Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA)

SEWA is a trade union of 1.8 million women workers in the informal economy in Gujarat and 17 other states in India.
SEWA’s MAIN GOALS

- Full Employment
- Work Security
- Income Security
- Food Security
- Social Security
- Self-Reliance

SOCIAL SECURITY:

- Health Care
- Insurance
- Child Care
- Housing
- Pension
Evidence: What does the research say?

A qualitative research study by WEIGO Child Care Initiative involved 159 informal women workers from five different countries as participants.

Different ways that child care can affect the incomes of informal workers

Changes in work schedules
Changes in choice of employment
Decreased productivity inside and outside of the home

Incomes of informal women workers

WIEGO. “Our children don’t get the attention they deserve” ; Workers. WIEGO Child Care Initiative. 2016;
“When children are not with us, we can work faster. My sister-in-law who sends her child to the [SEWA] childcare centre is able to earn more per day than I can because my son is at home with me and keeps needing attention...He interferes with my work. I make rotis [flat bread] for sale. I’m always afraid that he will touch the hot griddle and burn himself. At other times he runs out of the house and I have to run after him to bring him back” (India)

“I take my child to work with me, but when the weather is bad, like when it is raining, is windy and/or very hot, because there is no shelter where I work, I cannot take the child with me to work, so I stay at home” (South Africa)

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“Before when I didn’t have a small child, I used to work till late, around 16:00 or 17:00. Trucks bring good materials by the end of the day and I feel that I am missing out of all of this” (Ghana)

“without day care, I can’t work. When there is no day care, I don’t work” (Brazil)

“My grandchild stays around, grabbing and dragging the fishing net (she was working on). Sometimes it rips and I have to fix it” (Thailand)
What makes a good child care centre? (What do mothers/caregivers demand)

Child care centre

- Child care facilities should have **opening hours** that can accommodate the long and irregular hours of informal workers.
- Participation in **governance** and **good communication**.
- Child care facilities should include a **health** service.
- Child care facilities should have necessary **basic infrastructure** and **adequate staff**.
- **Provision of nutritious food**.
- **Convenient location**.
- Child care facilities should be **affordable**: either free or heavily subsidized.
- Child care facilities should include an **educational component**.
SEWA’s co-operative Sangini registered in 1984 operates Child Care Centres to empower women and educate children between the age group of 0 to 6 years, where mothers are the shareholders and board members.
Full day childcare has positive effects on women’s incomes

116 women from urban neighbourhood of Ahmedabad were involved in the study who sent their children to SEWA Sangini crèches

1-Defined as childcare offered from 9AM to 5PM, tailored to the mother’s working hours
Quality child care is a right for all women

- Maternity entitlements for all women
- Crèches for working women
- Enhanced workforce participation
- Economic empowerment of women
- Skills training

- Child care undertaken in a child care centre must be recognized as decent work and receive appropriate initiation
- Better and adequate investment by Government for child care care for all central and state for quality child care, indexed for inflation
- Full day, free, quality, holistic and integrated early childhood care is a right for all
Thank You