



SEWU News

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Newsletter of the Self Employed Women's Union (SEWU)

ILO Convention on Home-based Work

Pat Horn, Eunice Ntshangase and Sarah Nkunkwana attended the conference of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland, in June. They were participating in discussions about international guidelines for the recognition and protection of home-based workers. These international guidelines were a Convention (which is legally enforceable by countries who ratify the Convention) and a Recommendation containing a number of additional proposals which are not necessarily enforced by law.

The SEWU delegation was part of a group of women from different organisations in Homenet, the international body of organisations representing home-based workers which SEWU and SEWA from India both belong to. They had to lobby as many governments as possible to vote in support of the Convention. The South African government was one of those who supported it very strongly. The employers group at the conference fought very hard to stop the Convention being adopted, but in the end it was passed by a two-thirds majority vote. It was a victory for homeworkers, who have not been widely recognised in the past. Now the challenge is to get governments to ratify the Convention.

SEWU has translated the Convention and the Recommendation on Home-based work into Zulu, and we will be making copies for our members. We will also be lobbying the Labour Department of the government, as well as the trade unions (COSATU, NACTU and Fedsal) to push for the ratification of the Convention in the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (Nedlac). Then the recognition and protection of home-based workers can become part of South Africa's laws for the first time.

RIGHT: Pat Horn of SEWU and Ela Bhatt of SEWA at the ILO Conference.



UPat Horn weSEWU no
Ela Bhatt weSEWA
bekwinkomfa yeILO.

IsiVumelwano se-ILO Mayelana Nomsebenzi Wasekhaya

UPat Horn, no-Eunice Ntshangase noSarah Nkunkwana bethamela inkomfa ye-International Labour Organization (ILO) eGeneva, eSwitzerland, ngoJune. Babebambe iqhaza ezingxoxweni zemikhomandlela yamazwe ngamazwe zokuhlonishwa nokuvikeleka kwabasebenzi abasebenzela emakhaya. Lemikhomandlela yamazwe ngamazwe iyisiVumelwano (esiyisibopho ngokusemthethweni kumazwe asamukelile lesiVumelwano) futhi iyisiNcomo esiqukethe iziphakamiso ezingana eziyizijobelelo kodwa ezingeyona ngempela impoqo emthethweni.

Amanxusa kaSEWU ayeyingxenye yesigungu sabesifazane abavela ezinhlanganweni ezehlukene zeHomnet, okuyisigungu samazwe ngamazwe esimelele abasebenzi abasebenzela emakhaya uSEWU neSEWA yaseNdiya abangaphansi kwaso. Bamelwa ukuheha ohulumeni abaningi kakhulu ukuba bavotele ukwesekela lesiVumelwano. Uhulumeni waseSouth Africa ungomunye walabo abasesekela kakhulu. Iqembu labaqashi kulenkomfa lalwa kanzima lizama ukunqanda lesiVumelwano ukuba singemukelwa, kodwa ekugcineni saphasiswa ngeningi lokubili kokuthathu (2/3 majority). Kwaba wukuhlabana kubasebenzi abasebenzela emakhaya njengoba bengakaze bahlonishwe maphambilini. Manje inselele ingukwenza ohulumeni basamukele lesiVumelwano.

U-SEWU usesitolikele esiZulwini lesiVumelwano nesiNcomo somsebenzi wasekhaya, futhi amalungu ethu sizowenzela amakhophi. Futhi sizopheka abomnyango wezemisebenzi kuhulumeni, kanye nezinyonyana (uCOSATU, neNACTU neFedsal) ukuba balwele ukwamukelwa lwalesiVumelwano kwiNational Economic, Development and Labour Council (nedlac). Lapho-ke ukuhlonipheka nokuvikeleka kwabasebenzi abasebenzela emakhaya sekungaba yingxenye yemithetho yaseSouth Africa okokuqala.

SEWU Second Annual Conference

The second Annual Conference of SEWU was held on 9/10 July 1996 at the Koinonia Camp & Conference Centre in Botha's Hill outside Durban. It was very cold, and members from Matatiele and Makhoba were not able to get there. 67 of SEWU's members, elected from 25 branches, attended the conference.

