

**SATUCC – STREETNET JOINT WORKSHOP
ORGANISING WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY**

held at Booyens Hotel, Johannesburg
2 – 5 October 2008

OPENING ADDRESS

*Lucia Matibenga
President, SATUCC*

This is a landmark workshop.

Why the informal economy is growing:

- failed economic policies;
- SAPs have resulted in unemployment & underemployment due to company closures, downsizing.

Some characteristics of the informal economy:

- economic activities of a survivalist nature;
- no social protection;
- no labour rights / human rights in practice;
- low incomes;
- lack of recognition or registration.

Poverty reduction / eradication as one of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)

- some countries are sustained by their informal economies (e.g. in Zimbabwe where there is 80% unemployment)
- MDGs to eradicate poverty cannot be addressed without consideration of the informal economy, because the majority of people are in the informal economy;
- the ILO agenda on Decent Work has taken on board the informal economy.

Why organise workers in the informal economy – **organise or die !!**

- to give voice to the voiceless;
- in the face of globalisation, capital is consolidating, therefore the need for the downtrodden to unite in response;
- governments listen to World Bank & IMF, not to informal workers.

Workers in the informal economy need to unite against governments and capital.

Organising is not fashionable – it is a dire need.

United we bargain – divided we beg !!

This workshop should enable us to:

- share information on what work has been done thus far;
- work on concrete steps to take forward the work;
- identify best practices and adapt to various situations back home;
- gain understanding of relationship which needs to exist between trade unions and informal economy organisations.

A worker is a worker – whether formal or informal.

Forward with workers' unity !!

GUEST SPEAKER

*Gino Govender
Director, Ditsela*

Written address circulated.

DETAILED INTRODUCTIONS

See attendance register.

Day 2 (Friday 3 October) **Comparison of organising strategies**

Facilitator: Mike Chungu

A. Pioneers organising workers in the informal economy – presentations

Ghana TUC and all its affiliates

– presentation by Togbe Drayi II, Head of Organising Dept. of Ghana TUC

SEWA (Self-Employed Women’s Association)

– video presentation (SEWA Movement Part I)

DISCUSSION

Question about associate membership status in Ghana TUC.

Need to give executive positions also to informal workers.

- *this is a stop-gap measure to avoid losing these workers;*
- *can be further explored and developed;*
- *if the TU movement does not find a way to give them a home, they will go to the government.*

Question of market vendors vs street vendors.

Question about facilities for street vendors (e.g. shelters).

- *street vendors have not yet been organised (under Ghana StreetNet Alliance)*
- *probably need organisation for all vendors because there is mobility between markets and streets.*

SEWA observation – labour movement, co-operative movement, women’s movement.

Observation that they are doing employment creation for decent work.

Question about women’s membership of SEWA

- *SEWA’s commitment was to address the needs of the poorest most marginalised workers in the informal economy, i.e. women – and to eliminate the discrimination against them. There are other organisations in India organising workers (including men) in the informal economy – but SEWA is the one that made a breakthrough for women in the informal economy.*

Question about collective bargaining strategies in Ghana.

- *negotiations with authorities about taxes;*
- *negotiations issues depend on what is of concern to informal economy workers;*
- *negotiations about spatial arrangements;*
- *training to assist vendors to move out of sector;*
- *negotiations with govt. about what to do when economic policies fail.*

Question about problems encountered when approaching workers in informal economy.

- *resource constraints;*
- *resistance from established members;*
- *organisers without specific training (now undertaking training)*

Conflicts between government a Ghana TUC because of informal workers taking over economy ? *Not really, but in the 1980s organised informal workers independently to prevent the government trying to take them over.*

*N.B. Importance of independence of organisations from government control.

COSATU can learn a lot from Ghana.

Lack of bargaining forums for workers in the informal economy to participate directly.

How does union tackle environmental issues – e.g. *wrt* timber products.

- *problems in implementation of laws on logging;*
- *Timber Workers Union has their own plantation, with forestation project.*

Question about prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Ghana.

