Project No. 3-2

Project:
Bridging the Representational Gap: Organizing in South Africa

Project Description:
This project documented existing member-based informal worker organizations in the clothing, construction, minibus taxi, street trading, and waste management sectors. It was designed to reveal strengths and constraints of local organizations, as well as to build local research capacity. By combining research with policy dialogue and/or capacity building workshops, it also engaged informal workers and formal entities into mutually beneficial dialogue. The researchers, who were members of - or connected to - unions, gathered information for distribution to other workers as a basis for policy dialogue.

- Information was collected from workers at off-peak hours or close to work sites. If necessary, workers were compensated for lost wages
- Employer organizations and local and national government were interviewed for their perspectives on informality
- Facilitators trained to engage women without upsetting men and to understand gender priorities

Local and country level results can be observed.

- Research on three sectors was compiled into booklets to make them accessible to workers
- Trade unions and local authorities learned benefits of capacity building and strategies for organizing informal workers
- Strengthened country level institutional capacity to deal better and more often with challenges of informality
- Legislation expected soon on regulation in the taxi industry
- Women’s participation and responsibilities increased throughout

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