



# Congress Report

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Elizabeth Tang

General Secretary

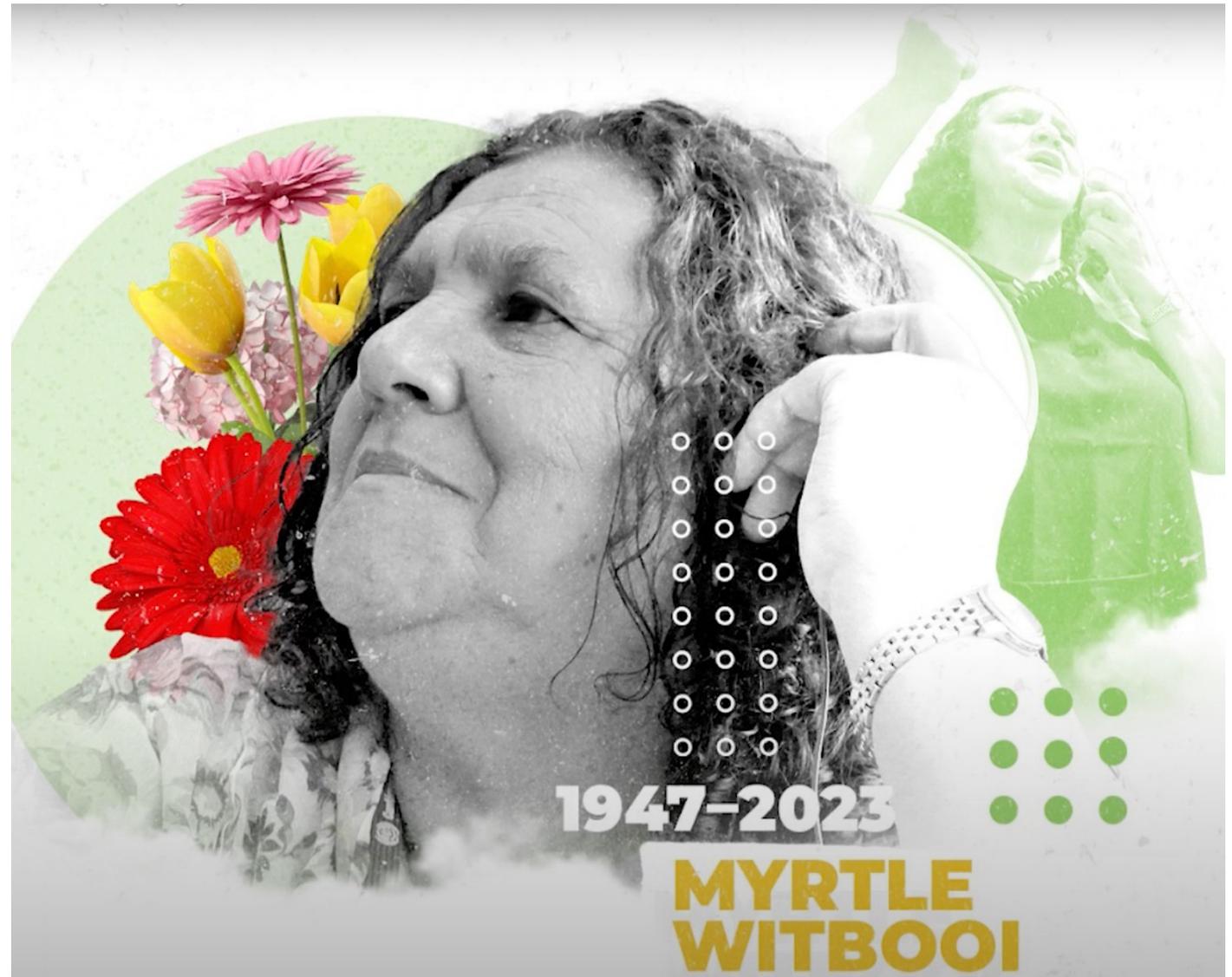
6 September 2023

# In honor of Myrtle Witbooi

**Domestic Worker, Beloved Leader,  
Mother of the Movement**

January 16, 2023 marked the end of our time with an incredible woman, domestic worker, unionist, and president of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), Myrtle Witbooi.

Not only has Myrtle changed the lives of those who crossed paths with her, but she also undoubtedly changed the conditions of domestic workers in South Africa and the world.





