

International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



Build, Organise, Organise!





“ From our President

“The IDWF was launched in 2013 to be a home for all domestic workers. After our victory on 16 June 2011 when we won ILO Convention 189, we then realised the work that lay ahead of us. As our faithful friend Dan Gallin said to me, ‘Myrtle, you need to walk that road once again and build this new federation.’

Well we did, and today we are a home for migrant, urban and rural domestic workers.

We are so proud of who we are. We want the Governments of the world to know who we are, respect us and listen to us. So let us build, organise and organise.

A big thanks to all the Executive, the General Secretary, and the Regional Coordinators.

Yes, together we can, and we will.”

Myrtle Witbooi, President, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)

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CONTENTS	PAGE NUMBER
About the IDWF	2
Key achievements of 2015	4
A stronger federation	4
Better laws, policies, and practice	11
More awareness / more supporters	13
The next steps	15

“ From our General Secretary

“I am happy to present you our annual report of 2015. It was an exciting year for the IDWF: our membership reached over 500,000, and some 10,000 domestic workers’ organisers were trained. First-ever domestic workers’ unions were formed in Mexico, the Philippines and Ghana, and momentums reached in legal reforms in Tanzania, South Africa, India, Mexico, Argentina, Ireland, Bangladesh, and many others, plus a collective agreement was signed in Argentina.

Thanks to our affiliates – it is their passion and tireless effort that makes the IDWF a growing force everywhere.

In 2015, as we entered the second year since our formation, we did an affiliates survey to understand better how our affiliates stand on the ground, and what the IDWF is and means for them.

Also, we adopted a 5-Year Strategic Plan with concrete and specific outcomes to achieve by 2020 in the fields of federation building, organising migrant domestic workers, capacity-building of domestic workers, effective campaigns and research, and representation of domestic workers at all levels. We believe that achieving these goals will result in a stronger and more united global movement of domestic workers.

This report does not tell the full story of our affiliates and the IDWF at every level, everywhere. I hope, though, that it gives you the essence of what we achieved over the year.”

Elizabeth Tang, General Secretary, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)



About the IDWF

- **There are about 67.1 million domestic workers across the world**
- **80% of domestic workers are women**
- **11.5 million domestic workers are international migrants**

The International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) is a membership-based organisation of domestic workers led by women. It was founded in October 2013, at an inaugural Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay.

The key objective of the IDWF is to be a strong, democratic and united domestic workers' global organisation in order to protect and advance domestic workers' rights in every country.

By December 2015, the number of IDWF affiliates had grown to:

58 domestic workers' organisations, representing over 500,000 domestic workers in 46 countries:

19 countries in Africa, 9 in Asia-Pacific, 12 in Latin America and Caribbean, 5 in Europe, and 1 in North America.

