



Data demands and challenges in measuring informality from a gender perspective

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Side Event on Engendering Informality Statistics

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WIEGO and Gender Statistics

WIEGO: a global network focused on women empowering the working poor, especially women in the Informal economy to secure their livelihoods through equal economic opportunities, rights, protection and voice.

Key stakeholders: MBOs and networks of domestic workers, home-based workers, market traders, street vendors, waste pickers – generally groups of workers who are not well measured in statistics

WIEGO's priority on official statistics: linked to approach of Ela Bhatt, founder of Self-employed Women's Association of India (SEWA) : **Statistics in the hands of activists have power**

- Ensure that sufficient and adequate information exist to understand how the economy works and what indicators to use to monitor its changes over time
- Draw public attention to the size and situation of workers especially women in the informal economy

WIEGO Statistics Programme and Informality

The WIEGO Statistics Programme's two main objectives:

(1) Developing and advocating concepts, classification and methods to identify and tabulate informal employment and its workers in official labor and economic statistics — working closely with ILO Statistics, ICLS, regional commissions and national statistical offices

(2) To put statistics on the informal economy in the hands of users in easily accessible formats, often in collaboration with ILO, for a range of outputs:

- First statistics on informal employment worldwide
- Comprehensive report on *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*
- Reports on informal workers in countries and cities



Importance for WIEGO & gender statistics of proposed informality standards

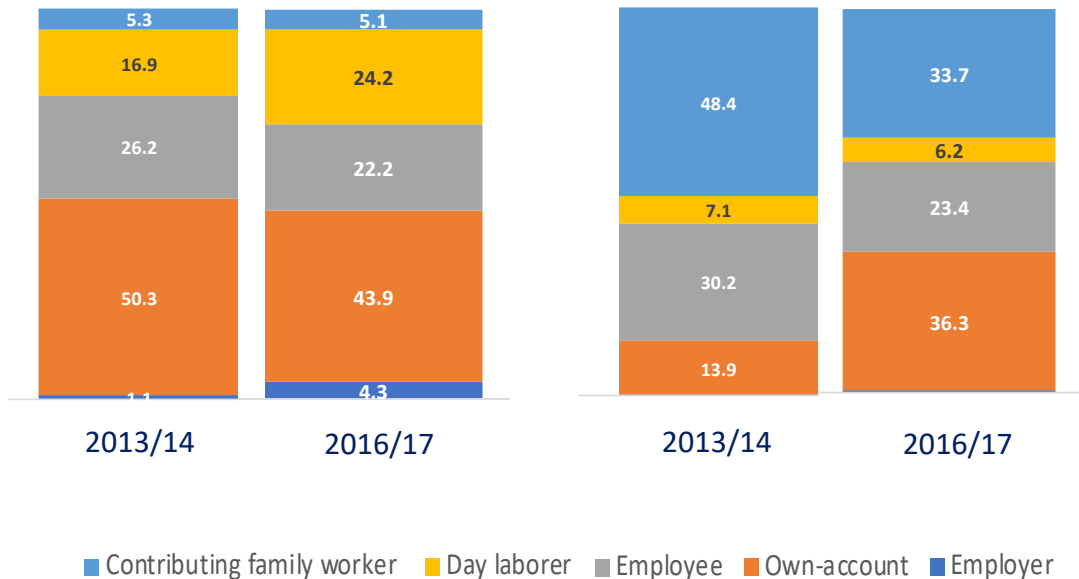
- **61%, or 2 billion of world's employed, and 58 per cent of women employed, are in informal employment**
 - Further harmonization of concept across countries is an aim of the proposed standards
- **Statistics needed on groups of informal workers** not easily reflected in official statistics - home-based workers, market traders, street vendors and waste pickers -and a larger source of employment for women than men
 - Place of work question needed and a priority variable in proposed standards
- **Improved identification of dependent contractors**
 - Across all countries, these workers comprise an increasing share of the informal workforce e.g, many women working in home-based supply chains and now identified as own-account workers are dependent contractors.
- **More precise classification of contributing family workers** - a large share of women in informal economy
 - New recommendations to distinguish the “real” status of contributing family workers
- **An indicator framework** giving priority to new policy related tabulations, including workers that are most exposed to informality