# Building Power Realizing Rights

- This report shares a summary of our **RESULTS / OUTCOMES** from 2019 to 2023
  - Over the last five years, despite the devastating losses and setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, our 88 affiliates across the 7 regions have risen to the challenges and worked tirelessly to expand and deepen the work of IDWF as a global federation.
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# IDWF: A Change-Making Organization

- From the four-year period from 2019 to 2023, IDWF has been able to harvest over 400 positive outcomes.
- This represents **more than 400 different points of change** in actions, relationships, policies, and/or practices of one or more social actors targeted by IDWF activities.
- We have made **significant strides in our 4 strategic priority pillars since the last Congress** at the international, regional and national levels.
- From the numerous examples of outcomes reported from across the globe, **our domestic worker leaders have been proud and relentless** in inserting their voices, taking their space and asserting the rights for all domestic workers.



**21 new affiliates**

**88 affiliates across 68 countries**



**29% increase in  
affiliate numbers**

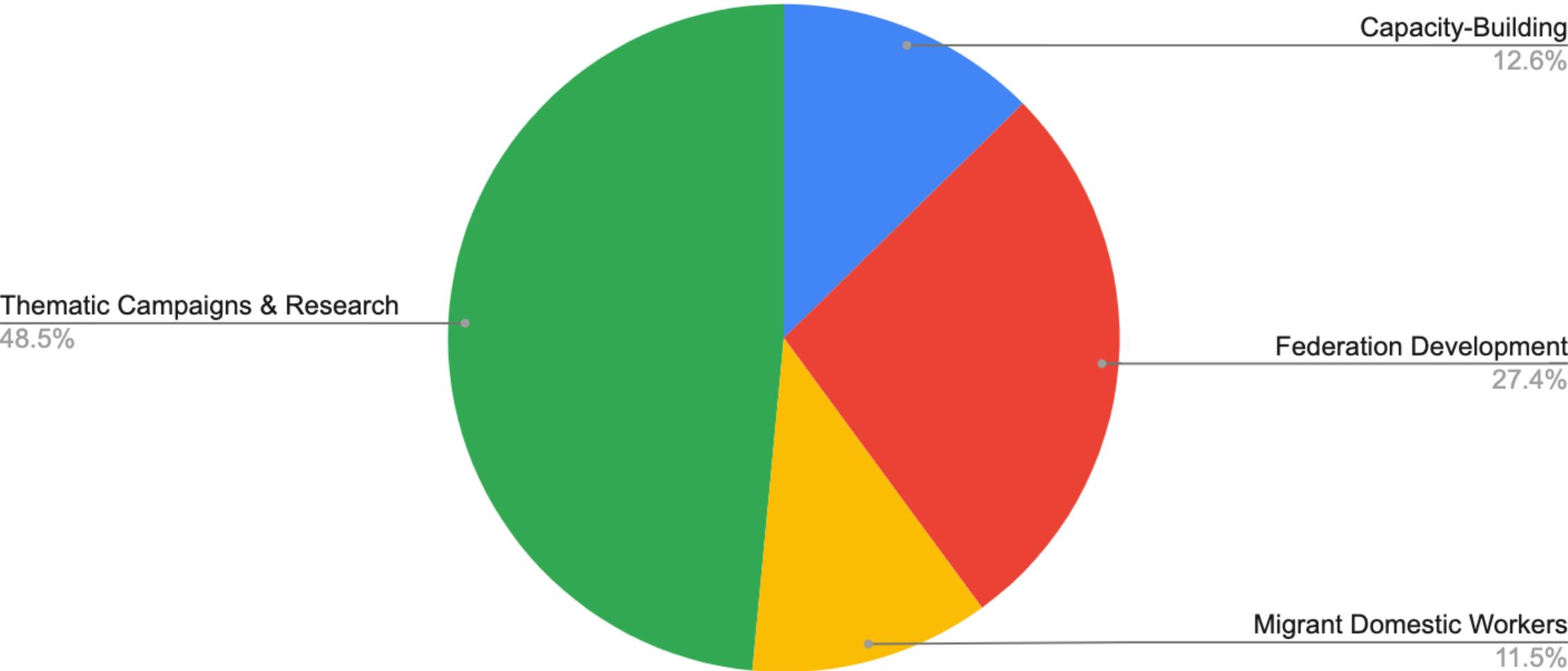
**675,404 domestic  
workers  
represented**





- **94% of affiliates have improved their fees paying status**
- **IDWF annual budget increased from US \$1.6M to US \$5M**
- **Over US \$1M raised for Solidarity Fund to help domestic workers during COVID-19**

