International Labour Organization

Platform labour in search of value

A study of workers' organizing practices and business models in the digital economy

Platform labour in search of value

A study of workers' organizing practices and business models in the digital economy

First published 2021

Platform labour in search of value : A study of worker organizing practices and business models in the digital economy - Geneva: ILO, 2021.

ISBN 978-92-2-034659-4 (web PDF)

Produced by the Publications Production Unit (PRODOC) of the ILO.

Graphic and typographic design, manuscript preparation, copy-editing, layout and composition, proofreading, printing, electronic publishing and distribution.

The ILO endeavours to use paper sourced from forests managed in an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible manner.

Code: BER-REP

Authors
Anita Gurumurthy, Nandini Chami, Deepti Bharthur

Regional consultants
Ingrid Brudvig (Africa), Sofia Scasserra (Latin America)

Desk research
Prathima Appaji

Acknowledgments
We thank Simel Esim, Valerie Breda, Guy Tchami, Craig Churchill, Rafael Peels, Mohammed Mwamadzingo, Claire La Hovary, Mélanie Jeanroy, Michael Watt and Janine Berg of the International Labour Organization for their inputs into the design and scoping of the study.

The data collection for the study was done between October to November 2019. We are deeply grateful to our key informants who took time out of their busy schedules and generously shared insights from their research, policy advocacy and field practice.

Contents

List of Boxes 3
List of Figures 3
List of Abbreviations 3
Glossary 4

Executive Summary 9

1. Background 16
1.1 Methodology and scope 18

2. The context of platform work 20
2.1 Platform work and increasing informalization 21
2.2 Platformization of the economy 22
2.3 Legal loopholes and platform workers' rights 25

3. Organizing and business models among platform workers – emerging trends 26
3.1 Trade union action 27
3.2 New intermediaries 37
3.3 New SSE platforms 41

4. Discussion and conclusions 52
4.1 Organizing — unconventional modes, new agendas 53
4.2 SSE platform models — data design as linchpin 57

5. Recommendations 62
5.1 Governments 65
5.2 Trade unions 68
5.3 SSE enterprises 70
5.4 Platform companies 71
5.5 ILO 72

Annex 1. List of key informants 76
References 78

© Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito Riobamba Ltda Ecuador

List of Boxes

Box 1.	Attempts by institutional trade unions to mobilize platform workers	**30**
Box 2.	How international trade union federations are challenging worker dataveillance	**33**
Box 3.	Southern actors against "data colonialism"	**35**
Box 4.	Intermediaries providing support services for gig workers	**40**
Box 5.	Food Fairies: A fledgling platform cooperative in Berlin	**42**
Box 6.	SEWA's experience as part of the Platform Development Toolkit	**47**

List of Figures

Fig 1.	Trade union initiatives for platform workers	**32**
Fig 2.	Organizing strategies of workers' organizations	**55**
Fig 3.	Techo-design choices of worker-led platforms	**57**
Fig 4.	Platform pathways for value generation	**60**
Fig 5.	Strategies towards political and economic rights of platform workers	**64**

List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASIMM	Trade Union Association of Motorcyclists, Messengers and Services
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
B2B	Business-to-Business
CLC	Cooperative Labour Contractor
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease
EATUC	East African Trade Union Confederation
ESC-SI	Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions
FACTTIC	The Argentina Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Technology, Innovation and Knowledge
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
SEIU-UHWW	Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association
SMart	Société Mutuelle pour les Artistes
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
TiSK	Tech Innovators Savings and Credit Cooperative
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

Glossary

Algorithmic disciplining: The deployment of algorithmic technologies to remotely manage workers, relying on continual mining of worker data to support automated/semi-automated decision-making pertaining to job allocation, work performance monitoring, and allocation of rewards and penalties. Algorithmic disciplining practices are especially common in platform-based gig work arrangements.

Crowdwork: A work arrangement in which tasks that can be performed online are outsourced to a geographically dispersed pool of workers through a digital platform that does real-time matching of clients with workers. This includes freelancing arrangements for specialized tasks such as software and web development, and data analytics, as well as microwork arrangements that break down a given piece of work into repetitive tasks that can be assigned to low-skilled, remote workers.

Cryptocurrency: A digital artifact designed to serve as a medium of exchange and backed by cryptographic protection to ensure transaction security, control over creation of additional units, and verification of the transfer of assets. Unlike fiat money, which is controlled by central banking systems, cryptocurrencies typically use decentralized control systems. The method that is usually adopted to control cryptocurrency is the creation of a blockchain-based ledger of public transactions that cannot be tampered with.

Dataveillance: The practice of collecting and processing personal data points to surveil a person's activities, including in the context of work management. Digital labour platforms use data points generated by workers as a tool of workplace surveillance. For example, Uber uses GPS and location data to monitor drivers' locations and routes.

Data value chain: The value chain that has evolved around the production of intelligence from data, including data acquisition, data storage and warehousing, data modelling and analysis. As the UNCTAD Digital Economy Report 2019 observes, the entwining of the data value chain with real economy value chains in agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors has structurally transformed the global economy.

Data dividend: A term used by consumer rights advocates to argue that users have to be appropriately compensated by Internet platforms profiting from their data. More recently, the term has also been deployed by workers' organizations to argue for workers' right to claim a share in the value generated from their data by platform companies. It is in the latter sense that this report uses the term.

Data extractivism: The exploitative data practices of ceaseless data mining, intrusive profiling and monopolization of data-based intelligence that characterize the mainstream platform business model.

Data minimalism: A worker-led platform enterprise model that focuses on the creation of localized worker-client networks without a data-based strategy for market expansion. Data-minimalist business models do not reap the "intelligence advantage".

Data maximalism: A worker-led platform enterprise model that emulates the expansive data mining, user profiling and targeting practices of mainstream capitalist platforms.

Data collectivism: A worker-led platform enterprise model that focuses on the creation of peer-based, decentralized networks and generation of data-based business intelligence supported by ethical data pooling practices that respect user agency and are mindful of clear time and purpose limitations.

Enskilment: Capacity-building programmes for workers that focus on building their skills to enhance their prospects of upward mobility in the labour market.

European Union's GDPR - Article 15 on Right of Access by the Data Subject: A provision that gives individuals the right to request from entities controlling their data a copy of their personal data which are being processed, including information about the purposes of processing, categories of such data, and the existence of automated decision-making. Processing includes any action that is done to, or with, personal data (including collecting, storing or deleting those data).

Farmer Producer Organizations: A producer company, cooperative society or any other legal form which provides for sharing of profits/benefits among member farmers.

Financialization: Financialization is a process where financial motives, financial markets, financial actors and financial institutions gain greater influence over economic policy and economic outcomes at national and international levels.

Intelligence advantage: The competitive advantage that accrues to platform firms because of their ability to generate and deploy data-based intelligence to reorganize production and market exchange.

Intelligencification: The application of big data algorithms based on machine learning sciences to economic and social activity.

Labour share in value added: The part of national income that goes to wages as opposed to the share of capital.

Microwork: A work arrangement that focuses on breaking down large projects into small tasks, typically of a low-skill and repetitive nature, which are subsequently outsourced to a remote workforce through an online platform such as, for example, Amazon Mechanical Turk.

Network-data advantage/effects: The market advantage that capitalist first-mover platforms obtain from the recursive loop of mining user data, generating algorithmic intelligence and deploying the intelligence to bring more users into the network, in a self-perpetuating cycle that ends in the monopolization of entire segments of the economy.

Network effect: The phenomenon of an online service/platform becoming more valuable as it accrues more users. The gains are initially incremental, but once a critical threshold is attained, there is an exponential growth in value.

On-demand work: A work arrangement in which low-skilled service work gigs that can only be performed in a physical geography are outsourced over a platform marketplace. Examples include Uber in transportation, Care.com in domestic work, and Deliveroo in home delivery.

Platform economy: Refers to the increasing reorganization of production and market exchange by platforms.

Platformization: Refers to the phenomenon of digital platforms becoming the essential infrastructure of economic and social interactions.

Platforms: Previously regarded as modular technological architectures, platforms today are infrastructures of value creation, value capture and value distribution. Platforms facilitate interactions among various actors (including consumers, producers, advertisers, service providers and suppliers), harvest data from such interactions, and generate data-based intelligence for optimizing value.

Platform and data interoperability: Interoperability refers to the ability of products, programs, and computer systems to be used together, without restrictions. Platform and data interoperability in particular refers to open platform and data standards that enable users to multi-home between different platform services.

Platform capitalism: The current phase of digital capitalism characterized by the reorganization of all sectors of economic activity by platform firms that leverage the network effect and data power for monopolistic business advantage.

Platform cooperativism: A platform enterprise tradition that offers an alternative to the current dominant model of platform capitalism, underpinned by the principles of cooperative ownership, democratic governance, and solidarity. Cooperativist platform enterprises may be collectively owned and governed by workers, consumers, or both, and may operate with/without public support.

Real economy: The elements of the economy that pertain to the actual flow of goods and services. It does not include the monetary sector that covers the circulation of money/financial instruments/documents that represent ownership or claims to ownership of real sector goods and services.

Social and solidarity economy enterprises and organizations: Enterprises producing goods, services and knowledge that meet the needs of the community they serve, through the pursuit of specific social and environmental objectives and the fostering of solidarity. This includes cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises.

Social cryptocurrency: Cryptocurrency that draws its legitimacy from a closed group/community of individuals involved in economic exchange, without any linkage to fiat money.

Social dialogue: According to the ILO, social dialogue includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy.

© abdul mujizz - unsplash

Executive Summary

Platforms are, today, critical infrastructure connecting different economic nodes and facilitating the constant harvesting of data-based intelligence to optimize interactions and, thus, maximize profits for their owners. Digital intelligence has emerged as a key factor of production to orchestrate market exchange in global value chains, enabling platform owners to selectively mobilize and demobilize labour at will. The "intelligencification" of value chains under the capitalist platform model has seen a concentration of economic power in the hands of a few powerful platform companies and an accompanying increase of labour precarity.

While digital labour platforms generate new flexi-work opportunities, they have also come under scrutiny for low wages, unfair terms of work, and lack of clarity about employment status of the workers associated with them (ILO 2019a; ILO 2020a). The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the urgency of securing labour guarantees for workers in the platform economy.

This research documents organizing strategies and alternative business models currently being deployed by platform workers across the world to reclaim their civil-political and economic rights in the platform economy. It focuses on the domains of on-demand work, such as platform-mediated matching of work performed within a specific geography; crowdwork, such as platform-mediated matching of work performed remotely across geographically dispersed locations; and e-commerce, such as digital trade in goods and services.

Based on a literature review and in-depth interviews with a range of stakeholders — representatives from academia, global trade union federations, traditional and new-age trade unions working with platform workers, apex organizations of the international cooperative movement, traditional cooperatives, new-age platform cooperatives and the ILO — the study captures and analyzes various standpoints, spotlighting the differences in worker perspectives and approaches between the Global North and the South.

Findings

Key findings of the study are as follows:

Collective action is gaining momentum in some sectors. In both the Global North and the South, trade unions have reached out to platform workers in ride-hailing, food delivery and online freelancing. Alliance-building among platform workers across these different sectors is also increasing. However, a whole range of platform workers in less visible sectors, such as data annotation, e-commerce logistics and on-demand domestic work, are currently left out from organizing efforts.

The relationship between institutional unions and emerging grassroots collectives of platform workers is strained, though some attempts are being made to build bridges. In the service sectors where platform workers are employed, the reach of institutional trade unions is very limited. New grassroots collectives have emerged to fill this gap. However, tensions between the traditional membership base of institutional trade unions and workers of platform companies, who often tend to be from a different demographic (such as migrants), make alliances and synergies for joint action difficult. Global trade union federations such as IG Metall, Unionen, and International Transport Workers' Federation are deliberately trying to bridge this gulf, with reasonable success.

Workers' data rights emerge as an important issue for unions across the globe, but specific concerns are different for the North and the South. Worker dataveillance and algorithmic disciplining by employers is emerging as a global concern. International trade union federations, well aware of invasive workplace tracking and monitoring, are leading the fight against these practices. Such mobilizations are most advanced in the European Union because of the institutional benchmark provided by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In most developing countries, however, the lack of an enabling legal framework becomes a major impediment. Global unions have underlined how the domination of data value chains by companies from the United States is likely to make it much harder for domestic competitors to emerge, impacting job creation and job quality. The magnitude of the problem for workers in the Global South is greater, considering that data colonialism may impede the ability of developing countries to create new jobs and move into higher value segments of global value chains.

Technology freelancers have leveraged the cooperative model successfully for labour market intermediation. In contexts as diverse as Argentina, Kenya and the United Kingdom, skilled technology professionals with high bargaining power have demonstrated how cooperative business models can help in attaining economies of scale, and enable access to skill development, savings, credit and insurance schemes.

Labour market intermediaries are extending support services to gig workers. In Europe and North America, there are attempts to set up membership-based labour cooperatives for workers in on-demand service work in order to enhance their bargaining power vis-à-vis platform employers. In the Global South, where historically a majority of workers have been in the informal sector and laws tend to be poorly implemented, such models have not taken off. Instead, there are attempts by intermediaries traditionally providing enskilment, placement and support services to workers to re-boot their models for the digital economy.

Platform cooperativism is emerging as a social and solidarity economy (SSE) enterprise

alternative to the dominant platform model. Progressive academics and practitioners in the Global North are advocating for the establishment of alternative platform business models in e-commerce, crowdwork and on-demand services, structured and run on cooperativist principles. This approach, called "platform cooperativism", has gained traction in Europe and North America and is being taken to traditional cooperatives and SSE enterprises across the world, through conferences and collaborative pilots. The future impact of this model depends on sustained investment in the establishment of an institutional ecosystem to provide financial, legal and technological support to nascent platform cooperatives.

Dedicated start-up accelerators are expanding the global footprint of platform cooperatives. In the United Kingdom and the United States, dedicated start-up accelerators for cooperative platforms that provide a viable alternative to venture capital have emerged since 2018. These accelerators are backed by socially conscious investment funds, cooperative banks and traditional social service organizations. In France, La Coop des Communs, an association of researchers, SSE organizations, and public agencies, has set up a working group to encourage cooperativist businesses based on peer-to-peer possibilities offered by digital technology. In addition to finance and seed funding, the working group is exploring how platform and data infrastructures can be designed and governed to promote cooperativist ethics. Some accelerators, such as the New School's Platform Cooperativism Consortium, are supporting traditional cooperatives in the Global South to set up their own platform business models.

Data cooperatives are the latest offshoot of the platform cooperativism idea. Trade unions and worker cooperatives in the Global North have put forward models in the ride-hailing sector for the creation of a worker-owned data commons. While some initiatives propose creation of a data pool by members as a strategy for collective bargaining with platform employers, others seek to generate data dividends by monetizing such data.

In the South, SSE organizations are setting up e-commerce marketplaces. Countries of the South with a strong institutional base for cooperatives (namely, Argentina, China, India and Malaysia), apex cooperative federations, cooperative banks and social enterprises are reinventing their role, enabling their member organizations to go platform. These initiatives tend to adopt the expansive data mining, user profiling and targeting techniques of dominant platforms.

Radical platform cooperatives outside the mainstream economy are being explored, but remain a fringe phenomenon. A few platform initiatives in high income countries (namely, Japan, Spain and the UK) and upper middle income countries (namely, Argentina) are attempting to explore a cooperativist vision grounded in the ethics of reciprocity and solidarity, locating themselves completely and firmly outside the mainstream capitalist economy. Some are building models in the communitization of care, while others have pursued radical alternatives in cooperativist marketplaces using social cryptocurrency. While such proposals present interesting socio-economic pathways towards just and fair economies, insofar as they remain delinked from the mainstream economy, they remain exceptions.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the Global North and the South alike, workers' movements are grappling with the loss of labour power as lead platform firms centralize value and control through their network-data advantage. The COVID-19 crisis points to immense working-class duress and a mixed score card for state responses, also galvanizing a debate about the need for egalitarian economic models. The role of digital technologies and the digital economy will be vital in the coming years in reorienting societies and their institutions towards socio-economic equality and justice. Against this backdrop, the insights and conclusions from the study about organizing and business models among workers engaged in the platform economy provide important insights into the future agendas of the international workers' movement. Success depends on addressing the gaps and building on the lessons learned so far.

Organizing: unconventional modes, new agendas

The platform economy has forced worker collectives to re-map the horizon of their organizing strategies. Court action challenging misclassification of employment status and in pursuit of collective bargaining rights has not always produced favourable outcomes for platform workers.

Independent grassroots collectives and unions pursuing direct confrontational tactics have been more successful than institutional unions in mobilizing workers in the platform economy worldwide. Efforts at organizing, however, have mostly been confined to the ride-hailing and on-demand delivery sectors where the impacts of platformization are easily visible. Both institutional and grassroots trade unions lack an understanding of platformization and its impacts on the lives and livelihoods of a wide spectrum of workers in data value chains of the platform economy. The labour movement should develop a sophisticated grasp of data value chains articulating a sophisticated and comprehensive conception of labour rights commensurate with a data-led 21st century paradigm.

The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) has reaffirmed "the continued relevance of the employment relationship as a means of providing certainty and legal protection to workers, while recognizing the extent of informality and the need to ensure effective action to achieve transition to formality." This means that, even as trade unions seek to establish the employer liability of platform companies, they need to carry on the fight for universalizing social protection for all workers, irrespective of the contractual arrangement involved. New institutional models for labour market intermediation are a critical way forward to ensure access to support services for platform workers, and expand their capacities to negotiate the terms and conditions of work.

SSE platform models: data design as linchpin

Creating alternative business models for workers in the platform economy based on a cooperativist ethos is not just about finding an alternative business structure (incorporation as a cooperative), funding strategy (community shares instead of venture capital), or method of surplus distribution (allocation of dividends based on member contribution rather than amount of share capital held). Choices of techno-design architecture (network scale and data strategies) are equally important in the creation of platform enterprises in the social and solidarity economy tradition.

Currently, worker-owned platform business models from the Global North have turned towards "platform cooperativism", embracing the Internet's original promise for equitable wealth creation and distribution. However,

the platform cooperativism community must devote more attention to data as the core value proposition in the platform economy and work through the challenges to build intelligence capital that maximizes collective benefit for workers, producers and consumers. Platform cooperativism hence needs a "regenerative appropriation" strategy that deploys data-based intelligence for sustainable value creation and equitable value distribution. Negating the value-generating potential of digital intelligence — that is, adopting a "data minimalist" approach — would be counterproductive. On the other hand, aping the data extractivist business practices of the mainstream capitalist model — that is, following a "data maximalist" approach — will result in an ethical deficit. Neither approach offers a holistic response to the question of worker empowerment in the digital age.

A third way — data collectivism — can provide the golden mean between the solidarity economy ethos of the cooperativist movement and the techno-design possibilities of platforms. Data collectivism enables worker organizations to be more efficient, decentralize value and re-engineer production and consumption in ecologically sensitive ways. Local cooperatives of service providers and producers (delivery workers, domestic workers, care providers and micro-entrepreneurs) can federate to forge trans-local linkages, widening their reach and expanding their markets. As a viable real economy alternative to platform capitalism, data collectivist approaches could also create linkages between worker/producer and consumer cooperatives.

Recommendations

COVID-19 has exposed the inherent flaws of the current global economic system. It has also brought to the forefront the vital economic role that platform workers play, and their unfair terms of employment and lack of labour protection. The encouraging findings of this study about new organizing initiatives and emergent SSE platform models hence come at a time when there is a window of opportunity for concerted global-to-local action. To further the economic and political rights of platform workers and create an enabling institutional environment, trade unions, cooperatives, SSE enterprises, national governments, platform companies and the ILO have a pivotal role to play. The study therefore makes the following recommendations:

Governments

Extend labour rights and social protection to platform workers: National laws should be updated so that all platform workers, irrespective of their employment status or contractual arrangement, enjoy the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, adequate living wages, limits on working hours, safety and health at work, and access to social protection.