- *HIV prevalence is lower in Ghana (about 2%)*
- *but there are HIV/AIDS programmes, esp. for transport sector*

What is the role of employers *wrt* informal economy.

- *involvement of all stakeholders in social dialogue (incl. employers)*
- *Ghanaian employers are not interested in informal economy workers*

*N.B. Social security scheme for workers in informal economy.

Informal workers pay contributions, 50% of which is put into a savings scheme.

Claiming in times of need – available for informal workers (not formal workers)

Govt. collected money from street vendors to provide space for African Cup – then failed to provide spaces and had to fight to get the vendors' money back – warning to South Africans in anticipation for FIFA World Cup.

B. SADC trade unions – presentation of 4 different examples – presentations

Tanzania – extension of trade union scope (TUICO)

- *short description by Pat Horn in absence of TUICO participant*

TUICO (Tanzanian Union of Industrial & Commercial Workers) started to organise informal market vendors in different market-places, including Kariokoo fresh produce Market in Dar Es Salaam – even putting funding into the provision of shelters outside the main market building to extend the selling space available and accommodate more traders. As more and more *machingas* (street vendors, hawkers) started to appear in the cities, unable to obtain space in the markets, TUICO has also started to organise them.

TUICO's strategy has been to extend the scope of the union itself to these informal workers in the commerce sector, and to extend their collective bargaining to cover these sectors (e.g. with management of markets and municipal authorities).

Mocambique – establishment of informal organisation (*direct affiliation*)
- presentation by OTM-CS and ASSOTSI

Written presentation.

Malawi – establishment of informal union (*direct affiliation*)
- very long impromptu presentation by MUFIS which has recently been directly affiliated to MCTU – repeat (longer version) of previous day’s description of how long it took for their registration process and how long it took for their affiliation to MCTU to be accepted. Expectations of MUFIS from their direct affiliation to MCTU (which he was asked by the facilitator to briefly present) were not addressed.

Zimbabwe – establishment of informal organisation (*MOU*)
- presentation by ZCTU and ZCIEA

Written presentation.

Consulted regularly by government.

Solidarity relationships with civil society organisations.

ZCIEA members now MPs (including Beauty Mugijima) since March 2008 elections.

ZCIEA assisting with the distribution of food aid.

New FOREX shops – ZCIEA members expect to be involved.

Zambia – independent informal organisation (*associate membership*)
- presentation by ZCTU and AZIEA

Written presentation.

NO DISCUSSION (time management problem)

Facilitator: Pat Horn

C. GROUP WORK on:

1. Recruiting strategies
 - *realising right to organise in practice*
 - *establishing freedom of association in practice*
2. New collective bargaining strategies
 - *for decent work for informal workers*
3. Services for informal workers

REPORT-BACK FROM GROUPS

Recruiting strategies – mobilising for workers’ rights

DIRECT recruitment

- Using focal persons to contact the potential members
- Targeting one or two then holding a meeting
- Formation of committees
- Circulation of pamphlets
- Dissemination of information
- Sensitization
- Creation of informal economy desks

ALLIANCES & ADVOCACY

- Through education and training such as workshops
- Using networking
- Using media to inform potential members re existence of the organisation
- Resource mobilisation
- Lobbying and Advocacy
- Public gatherings
- Collaboration with Trade Unions
- Visit of MP's to the association
- CAMPAIGNS, e.g. World Class Cities for All campaign

Recruiting strategies – mobilising by services

SOCIAL services

- Taking advantage of events such as harassments of vendors by the police
- Social clinics for helping vendors
- Intervention on their present problems

MATERIAL benefits

- Lobbying for Municipal funds to grant the vendors as micro finance
- Provide incentives

New collective bargaining strategies

NEW BASICS

- Participation in policy formulation
- Identify issues for negotiation, e.g. Constitutional reforms, recognition,
- Identify negotiating partner for each issue
- Regular formal meetings with authorities at local and national levels
- Establishments of legal forums
- Representation in municipal councils
- Extra-ordinary parliamentary forums

