

# IDWF Annual Report

2024



*Written by: Katherine Eva Maich, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Texas A&M University*



# Table of Contents

I. President’s Message.....	3
II. General Secretary’s Message.....	4
III. Context and Need .....	5
IV. About IDWF.....	7
V. 2024 Accomplishments and Activities.....	8
Overview of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and Sustainability Strategy.....	8
1) Federation Development .....	9
2) Capacity Building .....	13
3) Campaigns & Research .....	17
The Care Economy is Built by Domestic Workers .....	24
The Power of Care: Domestic Workers’ Voices at the ILC.....	28
UN CSW68 .....	29
4) Migrant Domestic Workers.....	30
Insights into International Representation, Awards, and Alliances formed in 2024 .....	36
VI. Publications and Research .....	37
Paid Domestic Workers Are Care Workers: They Have the Right to Care, to Be Cared For, and to Self-Care .....	38
Care Policy Mapping Publications Across Asia .....	38
IDWF Contributes to UN Document: Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda.....	38
IDWF 4th Congress: Ten Years Together: Global Solidarity: Domestic Workers Build Bridges, Close Gaps, Gain Rights.....	39
Strength Through Democracy: How to Build a Democratic Union .....	39
My Employer Never Saw a Calendar – Why Aren’t Migrant Domestic Workers in Malaysia Getting a Day Off?.....	40
VII. Challenges .....	40
VIII. Funders Acknowledgment and Financial Report.....	42
Funders Acknowledgment.....	42
Financial Report from the Finance and Administration Team.....	43
Appendix 1: List of ExCo Members .....	44
Appendix 2 - List of C189 Ratifications as of 31 December 2024 .....	45
Appendix 3 - List of C190 Ratifications as of 31 December 2024 .....	47
Appendix 4: List of IDWF Affiliates.....	49
Africa .....	49
Asia.....	49
Caribbean .....	50
Europe.....	50
Latin America.....	50
MENA.....	51
North America.....	51

## I. President's Message



*Carmen Brites, IDWF President*

As we continue our journey since the founding of our federation, our actions remain guided by the mandates set forth by our members through resolutions at each congress. A primary focus has been the ratification and implementation of the Domestic Workers Convention (C189) and the Violence and Harassment Convention (C190).

We must also emphasize the vital role of care as a fundamental driver of human life. At the 112th ILO Conference, during the committee on 'Decent Work and the Care Economy,' the voices of domestic workers were prominent. We advocated for policies and strategies aimed at ensuring decent work in the care sector and recognizing the invaluable contributions of domestic workers.

The significance of this work extends beyond the workplace; it is crucial for economic and social development, gender equality, and the right to formalization. We strive for equal rights, the valorization of care work, access to free trade union membership, and social security.

Our ongoing struggle in various regions focuses on incorporating migrant workers into national laws, ensuring they receive the same rights as all other workers. We continue to engage in diverse actions across our regions to unite our efforts and strengthen our federation daily. Collaborating with allies on various issues amplifies our voices, ensuring that domestic workers are heard around the world.

As we move forward, let us remember: "The success of our federation is the sum of small efforts repeated every day."

**-Carmen Brites**

## II. General Secretary's Message



*Adriana Paz Ramirez, IDWF General Secretary*

In 2024 we celebrated thirteen years of the IDWF institutional life as an organized global movement, when looking back we can proudly see the progress made and say with certainty that today domestic work and domestic workers are recognized as work that deserved to be performed under decent working conditions. Domestic workers are no longer invisible, they are named and recognized in major debates such as the care economy, migration, forced labor, platform work, gender based violence and harassment and discrimination. Let us remember that this was not the case twenty years ago, thanks to the self political representation of our leaders in every country, in all the regions, and at the global stage that domestic work has gained rights and recognition.

In 2024 coming out from our 4th Congress, where 16 resolutions were approved and new leadership was elected, we have seen a renewed energy of our movement in all regions. This militant energy on the ground carried out high impact campaigns and mobilizations that have been translated into victories such legal labor law reforms that recognize and integrate domestic workers in labor and social protections; we have also seen the consolidation and strengthening of our unions whether it is through membership increase by the establishment of new chapters and branches across national territories and/or through consolidation of internal governance structures that ensure strong and democratic organizations.

The victories, and the challenges that still persist on the ground, have been elevated by our movement to the global stage in crucial debates that shape international policy and legislation. The year of 2024 was the year of the care economy, a momentum that is the product of hard work and advocacy done by the labor movement at large; yet we must not forget that the first conversation to bring the care economy into the house of labour was brought forward by our movement with the ground-breaking ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers in 2011. This long history and tradition of mobilization to recognize paid care work, performed inside the household, is what informs the current debates around the care economy today. Then it is not casual that domestic workers had a prominent presence and role in the 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) and in the 112th International Labor Conference's General Discussion on Decent Work and Care Economy where our movement made significant gains to recognize the need for formalization and implementation of ILO convention 189 as a pillar to achieve decent work for domestic workers (locals and migrants) in the era of care.

Every year has its own challenges and 2024 was not the exception, we confronted complex problems and contexts where we continue seeing the closing of civic space and the punishment of labor and human rights defenders exercising freedom

of association and fundamental rights at work. Nevertheless, the grassroots organizing of domestic workers continues even under hostile socio-economic political contexts.

Internally, IDWF has intentionally invested in the strengthening of the development of our federation through a collective leadership building program for our newly elected Executive Committee members and for staff team members. The new program SPARC -Shared Power, Accountability, Resilience and Connection- consisted in three in-person retreats with the aim to foster collective leadership, organizational development and to build strategic alignment across regions, its Executive and staff members. The results of this program have resulted in the consolidation of our internal operations, workflows, processes and procedures that ensure greater efficiency and coordination so we can continue serving in more and better ways to our affiliates.

Last but definitely not least, in 2024 our federation joined the Council of Global Unions (CGU), this represents a major achievement for our movement since now we sit at the same table along with comrades from other sectors who are also in the fight for decent work for all workers of the world. In the words of sister Christy Hoffman, UNI General Secretary and Chair of the CGU until 2024, "It is a significant step forward for the global trade union movement to now have the IDWF and the many millions of domestic workers around the world that you represent as part of the Council of Global Unions".

Thank you from the bottom of my heart to all our affiliates, to the domestic workers on the ground who every day fight for their rights and recognition with dignity and courage, thank you to our leaders and Executive members for their passion and optimism, and thank you to our extraordinary team whose dedication and commitment to serve our movement have made possible all the fruits that we harvested together in 2024.

**Adriana Paz Ramírez**

### III. Context and Need



The IDWF 2024 Annual Report arrives at an important time for domestic workers who are poised to continue building a strong movement and fair, equitable working conditions, continuing in their global successes and achievements. **Globally, there are an estimated 75.6 million paid domestic workers who, on a daily basis, fulfill the care needs of the global**

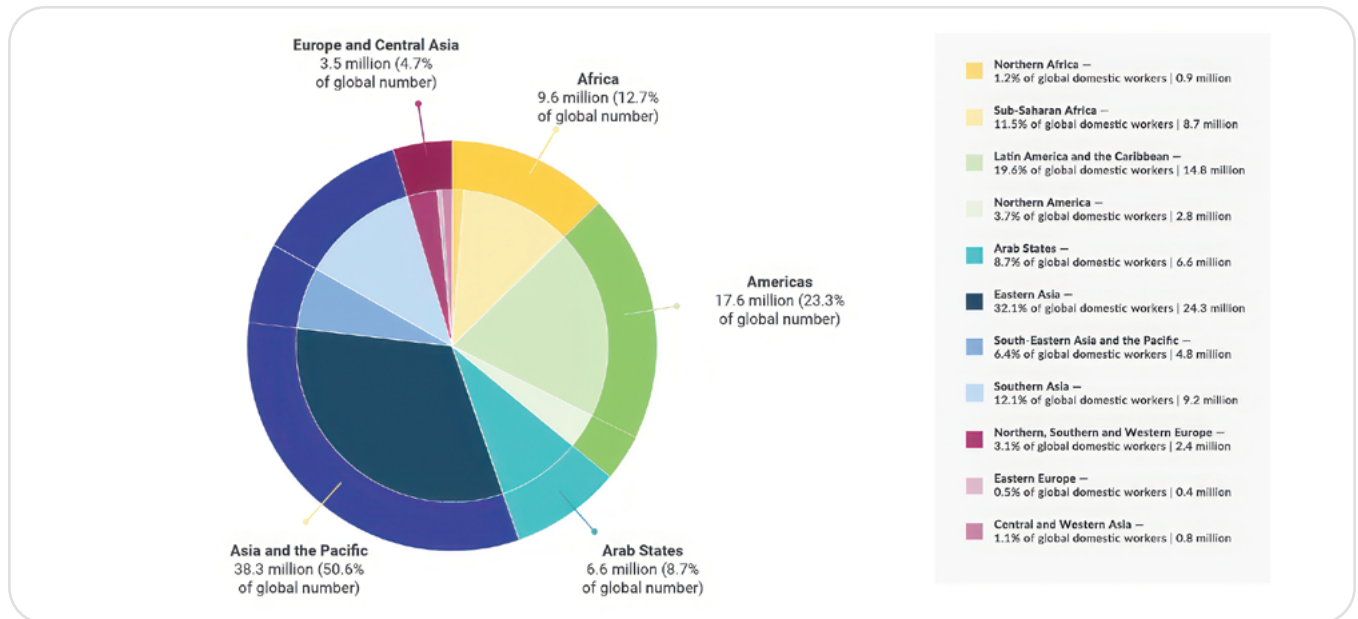
**population.** However, domestic workers fall well below acceptable labour standards for other categories of workers. They tirelessly do social reproductive labor under **poor working conditions and without adequate social, economic and labor protections** dating back to times of slavery, colonialism, and servitude. About **76.2% of domestic workers are women**, though the gendered percentages are much higher in certain parts of the world such as Latin America and the Caribbean, where nearly 91% of household workers are women. Of that number, **at least 12 million of those domestic workers are migrant workers** who cross borders, time zones, and oceans to cook, clean, and care for other people and their families. Their labor provides direct and indirect care in private households representing about 25% of the care workers globally. Paid domestic workers are care workers and the paid domestic work sector is a fundamental pillar of the care economy.

**Domestic workers do important, central tasks for the functioning of households.** A domestic or household worker is any person engaged in domestic work within an **employment relationship and on an occupational basis**. Domestic work itself can be defined as the labor of maintaining, cleaning, cooking, and caring in another person's home, and it is uniquely characterized by its set of employment relations in a specific location—the home. Domestic work is work performed in or for a household or households. Domestic workers can be employed by a household or through a service provider (public or private). Domestic workers include those care workers who provide either direct or indirect care (or both) in households. Globally, the wages of domestic workers are only about 56 per cent of those of non-domestic employees, with domestic workers in developing countries earning less than one-third of what non-domestic employees do. **An estimated 80% of domestic workers are informally employed**, meaning that they have no formal written contract, no access to secure labor protections, and no retirement or pensions.

**Domestic work tends to be characterized by low wages, few benefits, and a lack of social protections** when compared to other workers. Domestic workers typically work extremely long hours, without holidays or rest days. In many cases, in fact, domestic workers are forbidden to leave or to live outside of their workplace. Even in countries that have ratified C189 and have strong legislation in place for domestic workers' rights, they rarely have written contracts. Health care, pensions, maternity leave and sick leave are rarely available for domestic workers, and even in countries that have employer registries, there is often a lack of compliance and willingness to abide by the law and register. **In many countries, domestic workers are excluded from labour laws** benefiting other workers, or, if such laws do exist, they do not have access to remedy when the laws are not enforced. This is further compounded by the fact that the workplaces in question are private homes, which tend to be extremely difficult to regulate regardless of whether protective laws exist or not. Working conditions for domestic workers fall well below acceptable labour standards for other categories of worker, yet the **IDWF and domestic workers globally are organizing to change that reality and create a more vibrant future.**

**Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to workplace abuse and sub-par working conditions.** There are no significant protections that follow the migrant worker from their sending country to the receiving country, placing migrant workers in a vulnerable position for labor violations and the potential for trafficking. **Child domestic workers form another subset of this sector that is particularly vulnerable.** Child domestic workers are often young girls, and many of their typical daily risks include long hours, hazardous conditions, insufficient or inadequate food and accommodation, and humiliating or degrading treatment including physical violence, verbal violence, and sexual abuse. Furthermore, in many cases domestic work prohibits a child's ability to attend school and further their education. While most countries prohibit child domestic work, it continues today in all regions with millions of children working in other families' homes. Domestic workers tend to skew older than other workers, though child labor also remains a serious problem and many young women and girls still work as domestic workers, even though local labor codes may technically prohibit them from doing so. 65.1% of all child domestic workers are below 14 years old: 7.4 million aged 5 to 11 and 3.8 million aged 12 to 14 ([ILO 2017](#)).