Possible misclassification of women workers across status in employment categories

Percent of employed

Men

Women

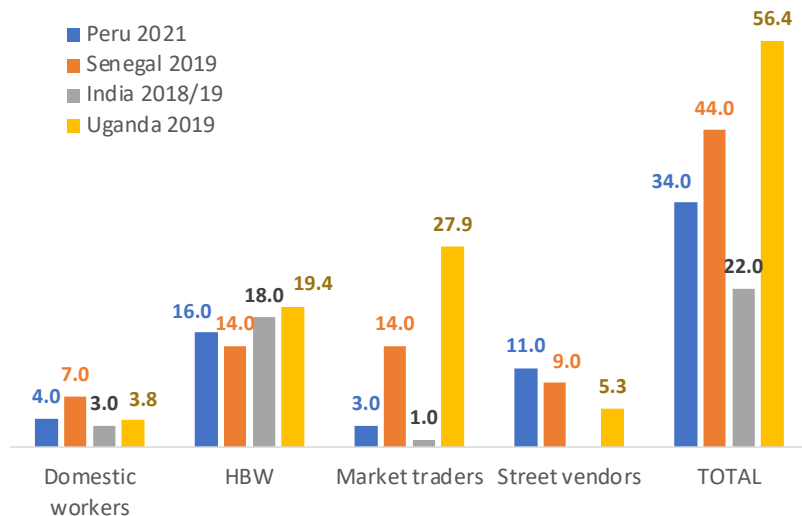


Bangladesh

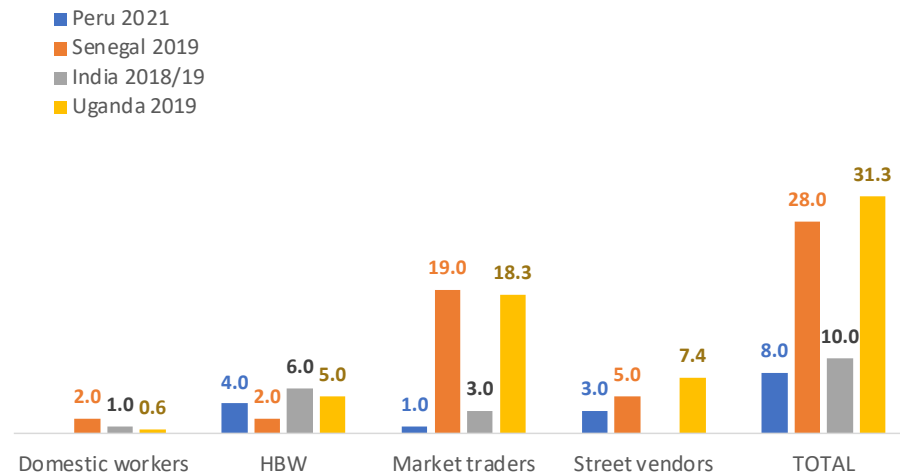
- Much greater share of women classified as CFW, and much lower share as own-account, in the 2013/14 LFS compared to 2016/17 → same does not happen for men, however.
- ICLS recommended specific questions be included in LFS to establish if CFWs have responsibilities/make important decisions for the enterprise.

