“Who we are

We, the members of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) commit ourselves to unite into a powerful force to overcome the exploitation and abuse experienced by domestic/household workers across the world. By domestic/household worker we mean any person engaged in domestic/household work within an employment relationship.

Preamble of the IDWF constitution, adopted at the Founding Congress, Montevideo, October 2013

Domestic workers are workers and must enjoy the same rights as any other worker. We see ourselves as part of a global labour movement and seek to join forces with all workers in the struggle to change power relations and to determine our own economic and social destinies, and secure freedom, justice, well being, security and peace.

Our objective is to build strong, democratic and united domestic/household workers organizations at all levels (local, national, regional and global) in order to protect and advance domestic workers’ rights everywhere.
Our Brief History

In 2006, domestic workers came together at the first international conference with an idea to build an international network for all domestic workers. With the support of many partners, the international networking flourished. In 2010 and 2011, the International Labour Organization (ILO) introduced the standard setting item “Decent Work for Domestic Workers.”

Together, domestic workers launched the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) and formed the first Steering Committee to lead the organization. In 2011, the ILO Convention C189 was adopted. During the Founding Congress in Montevideo in 2013, 180 domestic worker representatives, trade unions and allies from 56 organizations and over 40 countries were present.

How to Join

Organizations wishing to affiliate to the IDWF should complete the application form (available on our website) with the required documents and submit to the Executive Committee, who is responsible for approving applications.

Existing affiliates in the countries shall be consulted.

Eligible organizations of domestic/household workers in all countries may affiliate to the IDWF. They may be local or national, they may be national federations or multi-sectoral membership based organizations, which have domestic/household workers in their ranks.

Organizations should have a minimum of 50 members, a written constitution, they must be based on democratic principles and have regular financial reports approved by members.
Key Achievements in 2014

As of August 2015, IDWF has 58 affiliates from 46 countries, with over 330,000 members.

In 2014-2015, IDWF gained 7 new affiliates and a 17% overall membership increase.

10 countries saw improved legal status, labour rights and/or wages for domestic workers.

Three new reports were released on domestic worker national legislation, policies and strategies; Three baseline study reports in progress.

New web-based communications network launched in 3 languages (English, Spanish, French) to unite all IDWF affiliates into one network, with over 4,000 registered members.

Over 800 articles posted and disseminated through social media and IDWF website.

25% more domestic worker leaders in 15 key countries.

274 new leaders identified in Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Indonesia, India, Nepal, Cambodia, and Chile.

180 domestic worker leaders from 15 countries have participated in four regional meetings and learned skills in negotiation, advocacy and labour rights.
IDWF Executive Committee (2013 – 2018)

President
Myrtle Witbooi - South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union, South Africa

Vice President
Ernestina Ochoa - IPROFOTH, Peru

General Secretary
Elizabeth Tang

Titular Members
Giuliana Mesina - FILCAMS, Italy
Shirley Pryce - Jamaica Household Workers Association, Jamaica
Juanita Flores - National Domestic Workers Alliance, U.S.A.
Phobsuk Gasing (Dang) - Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions, HK

Alternate Members
Asmaou Bah - SYNEM, Guinea
Elena Pérez - Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar, Dominican Republic
Jonaida Dajuya - FNV-Bondgenoten, the Netherlands
Gillian Atwell - National Union of Domestic Employees, Trinidad & Tobago
Antonia Peña - National Domestic Workers Alliance, U.S.A.
Sonu Danuwar - Home Workers Trade Union of Nepal, Nepal

Coordinators
Africa - Vicky Kanyoka
Asia - Fish Ip
Latin America - Marcelina Bautista
Europe - Karin Pape
North America - Jill Shenker

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