



MEMORANDUM

Submitted to: Sister Michiko Miyamoto- Director, International Labour Organisation (ILO) New Delhi

Place: Tagore Hall, Ahmedabad, India

Submitted by: Self Employed of Women's Association (SEWA)

Date: April 23, 2024

There are 260 million home-based workers across the globe as per the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In India, there are approximately 30 million home-based workers but this number may be higher as it is very challenging to know the exact figures due to the informal nature of their work.

These workers are scattered and invisible; their home is their workplace and their work is precarious in nature including the long hours of work. They are both self-employed workers as well as piece-rated, who are part of both global as well as domestic supply chains. Their work ranges from minute detailed work like sticking embellishments on clothes and jewellery to preparing cotton wicks, cutting extra thread in finished products, beedi rolling, kite making to name a few. They are part of a long supply chain consisting of contractors, subcontractors resulting in home-based workers not being aware of their main employer. Additionally, it is seen that they do not have any formal contracts, regular work, access to social security and their incomes are very meagre. Even though they significantly contribute to their family incomes and the GDP of the country they remain unrecognised and invisible. Irrespective of this, they are not covered by any Policy or law in India. There are hardly any minimum wages for these workers and the ones covered under it do not receive it.

After a long struggle to which SEWA contributed effectively, the ILO Convention 177 for the home-based workers was formed in 1996, but since then it has still not been ratified in our country. Even after 28 years of formation of this Convention, SEWA has been struggling hard to create voice, visibility, and validation for these workers.

Post pandemic the situation of these workers worldwide has become even more susceptible. Small factories and units shut-down resulting in workers being pushed to home-based work. Resulting in an increase in precariousness of their work and

SEWA Reception Centre, Opp. Victoria Garden, Bhadra, Ahmedabad-380 001.

Contact : +91-79-25506477, 25511432, 25506446 M. +917211103130 | Email : mail@sewa.org | Website : www.sewa.org

महामंत्री : ज्योति मेकवान
General Secretary : **Jyoti Macwan**

संस्थापक : इला भट्ट
Founder : **Ela Bhatt**



decrease in the collective bargaining strength of these workers. This is because the workers are not aware of their main employer as there is a long sub-contractor's chain.

Climate change and its consequences is another subject of concern presently, yet its impact on the informal sector workers is not studied properly. These workers have several challenges to cope with the situation with least knowledge or resilience capabilities.

Today, on this Convention of the Home-Based Workers organized by Self Employed Women's Association, SEWA in Ahmedabad, on behalf of our 2.9 million members in India, we demand these important points for the home-based workers across 18 States.

1. ILO should take forward the drive to ratify the C177 in at least 3 south Asian countries -India, Nepal, Pakistan.
2. Through tripartite meetings, ILO should develop a comprehensive National Policy for the Home-based workers as a first step in our country while the C177 is being ratified.
3. ILO should conduct an action research study of Home-based work in five States on the impact of climate change on their trades.
4. We urge the ILO to develop a local Research & Development (R&D) centre for innovation to resolve issues like workspace design, occupational related health issues, lack of skills development and limited knowledge on latest market trends for home-based workers. We urge the State Governments to formulate policy for Home based workers.
5. Government should identify the trades of home-based workers and declare the minimum wages on piece rate as they are getting the wages on piece rate.
6. Under the E-Shram, the Government should initiate giving social security to home-based workers. It should cover basic social security schemes for – Old age pension; life and disability insurance; child care; maternity benefit; healthcare benefit; education for children and even housing subsidy, as home is their workspace. ILO should support this intervention with the Government. Later trade specific social security schemes should also be developed by the Government.

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7. While identifying the significant repercussions of climate change on home-based workers, it is important to devise mechanisms to reduce its adverse effect on these workers as well increase their resilience.
8. Government should link all HBWs with the ESI and it should start with 74 lakhs beedi workers because after repeal of the Beedi and Cigar Workers Welfare CESS Act, 1976, beedi workers are bereft from any social security schemes.
9. Government should include all home-based workers in relevant policies and guidelines in all the labour codes and regulations and ILO should engage itself in interventions at all levels for attaining the same.
10. The Government of India declared the National Policy on Occupational Safety, Health and Environment at Workplace on 9th February 2009. The Policy also aims at providing a statutory framework on Occupational Safety and Health in respect of all sectors. It is required that Home-based workers should also be included in this Policy. A study to understand the effects of their work on their health should be conducted and based on the report of the study, further preventive and curative steps/ measures must be taken. In addition, the Government should conduct a study on occupational health in 5 trades of home-based workers.
11. To ensure the inclusion of the home-based workers in all the present relevant schemes of the government.
12. A National minimum wage as the work keeps shifting either inter-State or intra-State depending on the least minimum wage in the given city or State.
13. We urge the ITUC-AP to take forward the Resolution No 2 passed in the 5th ITUC -Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Bangkok, Thailand on 20-22 November 2023.

J S Macwan
Jyoti Macwan
General Secretary, SEWA

Manali Shah
Manali Shah
National Secretary, SEWA

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