Address disguised employment relationships in the platform economy: To ensure effective protection of all workers, national policies should allow for a broad range of means for determining the existence of an employment relationship in both direct and indirect platform work.

Introduce sector-specific legislation for different categories of platform workers: Sector-specific laws to address the specific concerns of particular categories of platform workers should be enacted, considering the breadth and variety of employment arrangements in the platform economy.

Recognize workers' political and economic data rights: Workers should be legally protected from disproportionate and excessive workplace dataveillance. A new legal framework on individual and collective/community ownership of data should be introduced in order to enable workers to stake a claim to data value.

Create an enabling policy environment for a fair platform economy: Regulation can play a decisive role in checking the excesses of monopolistic platform power. Seed funding for SSE platform business models, and dedicated connectivity, platform, cloud and data infrastructure for cooperatives and SSE enterprises, are vital for developing countries.

Enhance public investment in care and social protection: Appropriate care infrastructure and a universal social protection floor for platform workers are important and it is urgent that national policies create these.

Trade unions

Develop new collective mobilization strategies: Grassroots approaches are needed to mobilize platform workers, inform them about their rights, forge inter - and intra - sectoral alliances and persuade platform employers to adopt voluntary codes of conduct through tripartite social dialogues.

Embrace a new agenda on workers' data rights and data claims: Trade union negotiations on labour rights should spell out a clear data rights agenda, challenging exploitative workplace dataveillance and asserting workers' collective claims in data value.

Build partnerships with support service intermediaries: New-age workers' organizing efforts must show agility in bringing trade unions, labour cooperatives and mutual support organizations together in order to effectively support platform workers.

SSE Enterprises

Design platform SSE models towards "regenerative appropriation": SSE enterprises should explore platform models that are founded on data ethics of respect for individual and group privacy, and sustainable creation and equitable distribution of data value. Federated design can bring additional advantages in the form of network effects and optimize supply through peer collaboration.

Explore innovative finance options: The International Cooperative Alliance and national level apex cooperative federations should set up innovative start-up accelerators and seed funding mechanisms to promote SSE platform businesses.

Provide capacity building and support for the platform context: Intermediary organizations should provide the much-need linkage for meeting the capacity-building needs and effective implementation of social insurance, credit and care services for worker cooperatives.

Platform companies

Respect labour and data rights of workers: Platform companies should respect basic labour rights, including workers' rights to minimum wages, maximum limits on working time, workplace safety and health guarantees, and collective bargaining. The privacy and personal data protection of platform workers must be guaranteed. Platform companies should not prevent workers from setting up data cooperatives for deriving collective benefits from data.

Adopt voluntary codes of conduct: Sector-specific codes of conduct for ethical business and worker practices should be adopted by platform employers. Platform companies providing integrated financial services/products to workers should adopt the tenets of "responsible finance".

Implement labour audits across the data value chain: Annual audits of the labour impacts of their business practices should be undertaken by platform companies for workers in direct and indirect work arrangements.

International Labour Organization

Catalyze the global adoption of a Universal Labour Guarantee: Drawing inspiration from the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, the ILO could catalyze an international governance system for digital platforms. This would be a crucial precondition to ensure that all platform workers, irrespective of their employment status and location, have the guarantee of minimum rights and protections.

Set up an expert group on the digital economy: A global expert group — with a special focus on developing countries — could be set up by the ILO to track the specific policy challenges of work in the digitalizing economy.

Promote social dialogue through Economic and Social Councils: Working together with the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS), the ILO can proactively promote social dialogue to ensure that the rights of platform workers become a national policy priority.

Equip the international trade union movement to further labour rights in the digital economy: The ILO could initiate learning dialogues and cutting-edge research on the platform economy, bringing together grassroots trade unions, new-age intermediaries and institutional trade unions, promoting cross regional alliances in the international workers' movement.

Revamp social finance strategies for platform realities: The Social Finance division of the ILO could support labour intermediaries and social enterprises working with gig workers in the North and the South to launch innovative savings-and-credit programmes and group insurance products. Under its "Sustainable Investing" line of work, the Social Finance division could focus on new partnerships to support platform cooperative start-up accelerators and raise finances through innovative equity financing models.

1 Background

© linkedin-sales-solutions - unsplash

As the emerging architecture of economic organization, the platform economy has been at the centre of intense debate. Bringing together the gift of the Internet's inter-connected nodes and the wealth of intelligence reaped from data, platformization represents promises and perils alike. The decentralized peer-to-peer networking affordances of the platform business model hold the possibility for a radical reorganization of production and distribution to build an alternative economy (Slee 2017; Scholz 2016). However, as things stand, the platform model has disproportionately benefited a few first-mover corporations (such as Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft) that have amassed huge amounts of data and are, hence, able to monopolize critical sectors (UNCTAD 2019; Srnicek 2016).

As critical infrastructure bridging different economic nodes — consumers, advertisers, service providers, producers, suppliers and even objects connected by the Internet of Things (IoT) — platforms constantly harvest intelligence to optimize interactions, thereby maximizing profits for their owners. Digital intelligence has emerged as a key factor of production to orchestrate market exchange in global value chains, enabling platform owners to selectively mobilize and demobilize labour at will (Kenney and Zysman 2018). The "intelligencification" of value chains under the capitalist platform model has seen a concentration of economic power in the hands of a few powerful transnational corporations and an accompanying increase of labour precarity.

However, in the Global North and Global South alike, workers and worker organizations are rejecting the dominant model of the platform economy and organizing against such practices. They are exploring how the original promise of an empowering digital economy[1] and society can be reclaimed through alternative platform business models rooted in a social and solidarity economy framework (Mayo 2019).

This report seeks to capture the new strategies being deployed by workers to reclaim their right to decent work and a fair share of economic gains in the value networks of the emerging platform economy. It focuses on the experiences of workers in the domains of on-demand work — platform-mediated matching of work performed within a specific geography, crowdwork — platform-mediated matching of work performed remotely across geographically dispersed locations, and e-commerce — digital trade in goods and services.

[1] The terms 'platform economy' and 'digital economy' are used interchangeably in this report.

1.1 Methodology and scope

The primary aim of this study is to identify initiatives by trade unions, cooperatives, and intermediary organizations such as social enterprises to mobilize, provide support services and create alternative business models for workers in the platform economy. The study builds on and complements recent research on platform workers (van Doorn 2017; Graham, Hjorth and Lehdonvirta 2017; Berg et al. 2018; Galperin and Alarcon 2018), exploring initiatives that serve as exemplars or models advancing their rights and well-being.

Using a rapid mapping approach to capture emerging trends, the study attempts to cast a net over the successes and challenges worker's organizations face in building and consolidating worker solidarity in a digitally-mediated economy. The study also seeks to highlight actors and initiatives in the Global South, attempting to draw out the differences in worker standpoints and approaches between the North and the South.

The data for this exercise has been collected through an in-depth review of both academic and non-academic literature as well as through face-to-face and phone interviews with representatives from academia, global trade union federations, traditional and new-age trade unions working with platform workers, apex organizations of the international cooperative movement, traditional cooperatives and new-age platform cooperatives across the world, and the ILO.

Between October-November 2019, IT for Change carried out the data collection in Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific. In Africa and Latin America, regional consultants[2] were engaged to support the data collection during the same period.[3] The full list of key informant interviews carried out for this study can be found in Annex 1. Some interviewees preferred to keep certain parts of the conversation off-the-record or to remain anonymous.

The report begins by setting the context of platform work before moving on to the main findings of the study that discuss current trends in workers' organizing, including the role of new intermediaries, and the rise of alternative SSE platform business models. The chapter that follows presents the key conclusions of the study: the need for new agendas and strategies for political action and for a data-collectivist reorganization of worker-owned businesses. The final chapter draws upon these insights and proposes a framework to further workers' political, economic and data rights in the platform economy, followed by recommendations for key actors: governments, trade unions, workers cooperatives, and social and solidarity economy (SSE) enterprises, platform companies and the ILO.

2 We acknowledge Ingrid Brudvig and Sofia Scasserra for undertaking the field research in the African and Latin American regions, respectively.
3 In Latin America, it was difficult to find instances of platform worker-led organizing and business models outside Argentina and Uruguay. The paucity of such initiatives in other countries in this region was also attested by Lucia Lidner, UNI Global Union Regional Office in Montevideo, a key informant interviewed for this research.


© Marcel Crozet / ILO

2

The context of platform work

© javygo - unsplash

Platform work is not restricted to virtualized labour arrangements. It includes all newly emerging non-standard or "gig work" arrangements in real economy value chains controlled by platform companies (Kenney and Zysman 2018). Gig work therefore includes service work performed by Uber drivers, Deliveroo couriers, and Care.com workers, as well as backend logistics support provided by Amazon's warehouse workers.

Recent research has unpacked and debunked claims about flexibility and freedom accompanying discourses on "gig work", exposing the largely unfair labour market structures of the platform economy (van Doorn 2017; De Stefano 2015; Galperin and Alarcon 2018). Worker experiences of crowdwork show how labour chains in the platform context build on existing power hierarchies organized around racial, gender and geographical relations (Galperin and Greppi 2019). Workers compete against one another in a "planetary labour market" that is algorithmically optimized by platform companies (Graham and Anwar 2019).

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the fragility of platform value chains. In the North and the South alike, numerous instances have come to light of e-commerce, delivery and ride-hailing platforms abdicating their responsibilities with respect to worker health and safety and social protection, as the outbreak took its toll (Fairwork Foundation 2019). The ILO has identified gig workers as part of the highly vulnerable class of workers who will be disproportionately affected by the economic fallouts of the global pandemic (ILO 2020b).

More than ever, there is an urgent imperative to promote worker rights in, and actualize alternative visions of, the platform economy. Notwithstanding common challenges across the world, workers' rights and well-being in the platform economy will need a situated analysis for how different countries and regions respond to rebuilding economies in the post-COVID-19 context. The current context of platform work and implications for social and solidarity economy models as well as worker rights is a necessary starting point towards such analysis.

2.1 Platform work and increasing informalization

In the economies of the North, platform-mediated work has accelerated an ongoing shift from formal work to gig work arrangements, a roll-back of the post-War economic model with its family wage and social protection (Daugareilh, Degryse and Pochet 2019). Trade unionists and scholars in the Global North have noted that the rise of platform-mediated work has been concomitant with the advent of a new era of atomization and worker isolation that is fragmenting organized labour (Dufresne 2019; Scholz 2016). In the Global South, labour platforms are aiding the persistence of informality in work arrangements (Raval 2019).

Evidence from across the world points to how crowdwork and on-demand work platforms often violate legal frameworks for labour and social protection (ILO 2018a). A global ILO survey of working conditions of 3,500 crowdworkers from 75 countries carried out in 2015-17 found that a substantial proportion of the workers surveyed were earning below the local minimum wage. Also, nearly nine out of ten respondents had work rejected and payment refused without adequate explanation or channels for appealing against unfair terms and conditions (Berg et al. 2018). Similarly, research on ride-hailing, care work, and food delivery platforms in China, the European Union, India, Philippines and South Africa reveals that companies create disguised employment relationships that completely de-mutualize business risks, by shifting them onto workers (Gurumurthy et al. 2019, De Stefano 2015).

2.2 Platformization of the economy

It is estimated that by 2025 over 30% of global value will be generated through platform companies (McKinsey 2018). In every economic sector, from agriculture to manufacturing and retail commerce, the platform is emerging as the foundational framework for economic activity. In the early 2000s — the halcyon days of Internet utopianism — alternative business models based on principles of equity, sustainability and community seemed to have found a new lease of life. However, as commercial forces took over the Internet promise, the platform opportunity for furthering solidarity economics became difficult to pursue (Scholz 2016).

Platformization has triggered a system-wide reorganization of the labour market. Firstly, in the dominant, capitalist platform model, the bulk of productivity gains accrue to a minuscule set of professional workers with advanced data and Artificial Intelligence skills. A vast majority of the unskilled labour force is relegated as a reserve army at the disposal of platform lead firms controlling value chains in different sectors. Often, platform owners resort to subcontracting arrangements to address labour requirements, as evidenced by a quick scan of emerging B2B logistics business models servicing the warehousing and delivery backend operations of e-commerce firms. For example, the Indian firm, Shadowfax, is building a B2B logistics business for last mile delivery and logistics services catering to major platform companies such as Amazon, Swiggy, Myntra and Big Basket. The firm is currently valued at USD 250 million and has managed to attract investments from the Walmart-owned Flipkart (Shrivastava 2019). What we see in this shift towards a highly centralized, platform-controlled, global finance-driven value chain is the gradual emptying out of pockets of local capital accumulation (essentially, small and marginal actors in the local economy) that does not necessarily translate into better labour conditions for workers.

Secondly, platform business models in the sphere of labour exchange are predicated on the perennial flow of "data-creating" work (Just Net Coalition 2019). Using the data generated by workers as they perform their gigs, platform companies become monopolistic interlocutors of the labour market. Such gatekeeping not only usurps worker data value at the aggregate level but also often leaves individual workers at the mercy of opaque, inscrutable and unfair terms and conditions of employment.

The usurpation of worker data results in a devaluation of human skills and contextual knowledge, and an undermining of local economic value creation, transferring surplus to platform capitalists. For example, a taxi driver's intricate knowledge of the city no longer matters in a market restructured by ride-hailing apps, and a farmer's indigenous knowledge of cropping practices can easily be substituted by the data analytics of precision agriculture platforms (Mann and Iazzolino 2019).

While the dominant, capitalist platform model has eroded worker rights and signals a longer-term loss of local productive capacities, alternative platform models can reclaim value for workers. This can be achieved through enterprise design choices that emphasize equitable value distribution between platform owners and workers, and through the promotion of worker-owned platform business models.

© charles-deluvio - unsplash

2.3 Legal loopholes and platform workers' rights

Worker rights, already weakened through global labour arbitrage, including off-shoring and sub-contracting employment practices, have been further eroded in the platform economy. The "gig" seemingly promises abundant opportunity, increased earnings and greater flexibility for the individual worker but, in reality, workers only experience heightened financial and employment precarity and longer hours, stripped of social protections and the right to collective bargaining. Worker voices in the on-demand service economy reflect this challenge, as Jean-Bernard Robillard, a food delivery worker, writes in his open letter to the Belgian manager of Deliveroo: "Transformations made by the platform economy are taking us back to the first industrial revolution, before social legislation existed" (Dufresne 2019).

Platform companies absolve themselves of any liability or responsibility for the vast workforce they command by classifying them as "independent contractors". The work environment they create is often hostile, with platform companies surveilling worker conversations and even terminating those who they see as potential troublemakers (Prassl 2018).

There has been limited effort to extend social protection to gig workers besides a few existing initiatives by the European Union and others. The European Union Directive on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions introduced in April 2019 to protect workers on non-standard zero-hour contracts may protect on-demand workers but not crowdworkers who perform their work entirely online (Bednarowicz 2019). France's El Khomri law provides platform workers with certain labour rights, including the rights to strike and organize, while the country's Mobility Law provides for additional obligations to be implemented through charters for drivers. However, platform companies continue to benefit, as platform workers are not classified as employees, and retain the status of "contractors".

In Ireland, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions had to obtain the intervention of the European Committee of Social Rights in order for self-employed workers to have the right to collective bargaining (Daugareilh et al. 2019). In Italy, platforms have refused to cooperate with government efforts to promote a dialogue on legislative guarantees for platform workers, including minimum wage, the right to disconnect and the right to annual leave (Daugareilh et al. 2019).

3

Organizing and business models among platform workers – emerging trends

Encouragingly, in the past couple of years, workers and worker organizations have mounted a strong challenge to the excesses of the platform economy. These efforts have come to occupy a deserved place in the public imagination. Worker organizations and scholar-activists have begun to construct new models to reclaim the Internet and its affordances for equitable value redistribution and worker autonomy.

This chapter lays out the key threads of these developments, based on the findings of this study. The discussion focuses on emerging approaches and models in trade union action, labour market intermediation and support services, and social and solidarity economy enterprises being set up by platform workers. It highlights how key actors in the domain are interpreting the context and designing their actions and what they perceive as challenges and ways forward.

3.1 Trade union action

Finding 1. Collective action gaining momentum in some sectors

In line with the findings of previous research on platform work (Joyce et al. 2020), this study found that in the Global North and the South, collective action in the trade union tradition is most common in ride-hailing and on-demand delivery services. In 2018-19, from Philadelphia (United States) to Kampala (Uganda) and Telangana (India), Uber drivers went on strike to challenge the exorbitant commission rates charged by the platform (Action News 2019; Kazibwe 2019; Kurmanath 2019). The same period also saw a surge of worker protests in the on-demand delivery sector. Workers from Foodpanda in Malaysia, Deliveroo in the United Kingdom and Rappi in Argentina went on strike to protest against arbitrary changes to payment structures by these platform companies (Kartono 2019; Gogarty and Brock 2019). For example, when the Rappi platform was first launched in Buenos Aires, its technical design allowed delivery executives the freedom to look over the available work orders and then accept or reject them based on their own independent cost-benefit analysis of each delivery trip (distance versus earnings potential). But later the platform suddenly changed its app design and started assigning work orders arbitrarily to its delivery executives, which meant that they could no longer reject trips that they saw as less profitable. In the new system, more and more workers found themselves assigned to remote neighbourhoods, leaving them with a long, unprofitable ride back home at the end of the day. This development spurred Rappi delivery executives into action, mobilizing through WhatsApp and going on their first organized strike in July 2018.[4]

In ride-hailing and on-demand services, COVID-19 has brought into focus how platform workers have been providing essential services, without adequate health and safety safeguards, or wage and sick pay guarantees. Amazon warehouse workers in the United States have gone on strike to demand increased safety measures (Streitfeld 2020). The UberEats union in Tokyo has demanded that the company supply delivery workers on duty with protective gear and commit to hazard pay (Kyodo News 2020).

We did not come across initiatives that have successfully mobilized microworkers for direct action.[5] Understandably, the hidden nature of microwork makes collectivization far more difficult than in on-demand sectors such as food delivery (Dufresne 2019). As Kurt Vandaele from the European Trade Union Institute

4 Field research by Sofia Scasserra.
5 Our study suggests that initiatives such as the Dynamo community platform that attempted to bring together Amazon Mechanical Turk workers are an exception rather than the norm. See Salehi et al. (2015) cited in Berg, J. et al. (2018, pp 97).

pointed out in the interview carried out for this research, "When it comes to microworkers, unionization is difficult, as recruitment of members becomes a challenge."[6] However, instances of collective organizing among highly skilled professionals engaging in online remote work suggest that the story may be different in this instance. The YouTubers Union initiated by Jorg Sprave — a German YouTuber with more than 2.3 million subscribers to his channel — is fighting for the rights of content creators to fair, transparent and equitable treatment on the platform (YouTubers Union 2020). Similarly, the South African Guild of Actors (SAGA) is engaged in advocacy with the Department of Labour for changing the pre-digital legislation on self-employed workers/contractors. The Guild has advocated for changes in the law that can address challenges that independent artistes/content creators face in platform-controlled audio-visual content distribution and consumption cultures of the Internet age.[7]

The study also found evidence of nascent alliance-building efforts between grassroots unions of platform workers in different sectors. In Belgium and Italy, food platform workers from Deliveroo, Foodora and Giovo have joined Black Friday strikes of Amazon workers (Cant 2018). At the European General Assembly of Couriers in October 2018, 23 on-demand delivery workers' collectives came together to adopt a Transnational Federation of Couriers' charter, which underscores "actions to express solidarity with other precarious workers and platform workers" as a foundational element of their struggle. The Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain, founded in October 2012 with the objective of representing sections of the workforce traditionally non-unionized and under-represented, aims to bring together platform workers such as couriers and drivers and other low-paid migrant workers in traditional non-standard employment, such as outsourced cleaners and security guards. AppSindical in Argentina demonstrates another strategy for alliance building, bringing together gig workers under a multi-sector, umbrella identity of "platform worker".

