



Women in Informal Employment
Globalizing and Organizing

CHANGES IN THE WORLD OF WORK:
RESPONDING TO THE RISE AND RISE OF
INFORMALITY

NEDLAC ANNUAL SUMMIT

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all photos own

Informal employment, informal economy and informal sector are different!

2

- **Informal Employment:** a job-based concept defined in terms of employment relationship and protections associated with the job. ILO Stats definition applied by QLFS. Includes
 - Own account workers
 - Workers holding informal jobs in informal AND formal firms, including sub-contracted and domestic workers

- **Informal Economy:** “all economic activities by workers and economic units that are in law or in practice not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements” (ILO Recommendation 204)

- **Informal sector:** an enterprise-based concept defined by the characteristics of the place of work
 - ▣ Employees in establishments of fewer than 5 workers who do not deduct tax
 - ▣ Employers, own account workers and unpaid family workers who are not registered for either income tax or VAT

Why is the distinction important?

4

When QLFS reports on numbers in the informal sector, these do not include people informally employed in the formal sector

To understand informal employment in its totality, we must look at the informal sector numbers AND the numbers of workers in the formal sector who are without protections such as UIF, medical aid, sick leave etc. QLFS reports on these.

Loose use of the terms has negative policy and action implications

So what do the numbers look like?

5

QLFS Q2 2022	Millions
Population age 15-64	40.2
Labour Force	23.6
Employed Total	15.6
Employed in formal sector (non agric)	10.5
Employed in informal sector (non agric)	3.0
Agriculture	0.9
Private households	1.1
Unemployed (narrow definition)	8.0

Take into account those in employment without protections in both sectors

6

QLFS Q2 2022	Millions
No sick leave	3.6
No parental leave	5.8
No UIF	4.8
No medical aid	9.0
No written contract	2.3

Added together

7

- Informal sector (non agric)
- High proportion of agricultural workforce
- High proportion of domestic workforce
- Other workers in the formal economy without protections

We're looking at around 7 million in informal employment i.e. 50%

World workforce is 61% informally employed.

How to reverse this to Decent Work?

