Continuing our 30 year journey
In Solidarity with Domestic workers
To realize
Justice, Dignity and Empowerment
Vision:
To create a just society for all domestic workers, where they are treated with dignity and justice, their rights are upheld, their contribution recognized and their voices heard. It also envisions a society where child domestic work is completely abolished and children in work enjoy mainstream education and fuller childhood.

Mission: As a Movement we commit ourselves to promote and ensure participation of domestic workers in their struggle for rights and justice. We empower domestic workers to fight against all forms of injustice and discrimination.

Our Action Goals:
- Promoting decent work and safe working conditions for all Domestic workers
- Defending human rights domestic workers against all violations
- Capacity building & Empowerment of domestic workers
- Providing crisis Intervention and re-integration services for victims of trafficking and abuse
- Networking and Collaborating at the local, national and international levels for inclusion in labour protections for domestic workers.
- Preventing Trafficking and Promoting Safe migration for women and children in forced labour.
- Safeguarding rights and protections for child workers
- Promoting decent social protections for all Domestic workers and Migrant workers
The National Domestic Workers’ Movement (NDWM) is a people’s movement that is committed to bringing together domestic workers who are among the poorest and most exploited groups of unorganized labor, so that in solidarity with each other they can be supported and empowered to advocate for themselves and claim their rights as workers. Founded in 1985 by Sr. Jeanne Devos, NDWM has grown into a thriving grassroots movement with more than 200,000 active members in 12,000 groups across 17 states.

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Reviewing 30 years of Commitment and Solidarity

As we cast a gentle sweep over the last three decades, we are conscious that NDWM has grown much through every accomplishment and setback of our journey with domestic workers.

At the start of the Movement, domestic workers were invisible, behind the walls of thousands of private homes. Most of them being sole breadwinners were forced to bear the ignominy of low wages, long hours without proper rest and even verbal and physical abuse with resigned stoicism. When the first groups of women banded together, there was a realization that as workers they had rights and in solidarity with each other they could improve their situations. Dignity, rights and justice of their labour were the watchwords that unlocked their prison doors to a new sense of freedom. It was a movement whose time had come.

By the second decade the movement had already taken root in several large states, especially in South India. The inclusion of domestic work in the schedule of the Tamil Nadu Manual Labour Act 1982 on 1st June, 1999 was the first instance of legal recognition of domestic workers as workers in India. The Northern, Eastern and North-eastern states soon joined the movement giving it a pan-Indian presence. Although the needs and problems of each State were unique, the common thread of unity was the growing awareness that the legitimate labour rights of domestic workers were being denied. During this period policy makers extended protections and upheld the rights of organized labour and some sectors of unorganized labour, but denied the inclusion of protections for domestic workers. While this was a setback, it made the Movement more united and determined to draw attention to the injustices and discrimination.

Due to the concerted advocacy and lobbying efforts of NDWM, child labour in domestic work was specifically banned in October 2006. The Tamil Nadu Domestic Workers Welfare Board was also constituted in January 2007 under the Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Work) Act 1982. The struggle of domestic workers to achieve recognition before the law received a huge boost in July 2011 with the codification of ILO Convention 189 which gave international recognition to domestic work as decent work with rights on par with all other forms of labour. Our Government was a signatory to this Convention, but has yet to pass comprehensive legislation that would be required as a part of its ratification. This has become the new rallying point of our advocacy efforts, especially during the last year and it has generated stronger media attention and favorable public opinion, which we hope will catalyse a change of mindset about the rights for domestic workers within our country.

NDWM owes a debt of gratitude to all its benefactors, well-wishers, international affiliates and network colleagues for their unstinted support. With their continued support, our domestic workers’ family commits itself to winning the struggle for labour rights and a higher quality of life in the coming decade.

Sr. Christin Mary, National Coordinator
Our Operations

NDWM
IN INDIA

NATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS’ MOVEMENT
Most domestic workers carry the mental burden of not being ‘Padha-likha’ (educated). Yet they have picked up valuable life and survivor skills from the ‘school of life’, thanks to their innate intelligence. The training and capacity building programs seek to awaken their self-worth and enkindle the spark of knowledge, which would gradually develop into a steady flame of empowerment. The focus of these programs has been on addressing “the need to know” and the practical as opposed to the merely theoretical. This has enabled the blossoming of home grown leaders at local, state and national levels, who have increasingly occupied the centre-stage in the campaigns and activities of the Movement.
During 2015, 175 programs have been conducted across all states, engaging 11,163 domestic workers in building their knowledge, skills and attitudes. The committed faculty and the eager to learn audience create a winning combination that has paid rich dividends over the years.

