

**Improving Social Protection for Domestic Workers in South Africa
Provincial Advocacy Workshop on UIF and COIDA**

Cape Town
23-24 April 2022

WORKSHOP REPORT



Section 1: Aims and Structure of the Workshop

The workshop [participants](#) comprised of twenty five members of South African Domestic Services and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU) & United Domestic Workers Organisation of South Africa (UDWOSA). The workshop was opened by Myrtle Witbooi, General Secretary of SADSAWU and Pinky Mashiane, President of UDWOSA. They explained that the workshop was funded by UN Women and organised by WIEGO, after consultation with SADSAWU and UDWOSA.



The workshop was **aimed** to help participants:

- ☞ Gain a deeper understanding of how COIDA and UIF work
- ☞ Identify challenges in effectively implementing COIDA and the UIF, including registration
- ☞ Review the demands and proposals for change identified in the National Workshop
- ☞ Decide on a plan of action to get our demands heard and acted upon

ORGANISERS

UN Women

We are the global champion for gender equality.

UN Women is the UN Organisation delivering programmes, policies and standards that uphold women's human rights and ensure that every woman and girl lives up to her full potential

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising – *is a global network focused on empowering the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy to secure their livelihoods.*

The workshop was co-facilitated by Fairuz Mullagee, Candice James, and Bronwyn February of the Social Law Project (SLP), Centre for Transformative Regulation of Work (Centrow), University of the Western Cape (UWC).

The facilitators made use of empowerment methodologies as a systematic approach that enables and promotes the ability to control, think, and act critically'. It supports resourcefulness and the development of skills to remove social barriers for individuals and communities enabling informed choices.

The Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) was represented by:

- UIF – DEL Somerset West, Client Service Supervisor: Bunto Nobebe who did a power point [presentation](#) on the UIF
- Compensation Fund, Deputy Director: Lerato Ramasobane, who did a power point [presentation on the Compensation Fund](#)

The WIEGO [Activities and Handouts](#) provided guidance for the workshop sessions.

Mr Nobebe's presentation included the following key points:

- The purpose of the UIF
- Workers were reminded that they need to be dismissed by the employer and not resign in order to benefit from the fund
- If not registered as a work seeker with the Department of Labour / refuses to be registered, workers will not be able to benefit from the fund
- Unemployed persons need to ensure that they fill out the form indicating that they are indeed available for work
- Workers need to be unemployed for 14 days in order to receive payment from Department of Labour UIF
- Workers need to be aware, especially when they have been married, that they need to change their details at home affairs accordingly to ensure they are able to receive a payment from the Department of labour and pass the verification test.

Section 2: Key Outcomes

i) Increased knowledge amongst domestic workers regarding UIF

Questions and Answers on the UIF

- 1. Currently working for one and a half years, I am being retrenched. What are the procedures to apply for UIF?**

The employer is obligated to register you for UIF, There is also another section as an auditory application. Employer did not register worker and therefore, once she has stopped working, she needs to go to the Department of Labour/ Labour centre, they will contact the employer, which will allow the applicant to carry on with her claim

- 2. Clarity on the illness - working for two employers, where will you start to claim for two employers? Will the hours for both employers be calculated together?**

Yes, it will be calculated together, and the claim will be for both employers and their funds to you will be calculated together.

- 3. What about the R350 from SASSA, not accepting application and the same for UIF?**

Appeal on the website for SASSA, and the department of labor will check it on their system, and will try and assist with the query.

- 4. Difference between UIF and UI19**

UI19 is a document clarifying working days, that is the employe'rs responsibility, whereas the UIF is the form you need to claim for.

- 5. Reduced times: Can I still apply if I earned R6000 when my money is now being reduced to R4000?**

No, you will still be able to apply.

Questions and Answers on the Compensation Fund

- 1. How long can they take to reopen a case?**

No time frame to reopen a case

- 2. What if you get injured on your way home after working? Or even when you are buying groceries for the employer and injured on your way back?**

Unfortunately, not. Only farmworkers can claim using the farmers transport
With regards to the groceries, however, you can claim for that.

