



**MAPPING OF THE PAST, CURRENT AND
FUTURE WORK OF THE REGIONAL
HOMENETS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES
RELATING TO HOMES DOUBLING UP AS
WORKPLACES**



AUGUST 22, 2021
FIROZA MEHROTRA

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| SECTION I- Background: | 3 |
| SECTION II – Introduction and Framework: | 4 |
| SECTION III - The reality of homes across regions: | 7 |
| 1. <i>Africa.</i> | 7 |
| 2. <i>Eastern Europe and Central Asia:</i> | 8 |
| 3. <i>Latin America:</i> | 9 |
| 4. <i>South Asia:</i> | 10 |
| 5. <i>South East Asia:</i> | 12 |
| SECTION IV - What has been done. | 15 |
| 1. <i>Africa</i> | 15 |
| 2. <i>Eastern Europe & Central Asia</i> | 15 |
| 3. <i>Latin America</i> | 16 |
| 4. <i>South Asia</i> | 16 |
| 5. <i>South East Asia</i> | 19 |
| SECTION V - What is being done and planned for the future | 22 |
| 1. <i>Africa</i> | 22 |
| 2. <i>Eastern Europe & Central Asia</i> | 23 |
| 3. <i>Latin America</i> | 24 |
| 4. <i>South Asia</i> | 25 |
| 5. <i>South East Asia</i> | 28 |
| SECTION V - Recommendations for WIEGO: | 31 |
| i) <i>Sharing and Learning among the HomeNets:</i> | 31 |
| a) <i>Events:</i> | 31 |
| b) <i>Exposure visits</i> | 31 |
| ii) <i>Awareness Building among policy makers:</i> | 32 |
| a) <i>Policy Dialogues:</i> | 32 |
| b) <i>Exposure Dialogue Programmes (EDP):</i> | 32 |
| c) <i>Documentation of Good Practices and development of Case Studies:</i> | 32 |
| iii) <i>Capacity Building:</i> | 32 |
| a) <i>Development of Tool kits and training:</i> | 32 |
| b) <i>Development of Strategies and Action Plans:</i> | 32 |
| c) <i>Campaigns:</i> | 32 |
| <i>Suggested Cross-Cutting Topics:</i> | 33 |
| iv) <i>Suggested Topics for WIEGO Research:</i> | 33 |
| b) <i>Climate stressors:</i> | 33 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>c) Disaster preparedness:</i> | 34 |
| <i>d) Occupational safety and Health:</i> | 34 |
| <i>e) Green energy:</i> | 34 |
| <i>f) Home Stays:</i> | 34 |
| <i>For Africa:</i> | 34 |
| <i>For South Asia and South East Asia:</i> | 35 |
| Annex 1: Region-wise persons interviewed | 36 |
| Annex 2: Format for collecting information | 37 |
| References | 40 |

MAPPING THE PAST, CURRENT AND FUTURE WORK OF REGIONAL HOMENETS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES RELATING TO HOMES DOUBLING UP AS WORKPLACES

May 2021
Firoza Mehrotra

SECTION I- Background:

Under WIEGO's Stocktaking and Strategy Development Home=Workplace Project of their Urban Policies Program, a mapping of the past, current and future work of the regional HomeNets to address challenges relating to homes doubling up as workplaces has been commissioned.

The goals of the Home=Workplace project under WIEGO's Urban Policies Program are to produce technical and advocacy tools for organizations/networks of home-based workers related to home-as-workplace issues; to advance conceptual thinking/framing on the topics around housing, zoning, tenure, basic infrastructure services to inform future strategy on home=workplace activities; and to facilitate engagement with architects/urban designers/planners who are working on this topic.

As part of this project, I have been commissioned to do a "mapping" through phone/app interviews with the heads of the various HomeNets on a) the past, current and planned work of regional HomeNets on the physical and regulatory challenges associated with homes which double up as workplaces b) their technical, advocacy or other needs in this regard; and c) what support WIEGO might provide.

Geographic Scope – This mapping includes all the existing and future regional HomeNets, in the five regions of Africa, Eastern Europe & Central Asia, Latin America, South Asia and South East Asia, represented by the Africa Platform, HomeNet Eastern Europe & Central Asia, Conatrado ALAC, HomeNet South Asia and HomeNet South East Asia respectively.

Sector Scope – Although many kinds of informal workers who mainly work outside their homes, like street vendors and waste pickers, use their homes as work spaces or storage spaces, this mapping is limited to home-based workers (HBWs).

Methodology – The methodology used was a combination of zoom/phone interviews with the various HomeNets and other key informants as given in Annex 1, as well as desk review of reports and papers, using the framework described below.

Limitations – Since I talked to and interacted with the regional coordinators of the HomeNets, who were not fully aware of all the activities of all their members, the information presented here is incomplete to that extent. Language was also a barrier at times. I have tried to make this more complete by separately contacting some of the members, within the constraints of my time, but it is still not an exhaustive portrayal of what has been done or what they are doing or propose to do in future.

SECTION II – Introduction and Framework:

Across the globe, there are 260 million home-based workers who produce goods or provide services from in or around their homes. Of these, 86% live in developing and emerging countries and 14% in developed countries. Almost two-thirds (65%) of the world's home-based workers are in Asia and the Pacific. While about 15% of home-based workers live in Africa, 6% are in Latin America and the Caribbean. Around 56% of the world's home-based workers live and work in rural areas and 44% in urban areas. Fifty seven percent of home-based workers are women, who need to balance their income-earning activities with their care responsibilities and household responsibilities.¹

Compared to other informal workers, home-based workers, tend to be the most invisible, least organised and also one of the more marginalised and vulnerable group of workers because they work in their own homes, or in small workshops near their homes and not in public places. Home-based workers could be self-employed own account workers or sub-contracted (piece-rate) workers. Both kinds of home-based workers have their own set of issues and challenges. In many parts of the world, the patriarchal gender- stereotyped reproductive and care roles society expects of women, leave women with very little option, but to work from home which makes home-based workers isolated, difficult to organise and deprived of information regarding opportunities, technology and markets. All this results in HBW's low earnings and exploitation by contractors and middlemen.

In most regions, home-based workers are not recognised as 'workers' and hence do not get rights accorded to other recognised workers. Very often they themselves do not consider themselves as workers.

Across the regions, poor home-based workers are mainly concerned with problems of insufficient or irregular work, very low earnings, and other challenges that prevent them from attaining economic stability. It has been observed that housing and its environment are not very high priorities in the eyes of home-based workers, in spite of the fact that in order to make homes which are also their workplaces more productive, it is essential to make homes more comfortable, affordable, healthier and safer if home-based workers are to sustain their livelihoods.

The framework: The framework² being used for this mapping is presented below. The three pillars that are essential to make homes more comfortable, safer, healthier and more productive work places are (A) Improving physical spaces (B) Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience and (C) Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus. It is important to distinguish between plans and policies that address the home-as-workplace issues and those that address other issues that HBWs face and this has been attempted. Each of these pillars has a number of building blocks as described below. It is clarified that this framework has been developed as it is felt that these are the most ideal pillars and building blocks required for making homes more comfortable, safer, healthier and more productive workplaces. This does not necessarily mean

¹ Source: WIEGO Statistical Brief No.27 (January 2021) drawn from the ILOSTAT Database of 118 countries that have a place of work question in their survey. The data are from the years 2000 to 2019.

² Framework inspired draft of 'Making home-based work environments safer, healthier and productive - Experiences and Insights from MHT's work' supported by WIEGO, by City Collab (2021)

that all the building blocks are being addressed by all the regional HomeNets. The framework has been used while collecting information from regional coordinators and other key informants and presenting the findings. The format in Annex 2 was canvassed to obtain the information. While writing the report, I have tried to present the information under these three pillars, without further breaking it up into the building blocks, for lack of information. It will be noticed that for some regions, even some pillars are missing; this is because there is nothing to report under them.

Pillar A. Improving physical spaces

- i. Location, size and quality of homes, efficient layout & design to maximise living and working spaces
- ii. Access to affordable regular & safe water and sanitation
- iii. Security of tenure and zoning
- iv. Better occupational safety & health and prevention of violence

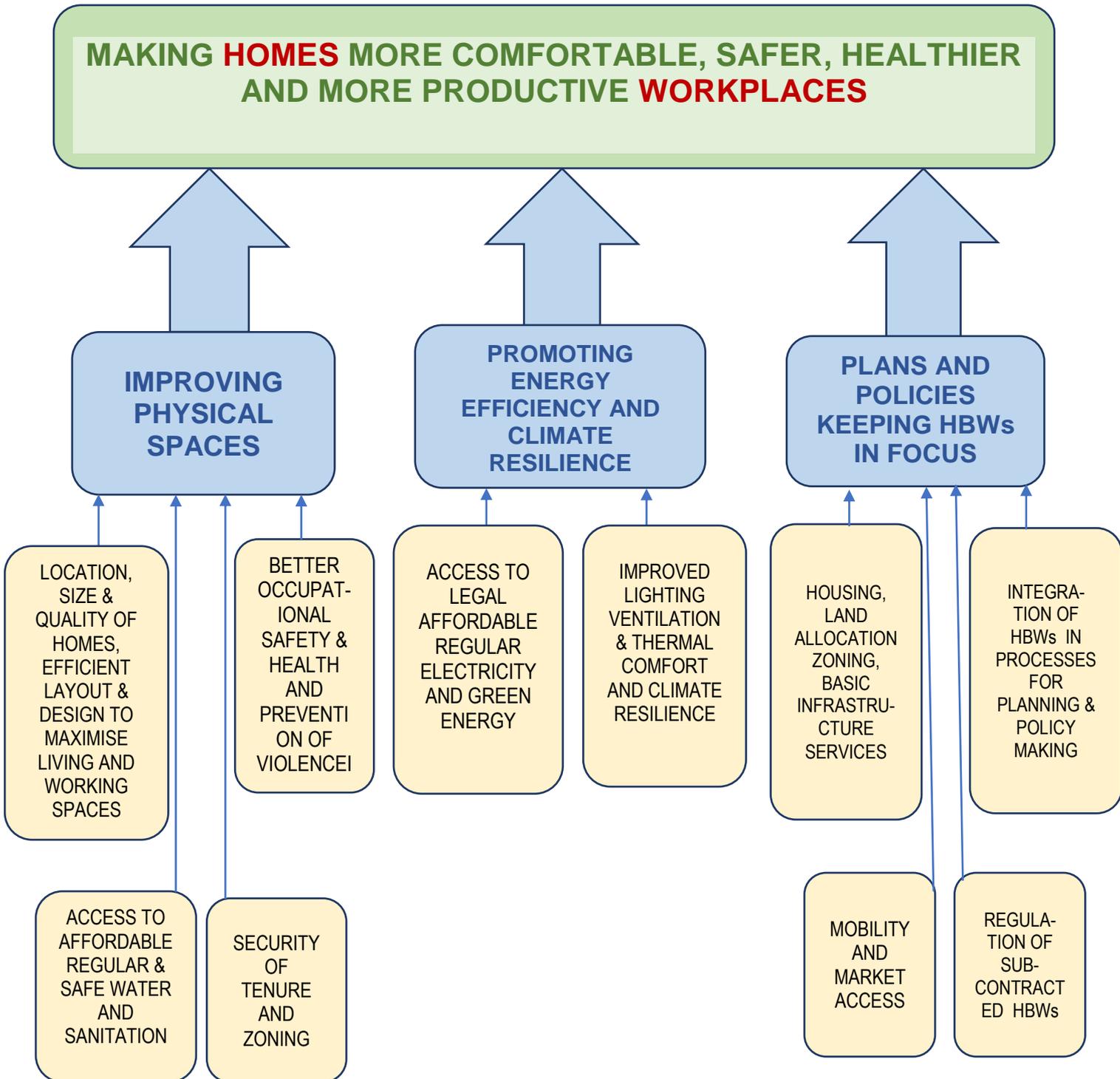
Pillar B. Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i. Access to legal, affordable, regular electricity and green energy
- ii. Improved lighting ventilation & thermal comfort and climate resilience