Types of Program offerings:
- Legal literacy Health & Hygiene
- Anti -Trafficking and Safe migration
- Skill development
- Leadership and Personality
- Development Building Solidarity
- Domestic Workers’ Rights Training
- Social Security and Welfare Schemes Enrolment
The history of women’s emancipation has been one of struggle and persistent knocking on the doors of those in authority to obtain their legitimate rights. Domestic workers being invisible and uncounted even among unorganized labour, for many decades, have limited opportunities to make their voices heard in the corridors of legislative power.

Through concerted actions of advocacy, a dent has been made in the wall of indifference and lethargy, surrounding much needed legislation for protection of the rights of domestic workers. Over the years, success has been achieved in terms of domestic workers being included in the Minimum Wages Act, the Sexual Harassment Act 2013 and the Unorganised Workers’ Social Welfare Act, but the implementation of the provisions of these laws has been half-hearted, to say the least.

Press Conference held to address the Issues of Domestic Workers

During 2015, campaigns and lobbying activities were stepped up significantly. A ground up approach was followed. At first signature campaigns focusing on issues of domestic workers, along with distribution of pamphlets and hand-bills, were conducted within each state at several local and district levels. Additional publicity was given through attractive posters, colourful street plays and Press Conferences which gave wide media publicity. Signatures of the supporting public were gathered on cloth banners and post cards. These events had the added effect of engaging the active support of the public in our advocacy activities. Lastly, members of the Advocacy committees met Members of Parliament and Local MLAs and discussed their issues while also apprising them of the signature support of the workers and the public in various states.
As no legislative headway was made in 2015, in terms of new legislation or updating of current laws, 2 PILs were lodged with the High Courts of Tamil Nadu and Bihar seeking immediate action towards inordinate delays in the implementation of the provisions of Minimum Wages Act, 1948 and Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008, in the respective States. The High courts of Tamil Nadu and Bihar have directed the State Government officials to remedy the situation at the earliest.

Impact 2015:

- Memoranda with 3 Lakh signatures submitted to Central and State Governments.
- 168 MPs and MLAs met by Advocacy Committee members.
- Public sensitized through distribution of over 25000 pamphlets, 61 street plays and 10 Press Conferences.
With the absence of a social security net, domestic workers were one of the most affected section of workers, up to the passage of the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008. This Act stipulated the formation of Welfare Boards, which would provide social welfare benefits like family medical insurance, assistance towards education and marriage of children and pension in old age to registered domestic workers.

Out of the 17 states under NDWM operations, four States – Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan have Welfare Boards for domestic workers. A PIL was filed in the High Court of Bihar as the Welfare Board has still not been set up and the Court has directed the State to redress the situation. In some states, benefits from State welfare schemes continue to be availed.

To highlight some of the lacunae in the working of the Welfare boards, 6 Public Hearings of grievances of domestic workers were organised in different States, with eminent legal and social personalities in attendance. In almost all the hearings, delays in disbursing benefits caused by unhelpful attitudes of officials and lack of proper procedures were identified and remedies suggested. The findings on these cases was later submitted to the Labour Ministries in the respective states.

Much progress was made in getting the basic documents for domestic workers like Savings Accounts under Jan Dhan Yojana, Voter ID cards, caste certificates, birth certificates, Ration cards, so that applications for registration for the various schemes could be completed.
## Impact 2015:

### NDWM’s Programs and Impact in 2015

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</tbody>
</table>

*Registrations completed in a 3 month drive
**RSBY scheme was suspended, hence only registrations shown

### Public Hearing for Domestic Workers

[Image of a public hearing]

### Post card campaign demanding for Pension for Domestic Workers

[Image of a postcard campaign]
Inter State trafficking
The North Eastern States along with Bihar, Odisha and Jharkand have been historically prone to interstate trafficking especially of young women by unscrupulous agents. Parents are often duped into believing that their children would have a better future in cities, outside their poverty stricken homes. It is only later that they realize that their girls have been lured into illegal occupations like the sex trade or placed in homes where they not only get little or no wages, but are also at the receiving end of verbal and physical abuse, with no hope of escape.
Prevention of this evil is better than the long term cure. With this aim in mind, NDWM has identified the vulnerable areas and women and children at risk and has launched large scale awareness and education campaigns in villages and schools to combat this evil. Village Sabhas have been instructed to maintain records of migrants as well as maintain a close watch on notorious agents. Novel methods have been employed in educating the public including street plays and audio visual presentations.