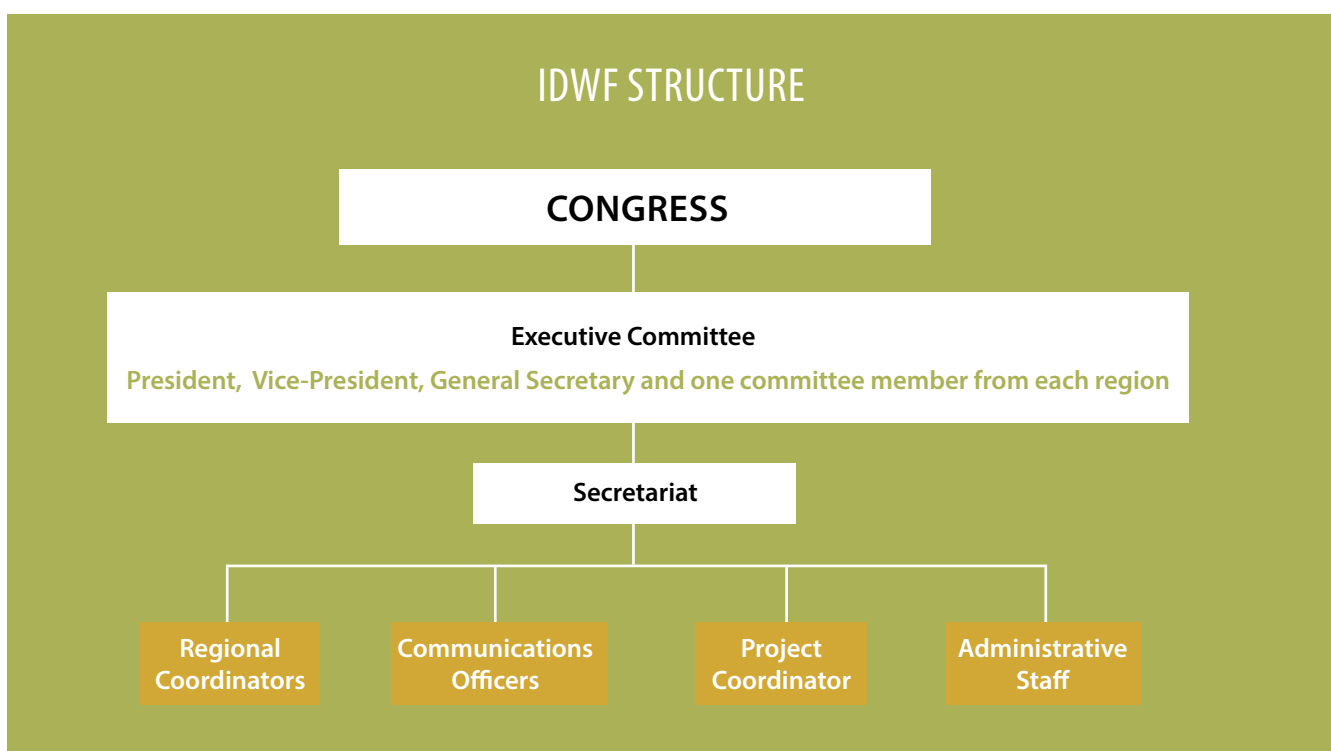
Most organisations that belong to the IDWF are trade unions, while others are associations and workers' cooperatives of domestic workers.

Thanks to our supporters

We are very grateful for financial support from a number of bodies. In 2015, this included the Olof Palme Centre (Sweden), Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW) and FNV Mondiaal (Netherlands), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) (Germany), and the International Labour Organisation (ILO Promote and ILO GAP-MDW).

We also very much appreciate our cooperation with other trade unions and workers' organisations including the IUF, ITUC, WIEGO, Global Labour Institute (GLI), Solidarity Center (US), ACV/CSC (Belgium), and Kommunal (Sweden), as well as other international bodies such as UN Women, Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery International, Human Rights Watch, and Migrant Forum Asia.

Without all their help, we would be able to do far, far less for the domestic workers of the world.





Awards and recognition

In 2015, we were proud to win several awards:

The European network of NGOs called SOLIDAR gave the IDWF its **Silver Rose Award** for our work in building a strong, democratic and united domestic workers' global organisation to protect and advance domestic workers' rights.

Our President Myrtle Witbooi received the **Global Fairness Award** from the Global Fairness Initiative, based in the USA

⇒ YouTube video of Myrtle receiving her award and making her speech can be seen at: <http://fairnessaward.org/fairness-award-honorees>



67.1 million
domestic
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Chile: On 9 March 2015, Ruth Olate and Luisa Cuevas from the Sindicato Trabajadoras de Casa Particular (Sintracap) received municipal recognition for their work and as women leaders.

Key achievements of 2015

A stronger federation

● Increasing our membership

More affiliates: During 2015, the IDWF gained three new affiliates, bringing the number to 58. The new ones were:

- **Namibian Domestic and Allied Workers Union (NDAWU), Namibia**
- **JalaPRT, Indonesia**
- **Gharelu Kaamgar Sangathan (GKS), India**

Meanwhile, more applications for IDWF membership were also being processed.

More workers represented: The number of domestic workers whom the IDWF represents globally grew over 2014-2015 from 325,218 to over **500,000**.

● Reaching out to more – with a focus on migrant domestic workers

Nearly one in five domestic workers in the world is a migrant. Globally, this means there are some 11.5 million migrant domestic workers, most of them women, and most with little or no social or legal protection. According to the ILO, the Arab States host the most, some 1.6 million of them, largely from Africa and Asia.

