

AFRICA DOMESTIC WORKERS' NETWORK (AfDWN)
RESEAU AFRICANA DES EMPLOYEES DE MAISON (RADEM)
REDE AFRICANA DE TRABALHADORES DOMESTICOS (RATDO)

GUIDELINE FOR BUILDING THE AFRICA DOMESTIC WORKERS' NETWORK.

Adopted at the Africa Regional Domestic Workers' Conference,

16 June 2013

"Reality must be seen by the domestic workers"

Myrtle Witbooi, IDWN Chairperson, 2012 in CPT

The Africa Domestic Workers' Network (AfDWN) was launched on the 16th June 2013, in Cape Town South Africa in commemoration of the historic victory of domestic workers at the ILO in June 2011 when the Domestic Workers' Convention, C189, was adopted.

The AfDWN is a network of membership-based domestic workers organizations from across Africa. The network will focus on major issues of importance to domestic workers in Africa, and which can give significant results.

The idea of an African network was first discussed in a workshop organized by the International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN) in Nairobi in 2009, and supported by a growing number of domestic workers' organizations in 2010, 2011 and 2012. AfDWN is part of the IDWN. However, at this stage, the AfDWN is not a formal sub-structure of the IDWN, with constitutional rights,

but is a vehicle to enhance and deepen the participation and voice of African domestic workers in the international movement of domestic workers. It will be up to the international organization, which will be launched in October 2013, to determine its position on regional networks.

This document will guide the AfDWN in its operations for the next two years, or until the new International Domestic Workers Network adopts a position on regional networks.

1. Goal and Objectives of the Domestic Workers Network in Africa

1.1. Goal of the Network

A Strong, Independent, Sustainable and Vibrant Domestic Workers Network.

1.2. Objectives

- Strengthen coordination and solidarity amongst domestic workers organizations in Africa
- Share information and good practice in the Region.
- Help build the capacity of domestic workers' organizations in Africa
- Facilitate access to political and trade union bodies in the Region to highlight and lobby for domestic workers issues
- Use the collective power of domestic workers in Africa to achieve ratification of C189 and improved legislation for domestic workers
- Strengthen participation of domestic workers organizations in Africa in the IDWN

2. Membership

2.1. Eligibility

- Membership of the Network is open to all trade unions of domestic workers, and trade unions where domestic workers form one of the sectors within a Union, in Africa
- Democratic domestic workers' organizations that are not trade unions may also become members of the Network.
- NGOs providing technical and other support for domestic workers may have observer status as approved by the Interim Steering Committee

2.2. Joining the Network

- Those wishing to join the Network will complete a form giving details of their organization as required and send to the Regional Coordinator
- The Steering Committee will approve membership based on the criteria for membership in 2.1. above.

3. Structures and Governance

3.1. Status

To allow for the Network to develop, interim arrangements will be put in place and will be reviewed by no later than June 2015 at a meeting where representatives of 50% or more Network members participate.

As it is expensive to hold meetings and funds are limited, meetings shall mean either physical or electronic meetings. However every two years there shall be a physical meeting.

3.2. Interim Steering Committee

3.2.1. An Interim Steering Committee (ISC) shall be established, based on language diversity and trade union sub-regions

3.2.2. The Steering Committee (ISC) will consist of the following persons:

- 3 representatives from French Speaking West African countries
- 3 representatives from English Speaking West and East African countries
- 3 representatives from English and Portuguese speaking Southern African countries
- Regional Coordinator of the IDWN ex-officio

3.2.3. The members of the ISC will be appointed at the Launching Conference, June, 2013, by delegates from their respective regions. Each designated region will choose 3 ISC representatives.

3.2.4. At its first meeting the ISC will choose its office bearers: Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson

3.3. Meetings

3.3.1. The ISC will meet, in person or by teleconference, twice a year, or more if necessary and agreed by a majority. The Regional Coordinator will convene the meetings.

3.3.2. The ISC will communicate regularly electronically and by other means

3.3.3. A Regional meeting with representatives of a majority of members should be held once every two years.

3.3.4. Minutes of all meeting shall be circulated to member organizations

4. Network Activities

4.1. Activities

In order to meet its objectives the Network will engage in the following activities:

- Collect data and share information from members and with the IDWN
- Coordinate solidarity action across the region
- Organize and coordinate regional campaigns such as campaign for ratification of C189
- Raise awareness and advocate for domestic workers rights in regional and/or sub-regional governmental and other forums
- Organize and recruit domestic workers' organizations
- Facilitate capacity building amongst member organizations
- Build alliances with other partners

4.2. Methods

- Collaborate with ITUC and IUF regional and sub regional organizations
- Support implementation of the IDWN activities in the region
- Regular communication via e-mail and other electronic methods
- Use IDWN web site and social media to post information (www.idwn.info)

- Exchange visits and capacity building workshops

5. Rights and Responsibilities of Members

5.1. Members' Responsibilities

Members shall to the best of their ability:

- Implement the decisions of the Network
- Participate in meetings and activities of the Network
- Provide support and solidarity to Network members in their struggles
- Regularly provide information on their activities so that this can be shared
- Provide the Regional Coordinator with information annually on membership and leadership, successes and challenges, and any changes to structures or operations
- Help develop a spirit and practice of solidarity and self-sufficiency through contributing resources such as skills, materials, money for regional or sub-regional activities
- Expand alliances with other partners
- Members shall pay an annual membership fee of 10 USD

5.2. Members' Rights

- To receive regular information about the Network and its members
- To participate fully in activities of the Network on the basis of agreed representation, and with regard to scarce resources
- To have their views heard and respected, even if not agreed to, within the Network

- To provide and receive mutual solidarity to help member organizations when needed

6. Responsibilities of Interim Steering Committee and Office Bearers

6.1. Interim Steering Committee

- Gather ideas from, and consult with, domestic workers organizations in the sub regions, and ensure they are kept informed of decisions and developments
- Develop AfDWN strategies and plans and ensure that they are implemented
- Ensure two –way communication with IDWN
- Support affiliates in implementing IDWN decisions and programmes
- Help build and strengthen DW organizations and assist them with their problems where possible
- Promote and represent AfDWN in regional and sub-regional forums and activities
- Ensure regular meetings of the ISC
- Approve new members of the Network
- Replace inactive ISC members if and when necessary
- Ensure financial accountability

6.2. Office Bearers

6.2.1. The Chairperson

All responsibilities of the Chair will apply to the Vice-Chair

She will:

- Assist the Regional Coordinator with correspondence, external requests, urgent issues
- Develop meeting agendas
- Chair meetings of the ISC, and other regional meetings
- Represent the AfDWN as required
- Ensure decisions of the ISC are carried out and the programme is implemented

6.2.2. The Regional Coordinator

She will:

- Ensure that all the decisions of the AfDWN/ISC are implemented
- Be responsible for the coordination and management of the AfDWN, including financial management
- Link and provide information from IDWN and other networks to the AfDWN and from AfDWN to the IDWN

Note: the Regional Coordinator is employed by IDWN through IUF