movement can succeed, built from and supporting the ongoing work of affected communities, activists and existing movements—and responding to the local realities of the inequalities people are experiencing. It is convinced that the fight against inequality will be won by deepening people's collective power and by taking practical actions that challenge and change the status quo and shift power. Helping to guide a process of growth in this foundational period are ActionAid, ACT Alliance, Asia People's Movement on Debt and Development, CIVICUS, FEMNET, Focus on the Global South, Greenpeace International, ITUC and Oxfam. The structure and governance of the Alliance, to be decided collectively, will be based on principles of diversity, inclusion and shared values. (Source: Fighting Inequality Alliance website, <https://www.fightinequality.org/Latest/>).

WOMEN BEE-KEEPERS IN ETHIOPIA: LOBBYING FOR POLITICAL CHANGE

Oxfam's programme supporting collective action of women bee-keepers in Ethiopia found that political change was required to overcome structural barriers to women's participation in producer cooperatives. According to the 1955 Cooperative Law, only one umbrella cooperative can be established per ward (district) in Amhara. Previously, only one family member per household was allowed to join a cooperative. With the support of Oxfam, the honey groups successfully lobbied district offices of the Cooperative Promotion Agency to amend the Act to provide for dual membership of husbands and wives in groups, so married women became members of cooperatives in their own right. Following this reform, the number of women members of the Agunta cooperative grew from just one in 2006 to 197 in 2007, and thousands more joined such groups, constituting up to 49 percent of the membership in some cooperatives. (Source: “Collective Enterprises of Women Informal Producers: Key Pathway for

Linking to Markets and Supply Chains,” paper submitted by Oxfam, SEWA and WIEGO to the HLP on women’s economic empowerment, July 2016.)

ITUC’S DECISIONS FOR LIFE CAMPAIGN: EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN

The Decisions for Life Campaign of the International Confederation of Trade Unions supports and empowers young women to make well-informed decisions about work, career and family; have access to secure jobs, earnings and social benefits; demand equal opportunities at work; and improve their leadership and negotiation skills. The campaign focuses on young women between the ages of 18 and 35 who are working or looking for work: working women, young mothers who might

have left school at a very early age and students who have to take important decisions about their future when they complete their studies. To reach these women, the project is deploying a triple approach combining grassroots trade union campaigns at the national level, media web technologies and research activities. Campaign teams are at work in Angola, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Panama, South Africa, Ukraine, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

“The idea is to create the spaces for young women to come together to discuss their concerns and to plan joint actions in solidarity with each other, as it is only through united effort that they can change the things that hold them back.” (Source: *Decisions for Life Campaign Guide*, ITUC website, <https://www.ituc-csi.org/decisions-for-life-campaign-guide>.)

NOTES

1. United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (with Tyson, L., and J. Klugman). 2016. *Leave No One Behind: A Call to Action for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment*. New York: United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. <http://www.womenseconomicempowerment.org/assets/reports/UNWomen%20Full%20Report.pdf>; see also ILO (International Labour Organization). 2016. *Women at Work: Trends 2016*. Geneva: ILO. http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS_457317/lang--de/index.htm.
2. The ILO defines "decent work" as productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity. ILO's decent work concept covers employment, social protection and social dialogues, as well as fundamental principles and rights at work and international labour standards with the cross-cutting theme of gender.
3. See ILO Freedom of Association and Right to Organize Convention 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). These are enabling rights underpinning the other fundamental rights laid out in ILO Conventions No. 29 and No. 105 on Forced Labour; No. 100 on Equal Remuneration and No. 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation); No. 138 on Minimum Age and No. 182 on Child Labour.
4. According to the ITUC Global Rights Index 2016, 58 percent of countries exclude groups of workers from the labour law, 70 percent of countries have workers who have no right to strike, 60 percent of countries deny or restrict workers collective bargaining and 52 percent of countries deny workers access to the rule of law, <https://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-global-rights-index-2016>
5. UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association. 2016. "The Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association in the Workplace: UN Special Rapporteur's Report to the General Assembly." Geneva: UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/AssemblyAssociation/Pages/SRFreedomAssemblyAssociationIndex.aspx>.
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7. Anderson, J., A. Hegewisch, and J. Hayes. 2015. *The Union Advantage for Women*. Briefing Paper. Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research. <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/the-union-advantage-for-women#sthash.VaUwff5I.dpuf>
8. *Women's Voices from the Informal Economy: A Consultation of the UN High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment*, hosted by UN Women India and the Self-Employed Women's Association, Ahmedabad, 4–5 August 2016, report, SEWA and UN Women
9. "Collective Enterprises of Women Informal Producers: Key Pathway for Linking to Markets and Supply Chains," note submitted to UN HLP on WEE by OXFAM, SEWA and WIEGO, July 2016; Chen, M., C. Bonner and F. Carre, *Organizing Informal Workers: Benefits, Challenges and Successes*. Background Paper for 2015 UNDP Human Development Report Office, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/chen_hdr_2015_final.pdf
10. ILO Recommendation Concerning Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 (No. 204), ILO Web page, 15 January 2016, http://www.ilo.org/employment/units/emp-invest/informal-economy/WCMS_443501/lang--en/index.htm
11. "Five Years of Progress for Domestic Workers, But Much Still to Be Done," ITUC website, 16 June 2016, <https://www.ituc-csi.org/five-years-of-progress-for>
12. See <http://wiego.org/wiego-in-brief>
13. AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development). 2016. "Challenging Corporate Power for Gender Justice: Highlights from a Cross-Movement Dialogue," 23 March 2016, <https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/challenging-corporate-power-gender-justice-highlights-cross-movement-dialogue>
14. World Bank. 2015. *Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth: 2016–2023 Gender Strategy*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/23425>
15. More detail on the seven drivers of women's economic empowerment identified by the High-Level Panel is in their two reports at <http://www.womenseconomicempowerment.org/>