PRESSURE TACTICS (incl. COLLECTIVE ACTIONS)

- Holding government to account during elections
- Voting influence
- Press statements
- Engaging in protests marches, withholding levies, etc

Services being offered by trade unions / organisations of informal workers

Education and Training
Social Security
Policy Interventions
Representation at all levels
Negotiate for bulk buying for members
Funeral services to members
Legal advice
Sanitary products distribution for free
Raise funds for ARV's from donors
Capacity building: education, awareness and campaigns
Solidarity activities
Representation on legal matters (litigation assistance)
Technical services
Facilitate access to funding to financial institution
Offer local agricultural products for sale

DISCUSSION

- The plenary discussed mobilisation by service provision as strategy for recruitment of members. The need was noted to be very conscious on using services as an auxiliary benefit – so that informal economy associations and trade unions organising in the informal economy do not lose sight of their core business (i.e. workers rights based approach).
- The plenary discussed the issues of informal economy workers' participation and representation in tripartite labour councils, and observed that there is urgent need to re-define the existing tripartite structures to take into account the ongoing organising of informal economy workers either through their independent informal economy associations/unions or trade unions.
- The issue of the relationship between politics and organisations of workers in the informal economy – including affiliation to political party(ies) either ruling or opposition – was debated at length, and the plenary noted the wide range of comments and observations. There was a general consensus that that our work is political because we aim to influence and change policies and laws, and mount collective pressure on politicians. On the other hand it was also generally agreed that organisations should never be compromised by political relationships. Policies of organisations regarding their relationship to political parties, and regarding participation of worker leaders in political office, were found to vary widely according to the different political situation in different countries in the region.

- The issue of corruption, which affects many workers in the informal economy, particularly street vendors and migrants, is often also related to practices or arrangements based on political patronage.
- There was consensus on strengthening solidarity between and among the informal economy associations and trade unions in the region in order to promote effective representation to the informal economy workers. Visiting the StreetNet International website at www.streetnet.org.za is greatly recommended, to monitor the current political and social trends facing informal economy workers around the world.

Day 3 (Saturday 4 October) Struggling for policies and laws

Facilitator: Mike Chungu

D. GROUP WORK on Decent Work

1. Informal workers' labour rights

NEEDS

Laws / policies friendly to informal workers
Infrastructure which makes informal work viable
Organisation into associations / unions
Constitutional / legislative review to remove discriminatory laws
Skills development
Financial support
Union constitutions to cater for inclusion of informal workers
Occupational safety & health
Labour laws to cover informal workers
Representation in decision-making structures
Inspections

POLICIES & LAWS

Amendment & review of bylaws & national laws
Implementation of existing laws, policies & bylaws
Laws & policies to be accessible by informal workers
Labour rights or informal workers

RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal workers to have same labour rights as formal;
SADC member states to align their policies with 2002 Resolution;
Networking at SADC level;
Need for participatory research & documentation on informal economy labour rights.

2. Employment creation & livelihoods in informal economy

NEEDS

Friendly policy framework recognising workers in informal economy
Recognition of workplaces of informal workers
Recognition of organisations of informal workers
Re-design of education system
Clear investment & business guidelines
Registration fees & trust funds covering formal and informal should be recognised
Legislation in recognition of economic right to trade, and be part of national constitution and labour laws

POLICIES

People-driven constitution

Platform of negotiation with local authorities (Mocambique – so far Maputo)
Update of outdated laws (Lesotho, Zambia)
Self-employment law in Angola – needs implementation
Citizenship & economic empowerment policies (Commission in Zambia)
SADC protocol on employment creation & defining informal workers
Informal economy regional body
Tripartite structures to be created/restructured to include informal economy workers' representatives

3. Social protection for informal workers

NEEDS

Access to credit
Security of working site
Health insurance schemes
Occupational health, safety & environment
Maternity leave
Job security
Income security
Vacational leave
Child care benefits
Disability grants
Training