Raising awareness and supporting the organising of migrant domestic workers was a main focus for the IDWF in 2015. Much of what we did was in collaboration with the ILO's Programme on Migrant Domestic Workers and their Families (GAP-MDW), FES, ITUC and the Solidarity Centre. Together, we held and supported events to develop strategies, train organisers, and so on. The IDWF also went on missions to several countries important on this issue.



Lebanon: On 25 January 2015, over 200 migrant domestic workers from Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Nepal, Bangladesh and elsewhere attended the founding Congress of the Domestic Workers Union of Lebanon (DWUL). It was formed with the support of the union federation in Lebanon FENASOL, ILO, ITUC and IDWF.

Some 250,000 migrant domestic workers in Lebanon are unprotected by labour laws and many are subject to the Kafala sponsorship system which binds the worker to a single employer, allowing a lot of abuse. The Lebanese Minister of Labour called the new union “illegal”, but the union was undaunted.

Middle East and Gulf Countries: In September 2015, the IDWF Asia-Pacific Regional Coordinator Fish Ip Pui Yu, visited five countries – **Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon** and **Qatar** – to help build our strategy on migrant domestic workers there. For part of the trip, she was accompanied by IDWF Project Coordinator Reynaldo Rasing, and Ellene Sana of the Centre for Migrants Advocacy in the Philippines. As a result, we decided to prioritise three of them – Bahrain, Kuwait and Lebanon – and to focus on building more capacity among our affiliates in Africa as many women migrate from there.

Meanwhile, the IDWF kept in touch with two new migrant workers’ groups: one in **Jordan** formed with the support of Solidarity Center (US) and another that had organised itself in **Kuwait**.



Africa: As this region is the source of many domestic workers to the Middle East, over four days in October 2015, our Africa Regional Coordinator Vicky Kanyoka spent time in **Ethiopia**, giving technical support to Communita Volontari per Mondo which has organised domestic workers in a number of locations, as well as meeting with the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), the ILO, representatives of government and employers, and women who have returned from working in Saudi Arabia and are now supported by Women in Self-Employment (WISE).

She also had discussions with contacts and potential domestic workers’ associations in **Sudan, Somalia, Angola** and **Tunisia**.

Asia-Pacific: In late September 2015, the IDWF, ILO GAP-MDW and ITUC joined forces on a regional workshop on Organising Migrant Domestic Workers, held in Bangkok, Thailand.

Some 56 participants attended, three-quarters women, from 17 countries. They included some from outside the region to showcase good examples of organising strategies, both within countries and across borders.



North America: In October 2015, General Secretary Elizabeth Tang and Regional Coordinator Jill Shenker went to **Canada**, invited to speak at the Social Justice Week at Ryerson University in Toronto. There they also met with several domestic workers’ and caregivers’ organisations such as the Caregivers Action Centre, and the Canadian Labour Congress, amongst others, to strengthen our relationships there.

Latin America and Caribbean: In November 2015, the IDWF Regional Coordinator Marcelina Bautista went to **El Salvador**, to a meeting organised by the ILO to develop domestic workers’ organising there, and contacts were made with two new unions.



**11.5 million
domestic workers
are international
migrants**

● Unions working across borders

Increasingly, unions realise they have to fight for rights and recognition not only for domestic workers in their own countries but also for their nationals who work abroad. Over 2015, the IDWF was pleased to support several bi-national partnerships develop between unions in home and host countries.