Our mapping suggests that, other than in ride-hailing, food delivery and online freelancing sectors, unions have not yet responded to a whole range of workers: workers doing data annotation in the Global South; workers in e-commerce logistics; domestic workers who are on-boarded by on-demand platforms, among others. This is understandable, as unions have historically found it difficult to organize gig workers who are in direct competition with one another for contracts and clients (Visser 2019).

6 Interview with Kurt Vandaele, 22 October 2019.
7 Field research by Ingrid Brudvig.

Finding 2. Relationship between grassroots collectives of platform workers and institutional unions strained, with some attempt to build bridges

Newly-established grassroots collectives of platform workers seem to be at the forefront of mobilization. Oftentimes, these collectives are supported by civil society activists or groups (such as Transnational Federation of Couriers in the European Union and AppSindical union of delivery workers in Argentina) and non-mainstream, fringe unions who prefer direct action through street mobilization (such as Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain in the United Kingdom and the Freie Arbeiterinnen- und Arbeiter-Union in Germany). However, large institutional unions are mostly missing from the picture. This is not surprising, considering that emerging jobs in the platform economy are service gigs, a domain where union density has historically been low (Visser 2019).

Even in contexts where unions have been operational, demographic differences and tensions between the traditional membership base and new platform workers impede joint action. In Uruguay, traditional commerce and service unions have found it difficult to reach out to on-demand delivery workers, the majority of whom are undocumented migrants from Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela.[8] In Buenos Aires (Argentina), 83% of the workers on the on-demand delivery platform, Rappi, are migrants from other Latin American countries, mainly Colombia and Venezuela. ASIMM (Trade Union Association of Motorcyclists, Messengers and Services) — the traditional union operating in the city — has not taken up the issues of migrant delivery workers who work with platforms. In this context, a fledgling grassroots union, AppSindical, has been actively mobilizing these delivery workers. There are allegations that ASIMM recently struck a deal with Rappi to provide outsourced delivery services through Envios Ya, the courier company it owns, undercutting the workers of AppSindical in the process.[9] Similarly, in Cape Town (South Africa), drivers who work with ride-hailing platforms tend to be migrants, while metered taxis are typically controlled by locals. A xenophobic discourse of migrant-operated Uber drivers snatching away livelihoods has taken hold among local metered taxi drivers. This smouldering resentment often breaks out in violent clashes between Uber drivers and the traditional KwaMashu Taxi Association. In December 2018, there were media reports of members of the KwaMashu Taxi Association impounding cars belonging to Uber drivers and demanding ZAR 5,000 for the release of the vehicle, with local police refusing to intervene (Nxumalo 2018).

Historically, institutional trade unions have prioritized the concerns of the organized workforce over those of casual workers. This has turned out to be a major impediment to their alliance-building with new-age grassroots unions. For example, at the European General Assembly of Couriers, institutional trade unions were allowed to attend only as observers, since organizers decided to limit participation to representatives of grassroots collectives of couriers and on-demand workers. As the team from the GRESEA research centre that documented this initiative observes in their report, "this moment reveal[s] a great deal about the state of collective identities in the [on-demand delivery] sector at that particular time" (Dufresne 2019).

We did, however, find that a few traditional trade unions have taken initiative in response to the platform economy (See Box 1).

8 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra.
9 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra. Also see http://www.laizquierdadiario.com/APP-denuncio-un-violento-ataque-contra-trabajadores-de-Rappi

Box 1. Attempts by institutional trade unions to mobilize platform workers

IG Metall's initiatives for crowdworkers and video creators[10]

IG Metall, Europe's largest industrial union, has launched the following initiatives to reach platform workers:

- Fair Crowd Work, a joint initiative with the Austrian Chamber of Labour, the Austrian Trade Union Confederation and the Swedish white collar union, Unionen. Fair Crowd Work operates as an online knowledge project, curating and archiving the perspective of workers and unions on crowdwork, app-based work and other forms of platform-based work. Among its notable features is a ratings system of different online labour platforms based on surveys with workers.

- Crowdsourcing Code of Conduct, a code of practice developed for minimum standards in fair working conditions for platform workers and the Ombudsstelle, an independent dispute resolution mechanism for workers on digital labour platforms.

- Fairtube campaign, a campaign co-launched with the YouTubers Union in July 2019, to advocate for fairness and transparency in platform dealings with online video creators, especially with respect to rules for assigning advertising.

10 We acknowledge Yorgos Altintzis, International Trade Union Confederation, for his inputs on the initiatives of IG Metall and Unionen. Interview with Yorgos Altintzis, 14 October 2019.

Unionen's initiatives for online content creators

Unionen recently reached a collective agreement with United Screens, the biggest YouTube network in the Nordic countries, to ensure that content creators working with them receive reasonable compensation. Unionen is also exploring possibilities of hardcoding collective agreements into the algorithmic design of platforms. In a November 2019 media interview, Victor Bernhardtz, Ombudsman for Digital Labour Markets of the organization, said: "[Unionen] will probably reach the point where we will see ourselves developing compliance with collective agreements through business models that are semi- or fully automated [...] We also need to get the technical knowledge within our organization to have a level playing field in the discussion with the platforms" (Arets 2019).

International Transport Workers' Federation's campaign for workers in ride-hailing and delivery sectors

The International Transport Workers' Federation (Asia-Pacific chapter) worked closely with grassroots collectives of the ride-hailing platforms Ola and Uber in over 15 cities between 2017-19, systematically collating their concerns about the poor conditions of work: unaffordable rates of commission, meagre per kilometre rates that force drivers to work extraordinarily long hours, lack of social security and insurance, and evasion of all responsibility by the platforms. In late 2019, the ITF team ran a coordinated campaign along with worker collectives of Uber and Ola, and met the concerned Minister, demanding that drivers' income, welfare entitlements, and health and safety be factored into government guidelines for cab aggregators. Over the next few months, ITF plans to track policy developments, also carrying out a national survey on employment conditions, and health and safety, to generate evidence for continuing their advocacy efforts. In Bandung and Jakarta, where the government of Indonesia is planning to open up Bus Rapid Transit systems by 2022, the ITF is working towards building a National Public Transport Workers' Union that brings together workers from metro rail and public bus systems along with on-demand delivery workers of the platform unicorn, Gojek, under a common umbrella. As Sangam Tripathy, Assistant Regional Secretary of ITF Asia Pacific Region, shared with us in an interview: "The union of Gojek workers has to join hands with other transport workers' unions and be part of a national alliance. What is needed is a concerted advocacy pitch on rights of workers in public transport systems."[11]

11 Interview with Sangam Tripathy, 21 October 2019.

▶ Fig 1. Trade union initiatives for platform workers

Finding 3. Workers' data rights an emergent issue for unions across the globe, but specific concerns different for the North and the South

Worker dataveillance and algorithmic disciplining by employers is emerging as a concern within the global trade union movement. International trade union federations, well aware of invasive workplace tracking and monitoring, are leading the fight against these practices (See Box 2).

Box 2. How international trade union federations are challenging worker dataveillance

UNI Global's Top 10 Principles for Workers' Data Privacy and Protection, released in December 2017, constitutes a watershed in the evolution of operational benchmarks for the collection, processing and use of workers' personal data by employers for decision-making about recruitment, promotion, disciplinary action and dismissal. In addition to underscoring the sanctity of privacy and personal data protection, the principles also emphasize the importance of providing a full right to explanation. As UNI Global's General Secretary, Philip Jennings, observed at the launch of these principles, "Data collection and artificial intelligence are the next frontier for the labour movement. Just as unions established wage, hour, and safety standards during the Industrial Revolution, it is urgent that we set new benchmarks for the Digital Revolution" (UNI Global Union 2017b).

IndustriALL, in its recently released research report, has pointed to how worker data protection is an essential component of trade unions' bargaining agenda, considering that workplace surveillance is now integral to emerging business models in all sectors, including manufacturing (IndustriALL 2019). In India, member unions have been approaching the members of IndustriALL's team in its Delhi office to raise concerns about wearable technologies being mandated on the factory floor. A new strategy to equip its membership to fight such new workplace surveillance practices is planned, as part of IndustriALL's future plans for its work in India and South Asia.[12]

12 Interview with Manicandan Gopalakrishnan, 22 October 2019.

In the European Union, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) provides an institutional benchmark to further workers' rights over their personal data. For example, in both India and the United Kingdom, trade union activists are aware that access to the data that the platform holds about its partner-drivers (such as total time spent on the app and GPS records of routing) would be a critical aid to campaigns about minimum wages, time off, and unfair working conditions. In the United Kingdom, in 2019, Uber drivers tried to repeatedly request access to such data invoking their rights Article 15(1) and Article 20 of the GDPR, but the response from Uber did not disclose all the data they were entitled to access under the law. After a year of futile attempts, in July 2020, the drivers, backed by the App Drivers & Couriers Union and the Worker Info Exchange, filed a legal complaint in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, arguing that Uber is in breach of its obligations under the GDPR.[13]

In developing countries, however, such strategies may be difficult in the absence of a legal framework. As Sangam Tripathy, Assistant Regional Secretary (Asia-Pacific region) of the International Transport Workers' Federation, observed in an interview carried out for this research:

"Uber driver unions cannot take similar action [...] They currently do not have any way of obtaining the data that the platform holds about them or a legal framework to make such claims. And even later on [if such rights are acknowledged through the enactment of personal data protection legislation], we will need a different system where there is proactive disclosure of personal data of partner drivers in a ready-to-understand template by platforms such as Uber. [In developing countries], we are dealing with a pool of drivers with limited literacy and low levels of education."[14]

While the fourth industrial revolution can be a game-changer for developing countries, opening up new pathways for job creation, including in high value segments of global value chains, the de facto usurpation of data resources from the South by transnational platform corporations forecloses this epochal opportunity (Singh 2017). The international trade union federation, ITUC, has called attention to how the push for unrestricted cross-border data flows in digital trade negotiations can threaten domestic industrial capacity (McCann 2019), an issue that trade unions from developing countries view as the rise of "data colonialism" (See Box 3).

13 As of this publication, the court decision on this lawsuit is still awaited.
14 Interview with Sangam Tripathy, 21 October 2019.

Box 3. Southern actors against "data colonialism"

Khamati Mugalla from the East African Trade Union Confederation (EATUC), interviewed for this study, underscored how the omission of "data colonialism" from mainstream policy conversations on platforms, jobs and development comprises a form of structural injustice: "Jumia is often described as a success story of African e-commerce. But who owns Jumia? Not Africa. Who owns the data? Not Africans. From where are the goods sold being sourced? China. This is not helping indigenous businesses develop. It is about a new frontier of colonisation. We should link the debate on the platform economy and e-commerce to the structural transformation of Africa, [instead of confusing it with] strategies for opening up African market [and African data] to transnational companies".[15]

A similar stance against data colonialism has also been expressed by trade unions in India. In October 2019, ten Central Trade Unions submitted a memorandum to the government, urging a withdrawal from trade negotiations in the Asia-Pacific for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. A central concern expressed was about proposed provisions on free data flows, how they would compromise both privacy and economic rights of workers, as well as India's domestic digital industrial development.

15 Interview with Khamati Mugalla, 7 November 2019.

© andrew-neel - unsplash

3.2 New intermediaries

Finding 4. Technology freelancers leveraging the cooperative model successfully for labour market intermediation

Technology freelancers in programming and software development — workers with relatively high bargaining power in the platform economy — have been experimenting with the cooperative model for labour market intermediation, in both the Global North and the South. This study located three such initiatives in Argentina, Kenya and the United Kingdom, discussed below.

Co-Tech is a federation of 40 technology freelancer cooperatives across the United Kingdom, established in 2017. The idea for the federation was mooted by the technology cooperative, Outlandish, which viewed collectivization as a prerequisite for attaining economies of scale. If any member cooperative has a project opportunity that exceeds its capacity or lies outside its domain of specialization, Co-Tech enables it to identify partners from among other member cooperatives of the federation who then provide the necessary support. In addition, Co-Tech has also launched an online platform through which it directly takes on project requests. However, as Kayleigh Walsh, worker cooperative member at Co-Tech, observed in an interview carried out for this research, there are some challenges to be addressed before this initiative takes off:

"Most clients don't really know about cooperatives and hence there is a visibility issue to contend with. There are also assumptions made about [our] efficiency and ability to deliver. Matching the bids of full-fledged service companies is also difficult."[16]

FACTTIC (The Argentinian Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Technology, Innovation and Knowledge) is a federation of 20 technology freelancer cooperatives. It was set up in 2009 on the initiative of Gcoop, an open source technologists' cooperative that was inspired by the Mondragon[17] model of building federated cooperative enterprises. Currently, work assignments are routed through two systems at FACTTIC: direct requests made by clients to the federation or requests routed by member cooperatives. Work requests are pooled centrally and a team of volunteers who are in charge of coordinating the federation's activities process them manually. Assignments are allocated to member cooperatives based on capacity and workloads at a given point in time. Another service that FACTTIC provides for its member cooperatives is periodic skills training for them to stay relevant in the market. Cooperative federations like FACTTIC can expand their impact and use automated work-flow processing and client management, with support from public agencies.[18]

In Kenya, the Tech Innovators Savings and Credit Cooperative (TiSK) was established in October 2016 as a collective platform for pooling financial resources and tech talent with the aim of enabling local innovation and supporting the local tech sector. TiSK offers savings-and-credit services for individual technology professionals, along with enterprise development support to individual technology entrepreneurs and start-ups. As of 2019, TiSK had 150 registered members and 30 active savings members. While the long-term strategy is to increase the number of savings members, in the interim, to address credit requests that may be above the cash ratios, TiSK has enrolled with a larger cooperative for a third-party credit facility. Enterprise development support comprises access to credit lines and investment channels as well as legal guidance, IP advisories, market access, and other services. In addition, the cooperative also offers schemes in health and life insurance and home ownership programmes to its individual membership. In designing these financial products, TiSK is also partnering with two companies providing insurance underwriting services.[19]

16 Interview with Kayleigh Walsh, 17 October 2019.
17 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mondragon_Corporation
18 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra.
19 Field research report of Ingrid Brudvig.

Finding 5. Labour market intermediaries extending support services to gig workers

Traditionally, a range of entities have provided labour market intermediation services for workers and firms in non-standard employment and the informal sector. They have offered information and matching services, supported conflict resolution, and negotiated worker access to social security and entitlements. Many such intermediaries are membership-based labour cooperatives or for-profit private enterprises (Vandaele 2018).

In the platform economy, old methods of collective organizing are not feasible and traditional organizing approaches have become ineffectual. Ra Criscitiello of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West,[20] observes how "organised labour has largely retained its same tactics and world view, despite the fact that economic structures capturing employment have been turned on their heads" (Conaty, Bird and Ross 2018: pp75). In Europe and North America, new efforts that are designed to meet the specific needs and rights of platform workers, especially in low-paid segments, have emerged.

In Europe, for instance, Société Mutuelle pour les Artistes (SMart), which has traditionally worked with technology freelancers, is now extending its model to low-skilled platform workers with limited bargaining power. SMart started out as a not-for-profit labour market intermediary offering a range of administrative, accounting and financial services to creative artistes and other freelance workers in Belgium. An online portal for invoicing and collection of payments from clients, tax filing support, legal advice, credit services, workplace insurance, and subscription-based social security coverage was also launched. In 2015, the leadership of SMart felt that the legal model that would best represent their relationship with their worker constituency was that of a labour cooperative, and so they incorporated themselves as such.[21] Since then, SMart has expanded its services to seven other European Union countries, covering a membership base of over 90,000 workers.

With the entry of food delivery platforms Deliveroo and Take Eat Easy in the Belgium market in 2015, gig workers associated with these platforms began to register their contracts and bill their services through SMart's online portal.[22] Given the nature of piecemeal work in the sector, SMart observed that it took riders several days "to be able to declare a single day's work and reach the legal minimum wage" (Drahokoupil and Piasna 2019). At this point, SMart had two options. According to Sarah de Heusch, "the first one was to say, Oh, it's not our business, we don't like the capitalist platforms, let's just not do anything. The second one, what SMart finally opted for, was to see if something could be negotiated for the workers through an agreement with these platforms".[23] They decided to go the latter route.

The joint agreement that SMart negotiated with Deliveroo and Take Eat Easy standardized pay structures and worker protection for delivery workers who chose to work via SMart. This included: (a) guaranteed minimum wage per hour as per law along with performance bonus and tips, (b) partial reimbursement of cell-phone use as a tax-free expense, (c) guaranteed minimum three-hour shifts, paid in full, even if the worker couldn't finish the shift due to technical reasons, (d) safety training and coverage for work-related accident insurance and third-party liability insurance, financed from the fee charged to the platforms and (e) access to a salary fund that provided

20 United Healthcare Workers West (UHWW) is a statewide local union of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in California in the United States. It has a membership of nearly 150,000.
21 Interview with Sarah de Heusch, 22 October 2019.
22 Gig workers associated with the platforms were mainly students who were prohibited by Belgian legislation from working as self-employed workers at that point in time. By going through SMart's billing services, which charged a 6.5% fee on their earnings, it was possible for them to find a work-around as they could technically claim the status of workers in a "triangular" employment contract involving a worker, a legal employer (SMart, in this case), and an effective employer (Deliveroo/Take Eat Easy).
23 Interview with Sarah de Heusch, 22 October 2019.

insurance against the bankruptcy of the client or delayed payment (Drahokoupil and Piasna 2019).

In July 2016, the platform Take Eat Easy went bankrupt, leaving hundreds of riders with unpaid wages. SMart was able to disburse €340,000 from its salary fund to pay its riders. In fact, riders who had worked via SMart were the only ones to receive their final dues. Unfortunately, Deliveroo discontinued its partnership with SMart abruptly in October 2017. This sudden exit has been attributed to the introduction of a new legislation in Belgium, permitting students to enter self-employment arrangements, enabling platforms such as Deliveroo to hire them directly, bypassing the need for intermediaries such as SMart.

SMart is currently exploring new models for furthering the interests of delivery workers, particularly the launch of a worker-owned cooperativist food delivery platform. However, it has not been able to make much progress on this front. SMart attributes the lack of success to the fact that, for most workers, on-demand delivery is a temporary, short-term gig, as a result of which they are not motivated enough to invest in the construction of alternatives.

Inspired by the progressive Dynamex judgment[24] that upheld gig workers' rights, SEIU United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHWW), a union, and Upside Down consulting, a think tank, have come up with an innovative model for gig work arrangements through a draft legislation in California (USA). They have co-proposed the Cooperative Platform Economy Act, a draft law that enables platform workers to be in meaningful self-employment arrangements that are flexible and independent, without being precarious. This draft law seeks to establish a new form of worker cooperative institution, Cooperative Labour Contractors (CLCs), that platform companies can contract with, in lieu of directly employing workers. CLCs are envisioned as worker cooperatives legally bound by the principles of open and voluntary membership, worker ownership, democratic governance and distribution of profits based on labour shares of member workers. To ensure that CLCs remain centred on worker needs, an institutional system of licensing and supervision by the Labour Commissioner is proposed. Most importantly, the draft legislation also recommends the establishment of a federation of CLCs through a 10-year, 0% interest, USD 25,000,000 loan from the State of California, as part of creating an overarching management and business support services ecosystem that could catalyze CLC development in various industries.[25]

In the Global South, the vast majority of workers are in the informal sector and laws tend to be poorly implemented. Intermediaries have, hence, focused mainly on support services, including access to skilling, placement and enterprise development. With the rise of gig work in the platform economy, some intermediaries in the South have rebooted their models (as discussed in Box 4 below).

