

July- September, 2015

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UPDATES FROM MEMBER

Homebased Workers' Strategy Planning Meeting

The homebased worker strategy meeting was held in Istanbul, Turkey in the month of September, and HomeNet South Asia participated in the planning process. The key objective of the meeting was to assess the progress and direction of interventions undertaken by all organisation that are part of WIEGO, evaluate fundraising strategies, explore opportunities of engagement for the network, discuss Global Declaration and Action Plan, understand work across regions, develop a global plan and regional plans for Africa, Asia, East Europe and Latin America, understand similarities and find common solutions for the challenges.



HOMEBASED WORKERS STRATEGY MEETING IN ISTANBUL-28-29TH SEPTEMBER, 2015

Developments in the region were presented. The team from **Africa** highlighted the mapping exercise undertaken by them in Kenya and Egypt that has allowed them to learn about workers' issues. They also highlighted the contradictory situation of homebased worker's issues in Africa and Asia. In Africa, market linkages for products were the core issues, while in Asia it was housing. The **Eastern Europe** team stressed the importance of identifying solutions for HBWs

issues. They highlighted the important role played by C177 to get the HBWs issue onto policy discussion. In the region, C177 has been used as an advocacy tool (ratifications in the region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Tajikistan, and Macedonia). Emphasis was placed on the role of legal fraternity in pursuing policy and legislative reform. The **Latin American** team provided highlights of the mapping that has been done in Argentina, Peru, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Chile. They highlighted lack of specific labour laws regulations for HBWs (Brazil, Chile and Nicaragua), and emphasised problems with compliance and implementation in the case of laws being existent. The representatives from **South Asia** stressed challenges in organizing workers in urban areas as they look for immediate benefits. Some of the successes that were highlighted from region of South Asia were pertaining to the field of capacity building, dealing with authorities, training on leadership and organizing, regional conference, global conference in Delhi, restructuring of HNSA, training plus pilot, HNSA response to earthquake in Nepal, statistical briefs (Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan), skill up-gradation and marketing support through SABAHs. **South East Asian** representative highlighted the increased visibility and representation of HBWs, improved livelihoods and quality of life through social protection schemes and policy advocacy (social security, OHS, access to health care services), as key achievements of the region.

It was evident from the presentations, how, mapping exercise, marketing initiatives and campaign has played vital role in mobilizing and organising homebased workers into network.

Discussion around global plan was held, resulting in generation of some key decisions and things to do list. Some of key points of discussion were:

- Participation in INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE ON GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS IN JUNE 2016
- 2. Observing 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF C177
- NETWORK/MOVEMENT BUILDING:

Detail Report can be access: www.homenetsouthasia.net

EMPLOYERS CONSULTATION MEETING ON 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2015 IN NEW DELHI:

A consultation with employers' association, organized by International Labour Organisation (ILO), was held in New Delhi, India. HNSA participated in it as one of the stakeholders. A presentation was made by ILO emphasizing the need for consultation between employers and stakeholders working with HBWs. ILO shared the findings of CITU study and another study conducted few years back that reflect the daily wage situation of HBWs. However, the employer groups were not convinced with the data, and expected more representative data of HBWs. Dr. Rajan Mehrotra, expert on Home Based Workers issues and former ILO employee highlighted the role of cooperatives and corporate sector in transforming the lives of HBWs. To present his case, Dr. Mehrotra cited the work of Lijjat Papad and ITC Mangaldeep. He emphasized the need for employers to take interest in the issues of HBWs through CSR activities. Ms. Suhasini from Fair Wear Foundation presented the work of the foundation that is working in apparel sector in Tamil Nadu and Bangalore. The organization has initiated a code of conduct among partner brands to improve the working condition of workers. HNSA also made a presentation about our work, including data on HBWs.

A brainstorming session was held to identify certain solutions, such as:

1. Areas where CSR groups can intervene: Technical Support, Skill Building trainings, Logistical support, market linkages, health Care, civic amenities like water, electricity etc., after school care for children of HBWs.
2. Scope of Employer organizations in providing support to HBWs: Creating awareness and education, undertaking pilot projects, conducting base line survey and market survey, documenting case studies and good models of interventions, helping to avoid middlemen, partnership with NGOs, Supporting advocacy, communication and lobbying
3. Indicators for code for engaging with HBWs: Provision of basic working condition, occupational safety, Child care center, Minimum wages, Avoiding child labour, occupational safety, providing regular flow of income, provision of social security.

PROGRESS OF TRAINING PLUS PILOT PROGRAMME IN INDIA-

The preceding months have been used for large-scale advocacy in Bhubaneswar under the pilot project. A meeting was conducted with deputy commissioner of the city on the issue of sanitation in Jharana sahi. The Deputy Commissioner offered administration support. Later, a meeting was held with the Mayor of the city, and overview was provided on sanitation issue in Jharana Sahi, stand post Issue in Sitanath Nagar, electricity issue in Tati Basti and residence proof for slum dwellers. The Mayor directed the Junior Engineer to visit the area and take necessary action, as well as gave directions for arrangements of dustbin in Jharna sahi. He also promised to provide residence proof to slum dwellers.