Below, the chart demonstrates the global distribution of domestic workers and their respective regional percentages:



However, domestic workers are constantly fighting and moving forward. They demonstrate their advocacy power, which relies on the symbolic power that is generated when workers speak for themselves directly to those in position to change their working conditions by making enormous strides on the legislative front over the last 15 years. **This report details many of the important strides that domestic workers have made on the global, regional, and organizational level over the course of 2024.**

## IV. About IDWF



## An introduction detailing our mission, vision, and core values

The IDWF is a historic, precedent-setting global union federation. It is **the first global federation of domestic worker organizations**, and it was formed at the founding Congress in October 2013 in Montevideo, Uruguay, when the International Domestic Worker Network (IDWN) became a global federation. At a meeting the year prior in May 2012, the Steering Committee approved the membership applications of 14 domestic workers' organizations as the first group of affiliates of the IDWN. Soon after, the global organization grew out many years of coalition building and mobilization. The Federation aims to organize domestic workers, promote the ratification of Convention 189, campaign for legal change towards decent work for domestic workers and the elimination of child labor, support migrant workers, combat gender-based violence, promote health and safety initiatives for domestic workers, mobilize allies and broad-based support, and build overall solidarity across regions and domestic worker organizations. **In October 2024, the IDWF became a member of the Council of Global Unions (CGU)**, which was a significant milestone for the domestic workers' movement.

The IDWF's organizational structure is crucial to its growth and global impact. Importantly, the IDWF is a membership-based global organization of domestic and household workers. **The IDWF has evolved into a key, powerful advocate for the rights of domestic workers globally, believing that domestic work is work, and all domestic and household workers deserve to enjoy the same rights as all other workers.**

A diverse and dedicated group of staff members make up the IDWF core and enable the organization to accomplish tasks in an efficient and effective manner. All staff team members are important to the IDWF's mission and were part of the drafting of multiple project proposals. The IDWF now has a more structural team division with closely related work together, and as of 31 December 2024, the IDWF had **21 staff members** in total.

As of July 2024, the IDWF is made up of **93 affiliates** from **69 countries**, serving a **membership of over 669,000 domestic/household workers' members**, and it continues to grow. Most of its members are organized in trade unions and worker associations.

## V. 2024 Accomplishments and Activities

**2024 was a vibrant year of building coalitions, growing the membership, and furthering important campaigns that advance domestic workers' rights regionally and globally.** Below is an overview of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan that highlights these goals across four main organizational priorities which are 1) Federation Development, 2) Organizational Capacity Building for Robust and Sustainable Growth, 3) Strengthening Efforts on Thematic Campaigns and Research, and 4) Focusing on the Organization and Representation of Migrant Domestic Workers. In the broader global context of rising hate crimes, anti-Black racism, gender-based violence (GBV), and all other forms of discrimination against marginalized populations, this important 5-year strategic plan document with its affirming vision, strategic roadmap, and path forward is now more relevant than ever before.

### Overview of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and Sustainability Strategy

#### Priority 1: Federation Development - Main Priorities and Objectives

- Increase domestic workers' membership worldwide to 1 million, recruiting 21 new affiliates from 16 countries by 2025
- Strengthen IDWF's organizational and financial sustainability
- Enhance a strong and effective communications system to raise the visibility of IDWF affiliates and their active engagement

- Increase membership and representation of migrant domestic workers
- Mobilize global thematic campaigns on country ratifications on C189 and C190

### Priority 2: Capacity Building - Main Priorities and Objectives

- Ensure all affiliates have basic organizational capacity and resources to become effective domestic workers advocates
- Develop and train emerging leaders
- Strengthen affiliate capacity on new member organizing, member engagement, and membership retention

### Priority 3: Thematic Campaigns and Research - Main Priorities and Objectives

- Ratification of C189
- Ratification of C190
- Raise awareness of domestic workers' role in care economy and the care needs of domestic workers
- Strengthen social security protection and security

### Priority 4: Migrant Domestic Workers - Main Priorities and Objectives

- Prioritize affiliation of migrant domestic workers and develop organizing strategies with migrant domestic workers
- Empower and build capacity of migrant domestic worker organizations, including advocacy skills
- Convene meetings of migrant domestic workers leaders at regional and international levels to facilitate sharing strategies and raising public awareness.

For more information on the Resolutions guiding the Strategic Plan and more detail on these priorities and objectives, the IDWF features the [Strategic Plan](#) outlined on its website.

## 1) Federation Development

The IDWF is committed to developing and nurturing leadership and strong, collaborative capabilities among its Executive Committee (Exco) and its staff members. One of the ways it does so is through the **SPARC Program**, which is a three-session, in-person development initiative that is designed to strengthen leadership skills and inter-organizational ties. Two sessions took place successfully in 2024, with a final session scheduled to take place in 2025, demonstrating the IDWF's commitment to growth, capacity building, leadership and strategic alignment across the entire Federation and its Exco.

The new Exco began its first full year after the 4th Global Congress in 2023. **The Executive Committee is composed of a titular and an alternate representative from each of seven regions: Africa, Asia/Pacific, Latin America, Caribbean, Europe, Middle East and North Africa and North America**, including the elected Office Bearers – President, First Vice-president and Second Vice-president.

*"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."*

(IDWF Constitution)



## Federation Building across IDWF Regions

IDWF affiliates accomplished a great deal of federation building in their respective regions, as well. There has been a strong move forward to **grow global connections and increase the number of affiliates**.

### Africa Region

Across the region of Africa, the IDWF recruited **one new affiliate in Sierra Leone**, Sierra Leone Domestic Workers Union (SLeDoWU), and **one new association in Cape Verde**, Associação de Trabalhadores Domésticos de Cabo Verde (ATD-CV). Overall, **19,709 members** were organized across the region in 2024. Affiliates at the national level organized several activities such as awareness seminars on the importance of joining unions. They used door to door, walk to work and street umbrella strategies and they also organized members at the market and at bus stands. Monthly meetings to organize members also took place, and affiliates used talk shows to organize and mobilize domestic workers through morning media sessions and interviews on related topics. A total number of 139 branches across the region in Nigeria (3), Zimbabwe (4), Ghana (5), Zambia (12), Ivory Coast (3), Congo (4), South Africa (5), Tanzania (25), Kenya (43), and Ethiopia (30). There was an **increase of a total of 37 branches** in 2024.



Domestic workers have increased their visibility with African governments and other national and international platforms as well. Trade union federations have been involving the domestic workers unions in different meetings, making them more visible to the sister unions and other partners like FES, ITUC Africa, ILO-Africa, Solidarity Center, academic institutions, and NGOs.

### Asia Region

In exciting news, **there is one new affiliate in the Asia region--the Korea Domestic Workers Union**. Monthly meetings of Asia affiliates have been organised to provide a space for leaders and members to share and learn from each other's updates especially on advocacy, and IDWF Asia staff and Excos to report on IDWF activities. More importantly, these meetings have provided a space for emotional support during wars and conflicts: Burmese migrants and migrants in Lebanon are able to express their situation, their feelings - while they are abroad and have to be strong, they can express themselves emotionally at our meetings and receive emotional support. IDWF Asia provided free counselling for sisters who are in need. However, timing for the Sunday monthly meeting still remains challenging across the region, as 6:30pm Delhi time is 10pm Korean time. Due to the political situation in Bangladesh, there are no public mobilizations or public assemblies at this time.

### Caribbean Region

- **Jamaica Household Workers Union - JHWU-Jamaica**

A banner year for the Jamaica Household Workers Union saw remarkable growth, exemplified by the successful recruitment of **433 new members**. This surge expanded the union's reach and brought its total membership to an impressive 7,333 individuals, solidifying its position as a leading advocate for domestic workers' rights in the region. Further strengthening its infrastructure, **the union successfully established two new chapters**, broadening its geographical coverage and enabling greater engagement with local communities. The South East Clarendon chapter encompasses the areas of Rocky Point, Portland Cottage, Hayes, and Race Course, while the Mid Clarendon chapter serves the communities of May Pen and Upper Clarendon. These strategic expansions allow the union to better address the unique challenges faced by domestic workers in various regions and provide them with crucial support and resources closer to home.

- **National Union of Domestic Workers:-NUDE of Trinidad and Tobago**

While facing its own set of challenges, the National Union of Domestic Workers in Trinidad made steady progress in 2024. **Twenty-five new members** joined the union and not ranks, bringing the total membership to 88. This incremental growth demonstrates the union's ongoing commitment to organizing and representing domestic workers in Trinidad, despite the relatively smaller scale compared to other organizations in the region. Continued efforts are essential to expand the union's reach and impact, ensuring that more domestic workers benefit from its advocacy and support.

Another important moment of recognition took place when the National Union for Domestic Employees (NUDE) in Trinidad and Tobago celebrated **50 years of struggle, organizing and achievements** on 7 September 2024.



### Europe Region

The IDWF also expanded its presence in Europe. There was also an important UK milestone which is that **UNITE the UNION established a domestic workers branch**, enhancing representation, with FNV in The Netherlands set to follow suit. And discussions are ongoing at EFFAT Executive Committee to invest more in organizing and representing Domestic Workers in their union, with a number of unions including NGG, 3F, PAM, CGT Services, CFDT, SIPTU, SGS, OGB-L, UGT, CCOO, and Kommunal.



### Latin America Region

**Two new affiliates joined the IDWF in 2024: UTRAHOGAR (Colombia) and SITDCES (El Salvador).** Membership also increased by **1,000** across the region in 2024, and leaders of the four-trade union and worker organizations in Peru strengthened their skills in advocacy and network management, project management, and organizational strength.

### Mena Region



Throughout the MENA region, despite the political challenges and Kafala system, different groups have continued their organizing and federation building.

#### ● Strengthening Leadership Capacity:

- In Kuwait, Sandigan KUWAIT Domestic Workers Association (SKDWA) played a pivotal role as a mentor for nascent organizations, offering comprehensive guidance in organizational development, membership-based training, leadership cultivation, and effective case management, thereby facilitating these groups through their inaugural congresses.
- In Qatar, MDWs leaders including our affiliate the Bayanihang Domestic Worker Qatar-BDWQ established collaboration with the ILO and MOL and became part of the migrant consultation committee in October 2024, headed by Skieka Najwa Al Thani. Enhanced existing partnerships with various domestic worker associations.

- In Lebanon, IDWF worked closely on strengthening leadership capacity of MDWs groups, and this has proven to be effective as they have led humanitarian campaigns to support each other during times of crisis. That includes supporting access to safe shelter, food, and medicine.

- **Membership Growth:**

- The region has about **15% to 25% increase of new members** from January 1 to December 31, 2024
- Strengthening Sustainability and Strategic Planning
- A comprehensive 5-year strategic plan, encompassing leadership succession, financial accountability, and organizing objectives, was developed and implemented following extensive member consultation.
- All affiliates in the region organized their annual congresses, elected new leadership and discussed the strategic plans for their unions.

## 2) Capacity Building

Much work was done in 2024 to ensure all affiliates have basic organizational capacity and resources to become effective domestic worker advocates, involving strengthening their organizational capacity via regional training and support and affiliates' income-generating capacity and financial sustainability.

### Capacity Building across IDWF Regions

#### Africa Region

Across the region of Africa, **8,504 domestic workers were trained during 2024**. Through these trainings, **domestic workers have built up confidence to speak on their own about their rights**, in meetings, television, and radio platforms. This is visible from leader-members from 14 affiliates which include, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Togo, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, Ivory Coast, Guinea Conakry, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Ethiopia and Niger.

For example:

- Zambia: Catherine M'seleka, a domestic worker, represented the Africa region to present a study on Digital Social Protection on 24th September in Dakar Senegal conference.
- Namibia and Zambia: Nellie Kahua (Namibia) and Ruth Sakala (Zambia) are domestic workers who represented the region in the panel discussion of lawyers in Cape Town on how domestic workers have been able to use C189 and make it real through implementation.
- Kenya: Ruth Khakame has been interviewed by different media platforms as a panelist on International Domestic Workers Day, 16th June, IDWD
- Ivory Coast: Marcelina Adopo and Sandrine Akaffou have been in several dialogues with MOL and together with ILO and other stakeholders in the preparation of the discussion on informality.
- Tanzania: CHODAWU union leaders and domestic workers Zanini and Nasra have been championing and lobbying with members of Parliament in June 2024 for the ratification of C 189 and speaking through the media.