- Bangladesh:** In August 2015, the IDWF collaborated with Anti-Slavery International to raise awareness in our affiliate, the National Domestic Women Workers Union (NDWWU), and the Domestic Workers Rights Network (DWRN) there on the issue of migrant Bangladeshi domestic workers abroad, particularly in **Lebanon**.
- Philippines:** The IDWF joined with the Migrant Forum Asia to found the 'Migrants Coordinating Group' in Western Visayas, a new initiative to connect Filipino migrants abroad with their families and communities at home. We also held discussions with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) about training to Filipino migrant domestic workers before departure and post-arrival in the destination countries, and more involvement by Filipino embassies in destination countries.
- Nepal:** The GEFONT union federation got involved with pre-departure and post-arrival training for Nepalese domestic workers in **Lebanon**.
- Tanzania:** Migrant domestic workers from there working in **Gulf countries** reported to the CHODAWU union about ill treatment by employment agencies. One agency based in Zanzibar was stopped from working as a result.
- India:** IDWF affiliates undertook a lot of public awareness-raising activities in an attempt to reach out to returnee and potential migrant domestic workers about safe migration. Meanwhile, in the State of Orissa the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) negotiated with the Government to issue SMART Cards to domestic workers who migrate to work in **Saudi Arabia** so as to keep records of them, potentially increasing their protection.
- USA:** The NDWA continued with its 'Beyond Survival' campaign which targets the trafficking of migrant domestic workers into the country. This included a new online tool: www.domesticworkers.org/beyondbeyondsurvival
- Thailand:** Some 140 domestic workers from **Burma** working in Thailand were organised within three months, with some strong new leaders identified.
- South Africa:** In 2013, SADSAWU set up a special task force for organising migrant domestic workers including developing specialised materials for outreach and training. By the end of 2015, they had recruited over 500 **Zimbabwean** workers into the union.
- Hong Kong / Philippines:** A team of leaders from the Progressive Labour Union of Domestic Workers (PLUDW), which organises migrant domestic workers from the Philippines in Hong Kong, were trained to do in-depth research. Their focus was on illegal and excessive fees charged by migrant employment agencies in their home country. They met on Sundays to debrief each other on the interviews they had carried out, and compile their results ready for action in 2016.

● More / better domestic workers' unions

Wherever possible, the IDWF helps new domestic workers' unions to form by providing training in recruitment strategies and other organising skills, as well as technical support such as in drafting Constitutions, forming organisational structures, and developing strategic plans.

Several new domestic workers' unions held their founding Congresses in 2015:

Namibia: Domestic and Allied Workers Union (NDAWU) successfully re-established itself and held its first Congress on 1 March 2015. The IDWF President and Africa Regional Coordinator attended, and the following day they facilitated a workshop with the new National Executive Committee to develop its strategic plan. Since then, with the support of the Olof Palme Centre, the IDWF has been working closely with the union to carry out a recruitment campaign for new members and training for its NEC.

Philippines: United Domestic Workers was founded in April, following IDWF training.

Mexico: After a series of workshops, SINACTRAHO (Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras del Hogar, National Domestic Workers Union) was founded in mid-September 2015 with over 100 members as a start. The IDWF General Secretary and North America Regional Coordinator were there to help them develop a plan of action to build the union.

Ghana: The Domestic Service Workers Union (DSWU) was founded in September. IDWF support included helping the leaders to draft a Constitution for the Union.



Zambia: Two IDWF affiliates merged to become a single union – the United House and Domestic Workers Union of Zambia (UHDWUZ) – with over 5500 members.



● More / better domestic worker leaders

In 2015, leadership training among IDWF affiliates was particularly strong in the following countries:

- **Latin America:** Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica
- **Asia:** India, Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh
- **Africa:** Tanzania, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Benin.

It was largely women leaders who attended these trainings, and their capacity increased immensely. They became much more assertive and confident in organising meetings and recruitment campaigns, as well as in raising the profile of domestic workers' issues among policy-makers and government officials.

Asia-Pacific: In July 2015, the IDWF facilitated a **South Asia** training of trainers workshop in **Sri Lanka** organised by the Solidarity Centre (US) for domestic workers' organisations from there, **India, Bangladesh and Nepal**. Meanwhile, the IDWF-ILO Asia-Pacific regional manual for trainers, which was already available in English, Chinese and Indonesian, was translated into Nepali, Tamil and Bengali. Four domestic workers' leaders in **Nepal** were provided with guidance and materials to conduct trainings, and a training workshop was held for domestic workers' organisers in **Bangladesh**.

Cambodia: A Domestic Workers' Network Planning and Leadership Training event took place over five days in December 2015. There, 58 participants were trained in such issues as trade union administration and gender awareness, and together they developed a new plan of action.

Brazil: In mid-May 2015, the IDWF and ITUC, supported by the FES, organised a 2-day workshop on labour rights for 32 domestic workers from across the country. One outcome was a petition to President Dilma Rousseff which succeeded in getting changes to labour laws that had discriminated against domestic workers on hours of work and dismissal.