24 Dynamex Operations West, Inc. v. Superior Court of Los Angeles, No. S222732 (Cal. Sup. Ct. Apr. 30, 2018). In this case, the California Supreme Court restored platform workers' rights and critical employment standards by making it harder for gig economy employers (especially platform companies) to evade their responsibility by classifying workers as independent contractors.
25 For more details, see https://cooperativeplatform.org/

Box 4. Intermediaries providing support services for gig workers

In India, the study found evidence of social enterprises working with informal sector workers and small producers initiating new, platform-mediated support services for their constituencies. LabourNet is an organization that provides skills training, placement services and assistance for micro-enterprise development to rural/urban unorganized workers in over 28 sectors across 200 locations in India. Through these strategies, the organization aimed to empower one million informal workers by 2020.

Currently, LabourNet is setting up a digital platform targeted at painters, plumbers and beauty sector workers who are part of its trainee cohort, to facilitate access to discounted product purchases as well as credit and insurance schemes. As Jalajakshi C.K., LabourNet team member, shared in an interview carried out for this research, "The platform is a services platform whose target audience is the workers who are our trainees. It is not a front-facing platform linking workers to clients. Say, for instance, there is a plumber or a beauty service worker who [is a] part of our training cohort. By coming on board with the platform, they can source the products like sanitary fittings or salon supplies — at discounted rates from sellers who will be on-boarded. We will also launch a micro-finance product and a micro-insurance product they can subscribe to."[26]

Vrutti, another social enterprise in India, has been working with over 26,000 smallholder farmers, organizing them into Farmer Producer Organizations and helping them gain access to services and enhance farm-based income. Currently, Vrutti is developing a digital platform for inclusive entrepreneurship that seeks to enable farm enterprise development by offering the following services: behavioural nudging for farm-specific input practices, personalized Enterprise Resource Planning modules to increase farm productivity, business planning assistance through demand and price forecasts, direct linkages to end consumers and institutional support systems for credit, distribution and logistics.

26 Interview with Jalajakshi C.K., 19 October 2019.

3.3 New SSE platforms

Finding 6. Platform cooperativism emerging as an SSE alternative to the dominant platform model

A long documented history bears testimony to the potential of SSE enterprises[27] in tackling the ills of capitalism, by delivering effectively on economic security, equal opportunity and social justice (ILO 2019b). As Curl observes, "the very existence of cooperatives challenges corporations and capitalism" (Curl 2015, cited in Scholz 2016: pp 12).

In the Global North, we see a movement coalescing around platform cooperativism, led by progressive academics and practitioners championing the SSE tradition in the platform moment. This may be described as an effort to "present a near-term economic alternative" to reclaim economic power for workers (ILO 2018b). The origins of platform cooperativism as a civil society discourse can be traced to a 2015 conference at the New School in New York, where over 1,000 activists, entrepreneurs, lawyers, union officials, financiers and academics came together to deliberate over a democratic alternative to the "death star" Big Tech platforms (Mayo 2019: pp 6). Trebor Scholz (ILO 2018b) describes it as an effort to join "the almost two hundred year-old model of cooperatives" with that of the digital economy. Interpreting it as a radical alternative to the popular myth of the sharing economy, Scholz elucidates platform cooperativism as an approach that challenges the "myriad ills of the sharing economy... [which is based on] platform capitalism, by changing ownership, establishing democratic governance, and reinvigorating solidarity" (Scholz 2016 cited in Mayo 2019: pp 5). The approach seeks to promote widely "models which combine a cooperative business structure with an online platform to deliver a real-world service" (Gorenflo 2015).

A core group that emerged from the New York conference organized a series of follow-up conferences to encourage adoption of the model by both traditional cooperatives and new-age collectives of technologists.[28] Nathan Schneider at the University of Colorado (UC) Boulder Media Enterprise Design (MED) Lab and Devin Balkind at Sarapis.org initiated the Internet of Ownership directory online to enable the systematic mapping and documentation of platform cooperatives in different regions (Spitzberg 2019).

Currently, an estimated 250 initiatives worldwide are exploring this approach. However, successful platform cooperative models are few in number and limited in scale (Mayo 2019: pp 3). This study to map and document exemplars of platform cooperatives confirms that only a few initiatives from Europe and North America surface time and again in the literature.[29]

Platform cooperatives in the North position themselves as localized, small-scale business models catering to a niche consumer base invested in sustainable consumption lifestyles. Food Fairies in Berlin is one such initiative that the study located (See Box 5).

27 Social and Solidarity Economy enterprises refer to organizations producing goods, services and knowledge that meet the needs of the community they serve, through the pursuit of specific social and environmental objectives and the fostering of solidarity. This includes cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises.
28 Between 2015-17, such events were organized in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Barcelona, Berlin and Helsinki.
29 Stocksy United, Fairmondo, Resonate, Up & Go appear frequently in the literature.

Box 5. Food Fairies: A fledgling platform cooperative in Berlin[30]

Food Fairies, a Berlin-based collective, is an attempt to build a local, rider-owned and operated food-delivery platform. The initiative was set up in August 2019, after the abrupt exit of Deliveroo, the popular European food delivery platform, from the German market. Around 30 riders who had previously worked for Deliveroo came together to think through how they could operate a service by themselves. A couple of riders then decided to try a start-up, jumping into the market with a website and a dispatch logistics system.

This pop-up initiative, initially termed Colima, became the impetus for thinking about a cooperative structure. The collective reached out to other political and technological collectives in Berlin to start thinking about building a platform with equity and sustainability as its operational ethos and expanding existing infrastructure in the city by connecting bike-riders with restaurants that currently face the challenge of low footfall.

Currently, the collective, which has eight to ten regular members, is focused on solidifying its legal structure. The founders of Food Fairies noted in an interview for this study that the lengthy legal process of going the route of either a cooperative or a foundation was a challenge, which is why they are proceeding with an easier path to setting up an enterprise, registering under a *Gesellschaft des bürgerlichen Rechts*, a form of civil partnership that is commonly adopted by start-ups.

With respect to techno-design, Food Fairies is collaborating with a local technology collective and is in the process of developing its own web-based order management platform. With eventual plans for a mobile app, the current model will be offered via website and communication channels such as Telegram and WhatsApp and will be marketed via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Food Fairies, which believes in a limited data collection approach, wants its initiative to be open source in the long run and available to be adapted by other initiatives around the world. Though the details of the platform architecture are still being worked out, Food Fairies is committed to zero data retention.

The Food Fairies team is confident that their product-service can create a niche market in Berlin and succeed in expanding the economic choices for customers who value sustainable consumption and wish to support the local economy. However, it remains to be seen if they will be able to succeed in a market where a pan-European platform like Deliveroo lost out to the established leader, Lieferando.

30 Based on an interview with Fong Po and Bronwyn from the Food Fairies team, 29 November 2019.

© eggbank - unsplash

Practitioners and scholars reflect that, without sustained investment to create an institutional ecosystem for financial, legal and technological support to fledgling platform cooperatives, they cannot go far. A venture capital funding system is geared only for the "winner-take-all" logic of platform capitalism and is ill-suited for alternative platform business models aspiring towards fair accumulation and distribution of economic value (Mayo 2019: pp 21). Business contracts and Intellectual Property Rights frameworks of the mainstream model may be inappropriate for platform cooperatives (Carroll 2017). Finally, in a context where digital intelligence is the secret sauce that enables business success in the platform environment, platform cooperatives have no option today other than the corporate cloud. This creates a catch-22, as David Carroll (2017: pp 116) perceptively observes:

"The corporate cloud, really, is just someone else's computer; it is at odds with platform cooperative ethics, especially when we realize we are just renting access and computation. However, to deliver the AI-powered features that near-future users will demand, applications will need to draw upon sophisticated industrial-strength AI software services and harness powerful clusters of data-mining server farms. This stuff doesn't come cheap. Free, open, and radically decentralised AI isn't a thing yet, but blockchain-based platforms like Ethereum and Backfeed could offer decentralised alternatives to the corporate cloud [...] In its infancy, Ethereum is far more expensive than the Amazon cloud but with laughable performance and capability by comparison. Can you afford to wait for the decentralised solution or do you accept that a corporate cloud is presently your only viable high-performance and affordable option?"

Finding 7. Dedicated start-up accelerators expanding the global footprint of platform cooperatives

Standing up against the platform behemoths who have amassed the data power, and, hence, the market power, in strategic business intelligence is not easy, given the lack of a wider institutional alternative to the capitalist system. The platform cooperativism movement is, however, working to remedy this. In the United Kingdom and the United States, dedicated start-up accelerators for cooperative platforms have emerged in the past two years. Start.Coop, a platform cooperative accelerator that is a partner in the Fledge global network of conscious investment funds, began operations in Boston (USA) in June 2018 (Start.Coop 2019). The organization brings together a strategic support system designed to increase the likelihood of entrepreneurs making an economic and social impact. Participants take part in a 10-week programme and have access to strategic tools, mentorship and USD 10,000 in investment as they build their transformative, scalable, cooperatively-owned businesses (Barry 2019). In the first year of operations, Start.Coop has helped five platform initiatives take off (Start.Coop 2019).[31]

31 These include: the Staffing Co-op, a staffing platform; Driver's Seat Data Co-op, a data aggregation platform owned by gig drivers; Savvy Coop, a patient-owned health data platform; Expert Collective, which connects industry need to academic experts; and Arizmendi Roots & Returns, a real estate investment co-op building affordable housing.

The programme is designed to be open to investments from the wider cooperative sector; its distinctive feature is an equity accelerator that requests participating investor cooperatives to "pay it forward" by contributing to future programme activity through revenue streams over ten years (Mayo 2019: pp 10).

In 2017-18, the UnFound cooperative start-up accelerator programme was launched in the United Kingdom as a partnership between Cooperatives UK, the worker cooperative, Stir-to-Action, and Hive, the business support programme from Cooperatives UK and the Cooperative Bank. This is the first initiative in the country that is focused on supporting platform cooperativism initiatives.[32] UnFound offers a series of master-classes on several topics — platform development, user on-boarding, digital marketing, funding strategies and conceptualizing platform governance systems — to equip platform cooperatives with skills and the requisite know-how to traverse the start-up path. In 2018, as part of its first round, UnFound worked with eight platform cooperatives, many of whom subsequently went on to attract capital support or start operations independently.[33]

Another interesting initiative for providing support to platform cooperatives has been set up by *La Coop des Communs*, an association of researchers, SSE organizations and public agencies, established in France in 2016 with the objective of promoting a collaborative economy based on reciprocity. Inspired by the New School initiative on platform cooperativism and the open cooperativism of the P2P Foundation, the association launched the *Plateformes en Communs* workgroup in 2017 to encourage the development of cooperativist economic models that enable the appropriation of new peer-to-peer possibilities offered by digital technology. This workgroup is specifically focused on the creation of a collective of French cooperativist platforms governed by the following five-point code of ethics: inclusive governance, equitable sharing of value, ethical data processing based on informed consent and transparency about data sharing with external agencies, production of commons, and cooperation among members. Its specific activities include supporting the emergence of new platform cooperatives, facilitating research and documentation of innovative models for cross-learning, and building shared resources for the platforms that join its member community. In the future, some of the critical directions in which Plateformes en Communs hopes to expand its work include: (a)creating a dedicated seed funding mechanism for platform cooperatives, (b) lobbying for public procurement guidelines favouring platform cooperatives, and (c) strengthening the technical possibilities for building alliances among its various member cooperatives through evolving guidelines for platform and data interoperability.[34]

There have also been instances where traditional social service organizations have ventured into playing the role of a platform cooperative accelerator. The Centre for Family Life in Brooklyn, New York, initiated Brightly Cleaning, the first cooperative franchise of worker-owned cleaning businesses in 2018. Four worker-owned cooperatives across different neighbourhoods in New York are currently part of the franchise, and they solicit prospective clients through the Up & Go web platform for worker-client matching. The platform was developed by the Centre with the CoLab Cooperative, a worker-owned digital agency (Bautista 2019; GlobeNewswire 2017).

The Platform Development Toolkit, a joint initiative launched by the New School's Platform Cooperativism Consortium and the Inclusive Design Research Center at the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) University in 2018, is an ambitious global programme of support for platform cooperatives. Jumpstarted with an initial grant of USD 1 million from Google.org, the Consortium is focused on implementing the following strategies

32 Interview with Ludovica Rogers, 22 October 2019.
33 See https://www.uk.coop
34 Personal communication with Nicole Alix, 29 October 2019.

(Raymond 2018): (a) setting up a comprehensive "living map" of platform cooperatives and support system organizations across the world that can catalyze peer learning and collaborative action (Spitzberg 2019)

(b) forging an international network of lawyers with support from Harvard Law School to ensure that platform cooperatives in any corner of the world can access strategic legal guidance

(c) developing a customizable open source labour platform that can be adapted by different platform cooperatives with the support of the Inclusive Design Research Centre.

Jutta Treviranus, Director and Professor of the Inclusive Design Research Centre, explains how co-design principles are used to create communities that can use data for good (personal communication, December 2019):

"[In our techno-design], the owners of the platform cooperative are the workers, and in certain cases (e.g., in care cooperatives), both workers and the clients/customers. They decide, and make transparent, what data is collected, how it is used and whether it is shared with any other entity, for what purpose, under what conditions. We have come up with a portable, personal data [sharing] preference standard. This will support a two-way negotiation. The personal data producer will be able to discover and explore the risks and benefits of releasing their data, and then declare who they trust with their data, for what purposes and under what conditions. The service provider that wishes to use the data will declare, in an auditable and transparent way, what data is essential for delivering the service. The intention is to prevent data over-reach and enable individuals to control how their data is used. We do not want to instrument[alize] work surveillance, or create systems that pit workers against each other. We also do not want to support predatory sales tactics."

The New School's Platform Cooperativism Consortium and the Inclusive Design Research Centre are already piloting the iterative co-design approach of the open source labour platform in a few locations in developed and developing countries.[35] As part of this study, we mapped the experience of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India, one of the collaborators in this initiative. SEWA commenced operations in the 1970s in the state of Gujarat, India, as a trade union promoting the rights of women workers in the informal sector. Parallelly, SEWA also started organizing cooperatives of informal women workers in different sectors in rural and urban areas. Today, in the state of Gujarat alone, SEWA provides marketing, capacity building, financial services and policy support to 106 cooperatives across various locations, reaching out to over 300,000 women through its apex body, SEWA Cooperative Federation.

In the past, SEWA Cooperative Federation has attempted to work through Amazon's Saheli programme to enable its cooperatives to access a wider market, but the steep rates of commission and unfavourable terms of participation made the collaboration unattractive.[36] Therefore, SEWA Cooperative Federation decided to experiment with setting up their own e-commerce platform instead (See Box 6).

35 Partnering organizations include The CoRise Cooperative (supported by SEIU-HCII and ICA) in the United States, SEWA in India, Cataki in Brazil, Rethink Co-op in Germany and The Co-operative Life in Australia.
36 Interview with Nitya Nangalia, 21 October 2019.

Box 6. SEWA's experience as part of the Platform Development Toolkit

As a collaborator of the Platform Development Toolkit and with support from the Inclusive Design Research Centre, SEWA Cooperative Federation first started work on an on-demand beauty service platform that would cater to specific neighbourhoods in Ahmedabad, India. This project involved a preliminary consultation with beauty service workers and mapping of their digital literacies, which was followed by a design for the platform. However, the project failed to take off because of a weak customer base and difficulties in ensuring market access for the workers who wished to come on-board.

"Workers need assured good market access. We didn't have a strong customer base and weren't able to guarantee them good business. We were also unable to compete with the marketing outreach of mainstream platforms," notes Salonie Hiriyur from the SEWA Cooperative Federation.[37]

Learning from this experience, SEWA Cooperative Federation moved on to experiment with a platform for domestic workers, an area where it has a longer history of organizing. It is currently working on developing this platform with two of its member cooperatives in Ahmedabad: Homecare, with 150 members, and Soundarya, with 100 members. The platform brings a digital edge to these cooperatives which have been operational for a decade and already have steady work and a pool of dedicated customers. At the time this research was being undertaken, the techno-design of the platform was still evolving.

However, from the beginning it is clear that the platform is being imagined as a hyper-local, web-based concierge service. Requests from clients will be processed and matched by backend workers of SEWA and not through the automated matching of clients and service providers of mainstream on-demand service platforms. Additionally, SEWA will also strengthen the internal processes of its domestic workers' cooperatives — including membership management and accounts and finance tools — in order to be able to go digital. SEWA Cooperative Federation is now contemplating the launch of SEWA Bazaar, which would function as a common digital marketplace for its member cooperatives of artisans and micro-entrepreneurs.

37 Interview with Salonie Hiriyur, 21 October 2019.

Finding 8. Data cooperatives, the latest offshoot of the platform cooperativism idea

A more recent offshoot of the platform cooperativism idea manifests in proposals for worker-led data cooperatives. In 2019, MIT academics, working closely with UNI Global Union, came out with a model for establishing a data cooperative in the ride-hailing sector. The proposal focuses on the establishment of a collective organization that acts as a fiduciary for the voluntarily pooled personal data of its member drivers and customers, generating common insights for the benefit of the membership (Hardjono and Pentland 2019). Details about payment and terms of service can address the informational asymmetry between the platform that controls all information and its drivers and passengers who are unaware of the terms. Workers and consumers can potentially increase their bargaining power vis-à-vis platform companies through such data cooperatives.

Currently, it is difficult for drivers of Uber or Lyft to compare incomes across similar routes or distances. Similarly, passengers do not have a yardstick to assess average costs for particular routes. If drivers and passengers voluntarily pool the data that they share with ride-hailing platforms, by either uploading data files manually or installing a passive data traffic copying app on their devices, the insights from such aggregate data could be available as the basis of any collective bargaining (Hardjono and Pentland 2019).[38]

The proposal from MIT Labs is a model that creates an "intelligence commons" to enable informational capability for drivers and passengers. Other data cooperative models have been proposed that focus on monetizing data pools. For instance, Driver's Seat, a cooperative of ride-hailing app drivers in the United States, collects and sells mobility data of members to city agencies so they can make better transportation planning decisions.[39] Driver-owners receive a share from revenue generated from data sales. In addition, member drivers can track and share their driving data by using the Driver's Seat's mobile application (currently in beta testing) to receive free insights on their driving habits to help them optimize their operations and increase earnings (Adjovu 2019).

Finding 9. SSE organizations in the Global South setting up e-commerce marketplaces

SSE experiments in the platform cooperativism tradition foreground the imperative to reclaim the potential of the Internet for peer collaboration and disrupt the dominant capitalist model of Big Tech platforms. Meanwhile, in countries of the Global South with a strong institutional base for cooperatives, such as Argentina, China, India and Malaysia, this study also found evidence of apex cooperative federations, cooperative banks and social enterprises setting up e-commerce marketplaces for their membership. These initiatives originating from traditional cooperativism mostly seem to embrace the data tactics of dominant platforms.

Angkasa, the publicly-funded apex organization of cooperatives in Malaysia, is one prominent example. In May 2019, Angkasa launched a cooperative retail platform, Jimat, to help cooperative store owners anticipate, source,

38 Consumer-end/user-end data cooperatives have also been set up, such as the Midata.coop initiative in Switzerland that has adopted a consumer cooperative model to enhance people's control over their medical data. Such initiatives are outside the scope of this study and, therefore, have not been discussed.