CHODAWU-Tanzania, KUDHEIHA- Kenya and Mulu Tesfa-Ethiopia in collaboration with the Vocational Education Training Authority-VETA have developed the curriculum to be used for their training. Approximately 603 domestic workers received this training in Tanzania, and 360 in Ethiopia. These trainings have improved skills and raised their confidence and lessened complaints between them and employers.

Income generating activities sustain the livelihood of domestic workers and reduce poverty at family level. Thanks to support from IDWF, there were programs run on **income generating activities to promote sustainable livelihood skills** trainings that were conducted in Nigeria, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Togo. Domestic workers were trained in how to make liquid soap for washing clothes, cooking, and washing, which enables them to increase their income and support their families.

Bargaining power increased for domestic workers in accessing their rights across Africa as well. **The training on negotiation skills and paralegal empowerment have helped domestic workers to increase their skills and bargaining power with the employers and government.** These trainings position domestic workers to negotiate better wages, access rest hours, earn social security, enjoy annual leave, and access maternity leave and public holidays.

Domestic workers experience many challenges, and gender-based violence and harassment is one of their primary obstacles in the workplace. **These impact stories highlight the power of solidarity, advocacy, and capacity building:**

\*Chisomo Banda, a 40-year-old Chewa domestic worker from Malawi, experienced unimaginable gender-based violence while working in Lilongwe. She was subjected to physical and emotional abuse, including being beaten, burnt with an iron, and sexually assaulted by her employer's husband. Chisomo's ordeal began when she was recruited by an agent who promised her a good job and salary in the city. However, upon arrival, she was forced to work under harsh conditions without proper documentation or support. Chisomo's neighbour, also a domestic worker, helped her escape from the abusive household; she reported the case to the Commercial Industrial & Allied Workers Union (CIAWU), which provided Chisomo with support and training on GBVH and labor rights. She joined the union and now advocates for the rights of Malawian women by sharing her story.

\*Akua Mensah, a domestic worker in Accra, Ghana, endured months of verbal and physical abuse from her employer. Isolated and afraid to speak out, her situation changed when she joined the Domestic Services Workers Union (DSWU) and received training on her rights. With union support, she safely exited the household, reported the abuse, and began advocating to protect others from similar harm.

### Asia Region

**IDWF Asia Course 2 (advanced course) of DWoVH (Domestic Workers Organize Against Violence and Harassment) TOT was completed in Jan 2024.** 37 participants joined the DWoVH TOT Course 2, and 24 of them completed and received the certificate. The aims of the DWoVH training are to support domestic workers from violence and harassment, learn strategies to fight against violence and harassment, and make the law work for domestic workers. The IDWF developed this training pack to empower many more domestic workers to unite, raise their voice and hold their employers and government accountable. Materials have been translated into various Asian languages. Additionally, participants have submitted their plan to conduct the trainings for their own members on the national level.

### Caribbean Region

- The Jamaica Household Workers Union (JHWU) collaborated with the University of Technology to offer **Household Management Certification programs** to domestic workers. In 2024, a cohort of 30 domestic workers successfully completed this rigorous training, equipping themselves with the expertise necessary to excel in the modern domestic environment. This accomplishment not only enhanced their professional capabilities but also translated

into tangible financial benefits, as the certified individuals experienced a notable increase in their income, reflecting the value placed on their newly acquired skills. Furthermore, another group of 30 domestic workers participated in a **specialized customer service training program** conducted at the JHWU Training Institute. This training focused on equipping them with exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, enabling them to provide even more outstanding service to their employers and further solidify their position as highly valued professionals.

- **In Trinidad and Tobago, the National Union of Domestic Workers (NUDE) has a partnership with the National Training Agency (NTA) to develop and implement a specialized training program for domestic workers.** This program is specifically designed to equip experienced domestic workers with the necessary skills and qualifications to function as certified assessors to assess those entering Trinidad and Tobago for domestic work.

### Europe Region

There are 6 EU projects ongoing:

- **PHS Employment Monitor (2024):** Surveyed over 6,500 workers, employers, and users, providing data on challenges like undervaluation, labor shortages, and undeclared work.
- **SCALE UP Project:** This project proposal was accepted by the European Commission. It focuses on expanding data collection, fostering social dialogue, and strengthening union-employer relations.
- **EFFAT Gender Equality Project:** New tools and a comprehensive report to support affiliates in improving gender equality in collective bargaining and campaigns.



These initiatives are fostering stronger trade unions and employer organizations in the Domestic Work sector. Empowered affiliates can drive local changes in working conditions, gender equality, and social dialogue. These activities and tools build the capacity of unions and workers organizations to address pressing challenges that domestic workers face.

### Latin America Region



**Latin America is the champion region in ratifications of ILO convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers; however, the implementation of it remains the biggest challenge that the region confronts.** The implementation of international conventions is a difficult task and often an unknown territory since it demands from workers and organizers to develop a whole new set of skills and knowledge.

The IDWF has developed the first [digital C189 Implementation Toolkit](#) to better equip our leaders on the ground to take on the big challenge of making C189 real in their everyday lives. Key capacity building activities included several C189 trainings that took place in September 2024 across Latin American countries with the goals of informing, educating, and solidarity building around the Implementation of C189 toolkit. In Peru, the C189: Challenges for Implementation, Struggle and Mobilization training took place with four of the household workers' unions: Centro de Capacitación de Trabajadoras del Hogar (CCTH), Instituto de Promoción y Formación de Trabajadoras del Hogar (IPROFOTH), Federación Nacional de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar Remuneradas del Perú (FENTRAHOGARP), and Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar de la Región Lima (SINTTRAHOL). Leaders of the four unions in Peru have the online training material so that they can use it in different trainings, advocacy and organizational strengthening activities.

The Toolbox contents include: Our History, Legal Frameworks for Domestic Work, C189 as an Instrument of Struggle, Ratification and Implementation of C189, and Planning and Union Strengthening. Workshops presented the logic of the toolkit contents through the metaphor of the body, according to the following text:

Our toolbox is like a human body. Just like the body, it has a head, hands, legs and of course, a heart. We divided our box into 6 parts, and each part resembles each of those parts of the human body.

**-C189 Implementation Training**

A similar C189 training took place in September 2024 in Paraguay with the unions SINTRADI, SINTRADESPY, and SINTRADOP-L. In the Dominican Republic, C189 toolkit trainings took place with Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadoras Domésticas (SINTRADOMES-CASC), Unión Nacional Fenamutra de Trabajadoras del Hogar (UNFETRAH-FENAMUTRA), and Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar (ATH).

**MENA Region**

- In Kuwait a **legal training** took place that centered on case handling and management empowers migrant domestic workers with the necessary knowledge and tools. This training enables them to identify, document, and effectively address workplace violations. Furthermore, it fosters a strong support system among peers and allies, cultivates leadership within migrant communities, and connects individuals to vital support networks, including NGOs, embassies, and legal aid services.
- The **Training of Trainers program** empowers migrant domestic workers by providing them with the necessary skills and tools to educate their own communities. This peer-to-peer training model leverages the shared backgrounds, languages, and lived experiences of the trainers and trainees, making the knowledge transfer highly effective. These peer trainers act as crucial multipliers, disseminating vital information on workers' rights, avenues for assistance, and strategies for organizing to improve working conditions.
- Furthermore, in Kuwait we also convey **skills development training**, which is crucial for domestic workers to bridge existing gaps. It validates migrant domestic workers as legitimate and skilled labor, enabling workers to enhance job performance, advocate for their rights, and secure improved employment prospects. The skills training includes caregiving, basic CPR, computer literacy, occupational safety and health training, mental health education, sewing instruction, and financial literacy.



### 3) Campaigns & Research

Even amid many structural challenges, 2024 was an important year for the IDWF with notable achievements from various national campaigns and broadscale, global recognition of its accomplishments to advocate for domestic workers. IDWF continues its work on raising awareness and putting the spotlight on domestic worker rights and advocacy for the voices of domestic workers through many activities. There were major actions on C189, C190, the Care Economy, UNCSW, the ILC, and more. A selection of these important events and actions are listed below.

#### 1) Ratification of C189



Convention 189 is the International Labour Organization Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers. It is an important Convention that establishes the first global standards for domestic workers' rights. **C189 guarantees domestic workers the same basic rights as other workers**, including weekly days off, limits to hours of work, minimum wages, paid overtime, social security, and clear terms and conditions of employment.

**One of the strongest legislative tools that domestic workers have at their disposal is C189**, which demonstrates their advocacy power through making enormous strides on the legislative front. Until 2024, 36 countries had ratified C189 and Recommendation 201, marking huge steps forward toward gender equality, racial justice, migrant justice and domestic worker inclusion, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. C189 asserts that domestic workers have working conditions no less favorable than

those normally applicable to other categories of workers. **In 2024, two new countries ratified C189—Barbados and Seychelles—bringing the total number as of December 2024 up to 38 countries.**

*Successful stories and achievements:*

#### Africa Region

**In terms of regional successes and continuing challenges to ratify C189, there were a number of strides taken at the national level:**


- In **Tanzania**, under CHODAWU's leadership and with the support of organizations such as the IDWF and CVM, **Convention 189 was approved by the Labour Economic and Social Council (LESCO)**. LESCO is an advisory body within the Ministry of Labor and Employment.
- There are positive trends in a few countries such as in Mozambique. In April and May, SINED, IDWF affiliate in **Mozambique**, conducted three sessions in Maputo and Sofala with the Ministry of Labour to discuss the **revision of the Regulations of Domestic workers** and the importance of establishing a minimum wage for domestic workers.



- In **Botswana**, with the effort of the affiliates and the C189 campaigns, the government has **increased the minimum wage** for domestic workers from USD 82 to USD 114. Minimum wages were also raised in Namibia and scheduled to be paid in January 2025.

### MENA Region

While ILO C189 has not been ratified in the MENA region, **significant progress has been made in Qatar, Kuwait, and Jordan national legislation.**

- **A shelter for distressed migrant domestic workers** has been established in **Kuwait** in 2014. However, it was not that effective. Most of the migrant domestic workers prefer to run to their embassy or stay with someone they trust. In the first quarter of 2024, there was a change as the government started to collaborate with the civil society organization and include SKDWA. It facilitates activities with the distressed domestic workers residing in the shelter while waiting for their repatriation. There are roughly 300 distress cases supported since its establishment. There is ongoing cooperation with government officials to educate the community about existing laws.
- 
- **Standardize contact regarding minimum wage coverage and working hour regulation in Qatar** through a consultation process. The domestic workers participated in the advocacy training, and advocate for these changes actively. The government policy refers to: <https://www.charlesrussellspeechlys.com/en/insights/expert-insights/corporate/2024/qatars-strategic-shift-to-national-workforce-empowerment/#:~:text=In%20a%20landmark%20move%2C%20His,foreign%20talents%20with%20advanced%20skills.s>
  - **Kuwait has implemented a mobile application in October 2024 more accessible to migrant domestic workers** (Sahel Government Mobile Application) to verify their legal status. Our affiliate SKDWA has been providing the translation for non-English speakers to assist the workers to access their basic information or legal status.

### Latin America Region

**Across Latin America, there are only three countries that have not yet ratified C189:** Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Despite this, workers continue to organize and raise awareness as they advocate for domestic workers' rights.

- In **Honduras**, the Minister of Labor committed to **facilitating the approval of the report in favor of Convention 189** in the tripartite space, a prerequisite for the agreement to be sent by the presidency to the Congress of the Republic of Honduras.
- In **Colombia**, affiliates presented a bill to advance the **implementation of Convention 189**, which includes labor inspection mechanisms.



- And in **Paraguay**, SINTRADI participated in a **public hearing on social security** to advocate for an increase in the registration of domestic workers in the social security system.

### Asia Region

- **Thailand:**

In Thailand, a new **Ministerial Regulation No. 15, B.E. 2567 (2024) extends the labour rights to domestic workers (both nationals and migrants)**. Under the new legal framework, domestic workers will receive the daily minimum wage in line with other workers and are entitled to regular working hours (8-hour workday and 1-hour rest), annual leave, and personal leave. They will also have the right to 98 days of maternity leave, of which 45 will be paid. Employers are prohibited from compelling pregnant employees to work overtime or between 10 pm and 6 am, as well as terminating employment due to pregnancy. The MR 15 also establishes 30 days of paid leave for employees under 18 years old to attend education and training. However, **the reform still excludes domestic workers from social protection**.



This achievement is the result of many years of advocacy efforts from our affiliate, the Network of Domestic Workers in Thailand (NDWT), in coordination with HomeNet and with the support of the International Labour Organization. Since 2018, the ILO TRIANGLE in ASEAN program has led a review process of the Thai legal framework related to DWs, bringing it closer in line with Convention 189. Yet, there are still issues to be addressed before DWs enjoy the same rights as other workers, including access to social security under Thailand's Social Security Act.