3. Must you still work between the 14 days Occupational Disease?

It will be dependent on the report from the employer, but yes, you can still work when booked off. The doctor will indicate that you have been booked off for such a period.

4. Domestic workers bitten by dogs can employers still claim?

This should be reported to the Compensation Fund.

In addition to the information received from the DEL officials' presentations and the Question and Answer opportunity with them, participants also had access to printed material and a [video](#). After Day 1 had ended, the facilitators sent an online [Quiz](#) to participants to complete overnight. On Day 2 as part of the feedback from the previous day, the [Quiz results](#) were shared.

ii) Domestic workers have developed and validated a set of advocacy demands around UIF and COIDA

Based on identification of understanding the benefits and the challenges with accessing the benefits and protection of the UIF and COIDA on Day 1, participants proceeded to explore in small groups, possible solutions and campaign actions as captured in Table 1.

iii) Domestic workers in the province have developed a clear provincial advocacy strategy for work on UIF and COIDA.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS WITH AND FOR UIF AND COIDA

UIF		
CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS	ACTIONS
<p>1. Employers do not register workers</p> <p>a. employers falsify information about the employee</p>	<p>1. If an employer registered worker, DEL should automatically send an sms to employee and employer that they have been registered for UIF on a yearly basis.</p> <p>2. All workers, including migrant workers should be registered and receive an sms provided that they have the correct documentation</p> <p>3. Mobile stations specifically for registration of workers</p>	<p>1. DEMAND: DEL sends an SMS to confirm registration of all Domestic workers, including migrant workers, for UIF & COIDA</p> <p>2. Demand: mobile service stations for UIF & Coida</p>
<p>2. Lack of information and awareness of workers with regards to the UIF benefits and mandatory documents</p>	<p>1. Township imbizos from the DEL in collaboration with trade unions to educate workers on UIF benefits on a twice per year.</p> <p>2. Door to door campaigns</p> <p>3. More visibility and media campaigns to increase education and resolve UIF issues</p> <p>4. Activation of call centres specifically for domestic issues - from the trade union side and DEL</p>	<p>1. Demand Township imbizos from the DEL in collaboration with trade unions to educate workers on UIF benefits on a twice per year.</p> <p>2. Trade unions to ensure compliance to their own Door to door campaigns</p> <p>3. Demand: Activation of call centres specifically for domestic issues - from the trade union side and DEL</p>
<p>3. Department of labour</p> <p>a. inaccessibility of DEL</p> <p>b. Poor treatment of workers and unfriendly staff</p> <p>c. Online system does not work well</p> <p>d. Lack of appropriate referrals</p> <p>e. Long queues</p> <p>f. Case reporting not properly managed by DEL</p>	<p>1. Mobile station activations to enable DEL officials and inspectors to come to specific areas for increased accessibility and visibility</p> <p>2. DEL officials need to be properly educated on issues related to domestic workers - collaborate with DW, and TU</p> <p>3. Central persons to be assigned to the trade</p>	<p>1. Demand: Mobile station activations from DEL officials and inspectors to come to specific areas to increase visibility</p> <p>2. Demand proper education for DEL officials on issues related to domestic workers - collaborate with DW, and TU</p> <p>3. Demand one central person to be assigned to</p>

	unions on a regular basis (one or two days a week) to address UIF issues	the trade union workplace on a weekly basis (one day or two days a week) to address UIF issues
4. Inspectors a. Lack of education of officials b. Lack of visibility in the areas c. Not enough inspectors employed in areas d. Lack of enforcement of compliance and awards	1. Independent compliance monitors from the trade unions and support organisations, to ensure compliance. This will help to keep DEL officials accountable and responsible with regards to inspection issues. These monitors will need to undergo specific training to ensure they know what to do.	1. Reflect on the law with regards to implementation of independent compliance monitors 2. Partner with DEL and support organisations to train workers with regards to becoming independent compliance monitors 3. Ensure proper investigation happens for the set-up of the independent compliance officers which could be done within a 6-8 months period before implementation.

