

DOMESTIC WORKERS AT THE FRONT-LINES



Newsletter #34

July 24, 2020

Luiza Batista, from our affiliate FENATRAD, shared during an interview:

"It is still common for Brazil's middle and upper class families to employ a full-time maid. The South American country has one of the world's largest populations of domestic workers—more than 6.3 million, according to government figures from late 2019. Some 95% are women and more than 63% are Black."

Our very own Niken Wulan, Program Officer in Asia, spoke on the topic of sexual harassment in the domestic work sector, and how challenging it is to tackle in the context of isolated working condition and migrant status among domestic workers. Niken spoke of the realities of the Asian context making the application of the #metoo movement all the more complex.

To learn more about gender based violence faced by domestic workers in Asia click [here](#).

IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

Our affiliate the Association of Domestic Workers (ATH) was created on May 7th, 1989, as a joint space for domestic workers based on a vindicated and educational nature. At that time, unionism for domestic workers was prohibited, which is why it was constituted as an association and not as a union.

ATH's first conquest came in 1992, when it managed to introduce a bill in Congress to modify the Labor Code which included new articles specifically referring to domestic work. From that moment, the Code established the following rights for domestic workers: 36 hours of weekly rest, 9 hours of rest between one working day and the next one, paid vacations, 13th salary, yearly bonus or Easter royalty, study permits and permits for medical visits. And in 2013, ATH and the rest of the unions of domestic workers in the Dominican Republic achieved the ratification of ILO Convention 189.

ATH currently has 4,600 affiliates, -of which around 700 are migrants-, and is working on the implementation of ILO Convention 189, the approval of a special law for domestic work that regulates the sector and the ratification of the Convention 190.



Among its latest achievements it is worth to mention the constitution of a bipartite commission seeking to establish a minimum wage for the sector and the powerful advocacy actions through which domestic workers were included in the "Stay at Home" program, an emergency fund created by the Government to assist workers and families affected by the Covid-19 crisis.

According to Elena Pérez, President of ATH, the main objective of the organization *"is and will continue to be to make the invisible visible, to bring out the working conditions of our sector from the private sphere into the public eye."*

Click [here](#) to check out their Facebook page.



A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT OUR AFFILIATES HAVE BEEN DOING:



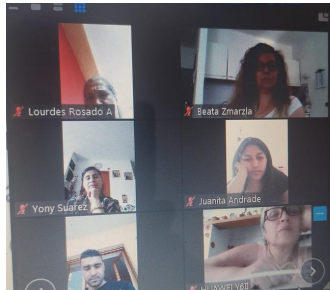
Affiliates in two countries in Africa piloted a survey aimed at studying the impact of COVID-19 on domestic workers. **Syndicat Nations des Travailleurs Domestiques Senegal** had 20 domestic workers fill in the questionnaire and **Syndicat National des Domestiques du Togo** had 25 respondents. IDWF plans to implement a similar survey in several countries and regions!



Jamaica Household Workers' Union held an in-person training on July 11 on Understanding C190 with members of the union. They planned for 20 participants but due to how popular it was 28 attended!



Federazione Italiana dei Lavoratori de Commercio held an online training for domestic workers and had an excellent turnout!



Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers was present on various streets of Nairobi to raise awareness on the presence of this trade union which is mandated to represent the domestic work sector.



Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions (FADWU) conducted a survey with 427 migrant domestic workers that shows that 80% of the respondents have been facing additional discrimination during the pandemic and are seen as coronavirus carriers. Hong Kong has the Disability Discrimination Ordinance to protect workers against this kind of discrimination but most employers and workers are not aware of it. So, FADWU organized a press conference to urge the government to understand that that fighting the pandemic requires working together and employers should be aware of their legal responsibility.

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