- **Indonesia:**

**After a 20-year fight, the Domestic Workers Protection Bill is still awaiting adoption by Parliament, although several important steps forward have been made:**

- Task Force Team created by the Presidential Staff to deliberate the draft Domestic Workers Law.
- The new Parliament (December 2024) prioritized the Domestic Worker Bill for the 2025 national legislation agenda.
- Active actions and mobilisation gained wider support across civil society organisations:
  - Social Dialogues: 100-200 participants from various sectors such as trade unions, women organizations, civil society, student organizations, academics, and media.
  - Increased support from associations of women employers and artists for promoting domestic workers' rights and laws.



- Domestic worker leaders heightened their social media work and victim of abuse cases spoke up:
  - DW Network Media Team by domestic workers leaders published 24 articles in Blog “Tungku Menyala” and gained over 100 media coverage on domestic worker issues and laws
  - With the cases handled, domestic workers unions’ leaders and members have become very active to raise up cases and handle the litigation and non litigation process of the cases.
- Challenges faced: despite Indonesia president commitment to the domestic workers law with task force group formed, the major political party and parliament members are still reluctant to adopt domestic workers law as they are mostly employers of domestic workers. Right to minimum wage protection remains one of the major stumbling blocks among unions, general workers and employers.

- **India:**

**The Kerala government announced its decision in 2024 to bring in a new law on domestic workers.** It’s the first state in India where a Domestic Workers Bill is tabled by the government after years of fight by IDWF affiliates in India jointly together with other organizations in the National Platform for Domestic Workers.

### *Impact Story*

#### **UNSEEN, NOW HEARD: JUMIYEM RISING AS A DOMESTIC WORKER LEADER IN INDONESIA**



Jumiye grew up in a remote, drought-prone village in Bantul, Yogyakarta, in a large farming and furniture-making family where girls were rarely encouraged to study beyond primary school. As a teenager, she left home to help ease her family’s economic burden and entered domestic work in the city. What she found was not opportunity, but exploitation: endless days starting before dawn and ending near midnight, constant shouting and humiliation, unpaid wages, no days off, overcrowded sleeping spaces with no privacy, and even sexual violence. She changed employers again and again, not because she did not want to work, but because the conditions were unbearable and there was no legal protection – only the “kindness” or cruelty of employers.

Despite these conditions, Jumiye never stopped looking for a way forward. With one relatively supportive employer, she finally managed to complete senior high school, paying her fees from her small salary. Later, she discovered the Domestic Workers’ School and the

Tunas Mulia domestic workers’ union, founded by the organization Rumpun Tjoet Nyak Dien. There, she gained not only practical skills such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare, but also knowledge on human rights, gender-based violence, trafficking, and advocacy. She began to understand that what she had endured was not personal failure, but systemic injustice. Determined to push back, she enrolled in law school in Yogyakarta while continuing to work as a domestic worker, proving that domestic workers could claim education, rights, and dignity.

The union space transformed Jumiye from an isolated worker into a strong leader in the domestic workers’

movement. Through Tunas Mulia and the National Advocacy Network for Domestic Worker's Rights (JALA PRT), she helped push for a regional framework of protections in Yogyakarta, including a Governor's Regulation in 2010 and a Mayor's Regulation in 2011. At the national level, she became part of the long campaign for the Domestic Worker Protection Bill (RUU PPRT), joining hunger strikes, "Wednesday Actions," coordinated protests across several regions, and public campaigns such as the film *Mengejar Mbak Puan* to expose political resistance to the bill and demand change.

Today, Jumiyeem is a strong leader and advocate for domestic workers' rights, active in Tunas Mulia and JALA PRT, especially in advocacy and media campaigning. She uses her lived experience, organizing skills, and legal training to support other domestic workers facing abuse, to help them understand their rights, and to encourage them to speak out and organize. Her journey shows how, when domestic workers organize and unions focus on building their members' leadership and capacity, they not only transform their own lives but also drive changes in laws, policies, and public attitudes that can improve conditions for hundreds of thousands of others like them.

### Europe region



- **PHS Dialogue Project:** Pushed for improved working conditions, collective bargaining, and inclusion of domestic workers in social protections.
- **C189 & C190 Advocacy:** Actively pushed for ILO C189 ratification and for inclusion of domestic workers in EU policy frameworks and National level. C189 entered into force in Spain in February 2024.
- **Campaign on Domestic Workers' Rights:** In collaboration with ESPAN, EFFAT played a key role in advocating for domestic workers' rights at EU level, influencing reports like *Access for Domestic Workers to Labour and Social Protections*.
- **Impact:** Significant policy shifts that directly benefit domestic workers (e.g., revision of the Workplace Directive, inclusion of domestic workers in the European Care Strategy and the future European Deal, as well as the future INL report on Domestic Work).
- **Research outputs**, such as the **PHS Employment Monitor** and policy reports, provide evidence to support advocacy.

Overall, these efforts bring recognition to domestic workers' contributions and help secure legal frameworks that ensure or improve their rights and protections.

## 2) Ratification of C190



There were a number of notable wins on the C190 ratification front in 2024. Zambia, Denmark, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Samoa all ratified C190.

### Latin America region

Eight countries have already ratified C190 (Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Peru). Affiliates in Brazil and Paraguay are lobbying their governments to send C190 to the legislature. In Brazil, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva sent C190 to the National Congress for ratification. And in Colombia, the national government sent Convention 190 to the National Congress for consideration and approval.

### Impact Story

#### WHEN THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL: THE STORY OF CLARIBED PALACIOS IN COLOMBIA

Claribed Palacios was born in Nuquí, on Colombia’s Pacific coast, into a low-income Afro-Colombian family. She began working as a domestic worker as a teenager, first in her hometown and later in Medellín, where she migrated at a very young age with the promise of studying and moving forward, but ended up being a victim of human trafficking for domestic servitude. Although she managed to escape that situation, she went through a series of jobs in which she endured discrimination, violence, and exploitation.



This experience led her to participate in different spaces for training and organizing, until in 2013, together with other domestic workers, she founded the Unión de Trabajadoras Afrocolombianas del Servicio Doméstico - UTRASD (Afro-Colombian Domestic Workers Union), grounding its organizing in an intersectional worker identity – race, gender, and class – as a core strategy to confront discrimination, inequality, and abuse in domestic work. Her leadership was key for the ratification of ILO Convention 189 in Colombia in 2014; the adoption of Law 1788 (2016), which established a statutory service bonus for domestic workers; the formation of the Inter-Union Coalition on Domestic Work (2017); and the creation of a bipartite Monitoring Committee on Convention 189 in 2023. Since

then, Colombia has made major progress in protecting domestic workers, including the development of a National Care System – in whose design domestic workers have actively participated – a framework for the implementation of C189, and a strong commitment toward the ratification of C190.

Graduating from the first edition of the IDWF's LUNA School in 2019 was a turning point for Claribed. This transformative leadership program, centered on strengthening and healing domestic workers' identities (race, class, gender, ethnicity, caste, migration status), encouraged her to complete her law degree, begin a bachelor's in Ethnoeducation, consolidate her leadership within UTRASD, and become a key reference for domestic workers not only at the national level, but also regionally and globally. Claribed's story is a powerful example of how the feminist premise that the personal is political is put into practice in domestic workers union organizing when it comes to restore dignity, worth, and pride to undo the tangible consequences of intersectional systems of oppression and exclusion that pushed domestic workers to the margins.

### Africa region

IDWF affiliates, with the support of sister unions and the trade union federations in nine countries, achieved the ratification of Convention 190 in 2023 in Uganda, Rwanda, Namibia, Somalia, Mauritius, South Africa, Nigeria, Zambia, and Lesotho. Yet in 2024 there were no new ratifications of C190. Unfortunately, there is still a great deal of gender-based violence and harassment against domestic workers. Some countries have legislation against discrimination, but the implementation of those laws is still difficult. **Affiliates such as SYNEM-GUINEE in Guinea, and other affiliates in Uganda, South Africa and Namibia have launched campaigns on C190 and continue to raise awareness.**

### MENA region

C190 has not seen regional progress in the MENA region as no country in the region has ratified it. However, **some GCC states are enhancing national labor protections to combat gender-based violence.** A combination of factors contributes to the challenges in addressing gender-based violence. These include a high prevalence of underreported cases, lenient enforcement of laws, cultural sensitivities, and the exclusion of domestic and informal workers from many legal protections. Workshops, peer education, and consortiums have been used to raise awareness and build capacity on C190 among migrant domestic workers.

### Caribbean region



The year 2024 was a continuation of the ongoing advocacy efforts across the Caribbean region concerning the C190. The Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act in Jamaica, passed in 2023, officially came into effect on January 22, 2024. However, there have been no new ratifications of C190 by any Caribbean nation. **This absence of new ratifications reflects a complex interplay of political, social, and economic factors** within the region, and while there have been active campaigns and dialogues surrounding the convention's importance, tangible formal commitments in the form of national ratification have yet to materialize. This situation underscores the need for continued and potentially enhanced strategies to engage with governments and stakeholders to promote the ratification and effective implementation of C190.

## The Care Economy is Built by Domestic Workers



Domestic workers are crucial in the care economy, as they – mostly women, and many women of color – provide at least 25% of care at the global level, with regional percentages often even higher. Yet this work is usually underpaid and sometimes unpaid, and too often involves situations of modern-day slavery, forced and child labor, and verbal, physical, psychological, and sexual abuse.

Most societies continue to place a low social and economic value on domestic work, often considering it “unskilled” and merely an extension of women’s unpaid care work. While an estimated 2.3 billion people will rely on care in the near future, domestic workers providing care are disproportionately susceptible to risks of gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH). Many domestic workers face sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination at work, behind closed doors in private homes.

*“Domestic workers are pillars of care work and the two cannot be separated.”*

— an IDWF affiliate from Anglophone/East Africa

IDWF carried out numerous initiatives and took part in key discussions around the care economy in 2024:

### Global Visibility:

In the global level, IDWF conducted a one week social media campaign in three languages, with multimedia and regular posting that worked to raise awareness about the role of domestic workers in the care economy and their own care needs (childcare and elderly care), linked to C189 (advocate for the ratification and effective implementation of C189, and build public support for a decent work agenda for domestic workers). It also launched the “Women who care for the world” series and an animated video with a series of story cards about the key role of domestic workers in the provision of care.



### MENA region

In the MENA region, and specifically in Jordan, **extensive empowerment programs have been initiated**, offering comprehensive support systems for female workers that include childcare, training, and secure transportation. The region displays a wide spectrum in their initial conditions; high-income GCC countries are at the forefront, whereas lower-income or conflict-affected nations fall behind. **Care provision is predominantly informal, often involving live-in migrant domestic workers, and is hindered by a lack of standardization and legal recognition.** Across the MENA region, reliable data concerning care worker demographics and service delivery models is scarce.

## Africa region

There was a regional workshop which was held in Kigali, Rwanda in May 2024 focused on the Care Economy. The workshop raised awareness to the domestic workers leaders about the importance of domestic workers in the Care Economy and covered about the relevance and urgency to lobby the trade union centers and government representatives to support the workers' committee on decent work in the care economy during the ILC in Geneva. Through the region of Africa, there have been many campaigns through several platforms by affiliates in Lesotho, South Africa, Togo, Kenya and Zimbabwe, Zanzibar, Togo and Benin.



### Impact Story

#### FROM SILENCE TO SOLIDARITY: EVELYN'S JOURNEY IN MOMBASA, KENYA



Evelyn Oduol, a 29-year-old domestic worker in Nyali, Mombasa, is quietly transforming the landscape of care work, beginning with her own life. In Nyali, a coastal neighborhood marked by affluence, domestic workers are essential to daily life. Yet, this work performed mainly by women remains undervalued, invisible, and largely unprotected. Evelyn worked under informal conditions for years, earning Ksh 7,000 per month without a contract or access to labor protections. Like many of her fellow domestic workers, she accepted this as the norm, unaware of her rights or avenues she could seek redress.

This changed when she was introduced to the Time to Care (TTC) project, implemented by her union, KUDHEIHA Workers, in partnership with Oxfam in Kenya. Through training sessions for domestic workers, Evelyn gained exposure and knowledge to essential topics, including Kenya's labor laws, gender equality, Occupational Safety and Health, negotiation skills, and the power of union organizing. These sessions were intended to inform and build solidarity, boost confidence, and challenge deep-seated social norms.