Regular garbage collection by BMC in Slums, Bhubaneswar, India

A meeting was also held with Swatch Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) cell team leader who gave an update on the pending SBA scheme. The leader was very positive on work undertaken by ROAD and mentioned about budgetary support to the organization for the SBA scheme. Survey forms to

ascertain number of slums that doesn't have the toilets was given to ROAD. Follow ups were undertaken with JEE electrical department due to rejection of application of few households that had applied for individual electricity meter. JEE informed that the applications were rejected as applicants houses were made of bamboo and roof were covered by polythene. Thus electricity could be provided to them only if pucca/permanent structures were made. The team of ROAD also tried to meet the corporator of Shanti Palli for the ending stand post issue. However, lack of budgetary allocation was cited as main cause for standstill. ROAD also conducted meeting with other NGOs and organizations in the city.

UPDATES FROM MEMBER:

1. Bangladesh - Trinamul Nari Uddyokta Society (Grassroots)



In the month of September, Trinamul Nari Uddyokta Society (Grassroots) received FOBANA Present Outstanding Community Service award of FOBANA-2015 for its work with homebased workers in Bangladesh. A national level exhibition cum sale programme was held by the organization that witnessed the participation of 30 homebased workers from across the country. The exhibition was inaugurated by the local parliamentarian. A human chain was organized all over the district headquarter of Bangladesh in September, demanding the ratification of ILO-177. Further, 16th foundation day of Trinamul Nari Uddyakta Society (Grassroots) was observed. The

4th National organizational conference of Grassroots was held in the month of September that saw the participation of 180 delegates. HNSA would like to congratulate Trinamul Nari Uddyakta Society (Grassroots) on its 16th foundation day.

2. Pakistan -Home-based Women Workers Federation

One of the most significant achievements of Home-based Women Workers Federation (HBWWF) in the preceding month was the consultation organized on glass bangle industry issues. The same was attended by representations of workers, employees and government officials. The issues of homebased workers pertaining to their livelihood, income, social security, occupation health, basic services were highlighted by organizations of homebased workers.



The key outcome of the consultative meeting was principle agreement on minimum wages for the homebased workers of glass bangle industry in Hyderabad. Discussions centered on this theme, and emphasis was placed on fixing the minimum wages, through tripartite process involving representatives of employees, employers and government. The industry representative agreed on fixed minimum wages for the bangle workers based on consultations and census. He also highlighted the fact that while industries were paying handsomely to the contractors, the latter were making cuts while paying to homebased workers. NTUF representative informed about the draft homebased labour policy that has been awaiting



provincial cabinet approval in Sindh assembly. ILO member representative stressed for government recognition of homebased worker as legal worker, just like the way agriculturists and fisheries workers were accepted as formal workers. The Secretary -Minimum wages board presented a list of proposed minimum wages for different categories of home-based workers. A committee of representatives was set up at the end of the meeting to re-draft the minimum wages after detailed consultation with all stakeholders. .

Another important progress was a meeting of HBWWF with Chairman of Senate of Pakistan Senator in Karachi to discuss on home based policy and ratification of ILO convention 177. The meeting was attended by the representative of UNWOMEN and ILO along with HBWWF. The chairman suggested submission of a petition to senate's official website for further follow up on ratification of ILO convention 177. The petition has been drafted.

A peaceful protest rally was organized by HBWWF on the occasion of international decent work day demanding the government to ratify the convention 177 .A large numbers of women home-based workers belonging to glass bangle and other sectors attended the rally. Some of the demands placed were for recognizing homebased workers and other informal sector workers under labor laws, registration of HBWs with Employee Old Age Benefit Institutionand social security institutions, policy for HBWs, ratification of convention 177 of ILO, ending contract labor and ensuring permanent nature of work , right to form labour unions and CBAs, ending privatization, workplace security and providing facilities of health and safety, fixing minimum wages at Rs 20000 per month at least and ensuring timely revision.

3. Nepal – SAATHI

Groups created by Saathi are functioning properly with regular savings and credit. Saathi tied up with Club 50 a non- profit organization that provides support for tailoring training and other activities within the settlement area. In coordination with Club 50, tailoring trainings were held in Godawari, Ramhati and Patibhara. In Godawari, members of group were able to sell their products at the fair organized as part of the ‘Maha Kumbha Mela’ that witnessed the



participation of 6 million people. Here homebased workers put stalls and sold agricultural products. Saathi was actively engaged in earthquake rehabilitation programmes as well. Follow-ups were done with district officials for pending relief funds for affected families. Yoga training was conducted for earthquake trauma members, and art and craft workshop was held with children. On basic services, follow-ups were conducted for sewerage connection and rain water harvesting water system, drinking water and electricity. Saathi also worked on providing relief materials to two slum communities during recent flood. Awareness programs on health and hygiene were conducted. Contacts are being made to source nearby suppliers who can supply wool to homebased workers. The ward office in Pathibhara approved a small fund for training program of HBWs group on tailoring. Lastly, homebased workers participated in rallies and hunger strike programs to pressurize the constitution making committee to ensure their right.