Pillar C. Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i. Home=Workplace: Plans and policies regarding housing, land allocation, zoning and basic infrastructure services
- ii. Planning and policy-making process: integration of HBW representatives
- iii. Mobility and market access
- iv. Regulation of sub-contracted home-based work

FRAMEWORK FOR MAKING HOMES MORE COMFORTABLE, SAFER, HEALTHIER AND MORE PRODUCTIVE WORK PLACES



SECTION III - The reality of homes across regions:

This section has been included in the report in order to set the context, as without this, one may not appreciate what has been done or not done and what is being done and planned for the future. Region-wise, an attempt has been made to describe in brief the condition of housing in all the aspects covered in the framework, as recounted by the regional coordinators and other key informants and as sourced from selected documents.

1. **Africa.** Presently the Africa Platform is active in 5 countries - Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Their aim is to evolve into a regional network.

Though there are differences in the size and quality of homes of home-based workers in Africa³, by and large they work from semi-permanent houses, or under a tree or on verandas and often in temporary sheds just outside their homes where they often work in groups. The ones that are better organised, have small common workshops from where they work. In urban areas, some better off home-based workers have a separate room for their work, especially those making jewellery. Most homes are located in informal settlements and are small, cramped, badly ventilated and poorly lit.

The impact of the above, is that both raw materials and finished products of the workers are always competing for safe and clean space within the home. This often results in the workers not being able to take larger orders or buy raw materials in bulk at lower rates. Besides, soiled finished products, result in deduction of rates and reduced profitability. Another fall out, is the effect on the health of the home-based workers – bad lighting resulting in damage to eyesight and poor ventilation resulting in breathing disorders amongst others, especially when workers produce wood, bone and horn products.

Civic amenities are also a cause for concern for most home-based workers. Most workers may technically have access to electricity in their homes, but the supply in rural areas is very erratic and could even be absent for a whole week. In Kenya, electricity is supplied by a monopoly joint venture outfit, making it quite unresponsive and difficult to reform. In urban areas however, there is not much problem in the supply but electricity charges are high making it expensive and unaffordable for home-based workers.

Water is a problem for most home-based workers in urban areas, where buying water is the norm. In rural areas, especially in dry areas, collection of water during the dry season is cumbersome and time consuming often cutting into the home-based workers productive time by as much as three hours a day. Sanitation is also a challenge especially in urban informal settlements where one has to pay to use public facilities. Garbage collection, once again is a paid private facility and sometimes to avoid paying; garbage is littered in public spaces, resulting in unhealthy and unclean surroundings.

In rural areas most home-based workers own their own homes but in urban areas they are either rented from government or private individuals or they just squat on lands that belong to others. The latter means that there are often eviction drives, either with or without rehabilitation alternatives. Home-based workers like the others are never consulted and have no say regarding relocation. This is not too severe a problem as yet but could become a really big issue as cities grow and expand.

³ Wherever Africa is used, it means only the five countries in Africa where the Africa Platform is working.

Urban areas in Africa do have zoning plans, where cities have distinct areas earmarked for various kinds of use, like residential, educational industrial, mixed use etc. However, these zoning plans are seldom implemented on the ground, except in some upmarket areas where residents make the first move. Zoning in most cases, forces home-based workers to the periphery - to areas that they can afford but where basic civic amenities and markets are not easily accessible. The target market for HBWs happens to be the populace in the upmarket areas thereby distance between them is very disadvantageous for home-based workers, as they lose those markets.

Most parts in East Africa are either subjected to heavy flooding in the monsoon season or severe heat and drought at other times. These natural phenomena adversely affect home-based workers – with regard to the safety of their raw materials as well as finished goods. Floods are known to often destroy both homes and livelihoods.

2. Eastern Europe and Central Asia: HomeNet Eastern Europe and Central Asia includes Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

Eastern Europe: Homes of home-based workers in Eastern Europe are relatively much bigger and better than elsewhere in the regions under study. Most home-based workers work in their kitchens, which is a place of much activity as children and the elderly also share this space. The space for work can therefore get cramped but it is not as much of a problem compared to the situation in the other regions. All the same, this creates challenges of keeping their raw materials and finished goods safe and clean. The impacts are the same as mentioned for Africa, causing their productivity and earnings to take a hit.

As a legacy of the communist era, most home-based workers own their homes, which are strong and sturdy; so they do not face issues arising out of bad construction or tenure or relocation.

Access and availability of civic amenities like water, sanitation and electricity are not really a problem; though they are very costly and so increase the cost of production of HBW's goods and services.

The cost of electric or gas heating is very high and so they tend to use wood for heating. This as we know, has many adverse effects on their health. In addition, other occupational health and safety concerns highlighted by the Regional Coordinator were the unsafe and unhygienic work environment of some HBWs involved in leather, crafts and jewelry making.

Central Asia is however different. Most home-based workers here live in remote areas and their entire home is usually just one room which doubles up as living quarters as well as a work space. Their homes, especially those in the mountains are poorly constructed, badly ventilated and poorly lit. Though HBWs have access to toilets, they are outside the living quarters. The other challenges faced by HBWs in Central Asia with regard to cramped spaces and wood heating are the same as for Eastern Europe.

In many small towns and cities of Central Asia ethnic minority home-based workers live in informal settlements and face problems of water collection and electricity. If and when these areas are taken up for eviction and re-development, the occupants just pack up and move to another area or even another country as borders are porous. In Turkey, the local government has

been able to provide alternative spaces and home-based workers are fairly satisfied with that arrangement.

Other environmental challenges faced by workers in this region are the threat of earthquakes, especially in Turkey. Flooding is also a cause for concern. Insurance of homes is a far cry for these home-based workers who suffer these vagaries of nature stoically.

Zoning is really not a problem in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as reported by the Regional Coordinator, as home-based workers can work in all places as long as they do not cause any air or noise pollution.

Home-based workers in rural areas often pool their resources and a couple of them go to the larger markets to buy raw materials in bulk, but costly transport is the problem.

Some estimates show that 80% of the men in Central Asia work abroad, leaving the women to manage the households. Under such circumstances, home-based work often becomes the only and most suitable occupation for women to earn a livelihood.

3. Latin America: Cotrado ALAC which is the network presently coordinating home-based workers in Latin America includes 4 countries at present - Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua and Peru.

As in other regions, the kind and condition of homes of home-based workers and their physical environment differs both from country to country and even within a country from rural to urban and from more up market locations to informal settlements. So while a few homes may be large and have separate rooms or sheds for working; by and large, the homes of home-based workers are quite small and congested and located in informal settlements. Even when there is more than one room, the HBWs usually work in their kitchen or in their own bed room. Though most homes are permanent, they are mostly located on the outskirts of cities. In Brazil and Chile, it is common for HBWs to have small flats built one above the other, making it quite hot and stuffy in summer. In winter the homes stay warm or HBWs use heaters which are costly to operate. In Nicaragua, most homes in urban areas are large and occupied by 4 to 6 families. The HBW leader I spoke to informed that her house is 30 meters by 25 meters and is occupied by 3 families.

In Brazil, those owning their own homes have to pay heavy taxes and those who rent homes struggle to meet their rental obligations. Housing shortages in Chile, have resulted in many generations living together, till the younger generation can afford their own houses. Rentals are very high, especially where migrants have entered cities. In informal settlements across Latin America, defaulters of rent, which increased due to the recent covid pandemic and those who have occupied others lands live in constant fear of eviction, which is usually done very ruthlessly. Those who have been evicted often go back to the rural areas or are forced to relocate to far off locations, adversely affecting their markets and transportation requirements.

In Nicaragua, home-based workers have the option of getting registered with the Ministry of Family Economy, in which case they will get government support to start their business, to brand their products and become active on social media. However many home-based workers do not prefer this option as it forces them to join certain groups (something like self-help groups) where all the members don't pay their dues, adversely affecting the running of the group. The

Government of Nicaragua have a special housing plan to build 50,000 houses for the self-employed. After paying monthly instalments, the houses will eventually belong to the workers.

Most homes have basic civic amenities, except those located in informal settlements where the civic amenities are most inadequate. Water supply is often problematic and buying water is common in Peru. In Chile, irrespective of the number of rooms, most houses have only one bathroom. Garbage collection is not regular and in places like Chile is a paid service. Flooding, due to bad drainage is also common. Further due to the growth of the population, and the lack of civic amenities keeping up with the population growth, water storage tanks are inadequate and sewerage treatment facilities are overflowing in Chile.

There are no zoning restrictions in Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua or Peru as far as working from home is concerned. However, the HBWs are not allowed to sell or put up stalls to sell their products in residential zones.

In informal settlements in Brazil, most electricity connections are illegally procured and so the supply is irregular and problematic. In other places though electricity is available it is very costly. Solar energy still hasn't yet been tried by HBWs in Latin America. In Peru, though electricity is more affordable, power cuts are frequent. In Chile, the supply is irregular and when needed most, to complete orders, it has a knack of disappearing. In Nicaragua, there have been no power cuts since the government took over power distribution in February 2021. The cost of power has also been reduced substantially – in fact those who consume less power are entitled to a subsidy. Heat stress is a big problem in Nicaragua and Chile as air-conditioning is not affordable due to the high costs of electricity as well as air conditioners.