Recognizing her leadership potential, KUDHEIHA selected Evelyn to attend a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop in Nairobi as part of the project. This training aimed to equip domestic workers with the tools to educate others and strengthen community mobilization. She joined a cohort of ten women from Mombasa, later nicknamed the "Nairobi 10," who became grassroots trainers across the region.

Empowered by the ToT training, Evelyn began actively training domestic workers in Nyali and greater Mombasa on their labor rights, including negotiating for better pay and securing safer, more conducive working conditions. Beyond her workplace, she also works with the union to recruit other domestic workers and conduct informal peer learning sessions. Many domestic workers are now learning about their rights and entitlements and forming support systems through Evelyn and her peers in the "Nairobi 10." Her efforts are helping build a local culture of solidarity, knowledge-sharing, and collective voice among domestic workers in Mombasa County.

Evelyn's journey illustrates the tangible shifts the TTC project is enabling. Domestic workers are becoming increasingly better informed, more confident in asserting their rights, and actively shaping their workplaces and communities. Her experience showcases the growing momentum of grassroots organizing and peer leadership among women in care work. It also highlights the strength of union-led, peer-to-peer education models in reaching and empowering workers in informal sectors traditionally overlooked by formal institutions. Evelyn's transformation from an undervalued worker to a confident community educator is not an isolated success. Evelyn's story reflects the shift that the Time to Care project advocates: advancing gender equality and strengthening the care systems that support women and girls in Kenya. Through stories like this, the project is laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and equitable care economy.

### Asia region



**In 2024, Asia made significant progress on initiatives regarding the Care economy.** The region has completed the **Care Policy Mapping** for 4 more countries under the Oxfam Advocacy Grant. This is in addition to the previous care policy mappings done in 8 Asian economies and countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Philippines, Thailand and South Korea).

National Care Consultations done for 4 countries of ASEAN: Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Philippines. The purpose of these consultations was to consult with a broader category of marginalised care workers such as community health workers, early-childhood educators, etc. The common set of demands generated at the country level through the **National Consultations on Care (NCC)** were used to have advocacy conversations with the respective governments of ASEAN. During this time, the Indonesian government developed a national care roadmap, and the Philippines have had a national discussion on Care to which our affiliates UNITED were invited as discussants.

This engagement with the Care Policy Mapping and engagements with different trade unions for the National Consultations on Care paved the way for IDWF to partner with PSI AP, ITUC AP and UNI APRO to jointly present a statement for having limited space for trade unions and still being very "enterprise-oriented" in the **Asia-Pacific Care Forum** organised by UN Women in October, 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. Sonia George, IDWF Executive Committee Member from Asia, also spoke in the session.

**IDWF won a Care Champions Award across Asia-Pacific** in the category "Partnership Architects - Building Bridges for Care" presented by UNESCAP and UN Women, with the support of the Global Alliance for Care (GAC), in collaboration with Oxfam and the World Bank. IDWF was also granted the opportunity to co-organize the **Feminist Forum on Migration and Displacement (FFMD)** with WIMN and other partners in Bangkok in November, 2024 and co-led two sessions on the 1) *Feminist Dimensions of Migration (including Care Work)* and 2) *Care Work and Migration and Its Intersections*. In **AWID Forum**, IDWF co-organised different sessions with various stakeholders, such as *Social Pact on Care* with ESCR-NET, *Care and Disability* with the Disability Rights Fund (DRF), the Centre for Inclusive Policy (CIP), and the Global Alliance for Care (GAC) to talk about the rights of caregivers and care recipients together as one voice. It also co-hosted a session with WIMN and ESCR on *Care, Climate Change and Its Intersections*, as well as a session with the Solidarity Center (SC) on *Care Workers and Migration*.

## Latin America region



The IDWF in Latin America conducted regional meetings on 30 Apr - 7 May, 2024 to create a **Trade Union Care Agenda**. Leaders from 25 domestic workers' unions in Latin America met to talk about care policies. The purpose of the Trade Union Care Agenda was multifold, including the goal of creating a regional agenda about care work and domestic work; supporting domestic workers to obtain decent work through the recognition and use of ILO C189, and to fully contextualize and analyze what "care work" means in terms of the social and political situation in each country. The key issues found were as follows:

### Convention 189:

- Domestic workers need social security and maternity benefits, strong labour inspections where they work, and training and professional development. Finally, digital platforms used to hire domestic workers must be better regulated.

### Social Dialogue:

- Domestic workers must be included in meetings and decision-making about care policies and systems. They need better care for themselves, who are careworkers: mental health, overall health services, and pensions for older domestic workers.

### Care Services:

- Domestic workers need childcare services for their children, older domestic workers also need support services, and migrant domestic workers need safe shelters when they move to cities for work.

**Domestic workers' unions in Latin America now understand better the link between decent domestic work and the care economy. They can participate more strongly in discussions about care policies in their countries:**

- In Colombia, UTRASD took part in national discussions about the National Care System Policy. They brought the demands of domestic workers to the table. The policy should be approved in 2025.
- In Brazil, FENATRAD joined the national debate on the Care Policy to make sure domestic work is recognized as essential to the care sector and that workers' rights are protected. In December 2024, the President approved the law creating the National Care Policy. One of its goals is to promote decent work for all care workers.
- In Guatemala, SITRADOMSA and CENTRACAP met with the First Lady, the Minister of Labour, and other government leaders to present domestic workers' care needs—childcare services and pensions for older workers. In August 2024, both unions officially shared these care needs with the highest government authorities.

## The Power of Care: Domestic Workers' Voices at the ILC



At the ILC 2024, Sonia George (Executive Committee Member, Asia) and Raina Bhattacharya (Program Officer, Asia) participated in the **Committee on Decent Work and the Care Economy**. Sonia George made a speech in the plenary session, highlighting the importance of domestic workers as care workers and their contributions and lack of access to decent work and social protection in the care economy. **A delegation of domestic workers from all regions representing the IDWF participated in the committee meetings.** The conclusions from the general discussions have built on the draft outcome document of the Committee on Decent Work and the Care Economy. **Key recommendations included:**

- **Ratification and Implementation of Convention 189:** Efforts should be made to ensure the ratification and effective implementation of Convention 189 to address decent work deficits among domestic workers. The IDWF requests the ILO Office to scale up promotional campaigns and provide technical assistance for Member States that have not yet ratified C189, as well as offer support and guidance for those that have already done so.
- **Technical Support and Training:** The ILO should provide technical support, guidance, and training to its tripartite constituents to strengthen the capacity for social dialogue mechanisms. This will help address decent work deficits for domestic workers and effectively guarantee their voice and representation.
- **Policy Guidance on National Frameworks:** The IDWF urges the ILO to offer policy guidance and training to tripartite constituents on developing national policy frameworks, roadmaps, and action plans on the care economy. These policies should promote decent work for domestic workers and incorporate their right to care as a core component of national care policies.
- **Continued ILO Research and Data Development:** The IDWF supports the continuation of ILO research and data development on the care economy. These efforts provide valuable inputs to promote decent work for domestic workers and aid in reaching a tripartite common understanding of the care economy, guided by the ILO's 5R framework.

**By participating in the ILC, the IDWF aims to ensure that domestic workers' issues are recognized and made central in policy discussions that can effect change around the world.**

**It is a milestone to expand the first three Rs, Reduce, Recognize and Redistribute unpaid care work into additional two R, i.e. Rewarding and ensuring Representation of paid care workers.** This framework's core principles focus on the crucial aspects of care work. In particular, it emphasizes rewarding care work through fair wages, decent working conditions, and professional development opportunities. Furthermore, it states the importance of ensuring the representation of

care workers through strong unions and collective bargaining, enabling their voices to be heard in policy discussions and decision-making processes. Centring reward and representation for domestic workers within this framework is the key to addressing labour market shortages, improving working conditions and reaching critical gender equality targets.

## UN CSW68



A group of IDWF domestic worker delegates from all regions led by the IDWF General Secretary participated in the sixty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) from 11 - 22 March 2024 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, under the priority theme “Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective”. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality, the rights and the empowerment of women.



Over two weeks, IDWF delegates and leaders of our movement were highly active: they seized every opportunity to advocate for the labor and human rights of domestic workers in all spaces at the CSW68. They participated in around 50 events, including parallel events, side events, high-level panels, and strategic meetings with allies, partners, key stakeholders, and policymakers. Through diligent advocacy, **the IDWF brought visibility to domestic workers as the backbone of the care economy**, positioned domestic workers’ demands on the global care agenda, built alliances, gained support, and led conversations on care, becoming an undisputed global reference.

The highlight was our parallel event, held on March 19 under the theme “Centering Decent Work for Domestic Workers in the Care Economy”. The event was attended by over 60 in-person attendees, and over 100 online attendees. Furthermore, the impact reverberated across various UN spheres.

## 4) Migrant Domestic Workers



**Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to marginalization and vulnerability given their precarity and lack of rights.** Lack of status in destination countries adds further barriers to their access to benefits and rights remedies under national laws, and they face multiple culture, structural, and language barriers that can exacerbate their isolation and precarity. **The IDWF continues to demonstrate its commitment to prioritizing and advocating for the rights of migrant domestic workers on a global level.**

On March 12, the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) convened a regional discussion involving participants from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions. The session facilitated the exchange of experiences, lessons learned, and in-depth discussions on key issues, interventions, and shared priorities concerning migrant domestic workers (MDWs), with particular attention to those in Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain. Several critical challenges were highlighted, including excessive working hours and the absence of rest days for live-in domestic workers, confiscation of passports and identity documents, restrictions on legal status and freedom of movement—exacerbated by the Kafala sponsorship system in the MENA region—and related concerns. IDWF continues its work on strengthening the base of MDWs starting from their journey in the unions at the country of origin (COO) and reaching the country of destination (COD). This includes **exchange meetings, awareness sessions, and continuous support to and coordination with unions** in both COO and COD.

### Global Compact for Migration (GCM)



The IDWF Asia team was also deeply involved in regional advocacy on the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) as part of the **Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) for the 2nd Asia Regional GCM Forum**, to be held in February 2025. This engagement strengthened collaboration with key stakeholders and **increased recognition of IDWF's leadership on migration in Asia-Pacific.** Through the consultations, stakeholders took stock of achievements and gaps against the GCM objectives, helping to prepare the 2025 regional review and the 2026 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), while Asia-based affiliates organizing migrant domestic workers deepened their knowledge of the GCM and its mechanisms. Together with other stakeholders, the active participation of IDWF and its affiliates in the GCM regional review continues to shape what a genuine whole-of-society approach should look like.

IDWF's involvement in the SAG also sought to create and secure additional opportunities for migrant domestic worker representatives within IDWF affiliates at the upcoming 2nd Asia Regional Forum for the Global Compact for Migration. This has proven an effective strategy for engaging with diverse stakeholders, ensuring that migrant domestic workers are included and their demands are addressed.

**There has been much progress made with organizing Migrant Domestic Workers across the various regions:**

### Africa Region



- **Kenya: KUDHEIHA has recruited 1000 domestic workers and developed a council for MDW's.** Its role is to oversee the migrant domestic workers issues such as cases and grievances both in Gulf countries and the returnees through their network. Also, the Migrant Domestic Workers Association is in the process of registration. **Kenya has signed Bilateral agreements with host countries of Kenyan migrants**, such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. These agreements focus on issues such as wages, travel, identity documents, and access to complaint mechanisms. These bilateral Agreements protect migrant domestic workers among other migrants while working outside the country. They provide forums where their grievances can be addressed and any other related issues.
- **Uganda: HTS union was able to recruit 102 migrant workers** from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, Oman, Jordan, and United Arab Emirates.
- **Ethiopia: Mulu Tesfa recruited 55 MDWs** in 2024. Mulu Tesfa is linking returnees with regional branches of domestic workers associations throughout Ethiopia to support their rehabilitation. The program focuses on reintegration by providing counseling, training, and ongoing psychological and medical assistance. Furthermore, it promotes information exchange and regular reporting to ensure effective monitoring and follow-up.
- **Tanzania: CHODAWU has provided legal assistance and support to 102 MDWs recruited.**
- **Zanzibar: CHODAWU-Z has recruited a total number of 782.** In Zanzibar there is **predeparture training for MDW's** before they leave the country. It is provided by the government and employment agencies in collaboration with CHODAWU-Z.
- Other countries have started to engage in **efforts to recruit migrant domestic workers**, including Togo (117 MDWs), Lesotho (2 MDWs), Ivory Coast (50 MDWs), Malawi (5 MDWs), Niger (5 MDWs) and Rwanda (3 MDWs)

## Asia Region

- **The Network of Domestic Workers in Thailand (NDWT) has successfully advocated for the domestic workers' law.** In April 2024, The Thai Cabinet approved the new Ministerial Regulation Number 15 extending the protection for domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers, to enjoy 8-hour days, better working conditions, annual leave and personal leave. This regulation also granted the benefit of 98 days for maternity leave, of which 45 will be paid leave. Employers are prohibited from compelling pregnant employees to work overtime or between 10 pm and 6 am, as well as terminating employment due to pregnancy. It also establishes 30 days of paid leave for employees between aged 15-17 to attend education and training.

