

Waste Picker Perceptions on Health and Health Risks: Perspectives from the Ground



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WIEGO: Supporting Informal Worker Livelihoods



- Increase Voice, Validity and Visibility of IWs in 4 sectors: Waste Pickers, Home-based Workers, Street Vendors, Domestic Workers
- Social Protection Programme: (1) Improving incomes and working conditions needs to be linked to struggles for better health; (2) Focus on health care coverage from informal workers' perspective



Waste Pickers: Contributions and Risks



- Recycling: economic and environmental benefits
- Recycling: linked to livelihoods perspective
- Series of risks



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- Sources: www.no-burn.org/wp, www.inclusivecities.org/waste_pickers.html, www.giz.de/de/downloads/giz2011-cwg-booklet-economicspects.pdf, www.wiego.org/wee/gender-waste-project#toolkits

Cuidar Project / Care Project: Health Risk Mapping



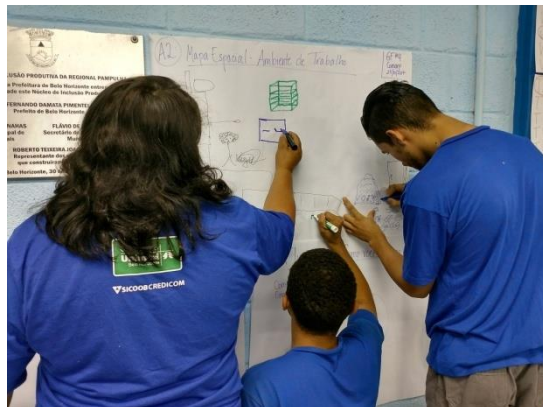
- Cuidar emerges with health concerns expressed in: WIEGO's Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS, 2012), the Gender & Waste Project (2012-2015), and Redesol/Belo Horizonte network annual meeting (2016)



Tools: Prioritizing Workers' Knowledge and Voices



- **Grounded on:** Popular Education tools, Participatory Action Research (PAR) principles, and mixed-methods
- **Building Rapport and Valuing Localized Knowledge:** use of spatial maps (Focus Groups - FGs), body maps (survey), flow diagrams (FGs), institutional matrix (FGs), life stories



General Findings



Concerns & Risks

- Concerns with non-communicable diseases
- Ergonomic problems due to lack of infrastructure and/or improvised spaces
- Exposure to sun, heat, extreme temperatures
- Exposure to organic materials, chemical products, glass, syringes (household and hospital waste)
- Women's care responsibilities and different forms of gender violence

Quality of / Access to Public Health Care Services

- Use of public community health care services in cases of emergency and for free medication
- Inconvenient opening/closing hours; concern with loss of earnings
- Long referrals
- Need for patient and attentive appointments; understanding of risks and gendered/racialized identities

Policy Recommendations



- Support from municipal authorities
- Investment in environmental and educational campaigns (civil society and government)
- Greater sensitivity of health workers and providers to the vulnerabilities faced by IWs
- Commitment to participatory multi-stakeholder platforms
- Commitment to holistic understanding of health

Health, Decent Work and Dignified Life



Thank you! Gracias! Obrigada!

For more information on the Cuidar Project:

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Images in Slides: Getty Images and Bruno Greco