Opening session

We had a guest speaker, Kathini Maloba-Caines, from the Kenyan Women Workers' Organisation (KEWWO). They have women working in the formal economy as well as informal sector workers in their organisation. KEWWO invited SEWU to form a partnership with them as a way of building sisterhood between working women in Africa. The conference participants agreed enthusiastically to this. The other guest speaker was Margaret Winter, a former mayor of Durban who opened up the rights of street traders in Durban at that time. She is still a councillor in the Durban Metropolitan Council, and has promised to help SEWU to push for the rights of self-employed women in the informal sector. We were very sorry that the third speaker, Inkosi Sibongile Zungu, was not able to be with us, as there was a power failure in her area on that day and we were not sure of the roads, due to the weather.

Closed sessions of conference

There was a lively discussion about SEWU's progress over the past year since our last conference, and about how to progress over the next year. Resolutions were adopted about the following issues:

1. The opening of SEWU's national office in Durban for expanding into other regions. Pat Horn is the National Co-ordinator and Lungi Lingishi is the National Administrator, and they are both still employed under the

Inkomfa Yesibili kaSEWU Yonyaka

Inkomfa yesibili kaSEWU yonyaka yabanjwa ngomhla ka-9/10 July 1996 eKoinonia Camp & Conference Centre eBotha's Hill emaphethelweni eTheku. Amakhaza ayeshubisa umnkantsha, ngaleyondlela amalungu aseMatatiele ehluleka ukufika. Kwakukhona amalungu kaSEWU angu-67 akhethwa emegatsheni angu-25.

Iseshini yokuvula

Sasinesikhulumi esinguKathini Maloba-Caines weKenyan Workers' Organization (KEWWO). Enhlanganweni yabo banabesifazane abasebenza embonini yezomnotho ojwayelékile kanye nezomnotho onganakekile. I-KEWWO yamema uSEWU ukuba kwakhiwe ubudlelwane bokusungula ubuhlobo phakathi kwabesimame abasebenzayo e-Afrika. Izethameli zenkomfa zakwamukela ngesasasa lokhu. Isikhulumi esiqavile kwakunguMargaret Winter, owayeyiMeya yeTheku, owaziwa kwakhe amalungelo abadayisi basemigwaqweni ngenkathi eyiMeya. Namanje useyiKhansela emKhandlwini weTheku namaphethelo, futhi wethembise ukuthi uzosiza uSEWU ngamalungelo abesifazane abazisebenzayo. Siyadabuka-ke ukuthi isikhulumi sesithathu, iNkos! Sibongile Zungu, akakwazanga ukubanathi ngenxa yokubalekelwa ugesi ngalelolanga futhi singaqondi ukuthi imigwaqo yayiphephe kanjani ngenxa yesimo sezulu.

Amaseshini enkomfa avevalelekile

Kwaba nengxoxo emnandi ngenqubekelaphambili kaSEWU onyakeni owedlule kusukela kwinkomfa yethu yokugcina, nangokuthi sizothuthuka kanjani kulonyaka ozayo. Kwathathwa izinqumo mayelana nalamaphuzu alandelayo:

1. Ukuvulwa kwehhovisi likazwelonke likaSEWU eThekwini lokwenabela kwezinye izifundazwe. UPat Horn ungumXhumanisi kazwelonke kanti uLungi Lingishi ungu-Administrator kazwelonke, futhi bobabili basaqashwe ngaphansi kwezimo ezifanayo nezabanye bestaff futhi basalawulwa yi-Executive Committee.



PHOTOGRAPH - JOANNE BLOCH

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Iqhubeka ekhasini 3

Women like these
SEWU members need
places to work together.



PHOTOGRAPH - JOANNE BLOCH

Amakhosikazi anjenga
weSEWU adinga izindawo
zokusebenzela ndawonye.

- same conditions as other staff and accountable to the Executive Committee.
- SEWU will start negotiations with Civic Associations in areas where our members are working at home, about their needs. Some of these needs are for places where they can work together, as well as for markets to sell their goods.
 - SEWU will push for Foreigners' Markets to be set up, so that traders from other African countries can trade with South African informal traders on a wholesale basis at these markets, instead of competing with them on the streets. The aim of this is to try to meet the needs of survivalist traders (especially women) from other African countries and South African informal traders, and remove the cause of conflicts between them.
 - SEWU will push for the development of cultural tourism at ncema-cutting time (first two weeks of May each year) and craft markets for the women to be able to sell their goods to tourists when they come to the places where they cut ncema. This could provide market opportunities for women craftworkers in the rural areas, and will involve negotiating with the Parks Board and the Departments of Economic Affairs & Tourism, and Traditional & Environmental Affairs.
 - It was decided to introduce a minimum age of 18 years for SEWU membership, and it was resolved that SEWU and all its members should encourage young girls to finish their schooling before starting to work, in order for them to be empowered as the women of tomorrow.

