

I want to speak as minority worker as I been there before.

MINORITY WOMEN AS DOMESTIC WORKERS

Presentation by M. Witbooi

Introduction: Domestic workers is rooted in the history of slavery. Yet it is work like any other work. And are left to the minority workers.

Who we are: Domestic workers make a large part of the informal economic sector of the world. They are the home care, worker, child care, cooks, security, looking after the elderly. Doing so they contribute to the economy by allowing the employers to go out and build the economy. Yet they hardly benefit for the role they play in the economy.

Lack of living wage: The lack of living wage makes it impossible to afford proper housing, health care, or even decent schooling or afford a [...].

Some domestic workers live in the backyard of the employer's home, have no access to family or friends.

Many domestic workers face struggle of another kind, physical and sexual abuse.

Migrant workers and minority workers: These workers often lack the ability to fight against the employer as they face or fear being sent back to their country and that they cannot afford as they left these countries due to poverty.

They are treated with [disrespect] . Lack of social benefits, health care are denied to these workers.

Many countries refuse to apply decent working conditions or to apply labour laws to include the migrant worker. "A migrant worker state at the ILO" many employers [underrate] us, they exploit us because they know we are desperate - but we need to work we must put food on the table for our families.

Yes, we are treated as minorities, as we don't belong to that country - we are and remain voiceless.

In S.A.: We have over a million [migrant] workers yet we are still treated as minorities and face exploitation daily by employers. We have a democratic government and an open door for workers. But we must also remember that they are also employers so we need to remember that at time who we are.

The importance of a domestic worker: They are vital and make needed workforce of many countries yet they are still treated as workers with no voice, and are often denied training and access to future schooling. We now need to change it and make minority right a reality.

We need a [...] convention.

We are aware, I hope so those present here, that after [...] - domestic work will not get recognition. They say domestic work is decent work, I wonder what it was before.

So we are now say:

1. We want social security/ social benefits;

2. We want training centres for young domestic workers to further their education;
3. We want a decent living wage;

There is so much more that we want. But our message to you today is: We may be part of the minorities, yet we are so important. What do we want from the international community?

We want our pride, our dignity, our respect, back as workers mainly women.

We want to work and be proud as workers.

After all we were and still are there for all of you. We need the support of Governments, NGOs, Social Groups, Businesses, labour to support us.

Minorities - yes perhaps but workers that belong to migrants, urban, rural - we are all here to stay.

I thank you.