REMARKS

- Informal Employment
  - official definition
  - national data

- Informal Employment, Poverty and Gender
  - national data
  - stylized model
  - key facts & policy implications

- Decent Work for Informal Workers, especially women
  - four ILO normative frameworks
  - promising national examples

- Concluding Thoughts: Post-2015 Agenda
  - multiple normative frameworks
  - key pathway to implementation: recognition, validation and inclusion of informal workers and their livelihoods
Informal Employment = jobs or work without employment-based social protection in informal enterprises, formal firms and/or households (2003 ICLS) - including:

- **self-employed**: employers + own account workers + contributing family workers
- **wage workers**: employees + casual day laborers
- **contracted & sub-contracted workers**: including those who work from their own homes (called homeworkers)

ICLS = International Conference of Labour Statisticians
More than half of non-agricultural employment in most developing countries is informal.

South Asia: 82%
range: 62% in Sri Lanka to 84% in India

Sub-Saharan Africa: 66%
range: 52% in Zimbabwe to 82% in Mali

East and Southeast Asia: 65%
range: 42% in Thailand to 73% in Indonesia

Latin America: 51%
range: 40% in Uruguay to 75% in Bolivia

Middle East and North Africa: 45%
range: 31% in Turkey to 57% in West Bank & Gaza
INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT: DIFFERENCES BY SEX

In 3 (out of 5) regions informal employment is a greater source of employment (non-agric.) for women than for men.

South Asia

83% women, 82% men

Sub-Saharan Africa

74% women, 61% men

Latin America and the Caribbean

54% women, 48% men

- In South East Asia, around two-thirds of both women and men workers are informally employed.
- In the Middle East and North Africa, a higher percentage of men workers, than of women workers, are informally employed.
- In all regions, men comprise a greater share of informal employment due to relatively low female labour force participation rates.
SELF-EMPLOYMENT: DIFFERENCES BY SEX

Half to two-thirds of all informal workers outside of agriculture are self-employed: more so women than men except in LAC.

**Latin America and the Caribbean**
- 51% of women, 52% of men

**South Asia**
- 58% of women, 51% of men

**East and Southeast Asia**
- 61% of women, 44% of men

**Sub-Saharan Africa**
- 76% of women, 58% of men

Source: Vanek et al. 2014
INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT, POVERTY & GENDER: TWO PAIRS OF KEY FACTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Informality & Poverty
  - Most informal workers are poor; most working poor are informally employed
  - Earnings are low and costs-plus-risks are high, on average, in the informal economy

Informality & Gender

- Higher percentage of women workers than men workers are informally employed in 3 (out of 5) developing regions; but men comprise the majority of the informal workforce in all regions due to relatively low female labour force participation rates.
- Women are concentrated in the lowest-earning segments of informal employment in all regions
SEGMENTATION OF THE INFORMAL ECONOMY: BY AVERAGE EARNINGS, POVERTY RISK AND SEX

Poverty Risk | Average Earnings
---|---
Low | High
High | Low

Segmentation by Sex
- Predominantly Men
- Men and Women
- Predominantly Women

Employers
- Informal Wage Workers: “Regular”
- Own Account Operators
- Informal Wage Workers: Casual
- Industrial Outworkers/Homeworkers
- Unpaid Family Workers
Poverty cannot be reduced unless earnings are increased and costs/risks are decreased in the informal economy.

Increasing incomes and reducing costs/risks of the working poor requires changing the legal and regulatory environment as well as providing skills training, financial and business development services.

Gender inequality cannot be reduced unless gender segmentation and gender gaps in earnings within the informal economy are reduced.