Africa: The IDWF held a 2-day regional capacity-building workshop for English-speaking countries in December 2015, hosted by SADSAWU in South Africa and with the support of the Olof Palme Centre and the ACV/CSC union from Belgium. Some 50 domestic workers' leaders from 18 countries were trained in planning, social media, and trade union skills such as collective bargaining. The event also helped strengthen the Africa regional organisation of the IDWF.



Actions by IDWF affiliates: some examples

Mexico: Every fortnight from March to July 2015, IDWF affiliate CACEH (Centro de Apoyo y Capacitación para Empleadas del Hogar, Support and Capacity Building Centre for Domestic Workers) carried out capacity-building workshops for domestic workers' leaders. Altogether 280 domestic workers took part. Then, every second Sunday they held information sessions in parks, reaching some 3000 domestic workers. They also continued with a public awareness-raising campaign where activists wear green gloves with the slogan "*Ponte los guantes por los derechos de las trabajadoras del hogar*" (Put on the gloves for the rights of domestic workers) to get the Government to ratify C189.

USA: In February 2015, 34 women from 19 organisations graduated from the second year-long SOL (Strategy, Organizing, Leadership) programme of the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA):

⇒ www.soltransforminglives.org

In mid-2015, the NDWA also launched an on-line 'Domestic Worker Organizing Toolbox': organizing.domesticworkers.org

● Better collaboration between organisations

In some places, existing organisations decided to cooperate better in the fight for domestic workers' rights.

India: Coinciding with International Domestic Workers' Day (see page 14), the IDWF, ITUC and FES, held a two-day strategic meeting with several national trade union centres in the country about how to better organise domestic workers there and ensure India's ratification of C189. In some states, 'platforms' were formed for organisations to develop common strategies and plans.

Germany: Following a resolution passed at the DGB union federation Congress in May 2014, three unions involved in organising domestic workers – NGG, ver.di and IG Bau – started working together on the issue.

Europe: IDWF Europe Regional Coordinator Karin Pape and our European affiliates – FILCAMS (Italy), NGG (Germany), and SIT and UNIA (Switzerland) – continued working with the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) – the regional body of the IUF – on its 'Decent Work for Domestic Workers!' project.

In early 2015, they published a research report and booklet in several languages about the current situation for domestic workers across the continent and how the unions are responding. They also took part in a hearing on domestic workers organised by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament.

'Promote industrial relations in the domestic work sector in Europe' research report, and

'Domestic Workers in Europe: Getting Organised!' booklet, February 2015:

⇒ www.effat.org/en/node/13931



● IDWF Communications Network

A new IDWF Communications Network was launched in December 2014. The idea came out of the ILO Project 'PROMOTE: Decent Work for Domestic Workers to End Child Domestic Work'.

By the end of 2015, more than 10,000 people had subscribed to it.



⇒ **YouTube video about the IDWF Communications Network: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hxG3J7VOiA**

The IDWF also assisted domestic workers' organisers and other leaders in how to use computers, smartphone apps and so on to communicate and to run and publicise their own activities. Training and support took place in a number of countries including **Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, and Philippines**, as well as affiliates in **Africa** at their regional workshop in December 2015.



IDWF COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK HELPS RESCUE FROM ABUSE

In 2014, a 23 year-old domestic worker from **Kenya** called Iscah went to work in **Saudi Arabia**. Her employers there threatened her with gun and knife, imprisoned her, and made her work up to 20 hours a day without pay. Using her mobile phone to look for support, Iscah came across the IDWF Facebook page. There, she uploaded a video of herself, under a pseudonym. IDWF General Secretary Elizabeth Tang saw it and got in touch with her. She also alerted the ITUC which contacted its affiliate in Kenya, and the Kenyan and Saudi authorities. In November 2015, Iscah returned safely to Kenya, vowing to become an activist for workers' rights.

Better laws, policies, and practice

Law enforcement is still a main challenge in most countries. So, many domestic workers have yet to enjoy real gains from the international Convention C189 which was passed for their rights as workers in June 2011. However, step-by-step, changes for the better are now happening.

● ILO Convention 189 (C189) on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011

During 2015, the number of countries which ratified C189 grew from 17 to 22: the new ones were **Belgium, Chile, Dominican Republic, Panama** and **Portugal**.

Meanwhile, campaigns and lobbying for ratification were in full swing in such countries as **Benin, Cambodia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, and Tanzania**.