Finally, the following new office-bearers were elected by the Conference:

PRESIDENT: Esme Dlamini (Clermont branch)
VICE-PRESIDENT: Patricia Mbiko (Newtown C, Inanda)
TREASURER: Eunice Ntshangase (Richmond Farm)
SECRETARY: Busi Xaba-Shezi (organiser)

2. U-SEWU uzoqala izingxoxo namaCivic Association ezindaweni lapho amalungu ethu esebenzela emakhaya khona, mayelana nezidingo zawo. Ezinye zalezidingo yizindawo lapho engasebenzela khona ndawonye, kanye nezimakethe zokudayisa izimpahla zawo.

3. U-SEWU uzolwela ukuba kwakhiwe izimakethe zabantu bokufika, ukuze kuthi abadayisi abavela kwamanye amazwe ase-Afrika bakwazi ukudayiselana nabadayisi base-Afrika bemboni enganakekile ngenani lamawolisela kulezimakethe. esikhundleni sokubangisana nabo emigwaqweni. Injongo yalokhu ukuzama ukuhlangabezana nezidingo zabadayisi abacikizayo (ikakhulu abesifazane) abavela kwamanye amazwe ase-Afrika nezabadayisi abanganakekile baseSouth Africa, kuphele ukungqubuzana phakathi kwabo.

4. U-SEWU uyolwela ukuthuthukiswa kwezokungcebeleka ngokwamasiko ngesikhathi sokusikwa kwencema (emasontweni okuqala amabili kaMay njalo ngonyaka) nezimakethe zemisebenzi yezandla zabantu besifazane ukuze bakwazi ukudayisa izimpahla zabo kubangebeleki ngesikhathi befika ezindaweni lapho besika khona incema. Lokhu kungavula amathuba okudayisa kubasebenzi besifazane bemisebenzi yezandla emaphandleni. Kuyodingeka kuxoxiswane nabeParks Board nabomNyango wezomNotho nokungcebeleka, nezeNdabuko nezindawo esiphila kuzo.

5. Kwanqunywa ukuthi alizujoyiniswa ilungu elingaphansi kweminyaka engu-18, kwabuye kwanqunywa ukuba uSEWU nawo wonke amalungu akhe bakhuthaze amantombane amancane ukuba aphothule esikoleni kuqala ngaphambi kokuqala ukusebenza ukuze athole amandla okuba abesifazane bangomuso.

INKomfa yaphetha ngokukhetha lababaphathi bezikhundla abasha:
UMONGAMELI: Esme Dlamini (Clermont Branch)
VICE-PRESIDENT: Patricia Mbiko (Newtown C, Inanda)
USIKHWAMA: Eunice Ntshangase (Richmond Farm)
UNOBHALA: Busi Xaba-Shezi (umGqugquzeli)

A conference on Human Habitation

In June Ntokozo Mbhele attended the Habitat II conference in Istanbul, Turkey. This conference took the form of all UN Conferences. There was the official conference and an NGO forum. There were a number of powerful women speaking. Ntokozo participated in a panel on "My home my Workplace". This was to share experiences of our members about how their houses are also used as business premises. Home-based workers from other countries like India through their Union have been able to raise credit to extend their houses. Some women who spoke also have to make do with very little, like SEWU members having very small houses or living in informal settlements. Outside of meeting and presentations there were exhibitions. Organisations had exhibitions of the work done in their countries and exhibitions on Good Practices. SEWA from India got an award for doing well.