In Chile flooding is a big problem as many cities have been badly planned, blocking the natural flow of water. Flooding is also an issue in Brazil and Peru. HBWs homes get badly flooded, affecting their work and incomes. In Nicaragua, hurricanes cause much damage to HBWs homes.

Across the Latin American region, the occupational safety and health problems of HBWs are more or less the same as in other regions. These include poor eyesight and headaches due to poor lighting and inadequate ventilation; pain in the back, hands and legs due to long hours of sitting in bad postures and uncomfortable equipment, repetitive movements as well as due to carrying heavy loads of raw materials or finished products; respiratory problems due to lint and fabric dust and toxic chemicals and solvents and burns due to cooking by HBWs who are involved in food preparations. Malnutrition, due to ignorance and lack of resources also results in diabetes and hypertension.

Domestic violence against HBWs is a common complaint across the board. This has increased due to the lock down and the covid pandemic. Violence comes in many forms – verbal, psychological, physical and sexual. In Peru, HBWs also face violence from the private security officers (serenos) and from municipal police - it is usually verbal, but often physical as well. Due to lack of reporting by the victim, violence often goes un-noticed and therefore unpunished.

- 4. South Asia:** HomeNet South Asia is the network of home-based workers organisations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The physical environment in the context of home as the work place for home-based workers varies across the 8 countries where HomeNet South Asia has a presence. Except for Maldives, where the home-based workers of Male (the capital city) are relatively better off and can be considered as self-employed entrepreneurs, the situation in the other countries is more or less the same. Urban home-based workers usually live in low income informal settlements where the size and quality of their homes is quite inadequate. Often they have only one or at best two rooms which compete for space, for sleeping, living, cooking, studying, playing and for home-based workers, for working. In India 44% of the homes in slums are one room habitations (Dr. Chandramouli C., 2011). The same space is often used for different purposes at different times. Hot and/or leaking roofs and unstable structures that may not be able to withstand strong storms are common. Many home-based workers come to the cities as migrants and do not own their homes - they are rented or they may be forced to squat on private or government lands on which they build temporary, often very fragile structures. There is no incentive to invest in upgradation or improvements of these houses due to lack of tenure and the constant threat of eviction.

Evictions and re-locations of home-based workers are another very distressing reality for them. Eviction could arise because the HBW has not been able to pay the rent (these instances have increased manifold during the covid pandemic) or in many cases because it is planned to use the land for some other purposes. Most times, they are not consulted or involved in these processes and are summarily moved to far off locations on the periphery of cities, adversely impacting their mobility to procure raw materials and sell finished goods. Besides, these resettlement areas, usually lack basic civic amenities further aggravating their problems.

Lack of basic civic services, like water, electricity, toilets, solid waste management, drainage, roads, street lighting etc. in the informal settlements is another harsh reality. In some of the bigger cities in South Asia things are improving, especially where national governments have housing and sanitation high on their agenda. In rural areas, collecting of water and fuel wood for cooking is often a challenge, especially in arid dry regions or hilly areas. Time spent on these activities cuts into and reduces the time spent on home-based work, thus impacting productivity and earnings.

In many areas, access to electricity is difficult and costly, due to lack of tenure, forcing workers to go in for illegal connections. Since homes often do not have good natural light and since women often work at night after attending to her household chores, the strain on the eyes and bad eyesight are common health problems faced by HBWs.

The urban slum environment in which HBWs work and live, often have poorly designed and maintained roads that create a backflow of dirty and contaminated water into their homes, causing damage to finished goods and supplies, disrupting production, and resulting in serious health problems.⁴ Home-based workers often complain of unsanitary and unsafe living and working conditions, which undermine their productivity and health.

Occupational safety and health of home-based workers are badly compromised. However, this is still a very low priority for them even though it has long term effects which will affect the quality of their lives. The OSH issues faced by HBWs are the same as for other regions. Workers

⁴ Synthesis Study Key Issues of Urban Poor Home-Based Workers in South and South East Asian Countries (Inclusive Cities Project) May 2012, <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/regional-synthesis-urban-issues>

are often exposed to harmful chemicals, fumes, fibre dust or hazardous materials. The complaints of HBWs range from head ache, loss of vision, aches and pains in various parts of the body like back, neck, waist, legs, hands and fingers to breathing problems, allergies and infections. Exposure to dust and other irritants, such as the pungent smell of kerosene, result in allergies and respiratory diseases. It has been observed that besides the home-based worker herself, her children and other family members are also exposed to toxins and other problems as her home is also her workplace.

Violence against women home-based workers both by contractors and family members is prevalent but often not voiced or remedied, for fear of social stigma and viable alternatives. Impacts of climate change and identification of stressors like heat, dryness, flooding, excessive cold are other challenges that vary from place to place and season to season. They all have adverse effects on the lives and livelihoods of home-based workers and need to be addressed.

5. South East Asia: HomeNet South East Asia includes within its fold Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

The size and quality of the homes of home-based workers varies depending on their economic status and geographical location. Some are permanent homes with all civic amenities. Homes in urban areas are often much smaller, having a single room or two rooms and are usually located in informal settlements with poor infrastructure and civic amenities. In rural areas, they have more space. Due to the size of habitations and kind of work done, many home-based workers like fish net makers and bamboo workers, work outside their homes or those involved in preparation of food items often work in a common space which could be the home of the group leader.

Those using sewing machines or other machines say their family members get disturbed and can not sleep at night due to the noise of the machines, which HBWs are sometimes forced to operate to meet orders, as working hours during the day are limited due to their domestic responsibilities. The work spaces are often hazardous to health due to exposure to non-food products like powdered detergent raw materials etc. In the Philippines, food products are exposed to hair of pet dogs and cats who usually play and sleep near the kitchen which also serves as production area for the HBW.

In cities like Bangkok in Thailand and San Vicente in the Philippines most of the houses are permanent and may be owned by the worker or be on rent. Even where they own their houses, the land on which they are constructed usually does not belong to them – they may be squatters on government or private lands. Migrants to cities, especially in Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines usually live in informal settlements. Many of these are located precariously in flood prone areas or along the coast or river banks and are susceptible to damage and destruction due to the light non-permanent construction materials used and the vagaries of nature. Some HBWs in Thailand rent temple lands or mosque lands which are usually more reasonably priced.

Civic amenities like water supply, electricity and sanitation are usually sub-standard in slum areas and this can be very debilitating in the hot climates of South East Asia. In slums, community common toilets are the norm. In the Philippines, water supplied in towns by the National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority is costly.

Incidents of forced eviction and relocation are not uncommon. The most well know example of this is, the relocation of HBWs, due to the expansion of the Bangkok airport about 15 years ago.

They were relocated to far off places on the periphery of the city, thus impacting their markets and causing much dislocation due to lack of transport and civic amenities. Due to the natural growth of the city, things are better now but at first, lives and livelihoods of HBWs were badly affected. More or less similar was the experience of workers relocated in Manila far from their markets/clients. A more recent example is the expansion of the railway network in north and north east Thailand which has caused much distress to HBWs who used to live along side the old railway lines and sell food to railway passengers. In the case of relocation, most times HBWs do not have a say in the new location or the design and layout of the new accommodation. However, HNSEA mentioned that where workers have come together and are organised they are able to negotiate better with local bodies and public housing authorities. Under certain schemes, if workers come together as a group, they can be allotted land together and plan and build their own houses. Forced eviction and relocation not only affects the livelihoods of HBWs but also breaks up the community and reduces support groups/solidarity, as some evictees return to rural areas or are dispersed in different locations.

Zoning is a lesser problem at present. Though there are residential zones where home-based work is strictly not permitted, in Thailand, but as long as there is no resultant noise or air pollution, authorities usually turn a blind eye. In the Philippines there are no zoning restrictions.

Access to and availability of legal and regular electricity is really not a problem in Thailand. However, in cities like Bangkok, HBWs who rent homes and do not have water or electricity meters, are subjected to the whims of land lords who charge them whatever they fancy. In Cambodia due to power shortages, power is supplied to hotels and factories on priority, depriving HBWs of their rightful share. The Philippines also experiences brown outs and black outs from time to time affecting the productivity of HBWs. Overall, power is expensive in the Philippines, leading to illegal tapping of lines /doing jumper. Green energy solutions like solar or wind power is expensive and needs space. HNSEA was not aware of any green energy initiatives in the region.

Being conscious of the impacts and adverse effects of climate change is a more recent thing for HBWs and their organisations. Flooding and lack of drainage is a big problem in most countries of South East Asia. This year there were floods in South Thailand three times, within the year. Some of the main reasons for flooding are poor city planning, blocking the natural flow of water by construction and carpeting of black top roads at irrational heights. Land slides and earthquakes are another common phenomena in parts of Indonesia and the Philippines. Combatting excessive heat and droughts are another challenge, especially for HBWs whose homes may not be well ventilated. Covid 19 has only increased the woes of home-based workers.

HNSEA is acutely aware that though occupational safety and health (OSH) is not seen as a priority by the community of HBWs, it has far reaching consequences for HBWs and their families, both with regard to their health and safety and also their productivity. The common ailments HBWs suffer from are the same as HBWs in other regions with the addition of cancers, asthma, high blood pressure and kidney ailments (due to infrequent urination due to pressure of work).

In view of lack of data and information, HNSEA was not able to comment on violence faced by HBWs. While there are instances of domestic violence which could be verbal, physical, sexual and psychological; violence from employers/contractor is less likely. Regrettably women HBWs have not been able to do much about this, due to lack of alternatives.

SECTION IV - What has been done.

Presentation of the work done under the 3 pillars of the framework has been attempted. Some pillars may be missing for some regions, as nothing has been done as yet there under.

1. Africa

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) Some affiliates who are better organised have been able to provide common working spaces to home-based workers near their homes, especially where one trade is concentrated in an area. They have also been able to help their members access water and sanitation. They have not yet been able to do anything with regard to evictions and relocations - however some opportunities for engaging with local or county governments exist and the HomeNets want to explore this.

2. Eastern Europe & Central Asia

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) With regard to the physical environment described above, it appears that though HomeNet Eastern Europe & Central Asia is conscious of these issues, challenges and implications on the health and productivity of HBWs, nothing much has been done. However, their immediate need is to help home-based workers get rehabilitated after the Covid pandemic, which has hit the already vulnerable home-based workers very hard. Finding markets for their products seem to be their top most priority.