The IDWF continued to work closely with the ITUC in its 12 x 12 Campaign to win more ratifications. We held a strategic planning meeting with the ITUC in Brussels, Belgium, on 27-28 May to see how best to continue supporting affiliates in their approaches to governments, plus awareness-raising with the wider trade union movement to encourage their support.

● Reforms to national/state laws

In a number of countries, domestic workers were pleased to see changes in the law giving them better rights, at least on paper, which is a very important step forward.

- **Kenya and Chile:** Individual employers must now register new employment contracts with their domestic worker, which gives those workers access to social security.
- **Liberia:** A minimum wage for domestic workers was approved, at US\$90 per month.
- **Bangladesh:** A Domestic Workers Welfare and Protection Policy was finally adopted at the end of 2015.
- **USA:** Following on a breakthrough law in the State of Massachusetts in July 2014, new laws were also adopted in 2015 in Oregon and Connecticut, as well as legislation introduced or advanced in Illinois and Nevada. The NDWA was delighted when Oregon legislators indicated that protecting domestic workers was simply the right thing to do.

Proper implementation of the laws and regulations that do exist remains a challenge everywhere.



DOMESTIC WORKERS UNITE
A GUIDE FOR BUILDING COLLECTIVE POWER TO ACHIEVE RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

For more detail on activities and achievements around the world in 2015, see:

'Domestic Workers Unite: A guide for building collective power to achieve rights and protections for Domestic Workers', ITUC/IDWF/ILO-GAP, May 2016:

⇒ www.idwfed.org/en/resources/domestic-workers-unite-a-guide-for-building-collective-power-to-achieve-rights-and-protections-for-domestic-workers

● A new international standard

At a global level, a team from the IDWF joined the delegation from WIEGO, including also the international organisation for street vendors StreetNet, in Geneva in June 2015 at the 104th annual International Labour Conference (ILC) of the ILO. The main discussion we participated in was on transitioning from the informal to formal economy, which is of course important for the recognition and rights of domestic workers.

The ILC adopted Recommendation No. 204 (2015) on the subject. This gives guidance to governments on how to bring more workers out of the informal and into the formal economy. Domestic workers are specifically mentioned as among the most vulnerable.

Steps that it advises governments to take include giving more workers access to social security, making sure occupational health and safety standards apply, and providing more opportunities for skills training and support for small enterprises. They should also enable such workers to organise themselves, for example in trade unions – and that includes domestic workers.

⇒ **ILO Recommendation No.204, 2015, on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy: www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:3243110**

Actions by IDWF affiliates: some examples

Argentina: In September 2015, seven unions representing domestic workers reached an historic collective agreement with employers' associations, at negotiations hosted by the Ministry of Employment. Amongst their gains was a pay rise of 28% and it applies to five official categories of domestic workers, including childminders, non-medical carers, housekeepers and caretakers.

USA: As part of the very successful campaign 'Caring Across Generations' to support homecare workers, NDWA Director Aijen Poo spoke at a White House National Conference on Aging in July 2015. She also published a book 'The Age of Dignity: Preparing for the Elder Boom in a Changing America'. www.caringacross.org

Sri Lanka: In mid-2015, a Supreme Court Judge Sarath de Abrew was accused of raping a domestic worker in his home. The Domestic Workers Union held a lot of public protests, winning much media attention. The IDWF supported with an online petition demanding his firing and prosecution. He was later indicted, with the trial set for May 2016. It proved to be a strong opportunity for public education in the country on the rights of domestic workers.

South Africa: SADSAWU won housing for a number of its members who had been live-in workers.





More awareness / more supporters

‘My Fair Home’

This campaign was launched on 25 September 2015, at the IDWF-ITUC-ILO GAP-MDW regional workshop in Thailand (see page 5). It is aimed at getting the support of employers for domestic workers’ legal protection, particularly ratification of C189.

In **Mexico**, a new employers’ association called ‘Hogar Justo Hogar’ (Home Fair Home), formed in January 2015 by women’s rights activists, journalists, artists and others, immediately signed up to the campaign. Over the following months, they joined forces with the domestic workers’ union CACEH, the Red de Mujeres Sindicalista (Network of Union Women), and the UNT union federation to engage in dialogue with the Government about ratifying C189.