*"We are happy with the regulation. It's a result of our campaign – NDWT leaders and members went to the Labour Office to fight for domestic workers' rights. Employers often have full authority over us – they can do anything to us. But now employers cannot do that anymore. We will have more rights covered by law. The most important part of Regulation 15 is the 8-hour workday. However, we have not fully reached our goal yet. We haven't got Article 33 to get social protection. We haven't got C189 ratified. Now these are our next goals."*

**Kanyapha Prasopsuk, NDWT's Chairperson.**

- **In Malaysia, on December 22, AMMPO and PERTIMIG successfully organized a social dialogue involving the government of Malaysia, the embassies of the Philippines and Indonesia to discuss migrant domestic workers protection on the right to a weekly day off.** Through this dialogue, the government is showing it is committed to ensure the implementation of employment contracts and strengthen the monitoring mechanism. While on the other hand, organizing Migrant Domestic Workers is not easy. In Malaysia, IDWF affiliates face challenges to conduct public activities due to security threat, especially the increase of raids program by the Malaysia Immigration has created huge fear among migrant workers to conduct such public activities. In this case, IDWF have provided training on risk management to help affiliates be able to identify their level of fear and risk and helped to coordinate with legal expertise and seek advice.
- Also in Malaysia, joint participatory research and capacity building took place around migrant domestic workers and rest days, which equipped them with interviewing skills and confidence, helped build partnerships with migrant domestic workers and employers, provided concrete evidence, helped the IDWF and affiliates understand target audiences, and informed broader campaign strategy.
- **FADWU in Hong Kong, successfully organized a press conference and a meeting with the Hong Kong government to demand the increased wages of MDWs, and it resulted in Minimum Allowable Wage increases by 2.5% from USD 624 to USD 640, on 27th Sep 2024.**



## Caribbean Region

- In Jamaica, **the Jamaica Household Workers Union (JHWU) has proactively engaged with the Ministry of Labour to gather precise data on the number of domestic workers who have been issued work permits.** This initiative aims to ensure proper regulation and protection of domestic workers within the country.
- **Trinidad and Tobago has a partnership with the National Training Agency (NTA) to offer train to domestic workers to become certified assessors.** These assessors will evaluate individuals seeking to enter Trinidad and Tobago for domestic work purposes, ensuring adherence to established standards and qualifications. This agreement,

titled “Trinidad - Enhancing Domestic Worker Standards through Collaboration with NTA,” signifies a commitment to professionalizing the domestic work sector and safeguarding the rights and welfare of both local and migrant domestic workers.

## Europe Region

- **Porticus Project** (Spain): Strengthening the movement for migrant domestic workers, particularly focusing on organizing, advocacy, empowerment and unity.
- Care Strategy Advocacy: **EFFAT has ensured that migrant domestic workers are included in discussions on the European Care Strategy and long-term care policies.**
- Legal Support: Key legal victories, including the **entry into force of ILO Convention 189 in Spain** and advocacy for migrant domestic workers to be included in national social protection systems (+ EU Ruling to implement a system to measure daily working hours, ensuring compliance with Directive 2003/88)
- In the United Kingdom, the IDWF affiliate **The Voice of Domestic Workers (VODW)** and Waling Waling—both migrant domestic workers organizations—successfully established the **first domestic workers branch within Unite the Union**, one of the largest trade unions in the UK and Ireland, with elected branch roles held by leaders from both organizations.



Legal recognition and stronger organizing capabilities empower migrant domestic workers to achieve lasting change and improve their livelihoods.

### Impact Story

#### RESILIENCE ACROSS BORDERS: HOW MIMI TURNED DESPAIR INTO A STRONG COMMITMENT TO MIGRANT JUSTICE

Mimi is a full-time domestic worker from Manila, Philippines, working in the United Kingdom. Her early life was shaped by hardship and resilience. She began a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy at Adamson University, but due to poverty, she had to change paths. A mother of three, Mimi dreamed of a brighter future for her children. In 2013, to give them better opportunities, she made the difficult decision to work overseas as a domestic worker.

She first worked in Dubai, UAE. Then, in 2014, her employers brought her to London, United Kingdom, where they subjected her to abuse and exploitation until she found the strength to ask for help and was rescued by the organization The Voice of Domestic



Workers (VODW). She was identified by the government as a victim of modern slavery and granted a two-year domestic worker visa – a painful but vital recognition of the suffering she had endured. VODW gave her the tools to start over: through their advocacy and education programs, Mimi slowly began to heal, learn, and stand tall again.

Today, Mimi works as a childcare provider and housekeeper in Hackney. Beyond that, she serves as a trustee with VODW and stands as a frontline campaigner fighting to restore the pre-2012 domestic worker visa – a fight for justice, dignity, and fair treatment for migrant domestic workers.

*"I carry with me not only my story of survival but a deep commitment to create change by amplifying the voices of countless domestic workers who still suffer in silence. I refuse to stay silent in the face of injustice. I want to challenge a system that devalues us and be a force that restores the rights of domestic workers – not as victims, but as proud workers deserving of justice, freedom, and dignity,"* says Mimi.

### Latin America Region



- **In Brazil, Sindicato dos Trabalhadores Domésticos do Município de São Paulo - STDMSP (São Paulo Domestic Workers' Union) has established a migrant workers section**, which develops actions specifically designed for migrant domestic workers on their rights as migrants in Brazil, from a citizen's perspective to equal rights with Brazilian workers. Union training activities at the union headquarters promote integration among migrants of various nationalities, disseminating the rights guaranteed in the union's collective agreement.
- **Another example to highlight is the work done by SINTRASEDOM Colombia with migrants from Venezuela** on labor rights, migration conditions, protection against gender-based violence and violence at work, and dissemination of information on institutional bodies that defend the life and dignity of migrant workers. In addition, they show how the union organization of domestic workers in Colombia is an achievement that benefits everyone.
- **In the Dominican Republic, SINTRADOMES, FENAMUTRA, and ATH are working to include workers from Haiti**, who suffer severe social discrimination because of their nationality and generally have lower living conditions than national workers.
- **In Panama, SINGRETRADS works with migrant domestic workers**, informing them about their labor rights, which are protected in Panama.

## MENA Region



- Migrant domestic worker (MDW) leaders face significant challenges that hinder consistent participation in workshops and meetings across the MENA region. The volatile employment ecosystem often subjects them to the unpredictability of their employers' moods, making it difficult to commit to regular activities. To accommodate this, in-person events are frequently converted into virtual sessions, often held during late hours or rescheduled entirely. During Ramadan, migrant domestic workers are overwhelmed with additional household duties, pushing all major engagements to after the Eid celebrations. Additionally, poor internet connectivity continues to disrupt virtual participation, forcing attendees to drop in and out of sessions. To mitigate this, meetings are supplemented with written notes for later access.

- **On March 21, 10 MDW leaders in Kuwait participated in a workshop to assess the impact of their association and IDWF initiatives at various levels.** The session offered a platform for sharing personal growth stories and discussing the challenges.



- In March, affiliates from Qatar and Kuwait participated in a meeting focused on adopting community guidelines, where updates on regional and global advocacy efforts, internal work, and upcoming projects were discussed. Coordination meetings with Bahrain community leaders to discuss the current situation, challenges, opportunities, and potential interventions were held, and bilateral dialogue with a Qatar MDW leader to assess their organization's situation, training needs, and support required, including: leadership and capacity-building mentorship; advocacy development training of trainers; livelihood and professional skills development.
- **The Coalition on Labor Justice for Migrants in the Gulf**, a collaborative initiative co-founded by IDWF, Global Labor Justice, Anti-Slavery International, Equidem, and the Solidarity Center, was formally launched in June 2024. This unprecedented global labor alliance is committed to championing the rights of all migrant workers, including domestic workers, throughout the entire migration continuum: encompassing recruitment, relocation, employment,

and repatriation. The Coalition actively champions fundamental entitlements such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, access to judicial redress, and the abolition of the kafala system, with a specific focus on migrant domestic workers residing in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar.

- Additionally, a meeting on digital security organized by the Coalition on Labor Justice for Migrant Workers in the Gulf was attended by IDWF Executive Committee members and staff, and leaders from affiliates. Key points discussed included: basic digital security practices used by leaders on social media, the role of social media in organizing and campaigns, personal and privacy risks, spread of misinformation and reputational threats, and information on training history and challenges in Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain.

*“In the MENA region in particular, you don’t see domestic workers walking around the streets. They are kept inside well-built houses and so on. And sometimes there are instances where in a certain area, it looks like there are no domestic workers there. But then if you play a certain music, culturally relevant music, domestic workers start to pop out and start to look out the windows. And you know a certain group of migrant domestic workers are there in that neighborhood. So, one area that we need to focus on is understanding the historical background of those domestic workers.”*

—Ben Braga, IDWF organizer in MENA region

The above quote demonstrates the fact that not only are the issues migrant domestic workers face often hidden from plain view, but so are the domestic workers themselves. They are often physically shielded from interacting with the broader outside world, as they are disciplined to stay inside their employer’s home or apartment and communication with fellow domestic workers is discouraged or prohibited.

### Insights into International Representation, Awards, and Alliances formed in 2024

The IDWF was recognized at the international level for being a strong voice for domestic workers’ rights, protections, and dignity, and the IDWF also formed important alliances during the year.

#### **IDWF honored with the Care Champions Award by the United Nations**

The IDWF has once again been honored with an international recognition: the **‘Care Champions’ award, presented by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UN Women to initiatives that have made outstanding contributions to advancing care economy policies across Asia-Pacific**, contributing to the broader goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The IDWF received this distinction for its transformative work in increasing the visibility and empowerment of care workers, as well as in helping build resilient and inclusive care systems. Sonia George, a member of the IDWF Executive Committee representing Asia and the National Vice President of the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) of India, accepted the award during the 2024 Asia-Pacific Care Champions event, held at the UN Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review, on November 21 in Bangkok, Thailand.



**Care work is a major driver of migration in and from Asia-Pacific, and yet as the world approaches the 30th anniversary of the historic Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, social justice and the full realization of human rights are far from guaranteed for migrant domestic workers across the region.** Migrant workers remain the most vulnerable group within the sector of domestic work, as they are often excluded from labor laws and social protections in the countries they work in, affected by discriminatory migration policies, and frequently exploited and subjected to various forms of abuse by recruiters and employers—including forced labor and even trafficking.

The IDWF and its affiliates in Asia have a long history of fighting for decent work and a dignified life for more than 38 million domestic workers, nearly a quarter of whom are migrants. This UN recognition is especially significant as it confirms that the IDWF is on the right path and inspires us to continue moving forward with the conviction that a better future is possible for the women who care for societies and fuel economies across Asia-Pacific.

*“Domestic workers should be explicitly recognized as care workers, as part of the care workforce, and as care providers, covered by national labor laws and social protection. Care is not a commodity: it’s a public good. And it’s a responsibility of the society to recognize the contribution of domestic workers to the economy. Our voices must be represented in decision-making spaces on the care economy, because domestic work is care work.”*

**- Sonia George, IDWF’s ExCo member and SEWA’s Vice President**

### ***The IDWF became a member of the Council of Global Unions (CGU)***

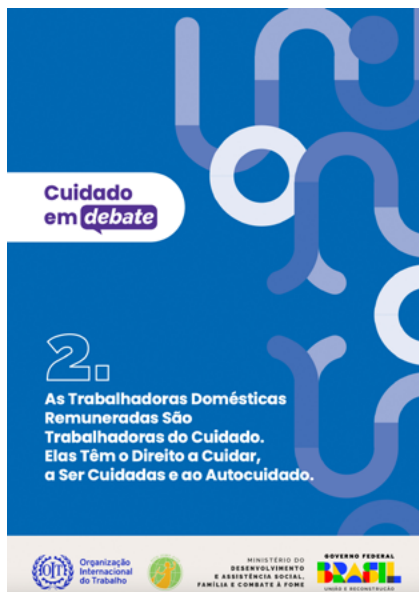
**In October of 2024, the IDWF became a member of the Council of Global Unions (CGU), a milestone for the domestic workers’ movement.** The CGU’s motto is “Standing Together for Rights of Workers.” It is the partnership between the International Trade Union Confederation, Global Union Federations and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD. The Council of Global Unions (CGU) represents more than 200 million workers. **The IDWF also has a longstanding affiliation to another global organization, WIEGO: Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing.**



## **VI. Publications and Research**

The IDWF is committed to publishing well-researched, evidence-based reports, surveys, and articles that detail important updates, changes, developments and achievements in the world of domestic workers globally. Below, a number of those important publications from 2024 are highlighted:

- ***Paid Domestic Workers Are Care Workers: They Have the Right to Care, to Be Cared For, and to Self-Care***



A new report by Brazil's Ministry of Social Development, Family, and the Fight Against Hunger, conducted in partnership with the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), reveals that despite the essential contribution of paid domestic workers to the care economy in Brazil, they remain one of the most precarious groups in the labor market, with high levels of informality, low social protection coverage, and serious decent work deficits. The development process for this important report began in 2024. Care work carried out within households plays a central role in generating employment, both for the person who undertakes this task for pay and for the family for whom they work, bringing those adults in that household into the labor market. Paid domestic workers provide care services that are essential to the well-being and income generation of the families that hire them. They perform direct care tasks for people in need, especially children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. They also perform indirect care tasks, such as cleaning, cooking, laundry, and planning, ensuring the family has a healthy and safe environment in which to live.