**Impact 2015:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Nos covered by Pre-Departure Training</th>
<th>Nos covered by Community meetings</th>
<th>Illegal agents identified</th>
<th>No of case interventions</th>
<th>No of repatriations</th>
<th>Repatriations of mortal remains</th>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Rajasthan</td>
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</table>
Cross Border Migration

Together with the Government, offshore migrants have been supported right from pre-decision to migrate to departure from India and point of entry to a new location abroad, in terms of understanding their contracts, tips on language and culture and helplines in case of any problems that they would face.

Since most domestic worker migrants have limited education and low skills, they were earlier wholly dependent on placement agencies and agents for processing their contracts and visas and were ignorant about other issues of legal migration including their rights. With continuous awareness programmes conducted at village and community level as well as liaison with stakeholders like panchayat presidents, ward members and religious leaders, prospective migrants are better equipped to judge the merits of overseas migration and means of redressal in cases of breach of contract or abuse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Nos. of prospective migrants covered by Safe migration programs</th>
<th>No of trafficking agents identified</th>
<th>Other programs</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
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<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>Odisha</td>
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<td>Assam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td></td>
<td>21 street plays in rural areas</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

< Safe Migration Mela

Anti Trafficking Campaign

Impact 2015:
NDWM works with all like minded organisations working for the cause of unorganized labour, especially domestic workers. Together we are able to exert greater pressure on Government officials to pay heed to the legitimate demands of domestic workers. Our joint efforts have yielded many of the legislative changes and social welfare benefits available today to unorganised workers.

Internationally, NDWM is affiliated to IDWF (International Domestic Workers’ Federation) which has 33 other affiliates comprising of organisations in Asian, African, Pacific, Carribbean, European, Latin American and North American coun-

**Impact 2015:**

Some highlights of NDWM’s networking activities

- A large demonstration was organized at Azad Maidan, Mumbai with the State Platform for domestic workers on various demands of Domestic workers relating to registration and the benefits given by the welfare board.
- Together with Labour department and State child Protection society Nagaland jointly organized and supported on interstate consultation on cross border children right violations.
- Coordinated with Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights for planning rally for Anti- Child labour day.
- In Bihar a Rights committee was formed of NDWM and members of centralized trade unions and NGOs which would meet on a quarterly basis to discuss issues of domestic workers.
- In Meghalaya along with Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Shillong, organized an empowerment programme on women rights at Sohbar village
- Organized a consultation with Chetanalaya, Hariyana Garelu Kamgar Sangatan, Seva, and Nirmala Niketan at Delhi on the issue of fixing the minimum wage to improve the living conditions of domestic workers.
- In UP networked with trade unions and NGOs to form an alliance to submit a memorandum to Labour Department for fixing minimum wage of domestic workers.
- In Tamil Nadu together with Unorganised Workers’ Federation planned and held rally on Women’s Day to publicize demands of domestic workers.
- With the help of Child line inaugurated Ranchi Railway Child Help Desk to function 24x7 to provide protection and care to children in need of care and protection especially those vulnerable to trafficking in and around Ranchi Railway Station.
- With the Deputy Commissioner of Labour and Media like, (Sangai Express, Heuyen Lan Pao, Imphal Free Press and People’s Chronicle) jointly organised International Domestic Workers’ Day, Press Conference and Signature Campaign at Manipur.
The Prevention and Regulation of Child Labour Act, 1986 amended in 2006 laid down that children below 14 years of age were barred from employment including domestic work. The recent amendment proposed by the Central Government to allow children below 14 years to be employed in home based industries after school hours and during vacations was vigorously protested by NDWM. Along with other organisations, it is our view that it would lead to a back door entry to employing child labour. Rallies, Human chains and signature campaigns were conducted by children in all states to publicize protest against this amendment.