⇒ A video of Hester Stephens from SADSAWU in **South Africa** explaining how she got her employer to sign the ‘My Fair Home’ pledge is at: <http://idwfed.org/en/activities/official-launch-of-my-fair-home-campaign>

Several high profile government officials elsewhere, including the **Indonesian** Minister for Manpower and Transmigration, Hanif Dhakiri, and the Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment of **Bangladesh**, Mikail Shipur, also announced their support.

Domestic workers’ organisations – including in **Belgium, Hong Kong, Mexico, Nepal, South Africa, Tanzania** and **Thailand** – began using it as an awareness-raising and organising tool. The campaign will be re-launched at the International Domestic Workers’ Day on 16 June 2016, especially to expand our outreach to employers.

“By encouraging individual employers to personally commit to better working and living conditions for domestic workers, we can create ground-up support for national ratification of ILO Convention No. 189.”

Elizabeth Tang, General Secretary, IDWF

Peru: Every Tuesday morning at 09:00, two IDWF affiliates, CCTH and IPROFOTH, air a radio programme where domestic workers discuss their situation and rights. As well as awareness-raising among domestic workers, employers and the public, this also adds pressure on the Government. In July 2015 the Minister of Labour finally agreed to meet domestic workers’ leaders.



International Days of Action

As in other years, IDWF affiliates across the world used annual days in 2015 to raise the profile of their demands, such as:

- **8 March: International Women’s Day:** Domestic workers in many countries, including **Bangladesh** and **Sri Lanka**, held demonstrations, street theatre and other public activities to highlight their situation as women and as workers.
- **30 March: Domestic Workers’ Day in Latin America:** Many IDWF affiliates across the region carried out public awareness-raising activities, held discussion forums, and so on.
- **16 June: International Domestic Workers’ Day:** In countries as far apart as **Cambodia, Chile, Dominican Republic, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Senegal, South Africa, UK, USA** and more, domestic workers and unions celebrated the anniversary of winning C189. They held public activities with rallies and petitions to keep up the pressure on governments to ratify C189 and adopt labour reforms, and they asked employers to sign up to the ‘My Fair Home’ campaign (see page 13). The IDWF logo was visible in many of their activities.
- **1 May: International Workers’ Day:** In many countries, such as **Sri Lanka**, domestic workers’ organisations joined forces with others of the trade union movement to express their solidarity.
- **10 December: International Human Rights Day:** Domestic workers from the ATH/CNUS in the **Dominican Republic** gathered in front of their Ministry of Labour to demand employers pay wages as they should. Elena Perez, who is also on the IDWF Executive Committee, urged the Government to implement ILO C189 properly, which the country ratified in May 2015. *“Because the labour rights of domestic workers are also human rights”*, she emphasised. In **Cambodia**, domestic workers and supporters marched to their Ministry of Justice with their demands for decent work.



The next steps

● IDWF's 5-Year Strategic Plan for 2016-2020

In February 2015, the IDWF held a 4-day strategic planning workshop in Hong Kong, where we were joined by several organisations which give us a lot of support: the IUF, WIEGO, Solidarity Centre (US), and Kommunal and Olof Palme Centre (Sweden). Out of our discussions came a Five-Year Strategic Plan for the IDWF for 2016-2020.

Overall Objectives:

By 2020, a strong, democratic and united domestic workers' global organisation will be contributing to the protection and advancement of the rights of its members and domestic workers everywhere.

The five goals to be achieved by 2020:

1

Federation Development: The IDWF will increase its membership to at least 670,000 in 80 affiliates in 60 countries. 60% of them pay membership fees regularly. Affiliates are engaging with the work of the IDWF through effective internal communication and regular joint activities. A well-functioning staff team and a global database support the affiliates in organising and advocacy.

3

Strengthening Capacity Building: 950 domestic worker leaders will have the necessary capacities to deliver training programmes to 20,000 domestic workers, thereby strengthening the capacity of their organisations and members, and we will support the formation of new organisations and their leaderships where there is a need.

5

Representation of Domestic Workers: IDWF affiliates will have the needs of their membership represented at an international level through increasing representation in global trade union organisations, and strategic partnerships with civil society organisations. Nationally, domestic workers will take leadership positions in the national trade unions in at least 20 countries.