39 At the time of this study, more details were not available on the website of the initiative about the specifics of member data sales and benefit sharing. See https://www.driversseat.co/

and manage inventory, and connect with local consumers as well as with product suppliers. Jimat is modelled after mainstream platforms and collects and processes data for managing its supply chains. A mobile app for consumers allows them to pre-order products from their nearby cooperative shops to facilitate closer linkages with the local economy. This order can be serviced by the cooperative shop either via its own inventory, or through channelling the request to a central hub which consolidates purchase orders from multiple shops into a single bulk order. The presence of a central hub also enables cooperatives to negotiate favourable terms of purchase with suppliers. Logistics solutions for the participating shops are also factored in as part of this model.[40]

Similarly, in 2015, the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives launched China E-Coop, a subsidiary company with a total investment of RMB 1.605 billion dedicated to opening up the e-commerce opportunity for cooperatives and small enterprises from across China. China E-Coop has launched an online marketplace, GXYJ.COM, that enables B2B trading in farm inputs, business-to-business and business-to-consumer trading in farm produce and consumer goods, and smart cloud intelligent logistics services to sellers. In 2018, the value of business transactions carried out by China E-Coop exceeded RMB 20 billion on GXYJ.COM; more than 140,000 registered shop owners were enrolled and 150,000 kinds of products were sold.[41] Consumer and supplier profiling for big data analytics is integral to China E-Coop's future business development strategies.

In Argentina, the Banco Crédito Cooperativo launched the e-commerce platform *Portal de Tiendas* in 2015. This platform enables participating cooperatives to operate an online storefront to widen the market reach of their products. It is more accurate to think of Portal de Tiendas as a web portal, as it does not have a product search engine and customers have to browse individual shop fronts of member cooperatives and then identify the products they want to purchase online. The model does not generate seller/consumer profiles from transaction data or use data-based analytics.[42] Sellers only have to pay a monthly maintenance fee of about USD 12 and are not charged any commission on individual transactions. Currently, there are about 200 stores listed on the portal, selling all kinds of products. Though the platform had a smooth start, it has since fallen on hard times because of the recession and inflation that the Argentine economy is facing.[43]

Go-Coop, launched in 2014, is India's first online marketplace for handmade/artisanal products. Utilizing a social enterprise approach, it supports over 350 master weavers and cooperatives in marketing and online merchandising of their products (Gandhi 2019). Its operating model involves cluster-level workshops to educate weavers and artisans about online marketing and merchandising of products, based on consumer demand. After the workshop, cooperatives and master weavers or artisans can register themselves on the platform. Go-Coop's team of cluster level service cooperatives provides ongoing support to the artisans to manage their products, inventory and ongoing business. Strategically, Go-Coop also cross-posts its products on mainstream e-commerce platforms such as Myntra and Amazon, evaluating on a case-by-case basis the trade-off between accessing the wider market reach of these platforms and their steep commission rates. It also uses AWS for data analytics to aid business strategy development.[44]

In the ride-hailing marketplace, traditional taxi cooperatives find themselves facing a tough choice. In Ecuador, *Coop Taxis Agua Clara* is trying to build its own alternative app, while *Taxi Coop El Rosario* has partnered with EasyTaxi, a mainstream ride-hailing platform in Latin America, to promote their services.[45] These examples reflect the challenges that traditional service cooperatives confront in reinventing themselves for the platform economy.

40 Interview with Roszurina Omar, 7 November 2019.
41 Interview with Chen Fei, 11 December 2019.
42 This may be attributable to wider public consciousness and legal frameworks on privacy.
43 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra. Also, see https://www.portaldetiendas.coop/
44 Interview with Siva Devireddy, 12 December 2019.
45 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra.

Finding 10. Radical platform cooperatives outside the mainstream economy being explored, but remain a fringe phenomenon

This study found a few initiatives that are attempting to employ a cooperativist vision grounded in the ethics of reciprocity and solidarity, locating themselves completely and firmly outside the mainstream capitalist economy. In the post-COVID-19 context, these models may acquire relevance and even emerge spontaneously through mutual aid and community self-organizing.

One area in which such models have emerged is in the communitization of care where cooperatives are trying to fill the gap in care services that has emerged because of the weakening welfare state. Equal Care Coop is an initiative in the United Kingdom that is reorganizing care work services through a trust-based approach. The initiative accords greater agency and autonomy to both frontline care workers who have historically been devalued in the healthcare field and care recipients who feel let down by current for-profit models of care provisioning. Unlike mainstream platforms in the domain that merely provide a marketplace for care services, Equal Care is focused on the development of local circles of care — geography-specific networks of care and support workers, professionally trained volunteers and people who need care and support. The digital platform — currently in development — will allow the people within each local "circle of care" to self-manage their neighbourhood-level care service requirements, matching the needs and skills of each member of the group. Care receivers will have the ability to choose who will support them and how, and will have full control over the sharing of their personal data.[46] Care givers will be part of peer support networks and be able to choose when and where they work, giving them greater control over their working lives. As Emma Back, who heads the initiative, pointed out in an interview carried out for this research, "In our on-boarding process, we are currently focused on bringing geographically connected groups [of care receivers, care givers and volunteers] onto the platform rather than individuals from disparate locations."[47] The platform is financed by a community shares model, a form of social investment that is available to cooperative and community benefit societies.

The Kobe consumer cooperative in Japan is attempting to build a similar mutual care cooperative platform that can digitally connect senior citizens who need help in running specific errands or household chores with a pool of neighbourhood volunteers. As Osamu Nakano from the Japanese Worker Cooperative Union underlines, "Workers' cooperatives should play a crucial role in the field of care work in local communities more than before, while developing platform cooperativism on a global economic scale... [as part of their opposition against platform capitalism]" (ICA Asia and Pacific 2018).

Some groups interested in radically overturning capitalism have also attempted to put in place online marketplaces where exchange is facilitated through alternative currency based on real economy principles, ensuring that workers/producers are protected from the risk of losing their earnings to the vagaries of financialization.

The *Cooperativa Integral Catalana* (CIC) project was formed by a group of activists who came together during the 15M anti-austerity movement in Spain, to explore post-capitalist alternatives to economic and social life. A central element in the alternative economic model proposed by CIC is the establishment

46 The granular details of these data controls are still being worked out, as shared by Emma Back in the interview carried out for this research. Interview with Emma Back, 18 November 2019.
47 Interview with Emma Back, 18 November 2019.

of local exchange networks — self-organized marketplaces for the local community where payment takes the form of either barter exchange or an alternative social currency created by the exchange network. If payment is made using the social currency, transactions are managed on the logic of mutual credit. That is, when a transaction between two parties occurs, one's account is credited and the other's is debited. To keep track of transactions and members' credit and debit balances, online platforms known as community exchange systems are deployed. There are about 40 such exchange networks in Catalonia that are currently in operation. Though each of the exchange networks has its own digital platform and social currency, the CIC has ensured that there is scope for inter-network transactions and coordination of the different social currencies (Dafermos 2017).

The *Moneda Par* project backed by the National Institute of Associativism and Social Economy is a similar initiative in Argentina. This social cryptocurrency project designed using blockchain technologies seeks to sustain the purchasing power of workers even in the face of devaluation and hyperinflation. Its market exchange system works on a credit basis. All those who access the Par marketplace are prosumers (producers and consumers at the same time), and, on download of the cryptowallet, receive a fixed number of credits. Whenever individuals sell a product or service, they receive Par currency and when they buy, Par currency is deducted from the wallet. The idea is to ensure that each individual will contribute to the system the same amount that they consume. In the long term, Moneda Par hopes to add social actors such as unions, which in Argentina provide social and health services, to create local micro markets based on the exchange of Par currency rather than physical money in pesos. However, traditional trade unions have not been very enthusiastic about the idea although new-age cooperatives and even a few municipalities have come on board.[48]

While such proposals present interesting socio-economic pathways towards just and fair economies, insofar as they remain delinked from the mainstream economy and its potently unifying global financial system, they are mere alternatives. Social cryptocurrency alternatives may hence not be an effective real economy strategy to fight labour exploitation. These models are only likely to work for small enclaves.

48 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra. Also, see https://www.monedapar.com.ar/funcionamiento-del-sistema/

4

Discussion and conclusions

This study has focused on identifying how the hard-won gains of the labour movement can be effectively extended to workers in the platform economy — what new strategies for organizing seem to be effective and what kind of alternative business models rooted in the SSE tradition are taking shape in platform-mediated work. The starting point of this research is that the platform economy is not a fringe sector. On the contrary, it is the harbinger of an important structural transformation, that of data-based digital intelligence generated through platform business models "becoming a central factor of production, [and] its application for value creation and the control of its value capture increasingly defin[ing] the global economy" (UNCTAD 2019: pp 99).

Emerging evidence clearly indicates that the unfolding platformization of the economy is a signifier of a new phase of neoliberal globalization, propagating labour exploitation and income inequality through unbridled data extractivism. In the Global North and South alike, workers' movements are grappling with the loss of labour power as lead platform firms centralize value and control through their network-data advantage.

Today, the task of reclaiming workers' rights and enhancing the labour share in value-added on the global stage is further complicated by calls for anti-globalization in many developed countries. A rising trend of authoritarian populism has masked issues of economic precarity and insecurity. At the same time, the limits of neoliberal capitalism are also being acknowledged (Piketty 2014) along with the need for a new social contract (ILO 2019a; Prassl 2018). The COVID-19 crisis points to immense working-class duress and a mixed score card for state responses, also galvanizing a debate about the need for egalitarian economic models (Vallelly 2020; Kozul-Wright 2020). The role of digital technologies and the digital economy will be vital in the coming years in reorienting societies and their institutions towards socio-economic equality and justice. The normative-ethical frameworks underpinning the digital domain are, hence, of immediate concern. Success depends on addressing the gaps and building on the lessons learned so far.

This study is, thus, a timely contribution to where the thinking lies with respect to worker rights in future society and alternatively, worker-centric economic models. This chapter synthesizes the overall findings of the research, pointing to specific insights and conclusions about organizing and business models among workers engaged in the platform economy. It reflects specifically on the strategies that platform workers in the Global South have used to assert their rights and carve out alternatives.

▸ 4.1 Organizing – unconventional modes, new agendas

Worldwide, organizing among platform workers seems to correspond to the reorganization of supply chains because of platforms. Platform workers across the world are turning to litigation in order to challenge the misclassification of their employment status and to realize their labour guarantees, including collective bargaining rights. However, cases with similar facts have yielded favourable outcomes in one jurisdiction while disadvantaging workers in others, based on whether courts have chosen to emphasize the degree of control platforms exert on their workforce or the flexibility that gig workers enjoy in determining their working hours (Gurumurthy, Chami and Sanjay 2020). Even within the same jurisdiction, courts have not always taken the same view (ILO 2021). For instance, the UK Supreme Court's February 2021 ruling upholding the UK Employment Tribunal's decision that Uber drivers are workers as defined in Section 230(3)(b) of the UK Employment Rights Act of 1996 is a positive development for ride-hailing workers.

48 Field research report of Sofia Scasserra. Also, see https://www.monedapar.com.ar/funcionamiento-del-sistema/

But this does not automatically translate to an extended recognition of the employment status of gig workers in other location-based or remote platform work arrangements. In 2019, in a legal suit filed by the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB) for collective bargaining rights for Deliveroo riders, the court rejected the claim. The case has now reached the Court of Appeal (Webber 2021). Collective bargaining efforts of platform workers are also inadvertently impeded by competition law frameworks that prohibit cartelization (Daugareilh et al 2019; ILO 2021).

Even in contexts where courts or arbitration tribunals have made an attempt to deliberately extend labour and social protection guarantees to platform workers, some platform companies successfully evade responsibilities to their workforce by exploiting jurisdictional ambiguities in the governance of transnational economic activities or refusing to participate in dialogue with workers and governments to address their demands.

In this scenario, unsurprisingly, around the world, independent grassroots collectives and unions pursuing direct confrontational tactics have been more successful than institutional unions in mobilizing workers in the platform economy (Joyce et al. 2020). Around 80% of dispute actions pertaining to platform workers have been initiated by informal groups (ILO 2021). These new-age efforts at organizing, however, have mostly been confined to the ride-hailing and on-demand delivery sectors where the impacts of platformization are easily visible. Many other sectors of the workforce that are just as severely impacted by the transformation of work arrangements in the platform economy have been completely bypassed: low-skilled crowdworkers, workers in the logistics backend operations of e-commerce, domestic workers, small suppliers with no bargaining power in relation to mainstream platforms, and so on. Both institutional and grassroots trade unions lack an understanding of platformization and its impacts on the lives and livelihoods of a wide spectrum of workers in data value chains of the platform economy. Without empirical and theoretical research to investigate these aspects, imaginaries of worker identity and narratives of worker rights cannot be reinterpreted for successful legal reform and policy change towards a just and equitable labour future.

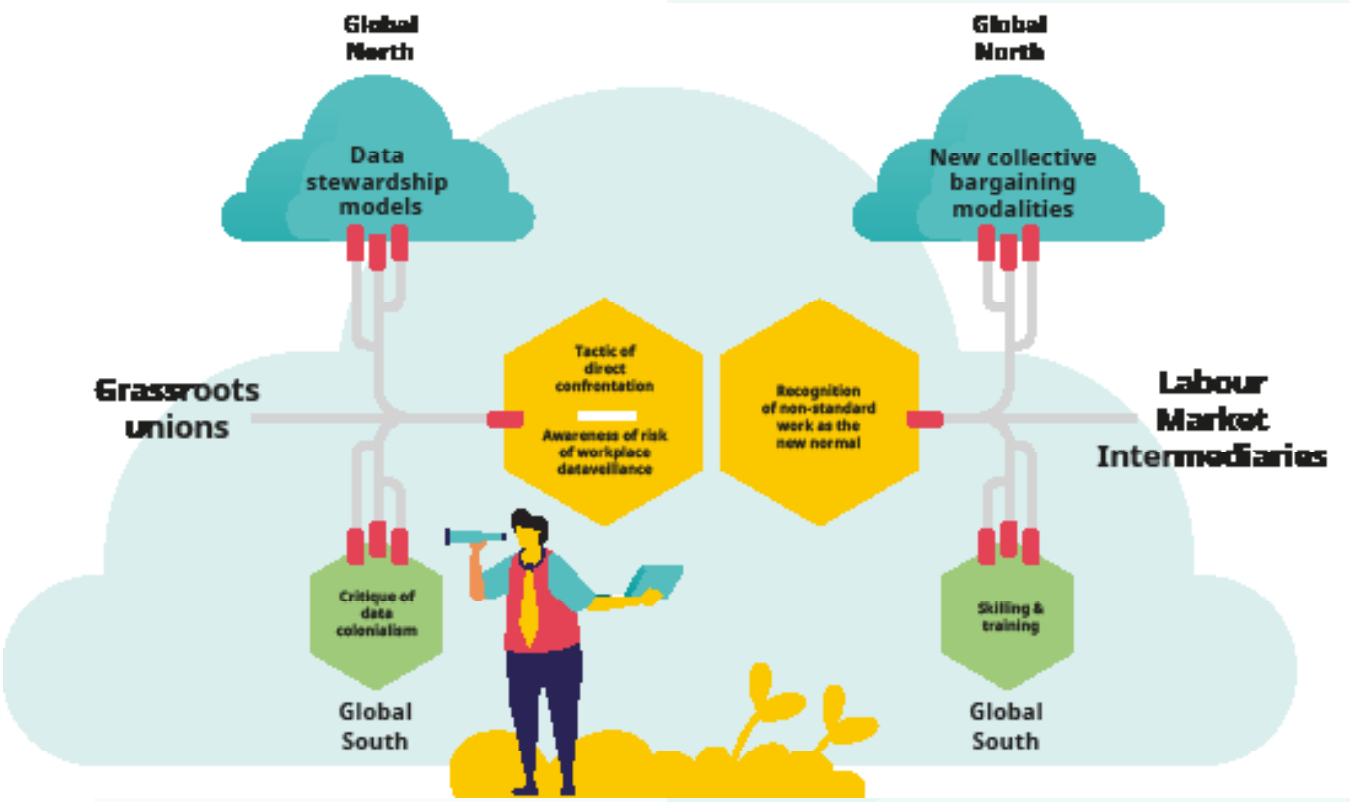
Workers' data rights have emerged as a new frontier for union action in both the Global North and the South. The apex organizations of the international trade union movement — global trade union federations such as UNI Global, ITF, and IndustriALL — identify workers' data privacy and protection as the next frontier of struggle. In fact, UNI Global's charter — Top 10 Principles for Workers' Data Privacy and Protection (2017a) — demands that "workers and their union representatives must have the right to access, influence, edit and delete data that is collected on them and via their work processes." This study also found that discourses of freedom from workplace dataveillance are more developed in countries with good privacy and personal data protection frameworks, such as the European Union and Argentina. Additionally, among a handful of unionists in the Global North, there is a fledgling idea that, by pooling the data traces produced in the course of their work and stewarding them through data cooperatives, workers can consolidate their collective bargaining power.

The political economy of cross-border data flows has also given rise to concerns around economic aspects of data rights. In a global paradigm where data value chains are controlled primarily by the United States, major international trade unions anticipate loss of jobs and eroding job quality as domestic production capacities are impeded by the drain of valuable data resources. For developing countries in particular, the AI advantage enjoyed by platform companies of China and the United States presents new

questions about labour futures. Unions in the South fear that they may be stuck in low value segments of the digital economy and lose jobs to automation. They are unclear how a workers' rights agenda can crystallize unless structural injustices in the political economy of data-led development are tackled in global and national policy spaces.

Given that platform companies have generally refused to engage with unions to remedy exploitative, non-standard employment arrangements, unions have begun experimenting with alternative labour market intermediation models. This study found evidence of such models being attempted in high-skilled crowdwork and technology freelancing and in some instances of on-demand work. In the Global North, there are some successful examples of triangular employment contracts where a workers' cooperative or a cooperative labour contractor mediates the employment relationship with the platform company to ensure minimum wages and non-exploitative terms of employment for associated workers. In the Global South, non-standard work contracts with limited legal protection have been the norm, and workers are over-represented in the peripheral, fluid parts of the labour market with limited bargaining power. Given the fragility inherent in collectivizing the workforce in such contexts, intermediary organizations have resorted to skill training and end-to-end support for micro-enterprise development, while also negotiating placement as a means to shift labour market dynamics.

▶ **Fig 2. Organizing strategies of workers' organizations**



The platform economy has forced worker collectives to re-map the horizon of their organizing strategies. The labour movement must develop a sophisticated grasp of data value chains, going beyond critiques of labour exploitation in the platform economy in order to articulate a conception of labour rights commensurate with a data-led 21st century paradigm (Singh 2020; Just Net Coalition 2019; McCann 2019). Decent work, social protection, health and occupational safety, and collective organizing and bargaining — the cornerstone tenets of labour rights — must be reinterpreted for the platform economy.

Without the vocabulary to frame the issues at stake, organizing for labour rights will be rendered ineffectual. In platform-controlled ecosystems, workers today are not simply faced with the absence of employment guarantees and social protection. They are at immense risk of being pushed into new frontiers of dependency and exploitation, akin to bondage. Uber, for instance, is now launching a new unit, "Uber Money", which includes services such as real-time access to earnings for its drivers and couriers, a revamped debit card with cash-back on gas purchases, and a mobile wallet (Detrixhe 2019). Such unification of banking and employment relationships is a threat to the autonomy and freedoms of Uber workers since the company could use its financial services as a bargaining chip to break strikes or weaken collective action, especially in the post-COVID-19 moment.[49]

As the binary between self-employment and wage employment becomes increasingly blurred in the gigs of the platform economy (Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas 2019), trade unions should embrace a two-pronged strategy. Even as they seek to establish the employer liability of platform companies, trade unions need to carry on the fight for universalizing social protection for all workers, irrespective of the contractual arrangement involved. The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019), has reaffirmed "the continued relevance of the employment relationship as a means of providing certainty and legal protection to workers, while recognizing the extent of informality and the need to ensure effective action to achieve transition to formality."

