

Addressing the Informal Economy in the time of COVID-19



**Caroline Skinner, Live Learning Event,
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The Size of the Informal Economy

- **Size:** 2 billion workers worldwide are informally employed – that is 61% of all workers.
- **Impact of COVID:** Devastating as the vast majority have lost their livelihoods and are currently facing hunger.
- **Direct income support:** Is critical for those who can't work over this period.



Informal Economy and City Systems: Food

- ❑ **Food system:** The research shows that the informal economy – informal producers and distributors – play a critical role in food security (see [African Centre for Cities](#)).
- ❑ For example, research done in across 11 cities in Sub-Saharan Africa found 70% of households normally sourced food from informal outlets.



Informal Economy and City Systems: Waste



- In many countries, waste pickers supply most if not the the only form of solid waste collection at little or no cost to municipalities (see [WIEGO](#)).

Solutions: 'Unlock' these systems

- Those working as in the informal food and waste systems that can and want to, should be allowed to work. Many countries have declared this work an **'essential service'**.
- BUT **safety guidelines** must be followed.
- Implies the urgent provision of appropriate protective equipment (e.g. masks, gloves) and water + sanitisers and/or bleach.
- Consider health screening at place of work.



CORONAVIRUS AND WASTE PICKERS: DECREASING THE RISKS

For workers



For further information about WIEGO's Cuidar Project, visit www.wiego.org/cuidar-project or reach out to us at cuidar@wiego.org.



WIEGO has worked with Public Health Experts to develop detailed health guidelines for waste pickers and informal food traders see <https://www.wiego.org/covid19crisis>



Street traders and
waste pickers
around the world
are designing their
own solutions –
work alongside
them.



For more solutions ...

- ❑ Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing is tracking COVID impacts on informal workers but also policy and organisation responses – with a focus on good practice see <https://www.wiego.org/covid19crisis>, updated daily.



PLEASE CONCLUDE



THANK YOU!