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) It is interesting and heartening to note that out of the 10 countries worldwide that have ratified ILO Convention 177 on Home Work, 5 of them are in this region, namely Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Tajikistan. HomeNet Eastern Europe and Central Asia and its affiliates played an important role in making this happen. Some activity to operationalise this ratification is taking place, albeit quite slowly. Macedonia now has a separate law on self-employed home-based workers. Albania has also made legislative changes to include home-based workers in some legislations. In Bulgaria, the sub-contracted home workers have been included within the ambit of the labour courts.
- ii) Efforts of home-based workers organisations in Central Asia have had the best results with regard to markets. Local governments here are quite responsive and there are many good practises of local governments in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan providing large spaces - up to three floors, free of cost, for home-based workers to work as well as sell their products. It is a conscious government strategy to do this. The workers are consulted while planning these facilities and are part of maintaining and running them as well. In fact, these are included in the tourist maps, as sites for tourists to visit. Recently the President of Tajikistan himself opened a big Cultural Centre for crafts persons. Home-based workers, mostly referred to as crafts persons often participate in exhibitions where they are able to promote and sell their products.

3. Latin America

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) In Chile under the new Social Housing initiative, the houses being constructed have 2 bedrooms, a living-dining room, bathroom and kitchen measuring between 38 and 42 square meters, which is a welcome step. However, these housing complexes are located in the outskirts of cities, often prone to flooding or in close proximity to garbage dumps, cemeteries or sewerage treatment plants. Besides, commuting to the city has become difficult and costly. Issues of housing are taken up from time to time with the municipal authorities but without much success.
- ii) In Brazil, HBWs reported that awareness about harassment and violence against home-based workers has been created by HomeNet International which has encouraged and inspired them to do something about it. In Chile, HBWs have made complaints to the government about the violence they face and also applied for grants for community projects to address violence against women, including women HBWs, but without any success.

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) In Chile, Conatrado Chile have lobbied with the Parliamentary Committee on Work for the rights of HBWs and ratification of ILO Convention-177 on Home Work and been involved in strategic talks with the government for ratification of ILO Convention 177 and 102. The same is the case with Atemdo in Brazil (an affiliate of Cotrado ALAC, the regional network in Latin America and a member of HomeNet International) where they are trying to take up issues of HBWs in the solidarity economy movement discussions.
- ii) Renatta of Peru (another affiliate of Cotrado ALAC, the regional network in Latin America and a member of HomeNet International) has tried to participate in macro policy and planning efforts but it is very difficult as they are not affiliated to any union. However, they have participated in some WIEGO activities.
- iii) In Chile, they have also been part of the city planning consultations but feel disappointed as their views are not heard.
- iv) Regarding involvement of HBWs in Governance and maintenance of public housing and civic amenities, Renatta of Peru has been making efforts without much success. However they feel they need to persevere more.
- v) In Peru, artisans registered with the municipalities are given market spaces but they are not really part of the planning, location and layout of these markets.
- vi) In Sao Paulo, Brazil, there used to be participatory budgeting where opinions were given and demands were made regarding public housing and civic amenities, but the present government has stopped this, resulting in a lack of trust and transparency.

4. South Asia

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) Two very significant studies have been conducted, highlighting the issue of home being the work place, especially for women workers and the fact that informal settlements where home-based workers usually reside and work are hubs of economic activity. The reports stress the fact that city governments and urban policy makers and planners need to be aware of these twin facts and take them into account while making urban policies and planning cities. The two studies are (a) A 2012 field study on urban Home-based workers in 3 Asian cities, ie. Ahmedabad in India, Bangkok in Thailand and Lahore in Pakistan as part of a wider 10 city study, titled ‘Home-based Workers sector Report : Informal Economy Monitoring Study’ by Professor Martha Chen, WIEGO⁵ and (b) “Housing and urban service needs of home-based workers: Findings from a seven country study” by Ms. Shalini Sinha of WIEGO⁶. The original seven country studies were undertaken by HomeNet South Asia and HomeNet South East Asia.
- ii) Another important study conducted was ‘Risk and Vulnerability of Homebased Workers in South Asia 2014’⁷ by Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi, for HNSA. The study tried to unpack the different dimensions of the risk and vulnerabilities of the home based in nine cities in five south Asian countries. Though the scope of this study was quite wide, it dwelt at length, on various urban issues like size and kind of houses, localities home-based workers live in, their access to basic civic amenities, occupational security and health issues etc.
- iii) HomeNet South Asia and HomeNet South East Asia implemented an ambitious multi-year project, starting in 2009, called ‘Strengthening the Organizations of Urban Poor Homebased Workers for Greater Visibility and Participation in City Governance’ (Inclusive Cities Project) funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, with technical support from WIEGO (who was also instrumental in developing and getting the project approved). The project aimed to support livelihoods of poor urban home based workers in different countries of South Asia and South East Asia, by strengthening and promoting membership based organisations and their networks and through related efforts toward livelihood security and sustainability. Some results of this project are:
 - a) City Studies were conducted in 28 cities of 5 countries of South Asia, ie. Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and 3 countries in South East Asia, ie. Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand, to highlight the key urban issues of HBWs and how they affect their lives and livelihoods. Many of these studies can be considered ‘frontier’ studies given that, in the past, the focus has been primarily on rural home-based workers. A synthesis document for South Asia and one for South East Asia⁸ was also developed, to distil the findings of these City Studies.
 - b) Twenty one Dialogues / workshops and 2 City Fora with city Mayors and Administrators were held, to share the study findings, sensitise them on HBWs issues and see how the local administration could ensure better civic amenities like regular water supply, uninterrupted legal electricity connections, adequate, safe and affordable housing, regularisation of informal settlements, transport etc. These dialogues have resulted in some successes, on the ground as well.

⁵ Chen Martha A (2014) ‘Home-based Workers sector Report : Informal Economy Monitoring Study’, WIEGO, Cambridge, MA, USA, available at <http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/IEMS-Home-based-Workers-Full-report>

⁶ Sinha Shalini (2013), “Housing and urban service needs of home-based workers: Findings from a seven country study”, WIEGO Policy Brief(Urban Policies) No.15, WIEGO, Cambridge, MA, USA, available at <http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Sinha-Home-based-workers-WIEGO-PB15>

⁷ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/final-risk-and-vulnerability-hbws-south-asia-2015>

⁸ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/regional-synthesis-urban-issues>

- c) A Regional Conference on Homebased Workers with City Authorities⁹ was held in Pattaya, Thailand in May 2014 which was attended by 8 countries of South and South East Asia. The objectives were to highlight the impact of good civic amenities on the productivity of HBWs, share experience of addressing homebased workers issues with city authorities and to agree on an Asian Cities Declaration.
 - d) Asian Cities Declaration¹⁰ was adopted at Pattaya, Thailand in May 2014. The declaration has made some overarching recommendations as well as recommendations regarding urban planning/regulations and housing, basic infrastructure services like water, sanitation, electricity and transport, livelihood support, occupational safety and health, and other health-related issues. For quite a while after the adoption, its implementation on the ground was being monitored, with many successes.
 - e) Exposure visits were organised to Slum up-gradation programme in Ahmedabad for HBW leaders from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, by Mahila Housing Trust (MHT), during 2013-14. The MHT programme in Ahmedabad, and elsewhere, provides seven basic infrastructural services at an affordable cost and involves community-based organizations (CBOs) in the design and implementation of these services. The exposure aimed at orienting leaders about ways to forge partnerships among target communities and their CBOs, local NGOs, private sector organizations and government bodies. It attempted to make leaders understand the strength of organising CBOs to address urban issues with support from a technical organisation (like Mahila Housing Trust), with a view to directly communicating with city officials and getting their issues resolved.
 - f) A Film regarding urban homebased workers was produced in which HBWs themselves talk about their civic amenities and how they affect their lives and livelihoods. The film also outlines some of the solutions to address these problems.
- iv) Towards the end of 2014, HNSA along with two of their affiliates and Mahila Housing Trust (MHT) as the technical partner undertook a very innovative pilot initiative, called ‘Training Plus’, with a view to obtaining actual results (of obtaining basic civic amenities) on the ground. It had been noticed that in spite of trainings - sometimes more than once and exposure visits to MHT field work areas, HNSA affiliates were not able to get the results they desired. This initiative was therefore conceived as ‘training plus’, taking training and exposure visits to the next level. In order to do this the local HBW organisation and MHT, identified existing schemes for basic amenities like electricity, water, sanitation, drainage, solid waste management etc at the city level which can be accessed; understood how local bureaucracy works; identified the steps of how an application moved and where the authority for provision of services rested; understood payment patterns and options etc. MHT as the technical partner facilitated this process and also imparted technical knowledge. The key objective of Training Plus was not just an ‘exposure’ to a good initiative but to hand hold the partners even as they replicated the initiative in their local context. Impact studies of this pilot revealed that there had been some commendable outcomes. For example, in Jharna Sahi slum in Bhubaneshwar in Odisha, India; by getting individual water connections home-based workers saved one hour every day which they were able to spend on their home-based work thus increasing their earnings¹¹. Some used this time to do construction work, on the side, which pays better.

⁹ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/report-regional-conference-city-authorities-homebased-workers>

¹⁰ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/asia-cities-declaration>

¹¹ Part 3 of Empowering Home-Based Workers in India: Strategies and Solutions

<https://hnsa.org.in/resources/empowering-home-based-workers-india-strategies-and-solutions>

- v) Mahila Housing Trust have been actively involved in the rehabilitation of workers, displaced by the ambitious Riverfront project in Ahmedabad. As in most rehabilitation projects, the displaced workers were uprooted from their homes and provided public housing which was very far from the city, affecting their markets.
- vi) In June 2019, HNSA commissioned a study on the nature of violence, harassment and discrimination against home-based workers in Nepal. The study¹² looked at women as workers and the violence they face from contractors/intermediaries in the course of their work, as well as the domestic violence they face at home from family members and came out with a strategy to address the issue. In November 2020, HNSA organised a webinar around this issue. They have also developed tools and resource materials for ending violence against women in 8 different languages, which have been shared across the globe, in October 2020. These can be seen on HNSA's website.

Pillar B- Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i) With technical assistance from Mahila Housing Trust, HNSA has developed some tools for HBWs on energy management¹³ and Energy expenditure reduction through energy audits¹⁴.

Pillar C- Plans and Policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) After a long consultative process with various stakeholders as well as government, Pakistan has managed to get cabinet approval for a Policy for Home-based Workers in Sindh Province¹⁵ and another Policy for HBWs in Punjab Province of Pakistan. They also have a draft Policy for the province of Balochistan. After a series of consultations with stakeholders including home-based workers themselves, HNSA developed a draft National Policy for Home-based Workers, in India, in 2017¹⁶ and submitted it to the Government of India for their consideration and approval. These policies contain clauses regarding homes as workplaces, amongst other aspects and could provide a good framework within which habitat issues of HBWs could be addressed.
- ii) Separate studies were conducted for Nepal¹⁷, Pakistan¹⁸ and Bangladesh¹⁹ on ILO Convention 177. In addition, HNSA developed a knowledge product on 'Convention 177 – What why and how?'²⁰, which was widely circulated and used. A shorter more concise version called 'ILO Convention 177 and Why it should be ratified'²¹ was also developed.