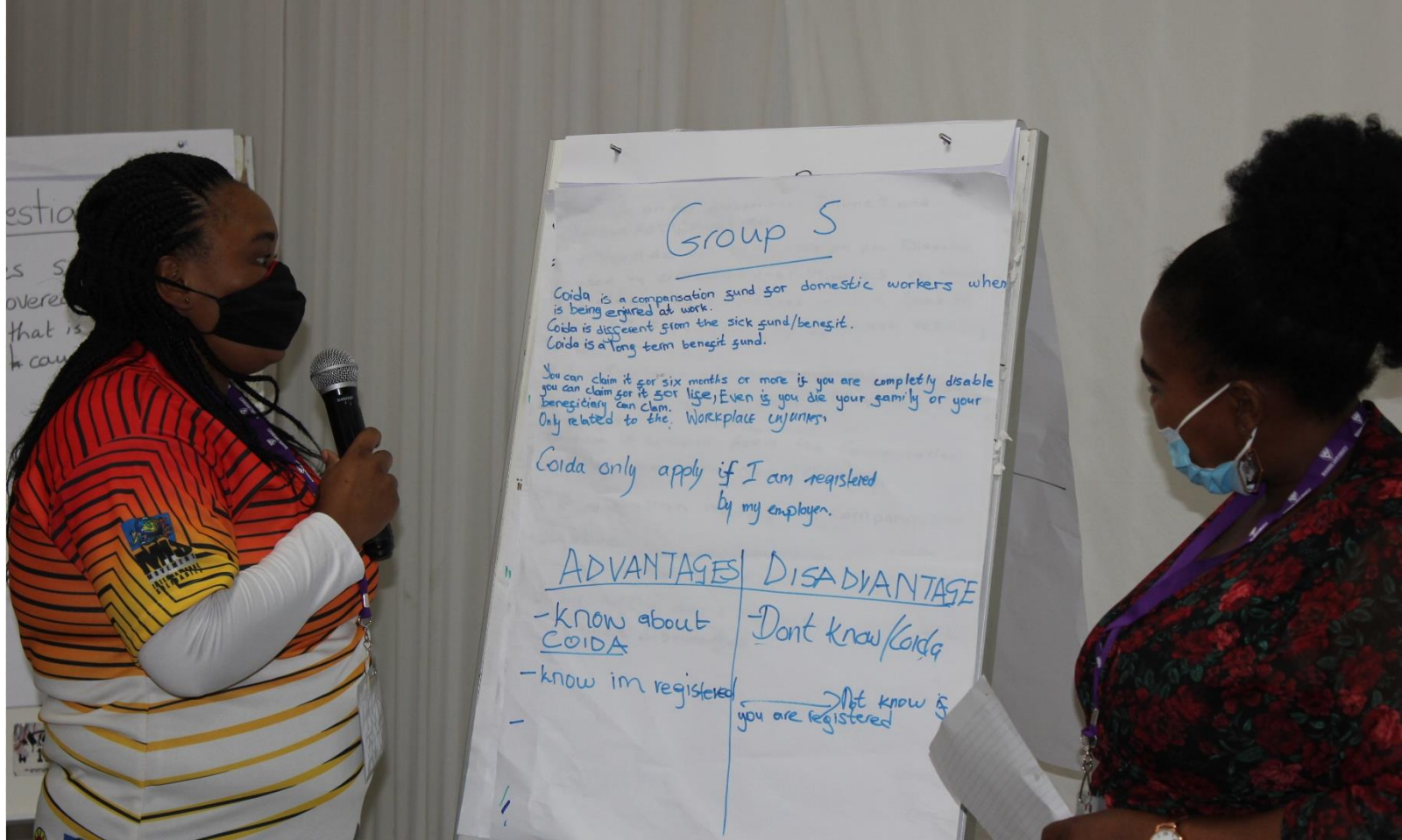
8

- End informalisation in the formal sector
- For own-account workers
 - ▣ Encourage collective organising
 - ▣ Recognise representative organisations, including for collective negotiation purposes: Nothing for us without us
 - ▣ Extend social protections
 - ▣ Provide infrastructural support at local level to enhance livelihoods e.g. sorting and storage space, water
 - ▣ Do away with harmful and punitive regulations
 - ▣ Provide access to training including via SETAs
 - ▣ Provide Occupational health and safety support
 - ▣ Recognise as workers

JHB reclaimers organise for improved livelihoods through infrastructural support: Bekezela, Newtown, JHB

9





Organised domestic workers prepare to engage DEL on COIDA and UIF implementation

Johannesburg workshop 2022

Home based workers plan the launch of a national organisation

11

**We are workers:
Our homes are workplaces**



**National workshop
Johannesburg Feb 2022**



Yeoville market traders organising in the face of COVID and then xenophobia. Aug 2022

12

Market logo:

A celebration of African Diversity

Linking People and Places

Spotlessly clean after traders negotiated the insourcing of cleaners by the City



DoNoHarm

NATIONAL INFORMAL TRADERS'

CAMPAIGN



DEMANDS

- ⚙️ Moratorium on evictions of informal traders
- ⚙️ Moratorium on confiscations (*official looting*) of informal traders' stock and equipment
- ⚙️ Urgent adoption of national regulations for Do No Harm policies
- ⚙️ Urgent adoption of regulation of shared economic opportunities (e.g. *permits & licences*) based on 10% quota for non-South Africans in sector of informal trade across each municipality, subject to retention of democratically negotiated exceptions in specified areas/markets
- ⚙️ Stop criminalization of informal traders trying to earn their livelihoods
- ⚙️ Train enforcement agents on implementation of "do no harm" measures



No shortage of international and national tools and forums

14

- ▣ ILO Recommendation 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy
- ▣ 2018 South African roadmap to the implementation of R204
- ▣ Decent Work Country Programme under Nedlac
- ▣ SALGA Public Space Trading Guidelines for Local Government 2021
- ▣ Waste Picker Integration Guideline for South Africa 2020 (DEFF and DST)
- ▣ Tshwane waste picker negotiating forum

National summit to draft R204 roadmap. Ethekekini 2018

15



Challenges and obstacles

16

- Mindsets stuck in informal/formal dichotomy
- Top down approaches and unilateralism (we had a lot of that in the early stages of Covid pandemic)
- Lack of co-ordination between government depts
- Lack of knowledge of own account workers, their activities and issues, and their contribution to the economy
- Lack of knowledge (wilful or not?) of tools available
- Above all, a lack of recognition of own account workers as workers – by all parties

Key takeaways

17

- ❑ Only bottom up works
- ❑ Organising is key – nothing for us without us
- ❑ Recognition is essential
- ❑ Local government needs to be at forefront of engagement and implementation
- ❑ Above all, the worker identity of the majority of the self-employed must be embraced by government, business and trade unions

Let the Nedlac parties do Simon Mbata proud
1971-2022. National coordinator, SAWPA

18