At Ranchi, NDWM inaugurated its new project, Ranchi Railway CHILDLINE in Ranchi Railway Station on 27th August 2015. The Ranchi Railway Child Help Desk functions 24x7 to provide protection and care to children in need of care and protection especially vulnerable to trafficking in and around Ranchi Railway Station.

**Impact 2015:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>No. of Children Identified</th>
<th>No. of Children Rescued/Rehabilitated</th>
<th>No. of Children in Bridge Schools/ tuition Centers</th>
<th>No. of Children Supported for Mainstream Education</th>
<th>No. of Children in Vocational Training</th>
<th>No. of Awareness Campaigns in Schools and Communities</th>
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</table>
NDWM- Child Rights Movement groups act as platforms to offer children especially from marginalized areas, opportunities to develop themselves and express their views and also create awareness of Child rights in their families, schools and neighborhood. Periodical workshops and seminars on motivation, personality development and life skills enable members to become aware and advocate their rights. Exposure visits are also conducted to increase practical knowledge of various Government offices and officials. Children are also encouraged to take up projects for improving their surroundings and becoming change agents in society.

<Child Rights Movement
(Exposure Visit)
Impact 2015:
Children in Child Participation Groups

- Odisha - 10 groups
- Bihar - 15 groups
- Tamil Nadu - 57 groups
- Uttar Pradesh - 21 groups
- Meghalaya - 10 groups
- Nagaland - 18 groups
- Assam - 10 groups
- Manipur - 15 groups
- Jharkhand - 41 groups
- Delhi - 3 groups
- Maharashtra - 15 groups

Child Rights Movement Group>

Anti-Child Labour day

<Child Rights Movement leaders presenting a list of child labour cases in Ranchi to Child labour Commission>
With an increasing awareness of their rights and the backing of their fellow workers, most domestic workers are in a position to feel empowered. To provide specialized help to aggrieved Domestic workers, Legal cells have been set up in Bihar, Nagaland, Jharkhand and Maharashtra. These are manned by committees which include a lawyer. Regular programmes are also conducted to make workers aware of legal protection under the Sexual Harassment and Domestic Violence Act, 2013 and steps to be followed in cases of rape and accidents.

Some Case Studies of Interventions on behalf of Domestic workers

Domestic Worker was employed by a School Principal with an agreement to work for a year. However the worker left the work after 22 days, because her work load was increasing daily. After long discussion and follow-up, the employer refused to pay her salary and instead filed a police complaint. The worker and the National Domestic Workers’ Movement animators discussed with employer and asked for her agreement copy, after which she agreed to pay her salary.

Domestic Worker was employed in a house for sweeping and cleaning. The employer without any reason dismissed her from the work and did not give her salary for the days worked. National Domestic Workers’ Movement team and legal cell members went to meet the employer. He was not ready to keep her for the job but he gave her salary for the worked days by the pressure of the team.

Domestic Worker was a live in worker for three months. Due to heavy work in the family, she expressed her inability to continue the work and left the job. When she came back to ask for the salary she was chased away by the owner who did not pay her pending wages. National Domestic Workers’ Movement rushed to the family seeking justice and wages for 15 days. Even though the employer was reluctant to pay her salary, she was compelled to pay her the amount for the number of days she had worked.

Domestic Worker went missing from her workplace. National Domestic Workers’ Movement accompanied the mother to the police station to file a complaint. The police without hearing the mother concluded saying the girl would have eloped with her boyfriend. At the insistence of NDWM, the photo of the girl was circulated by police in Goa and in Mumbai along with the contact numbers among taxi and auto drivers. NDWM received a phone call from an unknown number saying that the girl was found in sex work in Mumbai. The animator and the mother along with the Goa police went to Mumbai and rescued her from sex work.
Domestic worker after working for a month was not paid salary and the employer refused even to recognize her. She approached the Inspector General, Weaker Section, Patna through the support of a National Domestic Workers’ Movement leader. After the IG intervened the employer paid her total Salary of Rs. 5000/-. 

Employer lodged a false complaint of theft against the Domestic Worker because she asked for an increase in her salary. National Domestic Workers’ Movement Legal cell team went to the police station and met the investigation officer and the DW. The matter was settled by her with the intervention of local politicians.