5. South East Asia

¹² <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/research-violence-against-women-context-home-based-work-nepal>

¹³ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/guidelines-home-based-workers-energy-management>

¹⁴ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/energy-expenditure-reduction-through-energy-auditing>

¹⁵ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/hbw-policy-sindh-pakistan>

¹⁶ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/draft-national-policy-hbws-india>

¹⁷ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/nepal-c-177-study-jan-2013>

¹⁸ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/pakistan-c-177-study>

¹⁹ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/bangladesh-c-177-study>

²⁰ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/c-177-what-why-and-how>

²¹ <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/ilo-convention-177-homework-and-why-it-should-be-ratified>

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

HomeNet South East Asia's main focus so far has been on social protection and market access which for them are very high up on the list of priorities. However, they do realise the need and benefits of making HBW's homes more comfortable, healthier, safer and more productive work places. Unfortunately they have not been able to do as much as they would have liked, due to lack of funds. Some of the things they have done include:

- i) Work under HomeNet South Asia and HomeNet South East Asia's ambitious multi-year project, called 'Strengthening the Organizations of Urban Poor Homebased Workers for Greater Visibility and Participation in City Governance' (Inclusive Cities Project) funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Details can be seen in the HNSA section above - para iii, page 16.
- ii) HomeNet Phipippines (HNPh) has developed some alternate lay outs of homes for HBWs to maximise spaces for work and storage as well as for pets to stay out doors, creating a healthier and more productive home environment.
- iii) In the Philippines, HBWs, who had been evicted due to other developmental projects, were assisted to prepare the community, map the new sites and access the public housing being offered.
- iv) In one instance, HNPh was successful in negotiating with a landlord in Kalayaan²² and getting agreement to sell houses to HBWs, on instalment basis rather than making a one time payment.

Pillar B- Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i) HBWs in the Philippines experiment by using minimum kilowatt bulbs to reduce their electricity consumption. They have also been exposed to training on using solar installations at home, though nothing concrete has been done as yet on the ground.
- ii) HNPh provided relief to HBWs affected by natural calamities like typhoons and floods.

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) In the Philippines, the network members lobbied very hard for the ILO Convention C-177 to be ratified. Even though they were not successful in that, they did manage to draft a 'Magna Carta for Workers in the Informal Economy (MACWIE) which they have been trying to get passed for the last 14 years. Once passed, this promises to be a very good legislation for informal workers including home-based workers. Presently on line discussions are under way on MACWIE.
- iii) HNPh have also been involved, at the national level in the consultations on Occupational Safety and Health Act, Maternity Protection, Safe Spaces Act, Ease of Doing Business, Mandanas

²² Kalayaan, officially the Municipality of Kalayaan (a 5th class [municipality](#)) is part of the [Spratly Islands](#), situated within the [West Philippine Sea](#), under the jurisdiction of the [province](#) of [Palawan](#), [Philippines](#) and has a population of 184, according to the 2015 census. The region is under dispute between Philippines and Malaysia.

Ruling ²³ on local governments getting increased funds and the right to their management, Enterprise Formalization of Informal Economic Units, and the amendment to the Local Government Code. They hope to continue these efforts in future too, till they reach a logical conclusion.

- iv) As a result of advocacy efforts, HBWs in Philippines have been recognised as one of the front line groups that need social protection during the Covid 19 pandemic.

²³ The Mandanas Ruling of the Supreme Court holds that the local government units (LGUs) shall have a just share in national taxes and shall include not only 'national internal revenue taxes' but will also include other national taxes like customs duties. This will mean increased revenues for LGUs.

SECTION V - What is being done and planned for the future

What is being done and what is planned for the future are being taken together as much of the work is ongoing and will be continued in future. Presentation has been attempted using the 3 pillars of the framework. Some pillars may be missing for some regions as I was not able to capture what if anything they are doing or plan to do.

1. Africa

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) Regarding the problems with zoning, HomeNet Kenya does realise the need to do something but feels that this is an issue that the wider community of informal workers must come together to address with the local authorities – so this is what they are planning to do. They would like to specially request the local bodies to provide common work spaces and markets / places where they can work and sell their products.
- ii) There is a great housing shortage in Kenya and realising this, the government has an ambitious programme to provide houses especially in the urban areas utilising space from the old estates that can be demolished and high-rise flats constructed to accommodate a larger population than before. Housing, as also water supply, sanitation and markets are all subjects that have recently been devolved by the central government to the local government/counties and the council of governors. HomeNet Kenya sees this as an opportunity to engage with the relevant authorities to include the concerns of home-based workers in local government strategy and plans. They plan on taking up a number of issues like location of housing projects which should be ‘in situ’, design of the high rise housing complexes (since this is what is being envisaged), design of the individual housing units, provision of civic amenities like water supply and sanitation. They will also look at pricing and terms of payments which should suit the workers. Facilities like common work places, markets, parks, schools etc, will also be discussed with the local authorities.

Pillar B- Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i) Regarding access to reliable uninterrupted and reasonably priced electricity, HomeNet Kenya is once again looking to join hands with other like-minded groups to make these concerns part of a nationwide campaign. Last mile connectivity and pricing will be priorities.
- ii) One of the affiliates of HomeNet Kenya, Machakos Cooperative has done some good work regarding addressing environment concerns, by organising vigorous plantation of sisal and indigenous trees including fruit trees and renovating and constructing water storage ponds. It is proposed to expand and intensify this work.

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) The Africa Platform has very correctly realised that in order to be part of the policy and planning processes, one needs to be organised and preferably have a network, to champion the cause of home-based workers. It is with this in mind that the five countries of Africa where the platform is presently active have started taking steps to form and strengthen their networks. They also intend to engage with other informal sector workers’ networks / groups as well as civil society.

In fact, one of the most important objectives of the Africa Platform, at present, is to encourage and support the growth of national networks, in a focussed manner. The Platform also has a vision to include some more of the 52 remaining African countries within its fold. It is also hoped that the Africa Platform will one day emerge as a strong Africa Regional Network of home-based workers.

- ii) In this regard, HomeNet Kenya has already done some ground work by visiting and advocating the case of home-based workers with the Ministries of Labour, Trade (who also handle micro and small enterprise development) and Tourism. They also plan to engage with the county governments. At the outset, it is important to make policy makers aware of home-based workers as a category of workers, who have multiple needs and concerns like housing which are their work places, basic civic amenities, social security, occupational safety and health, capacity building etc, apart from markets. So far, they have been viewed only as entrepreneurs with needs for markets.
- iii) In Uganda, the Working Group of Home-based Workers is trying to work with trade unions. There is a strong possibility that this Working Group evolves into a national network, i.e., HomeNet Uganda and it is towards this end that they will be working.
- iv) In Tanzania too, they have a Working Group of 13 organisations and are in the process of mobilising new groups. This could also be the first step in the formation of a national network in the form of HomeNet Tanzania which once again, is something that is on the agenda.
- v) In two provinces of South Africa, namely Durban and Cape Town a number of organizations are beginning to organise and look towards engaging others across the country with a view to eventually form HomeNet South Africa.
- vi) A similar but slightly different scenario is evident in Ethiopia where WISE (a NGO) has been organizing women around savings (SACCO's); and currently a committee of five representatives is in place, engaging with the Africa Platform.
- vii) HomeNet Kenya is in the process of engaging with other informal worker federations & civil society groups to negotiate to be part of the 'Urban Working Committee' in Kenya, which looks at city planning and all other urban issues. Civil society in Nairobi has also taken up this agenda. The recent launch of HomeNet Kenya, which was attended by the Ministry of Trade gave this initiative of HNK a welcome positive push. The strength and influence of a network like HomeNet Kenya raises hope for the voices of home-based workers to be heard at the decision-making table.

2. Eastern Europe & Central Asia

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) In Eastern Europe, by and large, the governments are quite unresponsive and the nets/affiliates have limited engagement with them. In Central Asia however, the governments are more inclusive and many affiliates are involved with city planning, especially in Georgia, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina where governments are much more supportive of artisans and crafts persons which includes home-based workers. It is proposed to continue engaging with these governments, with a view to including the concerns and voices of HBWs in all endeavours of governments that affect HBWs.

HNEE & CA have no other definite plans for the future, due to lack of funds, as reported by the Regional Coordinator.

3. Latin America

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) In Chile one sees an opportunity as well as a challenge in the new Constitution which recognises housing as a human right. HBW's organisations will therefore explore how this can be used to their advantage. They realise the importance of organising and intend to intensify that so that their collective voices can be heard by the municipalities. In Chile, in order to qualify for public housing, one needs to form Housing Committees or *Personeria Juridica* with at least 15 members so that they get a legal identity and are recognised by the municipalities. Conatrado Nationale Chile intends to work in this direction so that more HBWs can access this housing.
- ii) Atemdo, Brazil (an affiliate of Conatrado ALAC, the regional network in Latin America and a member of HomeNet International) hopes to involve HBWs on issues of zoning by organising more awareness through lectures and discussions.
- iii) In Peru, efforts are being made to register HBWs in the Integral health insurance (Seguro Integral de Salud SIS) for poor and vulnerable people for health care, with the help of Carmen Roca, representative of WIEGO. This will continue in future too.
- iv) In Brazil, HBWs plan to support campaigns to end violence against women home-based workers for which they will join hands with other like minded workers and their organisations. After the pandemic, Peru hopes to take up the issue of violence against HBWs with the local authorities.

Pillar B- Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i) It was interesting to note that to the question of what is being done in Peru about the electricity problems, the HBW leader responded that they help each other to meet order deadlines.
- ii) In response to what they plan to do for meeting the climate change challenges, the HBW leader in Peru said they would like to "*form a savings bank drop by drop.*"

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) In Chile, there seems to be a good opportunity as Chile is going through a political churning and perhaps for the first time, there is a possibility that they will be able to influence the Constitution and with it, the labour Code. Conatrado Chile has already held meetings with political candidates and unions and made them aware of the challenges HBWs face and even got some kind of a commitment that they will be supportive of a legislation for HBWs. They are also canvassing political parties to include HBWs as workers in the next constitution. This looks like an opportune moment in Chile to address both 'housing as a right' and labour rights issues.
- ii) In Brazil, Atemdo is in dialogue with the present government regarding bringing ratification of ILO Convention 177 on Home Work onto their agenda and they plan on intensifying these talks.