2

Migrant Domestic Workers Organising: Some 200,000 migrant domestic workers will be part of the IDWF membership. Affiliates in at least 25 countries will implement advocacy and organising plans to increase the leadership roles of migrant domestic workers in their organisations and improve their rights and working conditions.

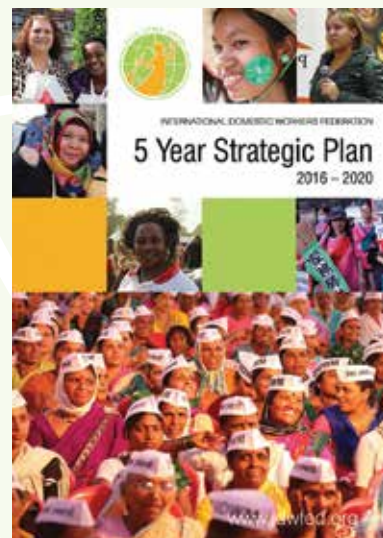
4

Effective Campaign and Research: The IDWF will have the resources necessary to conduct campaigns and/or research on the following themes:

- Ratification and implementation of C189
- Gender-based violence and discrimination of domestic workers
- Migration and forced labour
- Home care work
- Child domestic work



For more detail about the IDWF Five-Year Strategic Plan, see our booklet about it, at: www.idwfed.org/en/resources/idwf-5-year-strategic-plan-2016-2020/@@display-file/attachment_1



● Survey of IDWF affiliates



Over July–October 2015, the IDWF conducted a survey of our affiliates. 47 affiliates responded, and this gave us much more information about their strengths and needs, helping us to evaluate IDWF activities and strategic plans (see page 15).

Some things we learnt about our affiliates' memberships:

Most affiliates have monthly meetings with their members.

Over 17,500 domestic workers had taken part in some kind of training over the previous year.

26 affiliates reported organising migrant domestic workers; 23 have them in leadership roles, and 14 have campaigns or activities highlighting their situation.

38 affiliates charge an initial membership fee, regular dues, or both. Nearly 85% collect membership dues monthly rather than annually. Nearly 80% of members are up-to-date on their dues.

Most affiliates (32) said they had done a joint activity with other unions or a national trade union centre in the previous 12 months.

Most do not get enough resources from membership dues to carry out the activities that they would like to. This means that it is a challenge for most to have long-term strategies and plans and they can only grow slowly.

We also asked about their relationships with trade unions:

23 affiliates belong to a national union federation in their country. But only 7 of those national union federations have domestic workers in leadership positions. On the other hand, 24 affiliates said they are part of a multi-sector union, where at least one domestic worker is in an elected leadership position.

Very importantly, we wanted to understand better how they see the value of being an IDWF member, how useful our activities are and how we might improve them. We learnt, for example, that:

In the preceding 12 months, 34 affiliates had taken part in an IDWF regional or international forum or workshop.

Most affiliates have used the IDWF website and find it most useful for getting information about the IDWF and other affiliates, and up-to-date news.

73% of affiliates feel that communication between them and the IDWF is good enough or great, while the rest feel it needs improvement.



The IDWF Team

President: Myrtle Witbooi, South African Domestic and Allied Workers Union, South Africa
Vice-President: Ernestina Ochoa, IPROFOTH, Peru
General Secretary: Elizabeth Tang (elizabeth.tang@idwfed.org)

IDWF Executive Committee:

Titular members:

Wendy Galarza, FILCAMS, Italy
Shirley Pryce, Jamaica Household Workers Association, Jamaica
Juanita Flores, National Domestic Workers Alliance, USA
Phobsuk Gasing, Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions, Hong Kong

Alternate members:

Asmaou Bah, SYNEM, Guinea
Elena Perez, Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar, Dominican Republic
Grace Papa, ACV-CSC Service Union, Belgium
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The IDWF is also affiliated to two other global organisations:

International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF): www.iuf.org

Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO): wiego.org





International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)

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The International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) is a membership-based organisation of domestic workers led by women.

The key objective of the IDWF is to be a strong, democratic and united domestic workers' global organisation in order to protect and advance domestic workers' rights in every country.