Reducing gender segmentation and gender gaps in earnings within the informal economy requires changing social norms but also changing the hiring practices of formal firms and the discriminatory practices of government.
ILO RESOLUTION & RECOMMENDATION

- ILC 2002: Conclusion & Resolution on Decent Work and Informal Workers – recommend reducing deficits of informal workers in regard to the 4 pillars of decent work:
  - opportunities
  - rights
  - protection
  - voice

- ILC 2015: Recommendation 204 on Gradual Transition from Informal to Formal Economy - premised on providing rights, protection and incentives to the informal workforce and in making the legal and policy environment more friendly to informal workers. Specifically, the Recommendation calls for
  - regulated access of informal workers to public space & natural resources
  - protection of informal livelihoods during the transition
TWO ILO CONVENTIONS

- ILC 1996: Convention 177 on Home Workers - i.e., those who work in their own home under a sub-contract for an employer or his intermediary
- ILC 2011: Convention 189 on Domestic Workers – i.e. those who work for pay in the homes of others
- Both Conventions mandate that homeworkers and domestic workers, respectively, be treated equally as other workers in regard to:
  - right to organize
  - social protection, including occupational health and safety
  - fair remuneration
  - worker benefits
ADVOCATING FOR FOUR ILO STANDARDS: VOICE OF INFORMAL WORKERS

- Four ILO normative frameworks regarding the informal workforce came about because….
  - informal workers were organized
  - informal workers were represented in the norm-setting tripartite process of the ILO
  - informal workers had allies who provided technical advice, including data and policy analysis
- Each of these normative frameworks recognizes that….
  - informal workers are legitimate workers
  - informal workers, especially women, face major disadvantages in the existing legal and regulatory environment
- All of these normative frameworks need to be ratified by national governments and/or implemented through national policies
NATIONAL VICTORIES FOR INFORMAL WORKERS: THAILAND

Universal Health Coverage
- Formation of alliance, drafting a UHC legislation (people’s version) (1997-2000)
- Collection of >50,000 signatures needed to submit a people’s sector law (2001)
- Participation in the parliamentary committee discussion on the draft legislations (2001-2002)
- Passage of the UHC Law (2002)
- Participation in implementation of the legislation through membership on committees and subcommittees at local, district, and national levels (2002 to present)
- Representation on the National Health Security Board (2006 to present)


Home Workers Protection Act B.E.2553 (2011) – based on ILO Convention 177

Ministerial Regulation No. 14 on Domestic Work (2012) – based on ILO Convention 189

Campaign for Transport for Bangkok Home-Based Workers (current)
LEGAL VICTORIES FOR STREET VENDORS: DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

- City policy and scheme in support of informal workers, including street vendors in Warwick Junction (1999-2007)

- Asiye eTafuleni (AeT) founded by two ex-city employees to provide design, legal and other support to 6-7,000 street vendors in Warwick Junction (2008)

- Legal Resources Center, at request of AeT, filed 2 successful cases against city plans to build a mall in the middle of Warwick Junction (2009)

- Legal Resources Center, again at request of AeT, filed successful case to challenge power of municipality to confiscate and impound street vendor goods (2014-2015)
Asociacion Recicladores Bogota (ARB) (founded in 1990) co-founded by Nohra Padilla and Silvio Ruiz

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

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

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

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

Waste Picker Integration Model Launched in Bogota (2013)
Goldman Environmental Award to Nohra Padilla (2013)
National Ruling to Replicate Bogota Model throughout Colombia (2014)
Common secrets of success

- **Common strategies** included a mix of organizing + awareness building + advocacy + legal struggles including test cases: with action on these different fronts feeding into each other in a circular, interactive, reinforcing manner.

- **Common sources of technical and political support** included pro-bono lawyers + activist academics + specialized non-governmental organizations - and, most importantly, alliances of organizations of informal workers.

Team members of WIEGO, including activist academics, played an important role in these struggles: conducting research and policy analysis, providing technical and political support as well as legal evidence.
WAY FORWARD:
INFORMAL WORKERS IN POST-2015 AGENDA

- Post-2015 Global Agenda – multiple frameworks
  - Global Social Floor
  - ILO Norms & Standards
  - SDGs
  - New Urban Agenda

- Key Pathway to Realizing the Post-2015 Global Agenda
  - Recognizing and validating informal workers & their livelihoods activities
  - Including informal workers and their organizations in implementation processes
WAY FORWARD:
VOICE + VISIBILITY►VALIDITY
FOR INFORMAL WORKERS

Increased Organization & Representation
  ▼
  Increased Voice

Improved Statistics, Research & Policy Analysis
  ▼
  Increased Visibility

Increased Validity or Legitimacy
  ▼
  Ability to Influence Wider Environment
Thank You!

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