- iii) In Brazil, HBWs are trying to organise themselves better and are in dialogue with other workers and intend to collectively advocate for better marketing opportunities with civic authorities, especially since now due to the pandemic e-marketing is becoming popular. They also felt that change can happen if they vote out the present government in the next election, as the government wants to legalise home-based work only to collect more taxes.

4. South Asia

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

- i) HNSA through its member, Mahila Housing Sewa Trust in India has done and continues to do a significant body of work in India. MHT supports HBWs to opt for self-built incremental housing by providing financial, technical and design support to them. This is done in collaboration with design researchers, architects and product innovators, by developing layouts of homes which are cost effective, simple and easily upgradeable, maximising the use of space. The initiative helps to promote structural safety and efficiency of layouts by balancing the needs of working spaces as well as living quarters. Most HBWs do manage to improve their homes from time to time, depending on the availability of their resources but to make this possible it is important to plan for the future, from the start, which is what MHT helps them do. These activities will continue and be intensified.
- ii) HNSA through its members helps beneficiaries access government schemes / subsidies relating to housing, across South Asia, especially where governments have large ambitious national housing schemes like *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* in India. These efforts will continue.
- iii) MHT is also actively engaged in *insitu* slum upgradation efforts as opposed to relocation to far flung places, which disrupts HBWs lives and livelihoods. As and when the occasion demands, HNSA will encourage their members, with technical support from MHT to take up such matters.
- iv) MHT is doing some very innovative work on space optimization by addressing storage needs in the small cramped homes of HBWs. For example, they have designed hanging storage for raw materials and finished products of kite makers by using wall brackets and contraptions suspended from the roof. Such solutions to optimise spaces in the homes of HBWs will continue to be explored and promoted.
- v) Access to housing finance is one of the biggest challenges faced by HBWs, due to the reluctance of housing finance companies, as HBW's tenure is not always very clear. MHT has developed a model that can assess the tenure security of semi formal properties, based on the informal borrower's capacity and willingness to repay. If the borrower is deemed creditworthy MHT executes a mortgage through an advanced power of attorney. After establishing the security of the loan in this way, the lending institution is usually supportive of advancing credit. Financial literacy and technical guidance for construction is also being provided. MHT through its credit cooperatives has supported over 6000 households in making improvements to their homes. It is heartening to note that there has not been even a single default of such collateralised housing loans. These efforts will be shared with others and expanded.
- vi) Regarding access to civic amenities, MHT mobilises and empowers communities to demand better services from municipal authorities. They help home-based workers to access government schemes and facilitate last mile delivery of services. Through *Parivarthan* slum network program (SNP) with Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, HBWs are supported to avail a

package of integrated services of water, sanitation, waste management and paved roads. Over 100,000 families in 19 cities have been supported to get improved access to sanitation in India. Greater community participation is the strategy used, as provision of most civic amenities requires collective community action and mobilization. This is done through capacity building of communities and setting up Community Action Groups, in the field, so that they can liaise with the local government and improve their own surroundings and facilities. In Ahmedabad women and girls are taking the lead to ensure the proper maintenance of sanitation services. These activities will be further expanded to more areas.

- vii) In India, there is an ambitious national programme, called ‘*Swachh Bharat Mission*’, to construct individual toilets. HNSA members help HBWs to access the subsidies under the scheme and construct toilets according to required specifications. If necessary, MHT also provides loans to pay the initial cost of constructing the toilets.
- viii) Toilet construction alone will not solve the problem, as access to the city’s safe water supply and waste water treatment systems is essential. The informal nature of the tenure of the home-based workers’ homes is one of the biggest stumbling blocks. MHT once again stepped in and convinced the local body to ‘delink tenure from service delivery.’ As a result, in Ahmedabad, slum residents can now apply for legal individual sewage and water connections. Community leaders are being trained to facilitate the application process, making them independent. These efforts will continue and spread to other areas.
- ix) One of the most significant achievements has been, the building of the capacity of local governments in smaller cities of India and supporting them to provide water and sanitation to slum dwellers. They are supported by MHT with knowledge, resources and infrastructure needed for providing adequate services. Local bodies are also being helped to raise financial resources from state and central governments, through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives as well as by increasing their own revenues by improving property tax collection. This is a model which will be replicated.
- x) Another very useful and informative initiative that is underway is the documenting of MHT’s work through the ‘Home=workplace’ lens by City Collab, an urban consulting firm. They have described MHT’s 3-pronged strategy to make the home-based environment safer, healthier and more productive. The 3 prongs are (1) Improving Physical Environment (2) Promoting Energy Efficiency & Climate Resilience and (3) Incorporating needs of home based workers in city plans & policies. Each of the strategies has sub-strategies. The documentation will cover MHT’s approach, supported by illustrations and case studies as well as learnings & direction of further advocacy. The final product will be a set of policy briefs and web resources on MHT’s work. This promises to be a very valuable resource, not only for India but something that can be adapted and used as a blue print by others as well.

Pillar B- Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i) Small, cramped and badly ventilated and poorly lit dwelling units of HBWs force them to use artificial lights, sometimes for more than 18 hours a day. All this generates heat, causing the workers to use electric fans to cool their homes. However electricity connections, are often illegal, unreliable and costly. This affects not only the health of the workers but also their productivity. Some estimates indicate that a home based worker in India spends 30 to 40% of her monthly income to meet the electricity costs (Brahmbhatt et al., 2019). It is in this context that

HNSA believes that there is need for innovative approaches to provide affordable, clean, reliable energy to the poor marginalised slum dwellers.

- ii) Keeping this in mind, as well as the weak economic position of HBWs, MHT has been able to institutionalise a process for slum electrification. It negotiates with the electricity distribution company to implement a special slum electrification program using a one window service and simplifying the documentation required. To overcome the tenure question, an indemnity bond is taken from the applicant, thus delinking the electric connection from tenure security. Bill payment terms are also modified to suit the workers. This slum electrification programme called 'Ujjalla Yojana' was originally started in Ahmedabad, India in 2001 but has since spread to other cities. To date, more than 181,000 households have gained access to safe and legal electricity connections through this initiative, which will be further intensified.
- iii) With a view to encouraging energy saving and use of more energy efficient products, MHT has developed a system of energy audits, which are conducted by grassroots women community leaders, after some training. A simple tool to map the layout of the house and household requirements has been devised, in order to suggest changes in light points, adoption of energy saving products like LED bulbs, more energy efficient fans and other machinery used by HBWs. This initiative has great scope to be expanded, not only in India but across regions as well.
- iv) The promotion of green energy solutions is another activity which is ongoing in India. In collaboration with the private sector, home based workers are being encouraged to install hybrid solar roof top systems and use solar powered machines and equipment like sewing machines, refrigerators, soldering irons and solar powered milking machines. A HBW shared that the energy audit of her home revealed that, the soldering iron she used for lace cutting was accounting for almost half of her total energy consumption. By installing a solar panel and using a solar powered soldering iron she has been able to reduce her electricity bill by more than 50%. HBWs are helped to access and avail government schemes and subsidies for solar energy solutions. However, there are still many technical, procedural and bureaucratic processes that need to be streamlined. Efforts to sort out these issues will be taken up next.
- v) Thermal comfort and climate resilience are two more issues that HNSA is working on and will continue to do. Heat stress is a very debilitating impediment for HBWs in slums as it drastically reduces their productivity. Slums in Mumbai are 6 degrees warmer than neighbouring habitations (WRI India and Chatterjee 2020). MHT has done 6 pioneering studies with academic institutions to look at this issue. They also use innovations and technology of the private sector to help develop heat resistant products and technologies to reduce heat, increase natural light & ventilation and reduce energy consumption. MHT helps by providing the private sector opportunities to test their prototypes and make improvements after receiving feedback from the HBW users. MHT also provides small loans for making improvements and purchasing heat resistant products. Some of the products that have been developed and are being used successfully are modular roof (Modroof), Airlite roof ventilation, bamboo roof, solar reflective white paint, compressed agro-based as well as puff sheet & honeycomb panels for roof and walls. These activities have tremendous scope for replication and have immense benefits too and will be promoted in a big way.
- vi) It is well known that a variety of climate stressors like heat, flooding, water logging and droughts have far reaching impacts on home-based workers. For example, increased summer temperatures in India are reported to result in upto 30% decline in production (MHT, 2015). This year, Mahila Housing Trust (MHT) in collaboration with Home Net South Asia (HNSA) and with

support from International Development Research Centre (IDRC) are planning a research to understand the implications of climate change on women home-based workers' lives and livelihoods, in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. The research will identify the perception and understanding of home-based workers with regard to climate change, identify the key climate stressors and shocks and assess how they impact HBWs. The study will also document their current coping strategies and highlight the different possibilities of making climate change adaptation actions more responsive to home-based work. It is hoped that the findings of the study will inform all climate change and gender/livelihood policies on the need to include and focus on home as the work place.

- vii) HNSA is doing a research on 'Supply Chain Mapping Survey of Women Homeworkers in the Garment Sector in India and Nepal' under the Hidden Homeworkers Project, co-funded by the European Union. The field work was done between January and March 2020. The research provides a wealth of information about the conditions in which women homeworkers operate in the garment supply chains in two locations each in India and Nepal. Amongst other aspects, it also looked at location of work, access to basic civic amenities and occupational health and safety in their work places. Preliminary findings reveal that very few homeworkers (ranging from 3% in Delhi to 33% in Kathmandu) used safety equipment such as hand gloves, needle guards, aprons and masks. Most homeworkers informed that they didn't feel their work was hazardous and therefore didn't use safety equipment. Common complaints are poor eyesight, pain in the head and eyes, back, neck and body pain, difficulty in breathing and injury to hands and fingers from needles and thread and also feet, where foot operated sewing machines are used. Self medication, which a lot of home-based workers resort to, has also been shown to be a harmful and unsustainable solution. The study will be making some recommendations which will be very useful to take this agenda forward.

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) Under WIEGO's Focal Cities Project, HNSA has been engaging with the process of putting in place a Master Plan for Delhi, which will come into force this year and will determine the framework of the city's development for the next twenty years. HNSA's focus has been to demand that issues of livelihood, gender and habitat for the urban poor are adequately addressed in the plan. HNSA is also part of the larger community movement of 'I too am Delhi' or *Main Bhi Dilli* which is a people's campaign to make planning in Delhi more representative and inclusive by engaging citizens, especially the urban poor, in the 2041 Master Plan process. It promotes open public discussions about what kind of city the people of Delhi want and how to make it more equitable, just, inclusive and sustainable.
- ii) HBWs and their organisations are involved to a lesser or greater degree, in city planning and their governance processes in a number of cities like Delhi, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, and Ranchi in India.
- iii) MHT is also involved in improving women HBW's mobility by bringing their concerns to the forefront while helping the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation in identifying gaps in the bus route network and mapping new bus routes for the city.