POLICIES & LAWS

Recognition of workers in informal economy (existence and is likely to stay)
Best practice: Ghana & Mocambique
Try to reproduce Mocambican best practice in SADC

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tripartite forums for social dialogue on the issues facing informal workers should always include informal economy representation
Bi-partite forums with municipalities should also include informal economy representation
Direct affiliation of informal workers' organisations to national TU centres
Enact favourable laws – lobby parliament and policy-makers

4. Informal workers and representation

NEEDS

Local: elected committees handle negotiations;
National: national union centres, national informal economy bodies
Regional: formation of regional informal economy body from national bodies
International: formation of international body
Legal body to representation of legal issues and litigation.

POLICIES

Zambia has an Act, but not working in the interests of informal economy.
Participation in policy formulation – all policies, legislation and national constitutions.
No policies in any of the countries in the group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal economy representation needed at all levels.
Informal economy representatives should be involved in the formulation of policies, legislation and the national constitution
Regional body should be formed for representation of workers in informal economy
Nothing for us without us !!

5. Migrant workers and cross-border trade

NEEDS

Legal and social protection
Representation
Collective organisations like trade unions
Recognition
Education – business training, HIV/AIDS, rights, laws
Integration
Shelter

POLICIES

Mainly outdated or unknown
Knowledge of policies empowers worker in informal economy
Access to fair treatment
Operational space
Against sexual harassment
Against child labour, forced labour & trafficking
Asylum-seekers rights
Anti-corruption
Simplified immigration documents
SADC protocols to be observed:
 Tariff exemptions;
 Clearance to be done at one point to ease congestion at next order;
 No visas within SADC;
 Storage of goods.
Priority to be given to SADC citizens
Revisit cross-border policies
Protection against harassment & victimisation
Fight against corruption at all borders and within countries
Identity cards for cross-border traders within SADC region

Once border station for clearance
Removal of restrictive & unnecessary laws
Facilities to open accounts in countries where they trade

How does SADC work ?

- presentation by Moses Kachima, Executive Secretary, SATUCC

Power-point presentation.

Potential common codes:

Social security – drafts about how to include informal economy

Child labour

Gender at workplace – equal rights at workplace

Safe use of chemicals at workplace

HIV/AIDS at workplace

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

Facilitator: Elias Mashasi

E. GROUP WORK – Policy proposals for submission to SATUCC

1. Informal workers' labour rights

- StreetNet to be part of deliberations in SATUCC structures on what is to go forward to SADC;
- Informal economy workers to be accorded same labour rights as workers in the formal economy;
- SADC member states to align their policies with ILO's 2002 Resolution on Decent Work & Informal Economy.

- StreetNet & SATUCC to encourage their affiliates to network more about their work and experiences;

- StreetNet & SATUCC to disseminate their activities to all informal economy workers and what they are doing – step up their publicity to informal economy workers.

2. Employment creation & livelihoods in informal economy

- current 5-year strategic plans of SADC to be reviewed to include job & employment creation in informal economy;
- workers' group in all tripartite forums should include informal economy representatives;
- country delegations to SADC include informal economy workers' representatives.

Domestic follow up:

- SATUCC & StreetNet to create a regional body to represent informal workers in SADC region;

- SATUCC to create an informal economy desk.

3. Social protection for informal workers

- effective tripartite forum in region to cover informal economy workers;
- SATUCC to play facilitating role to enable affiliates to participate in bi-partite forums;
- SATUCC to encourage affiliates to take on direct informal economy organisations as affiliates;
- SADC to monitor that its member states implement signed protocols;
- SADC member states to extend social protection to informal economy workers (including own-account workers) along the lines of the Mocambique best practice.

4. Informal workers and representation

- SADC to recognise informal workers as workers;
- informal workers integral part of trade unions;
- SADC recognise SATUCC to represent interests and concerns of informal economy workers;
- extension of labour rights to informal economy workers, including their representation by unions of their choice.