A woman from Jamaica related how they have been involved in negotiations with gangs. Gang fighting disrupts all community activities. In Jamaica, education had come to a standstill due to gang violence. It was shown that where there is violence women are the most vulnerable. In countries like Zimbabwe, Namibia and Kenya women reported that they are in development committees. This helps to make sure that women's rights in getting access to housing are not ignored. Women also formed part of policy making in community housing. SEWA Bank celebrated its 20 years of existence and service to self-employed women in Amhebedhad. There were other organisations present concerned with women's access to credit. It seems all over the world women's access to housing is a problem.

Women took this conference very seriously. There were women's caucuses every morning. Women lobbied their government representatives on issues agreed in caucuses as pertinent to women. Issues of language on the text were high on the agenda as well. The governments of all member states are committed to Habitat II issues. Our government had representatives from the housing department. We hope that these conferences do not only widen one's understanding of international issues, but that Conventions are ratified and implemented by countries. We understand that the Durban Metropolitan Council has adopted Agenda 21 from the Habitat II Conference.

Ntokozo Mbhele
of SEWU.

Ntokozo Mbhele
of SEWU.



INkomfa ephathelene nezeNhlalo kubantu

NgoJune uNtokozo Mbhele wethamela inkomfa yezeNhlalo II e-Istanbul, eTurkey. Lenkomfa yahamba ngendlela efana nazo zonke izinkomfa zeNhlango yeziZwe. Kwakukhona inkomfa esemthethweni nenkundla yeNGO. Kwakunezikhulumi eziningana zabesifazane ezinohlonze. UNtokozo wayesesigungwini esasidingida iphuzu elithi "Ikhaya lami Indawo yami yokusebenza." Lokhu kwakwenzelwa ukuba amalungu ethu athole ukuchathazelana ngezipiliyoni zokuthi izindlu zawo nazo zisetshenziswa kanjani njengamagceke ebhizinisi. Abasebenzi abasebenzela emakhaya bakwamanye amazwe afana nelaseNdiya sebekwazile ukubolekwa izimali zokuxhuma izindlu zabo ngosizo lweNyonyana. Abanye besifazane abakhuluma nabo baziphilisa ngeze, njengamalungu kaSEWU anezindlu ezincane kakhulu okanye ahlala emijondolo. Ngaphandle komhlango nokwethulwa kwezinkulumo kwakukhona imibukiso. Izinhlangano zazinemibukiso yemisebenzi eyakhiwa emazweni azo nemibukiso yemiSebenzi emiHle. I-SEWA yaseNdiya yathola umklomelo womsebenzi omuhle.

Owesifazane waseJamaica wakhuluma ngokuthi babengena kanjani ezingxoxweni nezigebebu. Izimpi zezigebebu zibulala imisebenzi yemiphakathi. KwelaseJamaica, imfundo yama nse ngenxa yodlame lwezigebebu. Kwatholakala ukuthi lapho kunodlame khona kuthimaziseka abesifazane. Emazweni afana neZimbabwe, Namibia neKenya abesifazane babika ukuthi basemakomitini ezentuthuko. Lokhu kuyasiza ekwenzeni isiqiniseko sokuthi amalungelo abesifazane okuthola izindlu awashaywa indiva. Futhi abesifazane baneqhaza ekwakhiweni kwenqubomgomo yezindlu zomphakathi. IBhange leSEWA lagubha iminyaka yalo engu-20 lasungulwa futhi lisiza abesifazane abazisebenzayo e-Amhebedhad. Kwakukhona nezinye izinhlangano ezikhathazekile ngokuba abesifazane babolekwe izimali. Kuyacaca ukuthi emhlabeni jikelele ukutholakala kwezindlu kwabesifazane kuyinkinga.

Abesifane babezimisele kakhulu ngalenkomfa. Njalo ekuseni kwakubakhona izinguyazana. Abesifazane babeheha abameleli bohulumeni babo mayelana namaphuzu okuvunyelenwe ngawo ezinguyazeni eziphathelene nabesifazane. Izingqinamba eziphathelene nolimi nazo zazibekwe phambili ohlelweni. Ubulumeni wakithi wayenabameleli bomnyango wezezindlu. Masethembe ukuthi lezinkomfa azigcini-nje ngokwenabisa ulwazi lwezingqinamba zamazwe ngamazwe, kodwa iziVumelwano ziyemukelwa futhi zisetshenziswe amazwe. Amahlebezi athi uMasipala weTheku namaphethelo usemamukele u-agenda 21 weNkomfa yezeNhlalo II