New institutional models for labour market intermediation are a critical way forward to tackle the atomization and isolation of digitally-mediated work. Such intermediary models can ensure access to support services for platform workers, while also stepping in to negotiate the terms and conditions of work (Conaty et al 2018).

The COVID-19 conjuncture has precipitated the platformization of the economy, providing a boost to e-commerce in goods and digitally delivered service sectors (Petersen 2020; Banga 2020). In many developing countries, the majority of job opportunities are in the value chains controlled by transnational platforms. In this scenario, tripartite social dialogue mechanisms for platform work arrangements become important to enable the effective enforcement of international labour standards at global, national and enterprise levels. Such mechanisms, however, have been under strain in most countries since the 2008 economic crisis (ILO and AICESIS 2017) and need to be reinvigorated as a priority through concerted global action by worker organizations, with appropriate support from ILO and other multilateral and regional development organizations.

49 It is possible to imagine a scenario where the company could use the threat of freezing Uber Money accounts or refuse to provide its overdraft services to drivers who lead unions.

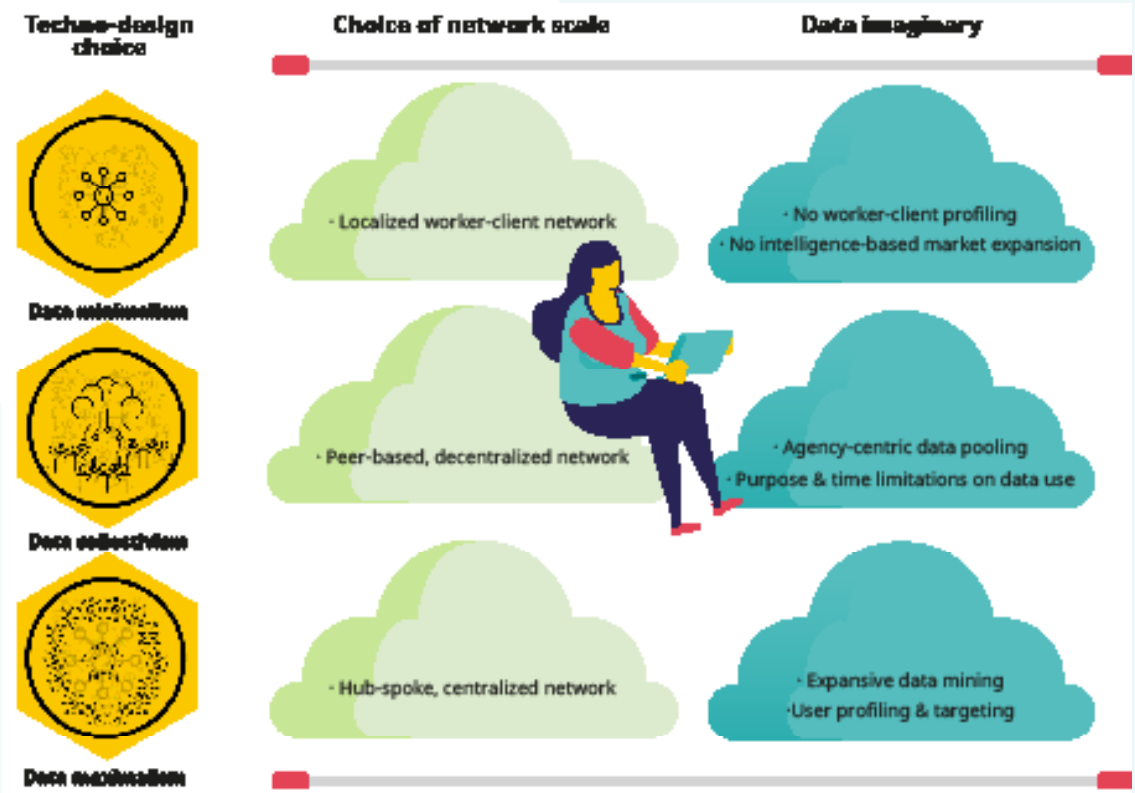
4.2 SSE platform models – data design as linchpin

Creating alternative business models for workers in the platform economy based on a cooperativist ethos is not simply about finding an alternative business structure (incorporation as a cooperative), funding strategy (community shares instead of venture capital) or method of surplus distribution (allocation of dividends based on member contribution rather than amount of share capital held). Choices of techno-design architecture are also equally important in the creation of platform enterprises in the social and solidarity economy tradition. The data ethics informing the intelligence frameworks of such enterprises — as revealed through our study, especially in key informant interviews — have to be radically different, ensuring the fair accumulation and equitable distribution of the value generated.

Data contracts, therefore, should respect individual privacy, and many of the SSE platform initiatives, especially in the North, are designed in this direction. However, what is also evident is that business viability in the platform economy depends on the intelligence and insights generated from data.

This means that the success of SSE frameworks in the platform economy is predicated on judicious choices with respect to both network scale and the level of algorithmic sophistication in data mining and processing. This study has found that the techno-design choices adopted by alternative platform business models for workers tend to broadly fall into the following categories:

Fig 3. Techo-design choices of worker-led platforms



Data minimalism.

The platform cooperativism movement has adopted a minimalist approach to data, utilizing the peer-to-peer networking affordances of the Internet for building a community of clients and service providers/workers, while limiting the collection and use of data from the network to the bare minimum required for the delivery of the service. In this approach, not only is predatory data mining for the purpose of worker-client profiling rejected, but the very generation of market intelligence from aggregate data of member nodes is also eschewed. In this view, data power should not be harnessed for business dominance by mimicking the strategies of mainstream platform business models. Models that promote short-sighted, unsustainable consumerism under surveillance capitalism should be rejected. The business network of a platform cooperative should grow organically out of the preexisting connections that it has created in its operational geography. Unsurprisingly, this model has been more popular in the Global North than in the Global South as, in the latter context, cooperativist enterprises tend to face a far more desperate struggle for survival. There is also the fierce competition from mainstream platform enterprises building a consumer base through unbridled data extractivism and unfair market practices (deep discounting, predatory pricing, and so on).

Data minimalist platform businesses relinquish the intelligence advantage and, instead, focus on web-based peering for localized networks of market exchange. The aspiration here is to achieve the "steady state" local economy advocated by de-growth activists from the Global North (Foster 2011). As hyper-local models that seek an alternative to predatory data extraction, they span an entire spectrum, with some businesses tending towards sharing economies, and others focusing on geographically-bounded markets. Examined through an economy-wide perspective, minimalist approaches to data in platform cooperativism do not really respond to the platform economy and its capitalist impulse. They do certainly emphasize democratic, non-extractivist labour models, ethical consumer practices and, even, ecologically sustainable production. However, in rejecting the efficiencies of data-based intelligence, they are unable to mount an alternative to big capital's networked production and logistics architecture. Efficiencies from data-based intelligence can bring significant gains for local producers, platform workers and consumers, enabling them to optimally manage value chains end-to-end, whereas a data-shy approach will hinder the cooperative movement and worker-owned enterprises as a whole, preventing sustainable value creation in the face of an all-pervasive platform economy. In contexts of the South, platform cooperativism based on data minimalism may end up as a fringe phenomenon catering to a small niche of sellers and buyers at best, and leading to business failure at worst.

Data collectivism.

This is the techno-design choice embraced by worker cooperatives which are convinced that, in an economic context where data has become the foundational source of value creation, it is important to develop an appropriate stewardship model for workers to obtain a share in the collective value extracted from their aggregate data. Such models reject the economy of data extractivism and, therefore, do not allow the creation of a commodity market where individual workers can trade their data. Instead, they focus on creating a fiduciary structure where the transactions data that workers generate in the course of their labour are pooled into a collective data pool on the basis of informed consent and clear use and purpose limitations. This is managed by a set of democratically elected trustees (akin to a credit union cooperative arrangement) who may then generate value from this aggregate data by licensing it to public authorities or business innovators.

In the current context where data-based intelligence has become a critical means of

production, data collectivism as a business strategy enables the commonsification of data ownership, paving the way for a range of benefits. It is built on agentic models of data collection and processing, giving cooperative enterprises an intelligence advantage based on a trusteeship or stewardship model of collective data ownership and administration.

Data maximalism.

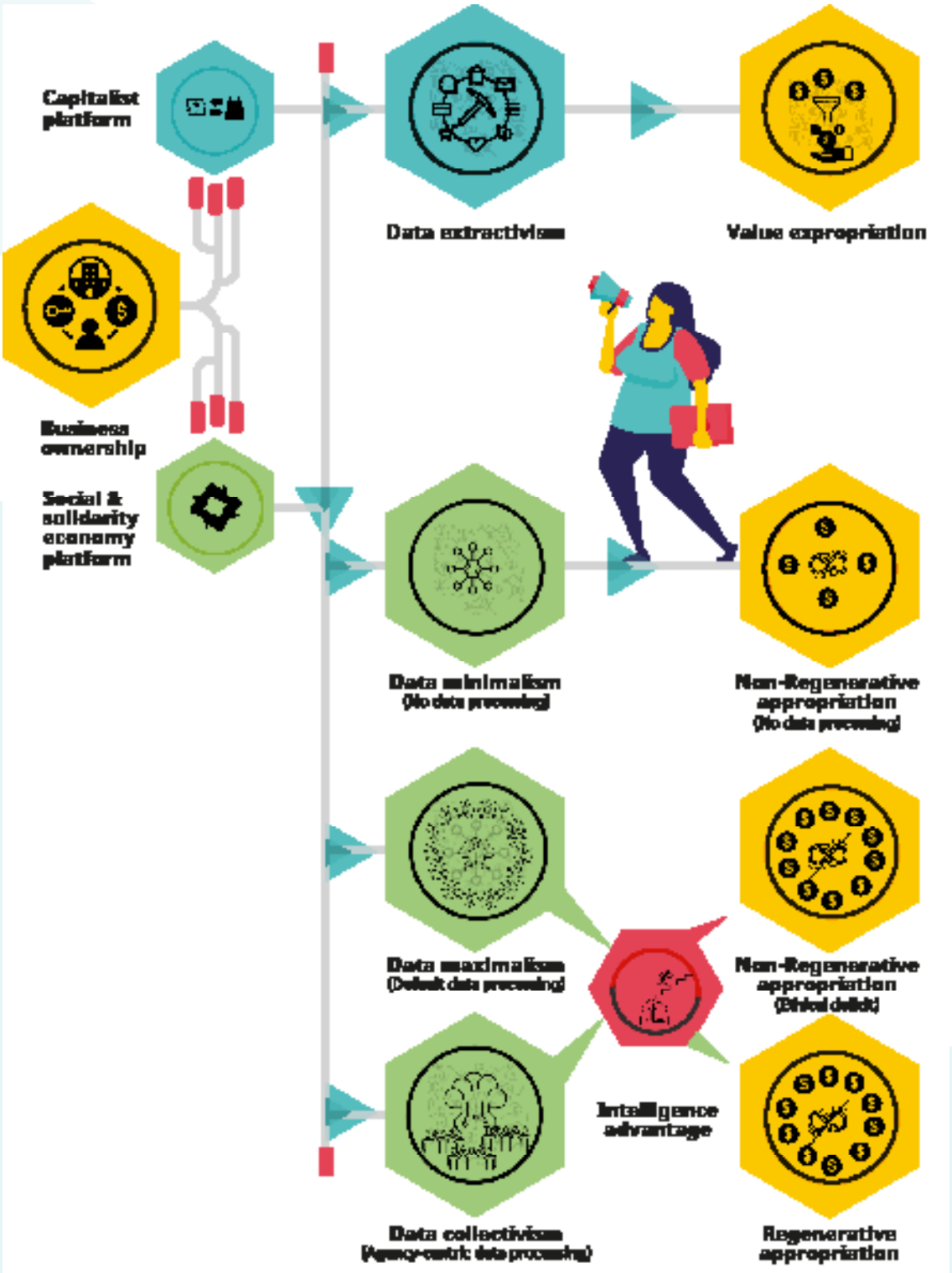
This is the techno-design choice of emulating the mainstream capitalist platform business model and its data practices, despite a platform enterprise having chosen an SSE approach in the design of its business structure and institutional practices. This study found that worker cooperatives and social enterprises in the Global South that are attempting to unlock economic value for workers in the platform economy tend to adopt this model. The rationale informing this choice is that, in a market dominated by mainstream platforms, alternative business models do not stand a chance unless they beat the dominant players at their own data game, relying on profiling and algorithmic targeting strategies.

Data maximalism adopted by South-based e-commerce enterprises supporting cooperatives seems to be impervious to the harms of the platform economy. The uncritical data harvesting approaches of such enterprises go against the grain of the cooperative movement's anti-capitalist ethos. By aping the dominant platform model that centralizes the gains of data-based intelligence, cooperatives adopting this path may end up with an ethical deficit. Maximalist data approaches can create market barriers that prevent smaller cooperatives from entering the fray, resulting in inequitable and unfair local economies.

To strengthen worker-controlled value chains, worker-owned platform business models from the Global North have turned towards "platform cooperativism", embracing the Internet's original promise for equitable wealth creation and distribution. However, the platform cooperativism community should devote more attention to data as the key value proposition in the platform economy and work through the attendant challenges to build intelligence capital that maximizes collective benefit for workers, producers and consumers.

Platform cooperativism hence needs a "regenerative appropriation" strategy that deploys data-based intelligence for sustainable value creation and equitable value distribution. Data minimalism with its negation of the value generating potential of digital intelligence and data maximalism with its ethical deficit do not meet this ask. Neither approach is an economy-wide response to worker empowerment in the digital age. The third way — data collectivism — can provide the golden mean between the solidarity economy ethos of the cooperativist movement and the techno-design possibilities of platforms.

▶ **Fig 4. Platform pathways for value generation**



Data collectivism encompasses three significant elements. Firstly, when worker organizations have the insight to develop market forecasts, anticipate and streamline logistics, and even network with other cooperatives to fulfil consumer demand, it upends Big Capital's data game. Secondly, it provides the techno-material design for decentralizing value distribution across a wide networked geography of multi-local producers/workers. Thirdly, it enables production of a knowledge commons for re-engineering production and consumption in ways that are sensitive to ecological limits. Without such attention to ecological sustainability, the commonsification of data and intelligence cannot lead to regenerative appropriation.

Through data collectivist approaches, local cooperatives of service providers/producers (delivery workers, domestic workers, care providers, and micro-entrepreneurs) can federate to forge trans-local linkages, widening their reach and expanding their markets. For example, Brightly Cleaning, a domestic workers' cooperative discussed in this study, will no longer be just a blip on the radar. If supported to build data capabilities and gain intelligence advantage, multiple groups of on-demand workers can come together across a wide variety of sectors, operating on intelligence scale efficiencies. As a viable real economy alternative to platform capitalism, data collectivist approaches could also create linkages between worker/producer and consumer cooperatives.

5 Recommendations

© anshu-a - unsplash

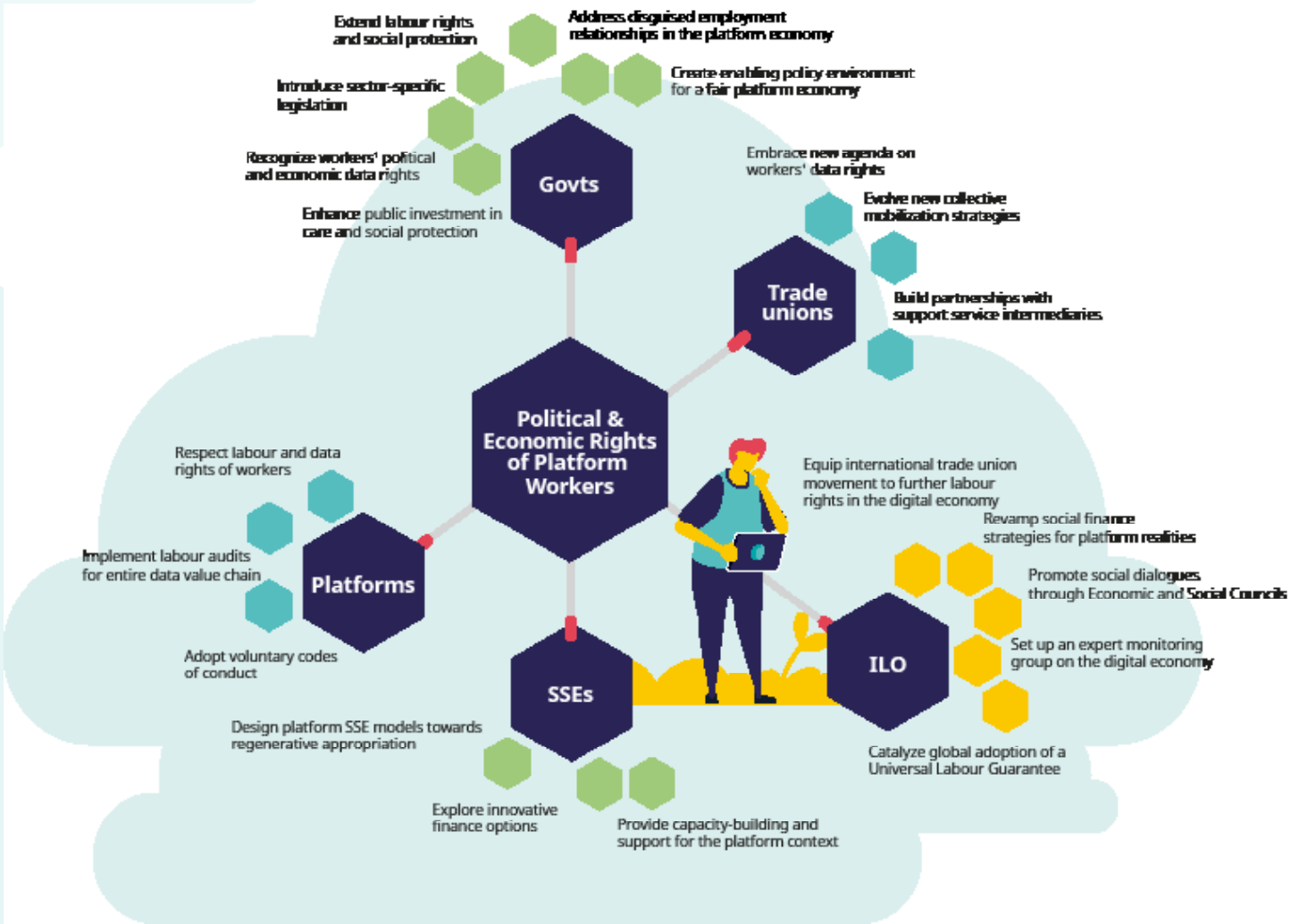
The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated the inequalities in the global economic system. It has also visibilized the issues and concerns of platform workers. The encouraging findings of this study about new organizing initiatives and emergent SSE platform models hence come at a time when there is a window of opportunity for concerted global-to-local action to change the status quo in favour of those in the margins.

The economic recession triggered by lockdowns to curb the pandemic is expected to adversely affect the work and livelihoods of over 81% of the global workforce (ILO 2020c). Informal sector workers, including platform workers, will be among the hardest hit. An unexpected outcome of the economic disruptions caused by COVID-19 is the acceleration of the transition to the digital economy. Social distancing measures have given a new impetus to e-commerce in goods and services in the short term, and experts have predicted a gradual shift to automated manufacturing in the medium term (Petersen 2020). As the digital economy assumes greater relevance in future societies, its outcomes for workers depend on a new international worker solidarity complemented by national vision and action.