Worker groups: percent of employment

Women

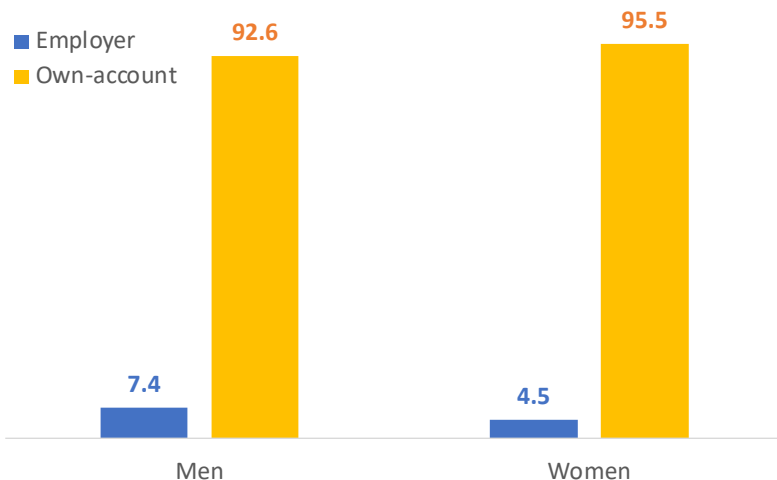


Men

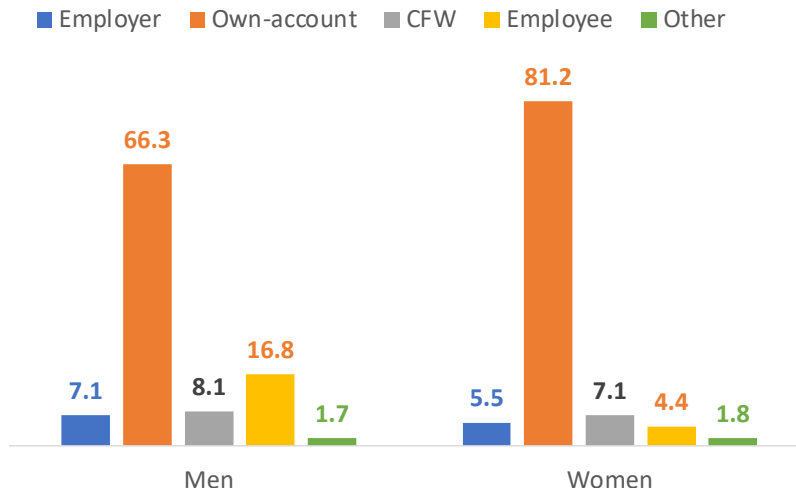


Place of work: the need to ask of all employment status categories

Peru HBW (and common across LFS in Latin America): place of work only asked of self-employed



Ghana HBW (as well as other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa): asked of dependent + self employed



WIEGO's approach to, and use, of the proposed indicator framework



- A major dimension of the indicator framework is the identification of workers that are most exposed to informality
- For WIEGO, these groups of workers include: domestic workers, HBWs, market traders, street vendors and waste pickers – all having a high level of informality
- WIEGO produces several types of statistical briefs that apply many of the proposed indicators in the framework
 - Country level briefs covering the whole set of specific worker groups
 - Briefs focusing on a particular group with data from ILOSTAT in collaboration with the ILO
 - These briefs are used by organizations of informal workers, officials, researchers to advocate and develop policies and plans to secure rights, their livelihood and improve working conditions
 - Also approach brings to light measurement issues in the identification of these groups that in turn have informed WIEGO's participation in the ILO Working Groups preparing for the ICLS



Waste pickers- collect, sort and sell recyclable materials such as paper, cardboard and other reusable materials. Informal workers, not municipal employees.

A worker group of focus to WIEGO and of new policy concern with importance placed on recycling and environmental sustainability

Numbers needed to advocate for policies for these workers but standard labour force surveys are not a good data source for workers whose employment is often seasonal and whose living arrangements may not be included in usual survey areas

- e.g. Senegal 2019 Quarterly Labour Survey identified only around 3,760 waste pickers, with one-third women

However, studies shows there are around that many workers in a single dump site in Dakar.

Statistics on Waste Pickers and Citizen-Generated Data: continued

Efforts to collect data on these workers have been initiated by the organizations of waste pickers and undertaken by them sometimes with municipal authorities

- Bogota, Columbia
- Pune, India
- South Africa
- New York City

New recognition that data producers such as these need to be brought together with the official statistics community and this has resulted in a new initiative of United Nations Statistics Division and others on **Citizen-generated data** - the direct involvement of citizens in any of the multiple stages of producing the data that describe them.

ABOUT WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) is a global network focused on empowering the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy to secure their livelihoods. We believe all workers should have equal economic opportunities, rights, protection and voice. WIEGO promotes change by improving statistics and expanding knowledge on the informal economy, building networks and capacity among informal worker organizations and, jointly with the networks and organizations, influencing local, national and international policies.

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