COIDA

PROBLEMS	SOLUTIONS	ACTIONS
1. Lack of knowledge and information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers - Employees 	1. Awareness campaigns through media 2. Frequent education and training for Workers with regards to the implementation of COIDA with partners and DEL.	1. Ensure the usage of already existing resources to educate and raise awareness 2. Unions make sure that enough copies of brochures and pamphlets are distributed to workers to give the other co-workers in their respective areas 3. Demand that DEL supports frequent education and training for Workers and employers with regards to rights awareness and the implementation of COIDA.
2. Lack of reporting injuries a. No clear reporting	1. Emergency alert system e.g. panic button on	1. Investigate what is needed for the implementation of

<p>method</p> <p>b. Fear of reporting due to fear of dismissal</p>	<p>cellphone/ website/ in the employer's house</p> <p>2. Activation of information desks</p> <p>3. Development of reporting system</p>	<p>a panic button</p> <p>1.1 What can be done?</p> <p>1.2 On what platform?</p> <p>1.3 Do we want to use technology?</p> <p>1.4 What can the DPCP platform do on their website to include the panic button?</p> <p>2. Demand the activation of the information desk.</p> <p>3. Demand a proper reporting system</p>
--	--	---

Section 3: Our Plans And Conclusion

OUR PLANS

1. Target groups for advocacy

- a. Youth (University students and community members)
- b. Feminist organisations
- c. Women on Farms
- d. Housing assembly
- e. Funders

2. Educate and mobilise

- a. Ensure the usage of already existing resources to educate and raise awareness
- b. Unions make sure that enough copies of brochures and pamphlets are distributed to workers to give the other co-workers in their respective areas
- c. Demand Township imbizos from the DEL in collaboration with trade unions to educate workers on UIF benefits on a twice per year.
- d. Trade unions to ensure compliance to their own Door to door campaigns

3. Demands

- a. We demand the Department of Labour to send a registration confirmation SMS of all domestic workers, including migrant workers, for UIF & COIDA. This should be in relation to the demand of improving the UIF registration system to ensure that all workers are made aware that they are registered for UIF & COIDA.

- b. We demand mobile service stations for UIF & Coida
- c. We demand Township imbizos from the DEL in collaboration with trade unions to educate workers on UIF benefits twice per year.
- d. We demand the activation of call centres specifically for domestic issues - from the trade union side and DEL
- e. We demand mobile station activations from DEL officials and inspectors to come to specific areas to increase visibility
- f. We demand the proper education for DEL officials on issues related to domestic workers - collaborate with DW, and TU
- g. We demand one central person to be assigned to the trade union workplace on a weekly basis (one day or two days a week) to address UIF issues
- h. We demand frequent education and training for Workers with regards to the implementation of COIDA with partners and DEL.
- i. We demand a proper reporting system for both COIDA and UIF.

4. Activities

- a. **01 May 2022** proposal of Mock funeral to May day event where all unions will be coming together. At these gatherings, most of the time, SADSAWU and especially the Domestic worker unions are neglected in these spaces. The mock funeral could be presented as a symbolic representation of the burial of challenges listed in this document, and also to highlight the ill treatment of the Domestic Worker unions by other unions.
- b. **16 June 2022** – UDWOSA will picket at the DEL (possible picket to parliament)
- c. **09 August 2022** (possible picket and activation of awareness campaign).

CONCLUSION

Workers and their leaders thanked the participants, the organisers and facilitators for making the workshops possible and productive. It was acknowledged that while there may be a high level of awareness of UIF and COIDA rights and benefits among workshop participants, information and knowledge – much of which already exists, including a [video](#) which captures a part of this workshop – would need to be extended to the masses of domestic workers.

A point was raised about the need for supporting agencies like UN Women to engage directly with worker organisations like SADSAWU and UDWOSA after consulting with them. Worker leaders expressed dissatisfaction with what they considered as undermining them when organisations consult with them and based on the consultations, they decide to support activities but do so through intermediaries rather than directly funding the organisations.

Development organisations like UN Women and others should continue to support initiatives of this nature and in so doing, contribute to sustained organisation for ensuring the rights of domestic workers. The plans, sketched above are based on the challenges identified and solutions explored in the workshop. The workers and their organisations are hopeful that the sponsors of the workshop series will contribute to the implementation of the planned activities.