5. South East Asia

Pillar A - Improving physical spaces

Most of the efforts described below are ongoing and will continue in future as well.

- i) In the Philippines, HBWs are being motivated to access government housing especially cooperative housing by organising themselves and building their capacity both to access the available opportunities and also to manage housing societies. These efforts will continue in future.
- ii) In the Philippines, Patamaba (an affiliate of HomeNet South East Asia and a member of HomeNet International) encourages and will continue to promote the use of alternate construction materials as well as alternative raw materials, chemicals and other ingredients that are not harmful to HBWs and are environment friendly.
- iii) HomeNet Thailand (HNT) encourages and helps HBW leaders to access funds for occupational safety and health (OSH) awareness and training from local governments, with a view to ultimately making policy interventions. This will be continued and expanded.
- iv) HNPh raises awareness by organising orientation sessions regarding OSH and encourages HBWs to access health insurance schemes like ‘*Damayan*’, and ‘Philippine Health Insurance’. Where possible, HBWs are encouraged to work just outside their homes, to ensure better OSH, especially now during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- v) HNT helps HBWs to access the Thai Government’s National Health Security initiative which provides universal free health care to all, in the event of an illness or injury. HNT feels that this should include preventive health care as well – for example, regular health check ups for HBWs at risk. They intend to take this up with the authorities, in the near future.
- vi) HNT has a small fund from which their members can borrow, at 3% interest, to improve their working conditions and increase productivity eg. to buy new and modern sewing machines, washing machines, ergonomically efficient furniture like tables and chairs, build temporary shelters and even purchase raw materials. A committee of HBW leaders decide these loan cases.
- vii) Regarding violence against women home-based workers, in the Philippines there are constant efforts to raise awareness, build capacity and provide information regarding how and where to report violence. They also propose to document cases of VAWC (violence against women and children) among HBWs and form Gender Based Violence (GBV) committees in every city /municipal Council.

Pillar B- Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience

- i) HNPh has plans to take up promotion of solar and wind energy by raising awareness about them, creating a data base of solar lights and solar panel suppliers and distributors and facilitating the installation of solar panels.
- ii) In Indonesia, HBWs are assisted under the ‘Indonesia Disaster Management Fund’ of HomeNet Indonesia to mitigate the impacts of disasters. HomeNet Thailand also has a small fund to help support their members affected by disasters.
- iii) HomeNet Philippines also has a programme to alert and prepare HBWs regarding disasters caused by climate change and other natural phenomena.

Pillar C- Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus

- i) HNSEA is very actively trying to involve HBWs and their leaders in influencing macro policies and laws.
- ii) In the Philippines, HNPh and its members plan to continue to advocate for the passage of MACWIE and monitor how it is progressing. They also intend to start a Campaign for ratification of ILO - C 177, targeted at the Senate and Office of the President. Other campaigns planned are for the realization of Just Transition (Paris Agreement) and for government to have a blueprint / road map on Enterprise formalization. They also intend to get involved in the amendments to the local government codes. These promise to be very significant efforts.
- iii) At the local level, HNPh plans to work on Magna Carta of Women, implementation of OSH Act, Maternity Protection, Safe Spaces Act, Ease of doing Business and the Mandanas Ruling regarding control of funds by the local governments.
- iv) HNT is very keen on working with local municipalities on city planning and city farming keeping the interests of HBWs in mind.
- v) Some HBW leaders in the Philippines have been involved and continue to be associated with city planning and participate in local regional and national development councils and bodies. Some HBW leaders have even been successful in elections. Even though the issues and concerns of HBWs are not being taken up seriously by the councils and local bodies at present, the leaders will persevere to make their voices heard and heeded.
- vi) In the Philippines, it is also proposed to create awareness and participate actively in the ambitious 1 Million Housing Project, launched in 2019. This is a partnership between ‘We Effect’ (former Swedish Cooperative Centre), private, public and community network organisations to promote cooperative housing, managed by the members. Patamaba plans to do some preparatory mapping regarding this. Formation of a primary cooperative and capacity building on operationalising cooperative housing will be the priorities for future. HBW leaders will be involved in designing this housing project including the layout of the individual flats.
- vii) Involvement of HBWs in city planning, relocation, re-development and zoning initiatives has been minimal but HNSEA does realise the need for it and plans to take this up in future. In the Philippines, where the HBW leaders are active, Patamaba participates in discussions on relocation and redevelopment after eviction and also on zoning (eg. In Rizal), but without much success. It is also difficult for HBW leaders to find the time to be part of these processes which tend to drag on; but this is very much on their agenda for the future.
- viii) HNT has been quite involved in shaping the public transport policy of Bangkok, through policy dialogues, especially after the relocation of HBWs to far off places as a result of eviction and relocation. They hope to use this experience to influence public transport in other cities as well.
- ix) HNSEA is also quite actively involved in policies of many local municipalities regarding markets, walking streets, green markets (for agri produce) and night markets – their location, hours of work and management. For example, their most recent effort involves dialogues with Chiang Mai municipality regarding the re-opening of markets, keeping in mind the Covid 19 situation.

- x) In the Philippines, Patamaba, is involved in decisions regarding new market locations, planning the spaces etc in Manila. In view of the Covid pandemic, *Purple Market Online* – a project of Patamaba was started last year to provide HBWs a web-based platform to reach on line buyers. Strategies and actions to grow this initiative further will be taken up.

SECTION V - Recommendations for WIEGO:

It has often been observed that even where HBWs are associated with an organisation, and therefore are more likely to voice their concerns and take up matters with either the authorities or the contractors/employers; they have mainly taken up issues of social security, increase in piece rates, need for regular work and very rarely issues of housing, basic civic amenities, eviction, relocation, climate change, occupational health and security etc. However, there is no doubt that housing and its environs play a crucial part in the well-being and prosperity of home-based workers as HOME=WORK PLACE for them. It is therefore felt that it is very appropriate that the Homenets should now look at home-based workers lives and livelihoods through this lens. This is an approach, whose time has come.

The recommendations are being presented altogether for all the three pillars and the five regions as there are many common ones. They are not in order of priority. Specific recommendations for regions have been separately indicated. The approach being recommended is a bottoms up one, where the first level of engagement should be with the HBWs and their leaders, next at the local municipal / district level, then at the state or provincial level and finally at a national level, as and when needed.

- i) **Sharing and Learning among the HomeNets:** All the regional HomeNets felt that WIEGO could play a very useful role by providing platforms for cross-regional and even intra-regional (cross-country) learning and sharing. From across the globe, there is a wealth of knowledge and experiences waiting to be shared.
- a) **Events:** One option is to use virtual spaces, which reduce time and costs while allowing for greater participation. However, face to face physical events have their own advantages, especially in creating solidarity and linkages. These could also be an option, once the COVID pandemic is behind us. Different subjects/themes, depending on the needs of HBW's organisations, some of which are mentioned below could be taken up. It would be good to have these at various levels – with national policy makers, local government elected and permanent executives, city planners, architects, as well as with home-based worker leaders and home-based workers in common trades, e.g., leather work, or jewellery making, textile workers, embroidery workers etc.
- b) **Exposure Visits** were once again a unanimous recommendation, as a form of learning across regions and even across countries within a region. WIEGO could support and facilitate this in a focussed way by identifying the needs and then matching them with the resources available. Such visits could be around a variety of subjects, some of which are given below. These exchange visits and exhibitions (where possible) both within a

country as well as across countries and across regions are known to be very effective and enjoyable. They also create solidarity, better understanding of others and help one realise one's own potential.

ii) Awareness Building among Policy Makers:

- a) **Policy Dialogues:** It would be good to have these at various levels – with national policy makers, local government elected and permanent executives, city planners, architects, as well as with home-based worker leaders and home-based workers in common trades, e.g., leather work, or jewellery making, textile workers, embroidery workers etc.
- b) **Exposure Dialogue Programmes (EDP):** EDPs have proved to be a very effective way of exposing policy makers and other duty bearers (eg.municipal staff and other service providers) to the reality of home-based workers lives and homes and helping them to appreciate and understand their issues and concerns and do something about it. This could be a 4 to 7 day activity to get exposure to the struggle and vulnerability of HBWs by living with one for a couple of days; to reflect on the situation; to dialogue with each other and finally to decide what you can change and how – it may be a policy or design of a scheme or a product. EDPs can be very powerful mechanisms to bring about change. However, they are also quite expensive to implement and also require a lot of coordination and time to plan and find the right players (HBWs and duty bearers) and match them. In view of the constraints mentioned above, WIEGO may like to consider if it will be feasible for them to support EDPs.
- c) **Documentation of Good Practices and Development of Case Studies:** Documentation of good practices and development of case studies on a range of subjects would be very helpful to understand what works and what doesn't. It is important to look at outcomes as well as processes and the role of various stakeholders. WIEGO could support these activities, both with technical and financial resources.

iii) Capacity Building:

- a) **Development of Tool Kits and Training:** using both print and audio visual modes, on some of the topics mentioned in (vi) below and a shelf of alternate layouts/designs for HBWs houses could be something that WIEGO could support. There could be separate tool kits for trainers and different ones for the leaders /HBWs. It is also recommended that WIEGO supports the training of trainers, on how to use these tool kits.
- b) **Development of Strategies and Action Plans:** Based on experiences of what works and what doesn't, the findings of operations research and other studies and with technical inputs from experts, strategies for different issues and topics mentioned below could be worked out in joint workshops. Since these would need to be specific to the location and ground realities, these strategies and plans would need to be developed separately for local, state/provincial and national levels. WIEGO could provide technical and financial resources for this.
- c) **Campaigns:** WIEGO is very well suited to facilitate the conception, development and running a global and regional campaigns. The subject of the campaigns could be mutually agreed on by all the regions.