5. Migrant workers and cross-border trade

- policy on legal protection of cross-border traders;
- policy on social security;
- policy on HIV/AIDS;
- educational policy for migrant workers;
- informal economy board at regional level for representation;
- affordable shelters at border posts for migrant workers, with storage space for commodities, incl. accommodation co-operatives;
- all existing SADC protocols on movement and trade (customs duties, visas, goods clearance) to be adhered to;
- recognition and representation for all migrant workers including cross-border traders.

Day 4 (Sunday 5 October) Campaigns and alliances

F. World Class Cities for All (WCCA) campaign towards 2010

- presentation by StreetNet International

DISCUSSION – strategising for involvement at SADC level

Preparation of implementation time-table

Pat presented the background the campaign, highlighting the experience of the World Cup in South Korea where the street vendors were threatened with mass crackdown as in light of the country hosting the world cup.

Street Net International in collaboration with local affiliates in South Korea, and other stakeholders petitioned the organising committee, FIFA and the South Korean government to address the concerns of the street vendors.

In 2006, the international council of StreetNet International adopted the campaign on World Class Cities for all. Initially, the campaign was not funded, but Street Net International has managed to raise some funding that will come through in 2009.

Currently, the campaign is underway in India and Brazil, and we would like to focus on SADC because of the forthcoming World Cup to be hosted in South Africa, and taking cognizant of the eruption of xenophobic violence in June in South Africa, and there is need to preempt the re-occurrence such violence again.

The campaign will focus on promoting protection among key sectors including sex work and street children so that they are not harrasing during the world cup, and the campaigning is a colloborative effort among progressive organisations including the trade unions such as cosatu, the anti-privatisation forum, etc.

Focal point for SADC

Agenda 21

SADC Resolution

Framework agreement

Report-back in COSATU

Mobilising work in provinces

Municipal consultation process on by-laws

Internal disputes

2010 city offices

Organise SADC Forum with specific theme (such as World Social Forum)

Letter to Thabo Mbeki

Rights of Workers during 2010 – Technical Committee

FIFA involvment

DISCUSSION and Way Forward

Resolution to SADC on 2010

Proposed contents:

SADC to commit to making the 2010 FIFA World Cup a SADC event.

Mutual commitment to ensure 2010 FIFA World Cup benefits all the SADC citizens including workers in the informal economy.

The rights of workers during the 2010.

Extending the provisions of the Fifa framework to all the SADC region.

2010 SADC countries – WCCA activities

- There is up grading of stadia in Swaziland, Zambia and Botswana.
- In Mozambique there is on going construction of hotel and stadia.
- In Angola, there is construction of hotels and stadia in preparation for the African Cup of Nations to be hosted by Angola and World Cup in South Africa.
- Fan parks are therefore a potential opportunity in SADC countries.
- Zimbabwe has been excluded (maybe for obvious reasons).

This will be used as the basis for expanding the WCCA campaign beyond South Africa into the SADC countries.

African WCCA Day of Action

To expand the WCCA campaign to the rest of Africa, it was agreed to organise an African WCCA Day of Action on May 25, 2010 (Africa Freedom Day) to popularise the demands of all informal workers and urban poor, related to the 2010. This would be organised along similar lines to the WSF international day of action which was done in different countries on 26 January 2008 when there was no World Social Forum international event.

CONCLUSION

The StreetNet – SATUCC Declaration was approved for forwarding to the SATUCC Congress (being held the following week) for discussion with a view to making a submission to SADC about policy matters regarding workers in the informal economy. The provisions relating to the 2010 FIFA World Cup would be added.

The next regional event will be the mid-term regional workshop in 2010, and hopefully by then there will be some interaction with SADC in relation to the workers in the informal economy.

Compiled by Pat Horn (StreetNet International)

- assisted by Mike Chungu (Workers' Education Association of Zambia)

October 2008