



## Declaration on the Right to Universal Social Protection

On the Occasion of International Women's Day, 8th March 2012

By StreetNet International, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) Public Services International and Trade Union Centres of Togo

The participants at the conference heard with interest about the report entitled "Pay Gap between men and women unchanged" and the plans for the ILO conference in 2012 and 2013 to discuss the possibility of establishing an international standard in the form of a Recommendation on a universal social protection floor.

The participants recognised that social security is a human right, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, in West and Central Africa, it is still far from being a reality. Both formal and informal economy workers lack social security, including access to basic services, and are vulnerable in sickness, accidents and old age. Informal economy workers face these difficulties most acutely. Child labour is largely found in the informal economy and rural areas and is a consequence of poverty and income insecurity.

The universal social protection floor refers to a minimum set of protections for all persons at different stages of their life cycle. It will particularly support the poorest and most vulnerable, the great majority of whom are women in the informal economy. It includes the following:

- Universal guarantee of access to basic health services, including maternity protection, funded by taxes and insurance systems;
- Guaranteed income security for all children through a system of family and child benefits;
- Social assistance for the unemployed, the working poor and disabled workers;
- A system of basic pensions for people in old age;

While recognising differences in approach from one country to another, and the different levels of commitment to social security protection on the part of the respective governments, the participants agreed to:

- Support initiatives to discuss how to improve and extend social security protection in their respective countries, with particular attention to the needs of women in the informal economy;

- Distribute this declaration to their respective membership ;
- Send this declaration to the trade union centres in their respective countries, requesting that they support the proposed recommendation on the universal social protection floor at the forthcoming ILO conference; and that they take into account the needs of women in the informal economy in their proposals to the conference;
- Request the trade union centres to include women from representative organizations of informal economy workers in their delegations to the 2012 ILO conference.

StreetNet International  
 International Trade Union Confederation –Africa (ITUC-Africa)  
 Public Services International (PSI –Africa)  
 CGCT –General Confederation of Professionals of Togo  
 CNTT-National Confederation of Workers of Togo  
 CSTT –Trade Union Confederation of Workers of Togo  
 GSA – Group of Autonomous Trade Unions  
 UGSL –General Union of Free Trade Unions  
 UNSIT –National Union of Independent Trade Unions of Togo

StreetNet International Affiliates  
 SYVEBU-Burundi  
 SYNAVAMAB-Benin  
 UNSYNVEPID-Benin  
 LFDC- DRC  
 StreetNet Ghana Alliance-Ghana  
 CNTG-Guinee  
 UGSEIN –Niger  
 FENASEIN-Niger  
 FAINATRASIT –Togo  
 SYVEMACOT- Togo  
 CNTS -Senegal  
 SUDEMS-Senegal

Other Informal Economy Organisations:  
 NAPETUL- Liberia  
 FIWON-Nigeria