

A Brief Account of The IDWF Executive Committee Meeting, Bogor, Indonesia, August 13 – 15, 2015.

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In August this year, the Executive Committee met in Bogor, Indonesia for its annual meeting. We used the opportunity of bringing our leaders together to meet with members of IDWF's Indonesia affiliate, and bring the voices of domestic workers to an important global meeting, ***“Labor Migration: Who Benefits? Solidarity Center Conference on Worker Rights and Shared Prosperity.”***

Our Exco meeting followed, and included the following Exco Members:

Myrtle Witbooi, Juanita Flores, Phosuk Gasing, Elizabeth Tang, Sonu Danuwar, Gillian Atwell, Elena Perez and Antonia Pena.

All coordinators were able to attend and they were:

Vicky Kanyoka, Fish Ip, Marcelina Bautista, Jill Shenker, Karin Pape, Rey Rasing and Sofia Trevino. We were joined by Barbro Budin of the IUF, Sofia Eriksson of the Kommunal and Jennifer Angarita, IDWF's summer intern.

We started with a dialogue on the global economy and the global labour movement with Shawna Bader-Blau, the Executive Director of the AFLCIO Solidarity Centre. In this discussion, we learned how trade agreements and regional economic integration, common people are losing control of their lives to corporation with their ever-expanding power. The result is massive unemployment and shrinking of human rights and democracy globally. We need to think about how to build solidarity with other workers, how to strengthen the IDWF as a domestic workers organization, and how to empower the labour movement overall, to be able to effectively fight back.

The meeting formally began with a review of the past one year in the regions and globally. I and our coordinators in the regions presented reports highlighting the achievements and challenges.

We achieved a stronger IDWF with 7 new affiliates and 17% increase of the total members. More affiliates have begun to include migrant domestic workers into their ranks. More domestic worker leaders are emerging with capacity to take up various roles within their organizations. The IDWF is more visible at national level with more affiliates using our materials in their workshops and public actions. Many are communicating with and learning from one another across countries and even regions through various social media platforms and tools such as whatsapp, FaceBook Messenger, etc. Finally, it is heartening to actually witness victories increasing rights of domestic workers in a number of countries, e.g. Right to organize in Liberia,

Minimum wage increase in South Africa and Hong Kong, Bills of Rights passed in 2 states of the US, Domestic Workers Law in Chile, and so on.

The Exco also heard the report of our affiliates survey conducted in July. Forty-four, or 76% of affiliates, responded. There were very interesting findings on the following areas: organizing, international organization, support of migrant domestic workers, collaboration with trade unions national centres and IDWF. This information is valuable to us in terms of defining our strategic goals and work plan. The Exco decided to get the remaining affiliates to send their responses before finalizing the report.

The Exco also discussed and approved the **5-Year Strategic Plan** of 2016 – 2020, its 5 Key Outcomes with achievement indicators. Before then, the Exco went through an exercise to develop the IDWF Theory of Change and heard a field report of a global mapping of domestic workers based on the ILO data and statistics. With this grounding, the Exco members and the Regional Coordinators worked in regional groups to develop regional work plans for 2016 towards implementing the 5-Year Strategic Plan. The highlights include:

Europe:

- Outreach and recruit existing domestic workers unions to affiliate to the IDWF;
- Develop the strategies to monitor the implementation of C189 in countries which have ratified and now need to send in their for 2 years report to the ILO.

Africa:

- Increase membership by 3000 including 1000 migrant domestic workers in 3 countries;
- Produce a trainers' manual and a training of trainers on public speaking, social media and negotiation skills;
- Support ratification of C189 in Tanzania.

Asia:

- Outreach and recruitment of new affiliates;
- Develop strategic action plans with affiliates in organizing and advocacy;
- Support ratification of C189 in Cambodia; and
- Leadership empowerment.

Americas:

- Increase membership through developing strategic action plans with specific affiliates in strategic countries, e.g. where there is large population of domestic workers,
- Linkage of migrant domestic workers in the sending and destination countries,
- Win the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in 2 more states of the US.

In addition, the IDWF will embark on a vigorous fundraising plan in order to have the capacities and means to implement all the activities under this **5-Year Strategic Plan**.

The Exco then discussed staff policies, which did not exist so far. However, as the IDWF grows day by day, we all felt it was time to have such policies in place. It is a challenge to us because we depend on project funding, which is minimal when comes to supporting staff at the IDWF. Finally, the Exco discussed the roles and responsibilities of leaders, specifically the Exco members of the IDWF. We heard the difficulties faced by our Exco members in performing their roles and also discussed the qualities we wish Exco members to have. At the end, we agreed to produce a Code of Conduct for Exco members as a guide.

It has been a very full and sometimes exhausting 3-days with a lot of exchanges, debates and brainwork. We are diverse – from different countries and personal histories. The Exco Meeting was also an opportunity for us to learn how to work together as a team. These 3-days were definitely well-spent.

A full report of the Exco Meeting will be sent to the Exco and the affiliates next month.