

Kathmandu Declaration 2000

The Kathmandu Declaration for the rights of South Asian home-based workers was adapted by representatives of South Asian Governments, UN agencies, NGOs and Trade Unions ;in a Conference organized by UNIFEM and WIEGO in October 2000 and supported by International Development Research Centre.

The South Asian Meeting on Women Workers in the Informal Economy Sector was participated by the Governments of India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka: and by Trade Unions and Non-Governmental Organisations and Bangladesh, who met in Kathmandu on 18-20 October 2000 and resolved as follows:

There are at least 50 million home-based workers in South Asia out of whom around 80% are women. They include own account or self-employed workers as well as those who do work for contractors at piece rate.

While these workers contribute significantly to the National Economy, they are mostly illiterate, invisible, unrepresented, voiceless and are not generally incorporated in the National Development agendas.

Therefore, in order to bring these home-based Workers into the National Economic mainstream in accordance with ILO convention no.177, the meeting recommended

- 1) Formulation of National Policy on Home-based Workers by each Country
- 2) Minimum protection, which would include right to organize, minimum remuneration, occupational health and safety, statutory social protection, maternity, childcare , skill development and literacy programme
- 3) Access to markets and economic resources including raw materials, marketing infrastructure, technology, credit and information
- 4) Set up Social Funds for home-based workers, which would provide insurance against risks of illness, death, old age accidents, loss of livelihood assets and contingencies as locally required
- 5) Incorporate into official statistics baseline data regarding various categories of workers in the informal Sector
- 6) Urged SAARC to address the issues of home-based workers in the region and take measures to enable them to deal with the risks and opportunities of globalization.