Find the full report [here](#)

- ***Care Policy Mapping Publications Across Asia***

In 2024, Asia made significant progress on initiatives regarding the care economy by completing the Care Policy Mapping for 4 more countries under the Oxfam Advocacy Grant. This is in addition to the previous care policy mappings done in 8 Asian economies and countries. **These publications are important because they show the infrastructure of the care sector, an overview of the local population and local care needs, and an examination of the relevant labor laws in each country.** Understanding the care policy needs of these countries and the region overall enables IDWF to be better equipped when organizing and building power. Currently, the following countries have completed care policy mapping: [Bangladesh](#), [Indonesia](#), [Malaysia](#), [Hong Kong](#), [Taiwan](#), [India](#), [Philippines](#), [Nepal](#), [Thailand](#), [South Korea](#), [Cambodia](#), and [Sri Lanka](#). These publications and all other related IDWF reports and papers can be downloaded from our [website](#).



- ***IDWF Contributes to UN Document: Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda***



In a historic and precedent-setting move, **the United Nations developed its first-ever system-wide policy paper on Care and Support, incorporating contributions from the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF).** On July 19, 2024, the IDWF's Second Vice-President, June Barrett, participated in a special meeting held by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in New York, where the document was officially launched.

The document is authored by a collaborative effort of various United Nations (UN) agencies, including UN Women, ECLAC, ILO, OHCHR, and UNDP. It focuses on the importance of care work and the need to transform care systems to achieve sustainable development and gender equality. The paper provides a practical framework for UN agencies to address care within the context of the SDGs and promotes comprehensive care systems that enable gender equality.

and social justice alongside sustainable development and economic transformation. It also highlights policy options to support the transformation of care systems and the importance of human rights-based, universal, and transformative approaches to care. The IDWF is truly making strides and joining important conversations as a voice of domestic workers working toward policy change and social transformation on the global level. **The inputs of the IDWF, through its report “[The Centrality of Care and Support from a Human Rights Perspective](#),” were invaluable to developing this tool.**

There are three aspects of the UN document to be highlighted:

- It takes an expansive and inclusive definition of care – affirming the rights, dignity, and autonomy of both caregivers and care receivers, and care for the environment.
- It sets out five common principles to transform care systems across all contexts, regardless of the scope, size, or type of intervention. These are: Human rights-based; State accountability; Universality; Transformative; and Leaving no one behind.
- It endorses the ‘5Rs’ (Recognize, Reduce, Redistribute, Reward, and Represent) as a common policy framework to address unpaid and paid care work and adds a new cross-cutting policy objective on ‘Resourcing’ care systems, recognizing this needs greater attention.

*“We are very happy to see this paper out! The IDWF is grateful for the opportunity of having contributed with insights and suggestions from domestic workers, as they account for 25% of paid care workers globally. We are hopeful to see more steps forward to transform and reorganize societies around and for care provision from a human rights and labor rights perspective.”*

**-Adriana Paz, IDWF’s General Secretary**

- **IDWF 4th Congress: Ten Years Together: Global Solidarity: Domestic Workers Build Bridges, Close Gaps, Gain Rights**



**The IDWF 4th Global Congress took place in De Haan, Belgium on 2-5 October 2023.** Many significant changes have taken place since the last IDWF Global Congress, including the loss of the much loved and respected IDWF President Myrtle Witbooi, who passed away from a long battle with cancer on 16 January 2023, leaving a strong and storied legacy behind. At the time of the 4th Congress, then-General Secretary Elizabeth Tang was embattled by political unrest in Hong Kong and was only able to join the Congress virtually through Zoom technology. Finally, this was the first in-person Congress since the Coronavirus pandemic, which was a very challenging experience for domestic workers and their loved ones around the world. Therefore, **this Congress brought forward a sense of solidarity as the IDWF has been “Ten Years Together,” and the number continues to grow.** This spirit of solidarity carried over into the Congress’ workshop sessions that were dynamic and participatory, and its many presentations involved active question-and-answer sessions with engagement and dialogue.

Discover the report [here](#).

- **Strength Through Democracy: How to Build a Democratic Union**

In 2021–2022, domestic worker leaders from IDWF’s 28 African affiliates took part in a virtual capacity-building program on democratic leadership in trade unions. This booklet brings together their ideas and experiences on how to strengthen democracy and build democratic leadership in our unions. It is designed for leaders and organizers in IDWF affiliates

in Africa, but it can also be used in other regions. It is also a **useful resource for members and anyone else helping to organize and build strong domestic workers organizations in Africa and beyond.**

Read it [here](#).

- ***My Employer Never Saw a Calendar – Why Aren't Migrant Domestic Workers in Malaysia Getting a Day Off?***



This report was **developed by the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) together with its affiliates, the Association of National Overseas Filipino Workers in Malaysia (AMMPO) and the Persatuan Pekerja Rumah Tangga Indonesia Migran (PERTIMIG).** It reveals that **almost all migrant domestic workers (95%) in Malaysia are deprived of weekly days off.** To produce the report, AMMPO and PERTIMIG leaders interviewed 108 live-in migrant domestic workers from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Cambodia between September and November 2023. Close to half (43%) of the migrant domestic workers surveyed worked seven days a week, and 41% only received an “occasional” day off – usually once a month (51%) or once a fortnight (36%).

Find the full report [here](#).

## VII. Challenges

There are numerous challenges domestic workers are facing on a global scale as well as within their regions and countries. In the current global political climate, there are many pressing social issues that continue to shape employment relations for domestic workers and continue to challenge the growing power of domestic workers.

### ***Rise of right-wing governments***



The rise of right-wing, authoritarian governments around the world and the global lean toward the right has had a severe effect on domestic workers, as **right-wing governments often restrict workers' rights, cut wages and benefits,** and are understood to be unfriendly and downright hostile to low-wage workers, informally employed workers, and workers from other countries. For instance, given the political situation in Bangladesh, they have stopped any public meetings or assemblies, making it very difficult to organize.

As the ITUC Global Rights Index notes, “Under international labour standards, all workers, without distinction, have the right to freedom of association. However, in 2024, 113 countries excluded certain categories of workers from this right, often based on their employment status. Domestic workers, temporary workers, those in the informal economy, and workers in the platform economy usually fell outside of the scope of labour legislation.” This was particularly seen in Pakistan, as Pakistan’s laws do not guarantee the right to organise for agricultural workers, domestic workers, home-based workers, or workers in the informal sector.

*Domestic workers have deep roots stemming from origin stories of exclusion, exploitation, displacement, and racial segregation, and they move forward an identity as workers from a whole-of-person approach deserving of dignity and respect. Through the IDWF, their global union federation, domestic workers mobilize hope, emphasize dignity, and build symbolic and relational power, and in so doing have brought progressive change and advancement to their movement.*

### **Discrimination, making MDWs being more marginalized and difficult to organize**



With relatively low barriers to entry, domestic work is often seen as a route out of poverty, and yet for migrant domestic workers who travel to other countries to work for unknown employers who may not speak the same language, there are a number of relevant structural barriers that can create vulnerabilities for this hidden workforce.

**Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to marginalization and vulnerability given their precarity and lack of rights.** Lack of status in destination countries adds further barriers to their access to benefits and rights remedies under national laws, and they face multiple culture and language barriers that make isolation worse. Migrant domestic workers are usually dependent on their employer’s approval in order to maintain their immigration status and are often subject to even more dramatic isolation and abuse than their national counterparts. Furthermore, if a contract exists, it is often between a placement agency and the employer, which can increase the level of disenfranchisement and access to rights for the worker herself. **There are at least an estimated 11.5 million migrant domestic workers, though this number is most likely higher.**

Why is domestic labor undervalued and unrecognized? **Interlocking systems of oppression, rooted in colonialism, patriarchy and slavery conspire against domestic workers.** Yet even while facing these structural challenges, a lack of resources and being severely underfunded, domestic workers have overcome numerous obstacles and organized to form local unions, worker associations and regional networks around the world. Domestic workers have a long tradition of organization and mobilization to recognize care work—performed for households—as work and their rights as workers. This legacy informs the current conceptualization of care work as work, which is also ingrained in the ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. **Promoting decent work for domestic workers must be at the core of a care economy agenda and policy, and the IDWF is leading the way.**

## VIII. Funders Acknowledgment and Financial Report

### Funders Acknowledgment

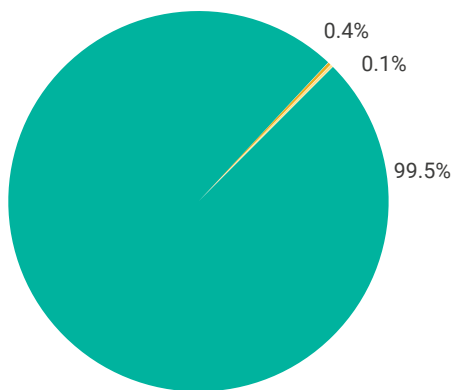
**IDWF is grateful to each of the following organizations and foundations for their generous financial support:**

- Arthur Svensson Award
- European Federation of Trade Unions in the Food, Agriculture and Tourism (EFFAT)
- FNV Mondiaal
- Foundation for a Just Society
- Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)
- Global Labor Justice - International Labor Rights Forum (GLJ-ILRF)
- Global Union Federations (GUFs)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
- International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)
- Kommunal Municipal Union
- Oxfam
- Olof Palmes Internationella Center
- Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA)
- SASK – Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland
- Solidarity Center
- Stiftung Auxilium/ Porticus Asia Ltd.
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- The Collective Future Fund
- The International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA)
- The Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)
- United Domestic Workers of America
- Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights Asia and Pacific
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)

**And thank you to all those who help sustain and enable the IDWF to grow stronger and thrive.**

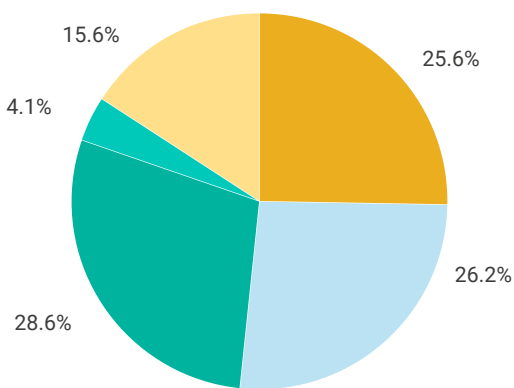
## Financial Report from the Finance and Administration Team

### Financial Report for IDWF for from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024



Sources of Funds

Sources of Funds	USD
Project income	4,872,771
General donations	20,716
Affiliation fees	4,785
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,898,272</b>



Use of Funds

Use of Funds	USD
National Programme	891,422
Regional Programme	914,306
Global Programme	997,246
Fundraising and Communication	141,841
Coordination and Management	54,384
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,488,649</b>

The total incoming resources for the financial year ending 31 December 2024 was USD 4,898,272. Project funds remain the key resource, which is 99% of the total budget, followed by general donations and affiliation fees. The total resources expended for the financial year ending 31 December 2024 was USD 3,488,649. The resources were expended to protect and advance domestic workers’ rights and in organizational development at national, regional, and global levels. The cash on hand is USD 1,969,096, and to ensure that necessary funds are available for future and contingency expenses. In order to ensure financial sustainability and resilience in uncertain times or sudden crisis IDWF has established a reserve totaling USD 552,860 that are meant ensure the functioning of the organization for a few months: The breakdown of the reserves include USD 497,351 for Congress and USD 55,509 for staff cost.

