Critical Factors to Closing the Representation Gap in MSEs

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## Union attitudes to representation of non-traditional workers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Awareness of the specific nature of diverse workers’ interests</th>
<th>Willingness to innovate representation models</th>
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<td>Low</td>
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<td>Indifference</td>
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<td>Imitative extension of protection</td>
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<td>- Specialization of protection</td>
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<td>- Reconfiguration of representation</td>
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Objective: Identify critical factors and variables that may affect or influence collective representation of MSE workers

Methodology: Statistical analysis using crosstabulation to determine association (not causality) between identified variables

- Limitations of statistical test make results not conclusive
- Only trends and tendencies are presented from which insights are derived
- Results were analyzed using findings of review of literature, interviews, survey & horizontal mapping
The sample and dataset

191 MSE WORKERS FROM SELECT SECTORS IN 11 COUNTRIES INTERVIEWED IN PHASE 2 OF MSE PROJECT

- Albania
- Barbados
- Brazil
- Colombia
- India
- Japan
- Korea
- Nigeria
- Philippines
- Turkey
- Ukraine
Phases 1-3 of MSE Project: Results

Employment and work conditions of MSE workers

- Job insecurity/instability
- High mobility
- Low wages (below minimum)
- Long work hours
- Health & safety issues
- Low skill & limited opportunities for skills upgrade
- Low or lack of unionization
- Usually outside labor law & its enforcement
The Variables

**DEMOGRAPHIC**
- Gender
- Education
- Age

**EMPLOYMENT-RELATED**
- Employment security
- Income & social security
- Skills training
- Safety at work
- Grievances/work-related problems
Representation variables

• Willingness to join a union (welcome a union)
• Opportunity for collective representation
• Previous attempts to organize
Willingness to join a union tends to be higher among MSE workers who have been working for 5 years & less
- 88.9% for those working less than a year
- 76.8% for those working between 1 and 5 years
Findings (Non-unionized sample)

Job security tends to enhance an MSE worker’s willingness to join a union.
- Easy to lose job group: 62.7% welcomed a union
- Not easy to lose job: 84.2% welcomed a union
Willingness to join a union tends to be higher among MSE workers who can apply or use their skills in another job.

- 68.4% among these respondents welcomed a union v. 33.3% who claimed non-applicability of skills in other jobs & welcomed a union
Income security or stability tends to increase the number of MSE workers who welcome a union.

- Higher proportion (78%) welcoming a union among those with stable earnings v. 57% with varying earnings welcoming a union.
As the employment contract becomes more informal or non-existent, the opportunity for collective representation among MSE workers tend to increase.

- Increasing % of respondents seeing opportunity for collective representation as employment becomes more informal.
Previous attempts to organise in the sector tend to positively influence workers perception of existence of opportunities for collective representation.
Findings (Non-unionized sample)

There were more workers who encountered problems at work that see opportunities for collective representation than those who have not experienced problems at work.

- Higher opportunity for collective representation among those who encountered problems at work.
Summary/Implications: Facilitating factors for representation in MSEs

- General receptiveness of MSE workers to unions
- Organizing is best done while workers are new in the job
- Enhancing job security
- Enhancing skills, acquisition of more skills applicable in other jobs
- Stabilizing or increasing income security
- Formalizing employment (existence of contracts)
- Organizing around grievances or problems at work
- Union visibility in organizing in the sector
Possible entry points/strategies for MSE organizing

- Labor action (political, campaigns, legislative initiative, etc.) for the critical factors requiring legislative intervention
- Inclusion of skills training and upgrading among union services
- Using safety at work, grievances or problems at work and income security or stability (e.g. minimum wage campaigns) as organizing themes
- Establishment and/or strengthening of other forms or structures of organisation to represent MSE workers (territorial structures, community-based organising, workers’ associations, cooperatives, etc)