# Outcomes by Strategic Plan Pillar



# Federation Development

- IDWF experienced **growth and development in all regions**, thanks to the efforts of domestic worker leaders and the IDWF team.
- In 2022, a majority of IDWF **affiliates agreed to increase affiliation fees**.
- More funders are willing to support IDWF in recent years (e.g. AVINA, PORTICUS, FJS, OSF, OSISA and Ford) in addition to those which have supported us before 2018. This has **diversified IDWF's income and improved our sustainability**.
- The **new funding allowed for projects in Asia, Africa, MENA, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean**, as well as for core/operational support for communications and advocacy at the global level. It also meant that **IDWF could shift its operational base from Hong Kong to Geneva** as the political situation deteriorated.
- **Domestic workers and other workers generally recognize the IDWF as the representative domestic workers organization globally** and being part of it is one of their organizations' objectives.

# Capacity Building

- **Enhanced women's leadership** through training and capacity-building support in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- Workshops and training have brought confidence to **domestic workers to share their experience and to assertiveness to combat Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**. Domestic workers leaders are bit by bit taking up the issue.
- In Latin America, participants of the regional leadership school for domestic workers LUNA (Leadership, Unity, reNewal, Amplification) reported that the program enabled a deep internal change. Participants feel overall more confident about their qualities as leaders, and more able to grow their organization. **LUNA has graduated 80 new leaders from 26 domestic workers unions from 15 countries.**

# Thematic Campaigns and Research

- 35 countries have **ratified C189**.
- Over **80 countries have enacted legal reforms**.
- IDWF and its affiliates are now active in **promoting countries to ratify C190**— and in implementing its important protections.
- As a result of collaboration and joint efforts with and by other movements and trade unions, there are now **8 ratifications of C190**.
- **Significant movement on legislative reforms in all regions** as domestic workers organize to have their voices heard.

# Support to Migrant Domestic Workers

- In January 2023, the as a follow-up a **IDWF and ITUC complaint regarding Lebanon on violation of C29** was accepted and shortlisted at the ILO's **Conference Committee on the Application of Standards** with a decision of an **ILO mission to Lebanon**
- **New migrant worker groups formed or outreached:** in Spain, Lebanon, Taiwan and Qatar.
- As of January 2023, the **MENA migrant domestic worker leaders started a regional exchange and coordination** regarding context, priorities and regional common actions.
- Across all regions, **IDWF affiliates organized to support migrant domestic workers.**

# Challenges for IDWF

- IDWF is now more than 10 years old. Although domestic workers are more organized and more visible than ever before, **continued growth brings new challenges** including budget growth that brings growth in the team.
- There's a **continued need to invest in building leadership capacities** for global perspectives and to build knowledge of emerging issues, such as the care economy, climate justice, and economic policies.
- Many policy changes have been realized but **the challenge continues to be implementation once the policies are in place**. Real change for domestic workers relies on policy changes that are fully implemented.
- Where real changes are happening – such as minimum wage gains or social protection coverage – this **change has to date been only in a small number of countries**. There is some change but domestic workers feel it is too little and too slow.

# The Way Forward

- The IDWF with 1 Million Members
- A Global Movement of Domestic Workers – Sustainable, Democratic and United
- The C189 – our Tool:
  - to Overcome Informalities,
  - for our rightful place in the care economy
  - for legal protection for all the migrant & other marginalized domestic workers

# Thanks!

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## OUR SOLIDARITY PARTNERS

- IUF (International Union of Food Workers)
- WIEGO
- ILO
- International Trade Unions Confederation
- Solidarity Centre
- Any many other allies!



# OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

- **ACVCSC Service Union**
- **AVINA Foundation**
- **Bread for the World**
- **Collective Future Fund**
- **Canadian Labour Congress**
- **DGB-BW**
- **Ford Foundation**
- **FNV Mondiaal**
- **Foundation for a Just Society (FJS)**
- **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)**
- **Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)**
- **Global Fund for Women**
- **Global Labor Justice - International Labor Rights Forum (GLJ-ILRF)**
- **International Labour Organization (ILO)**
- **Kommunal Municipal Union**
- **National Domestic Workers Alliance**
- **Novo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation**
- **Oxfam**
- **Olof Palme International Centre**
- **Open Society Foundations**
- **Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA)**
- **Panorama Global**
- **Porticus**
- **Proteus Fund**
- **SASK – Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland**
- **Solidarity Center**
- **Stiftung Auxilium/ Porticus Asia Ltd**
- **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)**
- **Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland (SASK)**
- **The International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA)**
- **United Domestic Workers of America**
- **Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)**



Thanks!

**DOMESTIC WORKER LEADERS  
AND OUR TEAM**