The IDWF made significant changes to the Finance and Administration Team over the last year to increase regional diversity and operational efficiency. A number of our key achievements over the year include staffing a complete team, including an Operations Manager, Finance Manager, Accounting Officer, Administrative Officer, and Accounting Assistant.

At the governance level, there was a revision of the accounting and procurement policies. The team contributed valuable suggestions for the revision of the accounting and procurement policies, which ensure that the policies reflect the evolving needs of IDWF and facilitate awareness among new leadership. Other financial aspects were improved, revised, and systematized, and there were a number of important human resource procedures and travel schedule procedures that were streamlined as well.

## Appendix 1: List of ExCo Members

### Office Bearers

**President:** Carmen Brítez, UPACP, Argentina  
**1st Vice President:** Toindepi Dhure, ZDAWU, Zimbabwe  
**2nd Vice President:** June Barrett, NDWA, USA  
**General Secretary:** Adriana Paz Ramírez

### Executive Members - Titular - 2023-2028

Sonia George, SEWA, India  
Elaine Duncan, JHWU, Jamaica  
Emanuela Loretone, Filcams CGIL Nazionale, Italy\*  
Mary Ann A., MENA

### Executive Members - Alternate - 2023-2028

Marina Künzi, ACV Food and Services, Belgium  
Ruth Díaz, UNFETRAH-FENAMUTRA, Dominican Republic  
Jec Sernande, Asia  
Ida Le Blanc, N.U.D.E, Trinidad and Tobago  
Aissata Sadjo, SYNTHOBRA, Niger  
Mercy, Solidarity Network, MENA  
Doug Moore, UDWA, USA

\*Note: Effective April 23, 2024, Ms. Pia Stalpaert has resigned from her position as the Titular Member for Europe. With the consensus of the European Affiliates, Ms. Emanuela Loretone assumes the role of Titular Member, while Ms. Marina Kunzi serves as the Alternate Member for Europe.

## Appendix 2 - List of C189 Ratifications as of 31 December 2024

Country	Date
Antigua and Barbuda	28 Jul 2021
Argentina	24 Mar 2014
Barbados	24 May 2024
Belgium	10 Jun 2015
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	15 Apr 2013
Brazil	31 Jan 2018
Chile	10 Jun 2015
Colombia	09 May 2014
Costa Rica	20 Jan 2014
Dominican Republic	15 May 2015
Ecuador	18 Dec 2013
Finland	08 Jan 2015
Germany	20 Sep 2013
Grenada	12 Nov 2018
Guinea	25 Apr 2017
Guyana	09 Aug 2013
Ireland	28 Aug 2014
Italy	22 Jan 2013
Jamaica	11 Oct 2016
Madagascar	11 Jun 2019
Malta	14 May 2021
Mauritius	13 Sep 2012
Mexico	03 Jul 2020
Namibia	09 Dec 2020
Nicaragua	10 Jan 2013
Norway	08 Jul 2021
Panama	11 Jun 2015
Paraguay	07 May 2013
Peru	26 Nov 2018
Philippines	05 Sep 2012
Portugal	17 Jul 2015
Seychelles	22 Jan 2024

Country	Date
Sierra Leone	25 Aug 2021
South Africa	20 Jun 2013
Spain	28 Feb 2023
Sweden	04 Apr 2019
Switzerland	12 Nov 2014
Uruguay	Jun 2012

### Appendix 3 - List of C190 Ratifications as of 31 December 2024

Country	Date
<a href="#">Albania</a>	06 May 2022
<a href="#">Antigua and Barbuda</a>	09 May 2022
<a href="#">Argentina</a>	23 Feb 2021
<a href="#">Australia</a>	09 Jun 2023
<a href="#">Bahamas</a>	30 Nov 2022
<a href="#">Barbados</a>	01 Sep 2022
<a href="#">Belgium</a>	13 Jun 2023
<a href="#">Canada</a>	30 Jan 2023
<a href="#">Central African Republic</a>	09 Jun 2022
<a href="#">Chile</a>	12 Jun 2023
<a href="#">Denmark</a>	06 Jun 2024
<a href="#">Ecuador</a>	19 May 2021
<a href="#">El Salvador</a>	07 Jun 2022
<a href="#">Fiji</a>	25 Jun 2020
<a href="#">Finland</a>	07 Jun 2024
<a href="#">France</a>	12 Apr 2023
<a href="#">Germany</a>	14 Jun 2023
<a href="#">Greece</a>	30 Aug 2021
<a href="#">Ireland</a>	12 Jan 2023
<a href="#">Italy</a>	29 Oct 2021
<a href="#">Kyrgyzstan</a>	03 Jun 2024
<a href="#">Lesotho</a>	15 Mar 2023
<a href="#">Mauritius</a>	01 Jul 2021
<a href="#">Mexico</a>	06 Jul 2022
<a href="#">Namibia</a>	09 Dec 2020
<a href="#">Nigeria</a>	08 Nov 2022
<a href="#">North Macedonia</a>	20 Oct 2023
<a href="#">Norway</a>	06 Oct 2023
<a href="#">Panama</a>	01 Nov 2022
<a href="#">Papua New Guinea</a>	27 Sep 2023
<a href="#">Peru</a>	08 Jun 2022
<a href="#">Philippines</a>	20 Feb 2024

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Country	Date
<a href="#">Portugal</a>	16 Feb 2024
<a href="#">Republic of Moldova</a>	19 Mar 2024
<a href="#">Romania</a>	12 Jun 2024
<a href="#">Rwanda</a>	01 Nov 2023
<a href="#">Samoa</a>	31 May 2024
<a href="#">San Marino</a>	14 Apr 2022
<a href="#">Somalia</a>	08 Mar 2021
<a href="#">South Africa</a>	29 Nov 2021
<a href="#">Spain</a>	25 May 2022
<a href="#">Uganda</a>	07 Aug 2023
<a href="#">United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</a>	07 Mar 2022
<a href="#">Uruguay</a>	Jun 2020

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## Appendix 4: List of IDWF Affiliates

### Africa

1. Sierra Leone Domestic Workers Union (SLeDoWU)
2. Syndicat National des Employés d'hôtels et de Maison du Bénin (SYNEHM BENIN)
3. Botswana Domestic and Allied Workers Union (BODAU)
4. Syndicat National des Employés de Maison et de Gardiennage du Burkina Faso (SYNEMAG-B)
5. Union des Femmes Domestiques du Congo (UFEDOC)
6. Mulu Tesfa Domestic Workers Association (MTDWA)
7. Domestic Services Workers Union (DSWU)
8. Syndicat National des Employés de Maison de Guinée (SYNEM-GUINEE)
9. Associação Nacional de Proteção dos Trabalhadores Domesticos da Guine-Bissau (ANAPROMED-GB)
10. Syndicat Des Travailleurs Domestiques et Travailleurs de l'Economie Informel (SYTDTEI.CI)
11. Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions and Hospital Workers (KUDHEIHA)
12. Kopanang Domestic Workers Association of Lesotho (KDWAL)
13. Domestic Workers Union of Liberia (DOWUL)
14. Commercial Industrial & Allied Workers Union (CIAWU)
15. Syndicat des Travailleurs Domestiques du Mali (SYNTRADOM)
16. Sindicato Nacional dos Empregados Domésticos (SINED)
17. Namibian Domestic and Allied Workers Union (NDAWU)
18. Syndicat National des Travailleurs des Hotels, Bars, Restaurants et Assimiles du Niger (SYNTHOBRA)
19. National Union of Hotels and Personal Services Workers (NUHPSW)
20. Syndicat des Travailleurs Domestiques et Indépendants de l'Economie Informelle (SYTRIECI)
21. Syndicat National des Travailleurs Domestiques (SYNTRAD)
22. South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU)
23. Conservation, Hotels, Domestic, Social Services and Consultancy Workers Union (CHODAWU)
24. Syndicat National des Domestiques du Togo (SYNADOT)
25. Uganda Hotels, Food, Tourism, Supermarkets and Allied Workers Union (HTS-UNION)
26. Domestic Workers Union of Zambia (DWUZ)
27. Conservation of Hotel, Domestic Workers and Allied Union (CHODAWU-Z)
28. Zimbabwe Domestic and Allied Workers Union (ZDAWU)
29. Sendika Nasionalin'ny Mpiasa An-Trano Malagasy (SENAMAMA)

### Asia

1. National Domestic Women Workers Union (NDWWU)
2. Independent Democratic Association of Informal Economy (IDEA)
3. Association of Domestic Workers (ADW)
4. Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Unions (FADWU)

5. National Domestic Workers Federation (NDWF)
6. National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM)
7. Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
8. Gharelu Kaamgar Sangathan, Gurgaon (GKS)
9. Gharelu Kamgar Panchayat Sangam (GKPS)
10. Jaringan Nasional Advokasi Pekerja Rumah Tangga (JALA PRT)
11. Asosasyon ng mga Makabayang Manggagawang Pilipino Overseas (AMMPO)
12. Persatuan Pekerja Rumah Tangga Indonesian Migran (PERTIMIG)
13. Home Workers Trade Union of Nepal (HUN)
14. United Domestic Workers of the Philippines (UNITED)
15. National House Manager's Cooperative (NHMC)
16. Domestic Workers Union (DWU)
17. Protect Union (PROTECT UNION)
18. Domestic Caretakers Union (DCU)
19. Korea Domestic Workers Union (KDWU)
20. Network of Domestic Workers in Thailand (NDWT)

## **Caribbean**

1. Antigua Trades and Labour Union (ATLU)
2. Jamaica Household Workers' Union (JHWU)
3. National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE)

## **Europe**

1. CSC Alimentation et Services (CSC A&S)
2. Centrale Alimentation-Horeco-Services FGTB-Horval (Horval FGTB)
3. Centrale Générale FGTB (ACCG FGTB)
4. Gewerkschaft Nahrung-Genuss-Gaststätten (NGG)
5. Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Commercio, Turismo e Servizi (FILCAMS CGIL NAZIONALE)
6. Federatie Nederlandse Vakverenigingen (FNV)
7. Gewerkschaft Unia (UNIA)
8. Syndicat Interprofessionnel de Travailleuses et Travailleurs (SIT)
9. Imece (IMECE)
10. The Voice of Domestic Workers (VODW)

## **Latin America**

1. Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar (ATH)
2. Unión Nacional Fenamutra de Trabajadoras del Hogar (UNFETRAH)
3. Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadora/es Domésticas (SINTRADOMES-CASC)
4. Unión Personal Auxiliar de Casas Particulares (UPACP)

5. Federação Nacional das Trabalhadoras Domésticas (FENATRAD)
6. Federación de Sindicatos de Trabajadoras de Casa Particular (FESINTRACAP)
7. Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadoras del Servicio Doméstico (SINTRASEDOM)
8. Unión de Trabajadoras Afrocolombianas del Servicio Doméstico (UTRASD)
9. Asociación Unión de Trabajadoras del Hogar (UTRAHOGAR)
10. Asociación de Trabajadoras Domésticas (ASTRADOMES)
11. Sindicato de Mujeres Trabajadoras del Hogar Remuneradas Salvadoreñas (SIMUTHRES)
12. Sindicato de Trabajadoras Domésticas y de los Cuidados de El Salvador (SITDCES)
13. Sindicato de Trabajadoras Domésticas Similares y a Cuenta Propia (SITRADOMSA)
14. Red de Mujeres Empleadas del Hogar, Asociación Civil (RMEHAC)
15. Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras del Hogar (SINACTRAHO)
16. Sindicato de Trabajadoras Domésticas del Departamento de Granada “Claudia Chamorro” (SINTRADOMGRA)
17. Federación de Trabajadoras Domésticas y Oficios Varios “Julia Herrera Pomares” (FETRADOMOV)
18. Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadoras del Hogar (SINTRAHO)
19. Sindicato Gremial de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Servicio Doméstico y Similares (SINGRETRADS)
20. Sindicato de Trabajadoras Domésticas y Afines de Itapúa (SINTRADI)
21. Sindicato de Trabajadoras del Servicio Doméstico del Paraguay (SINTRADESPY)
22. Centro de Capacitación para Trabajadoras del Hogar (CCTH)
23. Federación de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras del Hogar Remunerados del Perú (FENTRAHOGARP)
24. Instituto de Promoción y Formación de Trabajadoras del Hogar (IPROFOTH)
25. Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar de la Región Lima (SINTTRAHOL)

## **MENA**

1. Domestic Workers Solidarity Network in Jordan (DWSNJ)
2. Sandigan Kuwait Domestic Workers Association (SKDWA)
3. Bayanihang Domestic Worker Qatar (BDWQ)

## **North America**

1. National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)
2. United Domestic Workers of America (UDWA).



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