Suggested Cross-Cutting Topics: Based on an assessment from this mapping some suggested topics (though not exhaustive) for learning and sharing events, exposure visits, development of strategies, plans and tool kits could be:

- a) Layout and design of homes – efficient space optimisation especially for raw materials and finished products of HBWs, providing for incremental additions to houses so that home-based workers could make additions from time to time; layout and construction to maximise natural light and ventilation.
- b) Ways and means to gain access to affordable, reliable and safe basic civic amenities, like water supply, electricity, sanitation, drainage, street lighting etc. especially by delinking security of tenure with the service to be provided. Strategies for home-based workers involvement in decision making and maintaining basic civic amenities.
- c) Various sources and methods to obtain financing for homes including innovative ways to obtain finances for house construction, repair and upgradation.
- d) Strategies to address violence against women HBWs – awareness of the different kinds, strategies to combat it and the legal and other community frameworks available for that.
- e) Energy audits by HBWs themselves and simple solutions to address high electricity bills and also the use of solar power and solar devises.
- f) Strategies adopted (e.g. by Eastern Europe) to get ratification of ILO Convention 177 on home work and other relevant ILO Conventions and recommendations.
- g) Experiences regarding HBWs involvement in city planning, public housing, post eviction processes like rehabilitation and re-development – what kind, where, with what facilities and compensation and at what cost to the displaced.
- h) Experiences regarding advocating and negotiating for markets – night markets, exclusive markets, weekly markets etc. and their management partially or wholly by the sellers.

iv) Suggested Topics for WIEGO Research:

- a) **Work Centres / Common Workspaces:** Since common shared workspaces and storage facilities have been quite well received in some locations and has been a demand of the workers from time to time; WIEGO could study this and determine in what circumstances such common work spaces and storage facilities could be a viable option and how to operationalise them. This could be an operations research activity in selected locations across the regions. A few work centres in the vicinity of HBWs homes could be set up and the advantages and disadvantages of centres compared to the homes of HBWs could be studied. HNSA has suggested Tirupur could be one such location in India.
- b) **Climate Stressors:** Since heat as well as cold stress is something that affects HBWs' lives and their productivity, WIEGO could do some studies, in select locations across all regions, to see how and to what extent these affect HBWs and suggest innovative

remedies to address them. All the regions showed an interest in this and some have done some innovative work around the issue as well. Once the study is done, the findings could be shared with all regions in a seminar or workshop where action plans can be developed for the locations studied.

- c) **Disaster Preparedness:** for home-based workers is something that has not been given much importance but whose time has come. Besides sharing of experiences on the subject, WIEGO could consider doing hands on workshops where disaster preparedness plans and protocols could be developed in consultation with HBWs with technical assistance from experts.
- d) **Occupational Safety and Health:** WIEGO could support an action research to see how to make homes safer and healthier for women HBWs in different occupational groups – basically to assess what OSH measures could be suggested and put them in place. An assessment of the adverse effects / impacts before the interventions and after the interventions would provide good evidence for advocacy and replication. Workers education materials / tool kits for select occupational groups could also be developed to clearly identify what workers can do to increase their safety and comfort.
- e) **Green Energy:** WIEGO could support an action research regarding the use of non-conventional green energy by HBWs, since the cost of electricity for HBWs is quite costly and unreliable at present in many regions, resulting in reducing the profitability of their work. Non-conventional green solutions like solar energy could be explored and put in place at selected locations. Assessing the impact of these interventions would be helpful in advocating around and promoting such measures.
- f) **Home Stays:** Home-based workers offering home stay facilities to international tourists is something that is being done on a very small scale at present - for example in Nepal. This has the scope of increasing awareness and appreciation of the difficult lives HBWs lead and the goods and services they produce and also bringing in some extra income. This may be an opportunity for crowd sourcing of funds to improve the habitat of home-based workers. One could tie up with rural tourism / culture tourism operators who could offer attractive packages. However, this would need to be thought through more carefully.

For Africa: Two special recommendations are being made for Africa, as it is a new region, as far as home-based workers are concerned. Not very much has been done compared to the other regions (with the exception of Latin America) though there is considerable scope to organise and empower women home-based workers in the region.

- a) **Studies of Home-based Workers:** In order to have a good assessment of the number, spread and conditions in which home-based workers live and work in each of the five countries, WIEGO may like to commission studies. Besides the physical aspects of home as the work place and civic amenities; attitudes and self-identification as home-based workers could form an important part of the research. Initial assessment shows that 95% of the home-based workers do not identify themselves as such or as contributors to their families, community and country. This will provide a good base for creating visibility of home-based workers and evidence-based advocacy with policy makers. It will also guide strategies and activities that the regional and national nets can take up.

b) **Organising of Home-based Workers:** The Africa Platform strongly believes that ‘Organising, organising and organising is the way to go’. WIEGO could therefore support the mobilising and organising of home-based workers into groups and membership-based organisations. The natural next step would be to facilitate the development and / or strengthening of national and regional networks. The development / revising to suit the African context of tools and capacity building for this would be a very useful. WIEGO’s support in this direction would be very strategic and helpful.

For South Asia and South East Asia:

In both South Asia and South East Asia, there are some interesting schemes which are very relevant for home-based workers from poor households, like the ‘One million housing project’ in the Philippines, the ‘*Jahan jhuggi, waheen makan*’ (basically a scheme for insitu development of slums) in Delhi and the ‘Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)’ in India. WIEGO could work with the regional nets to help them strategise and plan on how to take advantage of these opportunities and help the needy HBWs to access these projects. Patamaba has already indicated that they would welcome some capacity building in policy development and in understanding and operationalising cooperative and housing development. There could be similar initiatives in other countries which would be very relevant for home-based workers who may need that little extra hand holding for them to be strategic in their approach in helping HBWs access the benefits. WIEGO could provide technical support to regional nets for such activities.

Some allies and support groups that could be involved in operationalising these recommendations and also more generally as well could include:

- 1) HomeNet International (HNI)
- 2) International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- 3) Concerned government departments at national and state levels
- 4) Local governments / municipalities
- 5) Academic and research institutes concerned with planning, design and architecture
- 6) Trade unions
- 7) Mahila Housing SEWA Trust, Ahmedabad, India
- 8) Indian Institute for Human Settlements, New Delhi and Bangalore, India
- 9) Institute for Human Development, New Delhi
- 10) OSH Clinics / hospitals in Thailand
- 11) Federation of Informal Workers in different countries

Annex 1: Region-wise persons interviewed

1. Mr. Edwin Bett, Regional Coordinator of the Africa Platform
2. Ms. Violeta Zlateva, Regional Coordinator HomeNet Eastern Europe & Central Asia
3. Ms. Patricia Conoman, Cotrado ALAC and Conatrado Nationale Chile
4. Ms. Edileuza Guimar, Atemdo, Brazil
5. Ms. Veronica Lopez, CTCP, Nicaragua
6. Ms. Gloria Solorzano, Renatta, Peru
7. Ms. Janhavi Dave, International Coordinator HomeNet South Asia
8. Ms. Namrata Bali, Strategy Adviser, HomeNet South Asia and Director Indian Academy for Self Employed Workers.
9. Ms. Bijal Brahmhatt, Director Mahila Housing Sewa Trust (MHT)
10. Ms. Suntaree H. Saeng-ging, Regional Coordinator HomeNet South East Asia
11. Ms. Poonsap Tulaphan, HomeNet Thailand
12. Ms. Lourdes Gula, HomeNet Philippines and Patamaba

Annex 2: Format for collecting information

HOME=WORKPLACE INITIATIVE FOR HOME-BASED WORKERS

REGION Country

| | ISSUE | PRESENT CONDITION (in summary) | IMPLICATIONS OR PROBLEMS /CHALLENGES | WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ? | WHAT ARE YOU DOING OR PLAN TO DO? |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Pillar A. Improving physical spaces for home-based workers | | | | | |
| 1. | Size of HBW's homes (Eg. Small and cramped or sufficient) Separate room for HBW to work? Design and layout of home adequate? | | | | |
| 2. | Quality of homes (materials used) permanent or temporary sheds? Located in slums/informal settlements? | | | | |
| 3. | i) Ventilation ii) light and thermal comfort | | | | |
| 4. | Civic amenities Toilets, Water supply, Drainage, Garbage collection | | | | |
| 5. | Security of tenure Ownership or rented Any problem of eviction, relocation ? Pl describe in brief | | | | |
| 6. | Do HBWs face problems of Zoning ie. Are HBWs allowed to work in all zones, like residential zones? | | | | |
| Pillar B. Promoting energy efficiency and climate resilience | | | | | |
| 1. | Electricity Is it affordable? Is it regular (no cuts)? Is it legal? Any energy audits done HBWs for their own homes | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Any clean energy eg. Solar wind energy being used? | | | | |
| 2. | Do HBWs get affected by climate changes heat, cold flooding hurricanes others | | | | |
| 3. | What are the Occupational health and safety issues HBWs face Eg. Bad eyesight, back pain etc due to bad posture, breathing problems due to fibres/gases | | | | |
| 4. | Do HBWs face violence? From who? What kind (Eg. physical, verbal, sexual) | | | | |
| Pillar C. Plans and policies keeping HBWs in focus | | | | | |
| 1. | Involvement of HBWs in macro policy for HBWs (Eg. A law or national policy for HBWs or ratification of ILO C-177) | | | | |
| 2. | Involvement of HBWs in city planning | | | | |
| 3. | Involvement of HBWs in relocation/redevelopment | | | | |
| 4. | Involvement of HBWs in Zoning | | | | |
| 5. | Involvement of HBWs in Governance and maintenance of public housing or civic amenities | | | | |
| 6. | Involvement of HBWs in Designing public housing and their layout | | | | |
| 7. | Involvement of HBWs in Public transport and communication (mobile and internet services) | | | | |
| 8. | What is the support from Govt / local authority for providing markets | | | | |

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | How do you think WIEGO can support HBWs regarding the above issues? (Eg. Workers Education, advocacy materials, learning and sharing platforms, technical advise, research etc). Please be specific. |
| 2. | Who could be support groups and allies in your country/region? |

References

- 1) Chen Martha A (2014) 'Home-based Workers sector Report : Informal Economy Monitoring Study', WIEGO, Cambridge, MA, USA, available at [http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/IEMS-Home-based Workers-Full report](http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/IEMS-Home-based%20Workers-Full%20report)
- 2) Sinha Shalini (2013), "Housing and urban service needs of home-based workers: Findings from a seven country study", WIEGO Policy Brief(Urban Policies) No.15, WIEGO, Cambridge, MA, USA, available at [http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Sinha- Home-based workers-WIEGO-PB15](http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Sinha-Home-based%20workers-WIEGO-PB15)
- 3) Empowering Home-Based Workers in India: Strategies and Solutions <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/empowering-home-based-workers-india-strategies-and-solutions>
- 4) Synthesis Study Key Issues of Urban Poor Home-Based Workers in South and South East Asian Countries (Inclusive Cities Project) May 2012 <https://hnsa.org.in/resources/regional-synthesis-urban-issues>
- 5) Draft of 'Making home-based work environments safer, healthier and productive Experiences and Insights from MHT's work' by City Collab for MHT and WIEGO