This study has also shown how conceptual frameworks and practical strategies of worker organizations need to be based on a better understanding of the process of value creation and distribution in the platform age. Platform capitalism is predicated upon ceaseless data generation to build value through an "intelligence advantage". Value created from "intelligence capital" in dominant business models is based on exploitation; lead platform firms in the e-commerce/on-demand work/microwork domains engage in algorithmic profiling and behavioural nudging tactics that violate the personal and economic autonomy of small producers/micro-entrepreneurs/workers in the ecosystems they control. Worker organizations exploring alternative businesses for workers in the platform economy have made some advances in addressing the unfair data practices of platform businesses. However, a lot of ground still remains to be covered to help platform worker communities assert shared stakes in the data they generate in the course of the labouring process.

The rest of this chapter discusses the specific strategies that worker organizations (trade unions and SSE enterprises) should adopt for furthering the economic and political rights of platform workers, and the pivotal role of national governments, platform companies and the ILO in creating an enabling institutional environment for such efforts.

▶ Fig 5. Strategies towards political and economic rights of platform workers



5.1 Governments

It is universally acknowledged that employment and labour laws in their current form are unable to counter the power imbalance in the "dependent self-employment relationships" of the platform economy, or address the precarity that workers in zero-hour contracts face. Platform workers currently end up being excluded from the ambit of such legal protection, as they experience frequent transitions "between, and combinations of, forms of dependent employment and self-employment" (European Commission 2018: pp 3). Pre-digital laws on the prevention of anti-trust conduct and cartelization often end up curtailing the rights to collective bargaining of workers in the platform economy. Social protection systems tend to contain thresholds on minimum hours, earnings, or duration of employment, resulting in platform workers falling outside of the net. A question that is often raised in debates on regulatory reform in the platform economy is about the applicability of territorial jurisdiction to global work arrangements. The Cross-Industry Agreement of Catalonia (Acuerdo Interprofesional de Cataluña, AIC) for 2018-2020 provides a useful pointer in this regard: "[lack of specific regulation on] digital platforms generates uncertainty about the applicable law, especially with respect to labour relations in cases in which the company's headquarters and the provision of services are in different countries" (Daugareilh et al 2019: pp 104-105).

The ILO's International Labour Standards are important touchstones that must guide states in protecting and promoting workers' rights, and in galvanizing local platform economies that are sustainable and equitable. For example, Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198) urges states to put in place clear legal frameworks to combat "disguised employment" or "dependent self-employment relationships" through which platform companies in the gig economy evade their responsibilities towards workers. Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) exhorts member states to put in place an integrated policy framework to facilitate the transition to the formal economy through appropriate national development strategies or plans. In the context of the platform economy, this would mean policies to harness network-data power to promote a sustainable economic model that ensures decent work for all. Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193) calls upon member states to create an enabling environment that fosters the flourishing of cooperative enterprises, and this is important even for the growth and development of alternative platform business models in the SSE tradition.

There is an opportunity here in the post-COVID-19 context, and governments should pursue the following priority actions:

Extend labour rights and social protection to all platform workers

Protection for platform workers should not be contingent on the establishment of employment status. As the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) has observed: "the full range of fundamental principles and rights at work are applicable to platform workers in the same way as to all other workers, irrespective of their employment status" (ILO 2021).

National laws should be updated so that all platform workers, irrespective of their employment status or contractual arrangement, enjoy the protection of their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, adequate living wage, limit on working hours, safety and health at work, and access to social protection as envisioned by the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019).

© Marcel Croset - ILO - Flickr

Address disguised employment relationships in the platform economy

The legal definition of who constitutes a platform worker must be expanded to correspond to all segments of the data value chain, including in subcontracting arrangements. An expansive legal definition of platform worker is especially important in the Global South, where the backend logistics and delivery operations of platform companies have spawned a wide range of subcontracting arrangements that are currently not traced back to the principal employer (the concerned platform firm). A relationship of accountability between the platform lead firm and the workers at the farthest ends of transnational supply chains that it controls depends on who, in the eyes of the law, is defined as a platform worker.

In line with the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198), and to ensure effective protection of all workers, national policies should allow for a broad range of means for determining the existence of an employment relationship in both direct and indirect platform work (International Labour Conference 109th Session 2020).

Introduce sector-specific legislation for different categories of platform workers

Sector-specific laws to address the specific concerns of particular categories of platform workers should be enacted, considering the breadth and variety of employment arrangements in the platform economy. For example, in 2019 the Government of France introduced LOM/General Mobility Act, a regulatory instrument specifically directed at the ride-hailing sector. The law requires platform companies in the sector to notify drivers with distance and net minimal price details before each ride and to disclose driver revenue and average working time.

Recognize workers' political and economic data rights

Workers should be legally protected from disproportionate and excessive workplace dataveillance. In addition to specific provisions in personal data protection legislation (such as in Spain), sector-specific guidelines on workplace monitoring for different areas of platform work (such as in France) and imposition of algorithmic accountability obligations on platform employers to guarantee digital workers the right to be informed about the functioning of performance rating systems (such as in the Lazio region of Italy) are also important (Daugareilh et al 2019).

A new legal framework on individual and collective/community ownership of data is needed in order to enable workers to stake a claim to data value in mainstream platform business models and build their own alternative SSE platform models using a data collectivist approach.

National labour ministries should initiate social dialogues that enable the operationalization of data dividends/data bonuses for platform workers.

Create an enabling policy environment for a fair platform economy

Regulatory reform is vital to address the growing threat of anti-competitive and anti-trust practices characteristic of the platform economy. Dominant platform businesses straddle different verticals, which gives them easy control over different aspects of workers' lives and livelihoods. Regulation can play a decisive role in checking the excesses of monopolistic platform power.

Policy intervention is necessary also for traditional cooperatives and social enterprises to survive in the digital economy. A seed fund mechanism for SSE platform business models could be established. Supportive policies can also further collaborations between technology start-ups and traditional SSE organizations.

Public investments in dedicated connectivity, platform, cloud and data infrastructure for cooperatives and SSE enterprises is pivotal, especially in developing countries. Multinational platform companies entering the domestic market should be asked to deposit a certain percentage of their revenues in a technology seed fund to be channelled towards the creation of such essential digital infrastructure.

Enhance public investment in care and social protection

A universal social protection floor should be created for platform workers through joint contributions from government and platform companies operating in a given national jurisdiction.

Public investments in care infrastructure should be stepped up to enhance worker well-being. This is non-negotiable for the platform economy to be gender-responsive and inclusive.

▸ 5.2 Trade unions

The global proliferation of non-standard work arrangements in the platform economy calls for a organizing approach that moves beyond institutional trade unionism. Lack of clarity about employment status and explicit exclusions from traditional labour law make it difficult for platform workers to replicate sectoral collective bargaining strategies (Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas 2019). Older strategies for resolving ambiguities in employment status and obtaining recognition of rights to protect platform workers through the litigation route have not gone far as there is little consensus across jurisdictions about whether gig workers are indeed "employees". For example, an examination of case laws on the status of ride-hailing workers in different contexts reveals that the decisions that have emerged with respect to their employment status "point in different and confusing directions" (Rogers 2016, cited in Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas 2019). Litigations on the issue of the employment status of platform workers have led to different results in different jurisdictions — with some courts acknowledging the "dependent self-employment" predicament that most platform workers find themselves in and others upholding the independent contractor arguments put forth by the company (ILO and OECD 2020). New responses that address exploitation and disenfranchisement of platform workers become essential in the post-COVID19 context which is likely to increase the pace of digitization/datafication of value chains in the global economy.

Trade unions should embark on a fresh repertoire of action, as discussed below.

Evolve new collective mobilization strategies

Grassroots approaches are needed to mobilize platform workers through a combination of face-to-face and online strategies, informing them about their rights and initiating direct action.

Collective identity can be built by forging a sense of kinship and belonging with platform workers across sectors (the strategy adopted by AppSindical and GRESEA) and with traditional workers in the same sector (the strategy adopted by ITF in Indonesia).

Unions that lack formal recognition can still wield discursive power by working alongside institutional trade unions to activate tripartite social dialogue mechanisms. Such strategies can persuade platform employers to adopt voluntary codes of conduct and address worker demands.

Embrace a new agenda on workers' data rights and data claims

Workers should collectively assert their rights against exploitative dataveillance, pressing for the right to participate in the technical governance of the platform.

Unions should demand a fair share in such data value by asserting "a collective claim to the aggregate, de-identified data that is generated through their labour in platform-mediated work environments".[50] Such a data theory of value must become part of the common sense of labour rights discussions (Singh 2020).

The formation of data cooperatives is an important strategy to generate collective and individual value from pooled, aggregate data generated during the labouring process in ride-hailing, e-commerce, and so on.

Build partnerships with support service intermediaries

New-age workers' organizing efforts have to be agile enough to bring together strategies of trade unions, labour cooperatives and mutual support organizations, in order to effectively support platform workers. Trade unions should therefore work with new intermediaries for provisioning of support and facilitation services for workers in non-standard work arrangements. Regional chapters of global trade unions can set up and support intermediaries to undertake a range of support services, including: debt collection, tax accounting and legal advice as provided by SMart to its member freelancers; credit and finance services as extended by TiSK; and other labour intermediation models as proposed by California unions. Institutional trade unions need to be particularly agile in building such partnerships for platform workers in the Global South.

[50] Digital Justice Manifesto adopted by the Just Net Coalition in November 2019. See https://justnetcoalition.org/digital-justice-manifesto.pdf

5.3 SSE enterprises

In the global cooperative movement, there is increasing interest in exploring platform business models and backstopping workers' needs for social services and protection. The International Cooperative Alliance has announced its intention to adopt platform cooperativism as a critical future strategy by pursuing a three-point programme of generating awareness of platform cooperatives among its member base, initiating national and regional programmes for the development of platform cooperatives, and brokering appropriate business and finance partnerships for old and new cooperative models (Mayo 2019). Funding, however, has been hard to come by, and start-up accelerators are located mainly in the Global North.

Platform trajectories in the North and the South should be reexamined for SSE enterprises world over to forge new platform futures. Neither data minimalism nor data maximalism may be useful to optimally leverage the value of data-based intelligence. The former may not be able to achieve the market viability that is essential for alternative models to become sustainable, and the latter may simply sidestep the deeper marketplace ethics commensurate with cooperativism. What is needed is a new data optimization strategy — one that leverages the network-data apparatus of the platform model to derive essential business intelligence, without compromising the personal and economic autonomy of the participating workers, producers, and consumers.

Social enterprises, cooperative federations and other intermediaries providing support services will now have to step in to also provide the momentum towards such a strategy. In the Global South, their role is even more vital in this regard. As we find our way out of the largest economic crisis that the world has witnessed since industrial times, SSE ideas of economic security, equal opportunity and egalitarianism become first principles to rebuild local economies.

SSE enterprises should, therefore, pursue the following strategies:

Design platform SSE models towards regenerative appropriation

SSE organizations should deploy data for sustainable value creation and equitable value distribution. They can explore data aggregation and processing without loss of individual and group privacy; promote transparent, fair and non-discriminatory algorithms; adhere to open licensing and platform and data interoperability standards; and create a mechanism to redistribute data value to members. Tech start-ups and traditional cooperatives and social enterprises could collaborate on such initiatives. Federated platform models can bring additional advantages through demand and supply side economies of scale. They can enable the membership base of producer/labour cooperatives to leverage network effects as well as optimize supply through cooperative-to-cooperative collaboration.

Explore innovative finance options

Organizations like the International Cooperative Alliance can set up innovative finance models, including through equity financing, to support start-up accelerators that provide mentoring support to entrepreneurs/founders in business plan development and establish seed funding mechanisms to build and refine platform SSE models. Focus on the Global South, especially to support traditional cooperatives, is vital in this regard.

Provide capacity-building and support for the platform context

National cooperative federations and social enterprises should run training programmes for traditional producer/worker cooperatives to champion SSE models. New business architectures of the platform economy are a greenfield area, and worker cooperatives need mentoring to develop enterprise-specific digital and data strategies.

Intermediary organizations will continue to have a significant role to play in implementing social insurance, credit and care services for worker cooperatives. They should adapt their model to the exigencies of the platform context, forging linkages with government schemes and social protection services.

▸ 5.4 Platform companies

The imperative to pin down the human rights obligations of transnational corporations and other business enterprises assumes extraordinary urgency today. The binding treaty on transnational corporations may be far from completion, but that should not prevent platform companies from voluntarily embracing respect for human rights and a new business ethics of accountability. As countries come out of the post-COVID-19 recession, a new social contract that places worker well-being and economic security at the centre is needed. In addition to legal and policy measures to promote workers' rights, this calls for corporate obligations to ensure that labour gets a fair share in the new data value chains of the platform economy.

Platform companies should address workers' rights in the following ways:

Respect labour and data rights of workers

Platform companies should respect basic labour rights, including workers' rights to minimum wages, maximum limits on working time, workplace safety and health guarantees, and collective bargaining.

Workers' data rights are sacrosanct. Any workplace surveillance measure should meet the test of necessity, legality and proportionality. Platform companies should not prevent workers from setting up data cooperatives for deriving collective benefits from data. Data dividend/data bonus mechanisms could be set up to enable fair and equitable distribution of data value among the workforce.

Governments across the world are embarking on social dialogues for the digital economy. Platform companies should participate in such forums to build the foundations of a just and fair future of work.

Adopt voluntary codes of conduct

Sector-specific codes of conduct for ethical business and worker practices should be adopted by platform employers. One useful exemplar for the design of such codes is the Crowdsourcing Code of Conduct adopted by eight digital labour platforms operating in Germany in 2017. The Code lays out a basic set of guidelines with a view to promoting trust and fair cooperation between service providers, clients and crowdworkers, and was developed in partnership with IG Metall and the German Crowdworkers Union.[51] Platforms could also draw upon the guidance provided in the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) (2017), especially in evolving procedures for workers to raise their concerns (ILO 2021).

Platform companies providing integrated financial services/products to workers should adopt the tenets of "responsible finance". Considering the huge power asymmetry between platform workers and platform employers who double up as financiers, new industry benchmarks for ethical financing are urgently needed.

Implement labour audits across the data value chain

Annual audits of the labour impacts of their business practices should be undertaken by platform companies. The five-point criteria of the Fairwork Foundation — fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management, and fair representation (Fairwork Foundation 2019) — offers one such framework for audit. Labour audits should be carried out not just for those workers in direct platform-mediated work arrangements, but across the entire value chain controlled by the platform.

▸ 5.5 ILO

The platform economy underscores an urgent role for the ILO in benchmarking decent work in emerging value chains including, particularly, access to opportunities for productive work with a fair income, social protection and workplace security guarantees, and freedom to organize and participate in workplace decision-making (Gurumurthy et al. 2019). Indeed, and as discussed above, various preexisting International Labour Standards are particularly pertinent in this regard, and in the post-COVID-19 context, likely to assume immediate significance.

In addition to urging nation-states to reinterpret historical benchmarks for the current conjuncture, it is also essential for the ILO to initiate "innovative action to address the growing diversity of situations in which work is performed, in particular the emerging phenomenon of digitally-mediated work in the platform economy" (ILO 2019a: pp 14).

51 See https://ombudsstelle.crowdwork-igmetall.de/en.html

The ILO could respond to this mandate through the following priority actions:

Catalyze the global adoption of a Universal Labour Guarantee

All workers, irrespective of their employment status and location, should have the guarantee of a labour protection floor that includes fundamental rights of workers — an adequate living wage, limits on hours of work, and safe and healthy workplaces, as recommended by the Global Commission on the Future of Work (ILO 2019a). In the post-COVID-19 context, there is an additional "strain on incomes resulting from the decline in economic activity" (ILO 2020b: pp 5). A universal labour guarantee, therefore, becomes imperative to protect worker well-being. The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, that serves as a global labour code for seafarers, provides a useful precedent for catalyzing an international governance system for digital platforms that "sets and requires platforms (and their clients) to respect certain minimum rights and protections" (ILO 2019a).

Set up an expert group on the digital economy

A global expert monitoring group to track the specific policy challenges of work in the digitalizing economy could be set up by the ILO, building on the recommendations of the Global Commission on the Future of Work (ILO 2019a: pp 56). This expert monitoring group could come out with periodic issue briefs and hold regular convenings in order to encourage member states to upgrade their labour laws and standards for this new context, and suggest policies to encourage platform business models benefiting SSE enterprises. The agenda and membership of the group should specifically account for the context of developing countries.

Promote social dialogue through Economic and Social Councils

Working together with the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS), the ILO could proactively promote social dialogue to ensure that the rights of platform workers become a national policy priority.[52] Through such dialogues, it is possible to introduce specific ideas about guarantees for platform workers, accountability of corporate platforms, and labs for worker-run platform enterprises in different sectors to promote inclusive and equitable platform economies.

Equip the international trade union movement to further labour rights in the digital economy

The ILO could initiate learning dialogues on the platform economy, bringing together grassroots trade unions, new-age intermediaries and institutional trade unions. Such dialogues should be structured to enable the emergence of North-South and South-South alliances in the international workers' movement.

The ILO could also commission research projects that bring to the fore the situated experiences of platform workers across different sectors and throughout the data value chain, moving beyond online delivery, transportation and food platforms.

52 Building on the discussions at the ILO-AICESIS-CES Romania International Conference (Bucharest, 10–11 October 2019).

Revamp social finance strategies for platform realities

The Social Finance division of the ILO could support intermediary organizations working with gig workers in the North and the South to launch innovative savings-and-credit programmes and group insurance products such as unemployment and accident insurance for their membership.

Under its Sustainable Investing line of work, the Social Finance division could focus on new partnerships to support platform cooperative start-up accelerators and raise finances through innovative equity financing models.

The unique tripartite structure of the ILO that enables it to foster cooperation between employers' and workers' organizations and national governments could be leveraged to ensure that we are able to reclaim a new internationalism in the post-COVID-19 moment. Shaping the platform economy to center workers and their rights is vital to realize a future where work and well-being go together.

© SEWA Cooperative Federation

Annex 1. List of key informants

1. Antoinette Tsiboe-Darko, Centre for Social Policy Studies, University of Ghana, Ghana
2. Amy King-Dejardin, independent consultant, Philippines
3. Anne Dufresne, GRESEA, Belgium
4. Balaji Parthasarathy, International Institute of Information Technology, India
5. Balu Iyer, International Cooperative Alliance (Asia and Pacific), India
6. Chen Fei, All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives, China
7. Chenai Chair, World Wide Web Foundation
8. Craig Churchill, Social Finance, International Labour Organization, Geneva
9. Danny Spitzberg, researcher, United States
10. Dora Mawutor, Media Foundation for West Africa, Ghana
11. Emma Back, Equal Care Coop, United Kingdom
12. Ephraim Kenyanito, Article 19 (East Africa), Kenya
13. Favio Riveron, FAECYS, Argentina
14. Fong Po and Bronwyn, Food Fairies, Germany
15. Grace Githaiga, Kenya ICT Action Network, Kenya
16. Guillermo Bianchi, Comercio Mar del Plata, Argentina
17. Guy Tchami, Cooperatives Unit, International Labour Organization, Geneva
18. Hanae Bezad, Le Wagon, Morocco
19. Hyungsik Eum, CICOPA (International Organisation of Industrial and Service Cooperatives), Belgium
20. Jalajakshi C.K., LabourNet, India
21. Janine Berg, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch, International Labour Organization, Geneva
22. Jean-Paul van Belle, Centre for Information Technology and National Development in Africa (CITANDA), University of Cape Town, South Africa
23. John Alhassan, Department of Computer Science, Federal University of Technology, Nigeria
24. Jorge Gomez, Comercio Posadas, Argentina
25. Juan Manuel Ottaviano, AppSindical, Argentina
26. Julie Owono, Internet Sans Frontieres, France
27. Kate Lappin, Public Services International, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
28. Kayleigh Walsh, Outlandish, United Kingdom

29. Khamati Mugalla, East African Trade Union Federation, Tanzania
30. Kishore, Chief Project Coordinator, Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society Ltd., India
31. Kurt Vandaele, European Trade Union Institute for Research, Belgium
32. Leandro Monk, G-coop/FACTTIC, Argentina
33. Lucia Lidner, UNI Americas, Uruguay
34. Ludovica Rogers, Cooperatives UK, United Kingdom
35. Manicandan Gopalakrishnan, IndustriALL, South Asia Office
36. Mohammed Mwamadzingo, ACTRAV, International Labour Organization, Geneva
37. Nanjira Sambuli, researcher, Kenya
38. Nathan Schneider, University of Colorado Boulder, United States
39. Nicole Alix, La Coop des Communs, France
40. Nitya Nangalia, SEWA Federation, India
41. Nnenna Nwakanma, World Wide Web Foundation
42. Onica Makwakwa, World Wide Web Foundation/Alliance for Affordable Internet
43. Osamu Nakano, Japan Cooperative Workers Union, Japan
44. Rafael Peels, ACTRAV, International Labour Organization, Geneva
45. Richard Gevers, Open Data Durban, South Africa
46. Roland Kulke, Transform Europe, Belgium
47. Roszurina Omar, Angkasa, Malaysia
48. Salonie Hiriyur, SEWA Cooperative Federation, India
49. Sangam Tripathy, International Transport Workers' Federation (Asia-Pacific)
50. Santosh P. Kumar, Legislation Coordinator, International Cooperative Alliance, Belgium
51. Sarah de Heusch, SMart, Belgium
52. Sebastian Ferro, Comercio Rosario, Argentina
53. Simel Esim, Cooperatives Unit, International Labour Organization, Geneva
54. Siva Devireddy, Go Coop, India
55. Sonja Novkovic, ICA Committee on Cooperative Research, Canada
56. Tope Ogundipe, Paradigm Initiative, Nigeria
57. Valerie Breda, Social Finance, International Labour Organization, Geneva
58. Yorgos Altintzis, International Trade Union Confederation, Belgium

References

1. Action News. 2019. "Uber, Lyft Drivers in Philadelphia Rally Demanding Fair Pay, Job Security in Nationwide Protest." 6abc Philadelphia. May 9, 2019. https://6abc.com/uber-strike-lyft-protest-and/5290588/

2. Adjovu, Charles. 2019. "My Data! My Rules!" Scouts at Work - Medium. September 7, 2019. https://medium.com/the-backers/my-data-my-rules-60890ffa0e56

3. Arets, Martijn. 2019. "One collective agreement after the other, Swedish Unionen is leading the way in how to approach platforms". (Published interview with Victor Bernhardtz). 12 November 2019. http://www.martijnarets.com/one-collective-agreement-after-the-other-swedish-unionen-is-leading-the-way-in-how-to-approach-platforms/?lang=en

4. Banga, Karishma. 2020. Can the Digital Economy Help Mitigate the Economic Losses from COVID-19 in Kenya? ODI. https://set.odi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Can-the-digital-economy-help-mitigate-the-economic-losses-from-COVID-19-in-Kenya.pdf

5. Barry, Colin W. 2019. "Start.Coop - The Nuts-and-Bolts of Boston's First Co-Op Accelerator". VentureFizz. June 26, 2019. https://venturefizz.com/stories/boston/start_coop-startup-profile

6. Bautista, Maru. 2019. Brightly® – Scaling up Worker Cooperatives through the Franchise Model. ILO. http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/WCMS_732825/lang--en/index.htm

7. Bednarowicz, Bartłomiej. 2019. "EU Law Analysis: Workers' Rights in the Gig Economy: Is the New EU Directive on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions in the EU Really a Boost?" EU Law Analysis (blog). April 24, 2019. http://eulawanalysis.blogspot.com/2019/04/workers-rights-in-gig-economy-is-new-eu.html

8. Berg, Janine, Marianne Furrer, Uma Rani, Ellie Harmon, and M. Six Silberman. 2018. Digital Labour Platforms and the Future of Work: Towards Decent Work in the Online World. ILO. http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_645337/lang--en/index.htm

9. Cant, Callum. 2018. "The Wave of Worker Resistance in European Food Platforms 2016-17." Notes From Below. January 29, 2018. https://notesfrombelow.org/article/european-food-platform-strike-wave

10. Carroll, David. 2017. "A Different Kind Of Startup Is Possible." In Ours To Hack And To Own: The Rise Of Platform Cooperativism, A New Vision For The Future Of Work And A Fairer Internet, edited by Scholz, Trebor, and Nathan Schneider. Orbooks. https://www.orbooks.com/catalog/ours-to-hack-and-to-own/

11. Conaty, Pat, Alex Bird, and Cilla Ross. 2018. Working Together: Trade Union and Co-Operative Innovations for Precarious Workers, Co-ooperatives UK. https://www.academia.edu/36419621/Working_Together_Trade_union_and_co_operative_innovations_for_precarious_workers

12. Dafermos, George. 2017. "The Catalan Integral Cooperative: An Organizational Study of a Post-Capitalist Cooperative." Commons Transition (blog). October 19, 2017. https://commonstransition.org/the-catalan-integral-cooperative-an-organizational-study-of-a-post-capitalist-cooperative/

13. Daugareilh, Isabelle, Christophe Degryse, and Philippe Pochet. 2019. "The Platform Economy and Social Law: Key Issues in Comparative Perspective", European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) Working Paper. https://www.etui.org/content/download/36581/367776/file/WP-2019.10-EN-v3-WEB.pdf

14. De Stefano, Valerio. 2015. "The Rise of the 'Just-in-Time Workforce': On-Demand Work, Crowd Work and Labour Protection in the 'Gig-Economy'". SSRN Electronic Journal. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2682602

15. Detrixhe, John. 2019. "Investors Aren't Impressed by Uber Money." Quartz. October 31, 2019. https://qz.com/1738361/investors-arent-impressed-by-uber-money/

16. Drahokoupil, Jan, and Agnieszka Piasna. 2019. "Work in the Platform Economy: Deliveroo Riders in Belgium and the SMart Arrangement", European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) Working Paper 2019.01. https://www.etui.org/Publications2/Working-Papers/Work-in-the-platform-economy-Deliveroo-riders-in-Belgium-and-the-SMart-arrangement

17. Dufresne, Anne. 2019. Riders of the World, Unite! The Fight against Platform Capitalism. GRESEA. http://gresea.be/IMG/pdf/ge98_en_complet_reduit.pdf

18. European Commission. 2018. "Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Access to Social Protection for Workers and the Self-Employed." https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0132&from=GA

19. Fairwork Foundation. 2019. "The Five Pillars of Fairwork: Labour Standards in the Platform Economy." https://fair.work/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2019/10/Fairwork-Y1-Report.pdf

20. Foster, John Bellamy. 2011. "Capitalism and Degrowth: An Impossibility Theorem". Monthly Review, 1 January, 2011. https://monthlyreview.org/2011/01/01/capitalism-and-degrowth-an-impossibility-theorem/

21. Galperin, H., and A. Alarcon. «The Future of Work in the Global South.» International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ottawa (2017).

22. Galperin, Hernan, and Catrihel Greppi. 2019. "Geographic Discrimination in the Gig Economy – USC Annenberg Research Network on International Communication." In Digital Economies at Global Margins, edited by Mark Graham. Cambridge, USA: MIT Press. https://arnicusc.org/publications/geographic-discrimination-in-the-gig-economy/

23. Gandhi, Shweta. 2019. "GoCoop App Is Helping Grassroot Level Weavers Get Direct Business in India". Vogue India, 28 March, 2019. https://www.vogue.in/content/gocoop-app-is-helping-grassroot-level-weavers-get-direct-business-in-india

24. GlobeNewswire. 2017. "New Home Services Platform Up & Go Shakes up the Gig Economy by Putting Workers in Charge". GlobeNewswire News Room, 9 May, 2017. http://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2017/05/09/1311291/0/en/New-Home-Services-Platform-Up-Go-Shakes-up-the-Gig-Economy-by-Putting-Workers-in-Charge.html

25. Gogarty, Conor, and Alexander Brock. 2019. "Why You Might Struggle to Get Your Deliveroo Order Tonight". Bristol Post, 21 September, 2019. https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/you-might-struggle-your-deliveroo-3345513

26. Gorenflo, Neal. 2015. "How Platform Coops Can Beat Death Stars Like Uber to Create a Real Sharing Economy". Shareable, 4 November, 2015. https://www.shareable.net/how-platform-coops-can-beat-death-stars-like-uber-to-create-a-real-sharing-economy/

27. Graham, Mark, and Mohammad Amir Anwar. 2019. "The Global Gig Economy: Towards a Planetary Labour Market?" SSRN Scholarly Paper ID 3401298. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network. https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3401298

28. Graham, Mark, Isis Hjorth, and Vili Lehdonvirta. 2017. "Digital Labour and Development: Impacts of Global Digital Labour Platforms and the Gig Economy on Worker Livelihoods". Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research 23 (2): 135–62. https://doi.org/10.1177/1024258916687250

29. Gurumurthy, Anita, Deepti Bharthur, and Nandini Chami with Jai Vipra and Ira Anjali Anwar. 2019. Platform Planet: Development in the Intelligence Economy. IT for Change. https://itforchange.net/sites/default/files/add/Report-Platform%20Planet_Development_in_the_intelligence_economy.pdf

30. Gurumurthy, Anita, Nandini Chami, and Sadhana Sanjay. 2020. The gig is up! Worker rights for digital day labour in India. FES. http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/indien/16516.pdf

31. Hardjono, Thomas, and Alex Pentland. 2019. "Data Cooperatives: Towards a Foundation for Decentralized Personal Data Management." ArXiv:1905.08819 [Cs], May. http://arxiv.org/abs/1905.08819

32. ICA Asia and Pacific. 2018. Cooperatives in the Changing World of Work. International Cooperative Alliance Asia and Pacific. https://icaap.coop/sites/ica-ap.coop/files/CCWW%20Report_1.pdf

33. ILO. 2018a. Issue Brief#5. Job quality in the platform economy. Cluster 3: Technology for Social, Environmental and Economic Development. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_618167.pdf

34. ———. 2018b. Interview with Trebor Scholz – Connecting Cooperatives to the Future of Work, Digitally. February. http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/spotlight/WCMS_616775/lang--en/index.htm

35. ———. 2019a. Work for a Brighter Future. Report of the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work. http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_662410/lang--en/index.htm

36. ———. 2019b. Cooperative & Social Solidarity Economy: Responses to Key Issues in the Report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---coop/documents/publication/wcms_705803.pdf

37. ———. 2020a. World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2020. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_734455.pdf

38. ———. 2020b. COVID-19 and the World of Work: Impact and Policy Responses. ILO Monitor 1st Edition. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_738753.pdf

39. ———. 2020c. COVID-19 and the World of Work: Updated Estimates and Analysis. ILO Monitor 2nd Edition. ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_740877.pdf

40. ———. 2021. World Employment and Social Outlook : The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work. https://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/2021/lang--en/index.htm

41. International Labour Conference (2019). ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_711674.pdf

42. International Labour Conference (109th Session, 2020). Promoting employment and decent work in a changing landscape. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_736873.pdf

43. ILO and AICESIS. 2017. Social Dialogue and the Future of Work: Report of the ILO-AICESIS Conference. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---dialogue/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_645833.pdf

44. ILO and OECD. 2020. Ensuring Better Social Protection for Self-Employed Workers. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---ddg_p/documents/publication/wcms_742290.pdf

45. Johnston, Hannah, and Chris Land-Kazlauskas. 2019. "Organizing On-Demand: Representation,Voice, and Collective Bargaining in the Gig Economy", ILO Conditions of Work and Employment Series No. 94. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_624286.pdf

46. Joyce, Simon, Denis Neumann, Vera Trappmann, and Charles Umney. 2020. "A Global Struggle: Worker Protest in the Platform Economy", European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) Policy Brief (European Economic, Employment and Social Policy) No. 2/2020: 6. https://www.etui.org/Publications2/Policy-Briefs/European-Economic-Employment-and-Social-Policy/A-global-struggle-worker-protest-in-the-platform-economy

47. Just Net Coalition. 2019. "Digital Justice Manifesto: A Call to Own our Shared Digital Future". https://justnetcoalition.org/digital-justice-manifesto.pdf

48. Kartono, Arif. 2019. "Time to Regulate the Gig Economy?" The Malaysian Reserve. 2 October, 2019. https://themalaysianreserve.com/2019/10/02/time-to-regulate-the-gig-economy/

49. Kazibwe, Kenneth. 2019. "Uber Drivers Strike over Pay, Mistreatment by Company". Nile Post (blog). 24 September, 2019. https://nilepost.co.ug/2019/09/24/uber-drivers-strike-over-pay-mistreatment-by-company/

50. Kenney, Martin, and John Zysman. 2018. "Work and Value Creation in the Platform Economy", BRIE Working Paper 2018-4. https://brie.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/brie_wp_20184.pdf

51. Kozul-Wright, Richard. 2020. "After Coronavirus We Need a Global Green New Deal". Tribune Magazine, 27 April, 2020. https://tribunemag.co.uk/2020/04/after-coronavirus-we-need-a-global-green-new-deal.

52. Kurmanath, KV. 2019. "50,000 Uber, Ola Cabs to Go off the Roads on Oct 19 in Telangana - The Hindu BusinessLine". Hindu BusinessLine, 17 October, 2019. https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/50000-uber-ola-cabs-to-go-off-the-roads-on-oct-19-in-telangana/article29725460.ece

53. Kyodo News. 2020. "Tokyo Uber Eats Union Demands Hazard Pay, Protection against Coronavirus". 10 April, 2020. https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2020/04/4b0ebbd6dce7-tokyo-uber-eats-union-demands-hazard-pay-protection-against-virus.html

54. Mann, Laura, and Gianluca Iazzolino. 2019. See, Nudge, Control and Profit: Digital Platforms as Privatized Epistemic Infrastructures. It for Change, Platform Politick: A Series. March. https://itforchange.net/platformpolitics/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Digital-Platforms-as-Privatized-Epistemic-Infrastructures-_5thMarch.pdf

55. Mayo, Ed. 2019. The International Co-Operative Alliance and Platform Co-Ops: Options for the ICA to Support Platform Co-Ops in Its Forward Strategy. Discussion Paper. International Co-operative Alliance. https://resonate.is/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Platform-Coop-ICA-Strategy-Options-Discussion-Paper.pdf

56. McCann, Duncan. 2019. E-Commerce Free Trade Agreements, Digital Chapters and the Impact on Labour: A Comparative Analysis of Treaty Texts and Their Potential Practical Implications. International Trade Union Confederation. https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/digital_chapters_and_the_impact_on_labour_en.pdf

57. McKinsey. 2018. "Digital/Mckinsey: Insights, WInning in Digital Ecosystems". https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/McKinsey%20Digital/Our%20Insights/Digital%20McKinsey%20Insights%20Number%203/Digital-McKinsey-Insights-Issue-3-revised.ashx

58. Nxumalo, M. 2018. «Durban Uber, Taxify drivers 'besieged'». Independent Online, 13 December, 2018. https://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/durban-uber-taxify-drivers-besieged-18493566

59. Petersen, Thieß. 2020. "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Will Boost Digitalization", AI Policy Exchange (blog). 9 April, 2020. https://aipolicyexchange.org/2020/04/09/how-the-covid-19-pandemic-will-boost-digitalization/

60. Piketty, Thomas. 2014. Capital in the Twenty-first Century. Cambridge, USA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer.

61. Prassl, Jeremias. 2018. Collective Voice in the Platform Economy: Challenges, Opportunities, Solutions. European Trade Union Confederation. https://www.etuc.org/sites/default/files/publication/file/2018-09/Prassl%20report%20maquette.pdf

62. Raval, Noopur. 2019. "Automating Informality: On AI and Labour in the Global South". Global Information Society Watch 2019: Artificial intelligence: Human rights, social justice and development. https://www.giswatch.org/node/6202

63. Raymond, Robert. 2018. "Platform Cooperativism Consortium awarded $1 million Google.org grant". P2P Foundation (blog). https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/platform-cooperativism-consortium-awarded-1-million-google-org-grant/2018/06/10

64. Scholz, Trebor. 2016. "Platform Cooperativism: Challenging the Corporate Sharing Economy." Rosa LuxembuSrg Stiftung.https://rosalux.nyc/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/RLS-NYC_platformcoop.pdf

65. Singh, Parminder. 2017. Digital Industrialisation in Developing Countries: A review. IT for Change. https://itforchange.net/digital-industrialisation-developing-countries-%E2%80%94-a-review-of-business-and-policy-landscape

66. Shrivastava, Aditi. 2019. "Flipkart: Flipkart Leads $60 Million Round in Logistics Startup Shadowfax." The Economic Times, 5 December, 2019. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/startups/newsbuzz/flipkart-leads-60-million-round-in-logistics-startup-shadowfax/articleshow/72382017.cms

67. Slee, Tom. 2017. What's Yours Is Mine: Against the Sharing Economy. New York: OR Books, LLC.

68. Spitzberg, Danny. 2019. Mapping the Cooperative Digital Economy. Platform Cooperativism Consortium. 19 December, 2019. https://platform.coop/blog/mapping-the-cooperative-digital-economy/

69. Srnicek, Nick. 2016. Platform Capitalism. Hoboken, USA: John Wiley & Sons.

70. Start.Coop. 2019. Empowering Enterpreneurs to Build Transformative, Scalable, Cooperatively-Owned Businesses. Cohort Report. https://start.coop/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Start.coop_2019Report.pdf

71. Streitfeld, David. 2020. "As Amazon Rises, so Does the Opposition". The Economic Times, 20 April, 2020. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/startups/features/as-amazon-rises-so-does-the-opposition/articleshow/75242795.cms.

72. UNI Global Union. 2017a. Top 10 Principles for Workers' Data Privacy and Protection. http://www.thefutureworldofwork.org/opinions/10-principles-for-workers-data-rights/

73. UNI Global Union. 2017b. Global Union Sets new Rules for the Next Frontier of Work—Ethical AI and Employee Data Protection (Published interview with Philip Jennings), 11 December 2017. https://uniglobalunion.org/news/global-union-sets-new-rules-next-frontier-work-ethical-ai-and-employee-data-protection

74. UNCTAD. 2019. Value Creation and Capture: Implications for Developing Countries. Digital Eocnomy Report 2019. https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/der2019_overview_en.pdf

75. Vallelly, Neil. 2020. "The Coronavirus Decade: Post-Capitalist Nightmare or Socialist Awakening?" ROAR Magazine. https://roarmag.org/essays/coronavirus-decade/

76. Vandaele, Kurt. 2018. "Will Trade Unions Survive in the Platform Economy?: Emerging Patterns of Platform Workers' Collective Voice and Representation in Europe." European Trade Union Institute, Working paper 2018.05. ETUI.

77. Van Doorn, Niels van. 2017. "Platform Labor: On the Gendered and Racialized Exploitation of Low-Income Service Work in the 'on-Demand' Economy." Information, Communication & Society 20 (6): 898–914. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1294194

78. Visser, Jelle. 2019. Trade Unions in the Balance. ILO ACTRAV Working Paper. ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---actrav/documents/publication/wcms_722482.pdf

79. Webber, Ashley. 2021. "Deliveroo collective bargaining case reaches Court of Appeal". Personnel Today, 2 February 2021. https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/deliveroo-collective-bargaining-case-reaches-court-of-appeal/

80. Youtubers Union. 2020. "Youtubers Union | United We Stand." Youtubers Union. 2020. https://youtubersunion.org/

International Labour Organization
4 route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 22 - Switzerland

COOPERATIVES UNIT
ilo.org/coop

SOCIAL FINANCE PROGRAMME
ilo.org/socialfinance