Domestic Worker was sickly and unable to do hard work. Her daughter a Std 9th dropout, despite a good academic record, used to replace her. National Domestic Workers’ Movement contacted the daughter and after counseling, sponsored her for a 3 month course in tailoring, which has made her self reliant.

Domestic Workers was falsely accused of stealing Rs 10 lakhs when she asked for her salary after working for a month. The worker did not panic because she was not alone. She went along with 17 Domestic workers to the house of the employers and challenged them to pay her salary or she would go to the Police. The employer after seeing the crowd paid her salary of Rs.3000/-

Two girls aged 13 and 14, belonging to Bru tribe were trafficked to Guwahati by an accused, giving a fake promise of marrying them. The two girls were kept in a rented house at Satgaon, Guwahati. The Women’s Group of the locality informed the Police who intervened and rescued the victims. National Domestic Workers’ Movement with Bru Tribe Association went to the police station negotiated with the police for their immediate safety and security at Assam State Women Home.

Domestic worker had worked for 2 years. Her employer stopped her work without any notifications in the month of August. When asked why she was dismissed, she was told it was due to her going on leave. She complained to the National Domestic Worker Movement leaders who met the employer and asked him to pay 15 days salary with bonus and 15 days of non-working days salary for stopping without notification. The employer has paid Rs. 4000 to the worker.
National and International Conferences

National Programs

National Consultation on Social Protection for Domestic Workers
The National Consultation on Social Protection for domestic workers was held at Chennai on October 17, 2015, with the objectives of over viewing Social Security C 102 and Social Floor Recommendations R 202, along with The unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008. It also discussed Social Protection as a Human and Constitutional Right and the role of Social Movements and Trade unions in Social Protection.

Program on Advocacy for Labour Rights
A National program on Advocacy for Labour Rights was organized at Patna on November 17, with Mr. Ghazanfar Nawab, a trade union activist as facilitator. 51 delegates were in attendance.

International Programs

2 NDWM representatives attended a 3 day conference on identifying training needs and sharing training modules for domestic workers organized by IIWE at Colombo

1 NDWM representative attended a 4 day Conference on Learning about Gender and Planning organized by WSM-IIWE at Indonesia.
Achievements

Our intensified Advocacy events of Signature campaigns and Press conferences in all States met with considerable success at the grassroot level, creating public awareness and greater social recognition of the rights of domestic workers. This activity culminated with the Advocacy Committee meeting Central Ministers and MPs across party lines to put forward our demand for comprehensive legislation and ratification of C 189.

Besides basic training programs on rights awareness and creating solidarity at the local level, emphasis was placed on creating legal awareness especially among leaders and senior members at State levels to enable them to intervene effectively and address problems faced by domestic workers.

Public interest litigations were filed in the High Courts in Tamil Nadu and Bihar on matters relating to non-fixation of minimum wage and delay in setting up a Social Security Board, respectively. In both cases, the High Courts directed the State Governments to respond and take immediate action.

In States, where minimum wages have not been fixed, the State units finalized rate cards, based on guidelines for minimum wage and workers negotiated with employers on this basis. This has been accepted due to the workers presenting a united front.

Our maiden venture to hold Public Hearings in six states proved effective in creating pressure on Government authorities. Panels consisting of judges, advocates and civil society activists heard on problems faced by domestic workers and presented their findings, which were submitted to Government authorities for further action.

Registration of domestic workers in Boards and educating them on the appropriate schemes was taken on top priority in all States, to enable them to avail of the social security benefits.
On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of NDWM, I would like to congratulate all our domestic workers, staff and Co-coordinators for their dedication and hard work to promote the goals of our movement. No doubt, it has been an uphill journey. I am reminded of the words of a song, ‘When we walk in love with the wind on our wings and cover the earth with the songs we sing, the miles fly by’. Yes, we will not rest till all domestic workers can breathe the air of justice and dignity.

Sr Jeanne Devos
Celebrating International Domestic Workers’ Day and World Against Child Labour Day: The True Spirit of Solidarity

As a movement working for domestic workers’ and child domestic workers’ rights in 17 states of India, National Domestic Workers’ Movement believes in creating a space for solidarity among domestic workers throughout the nation. In this light, on the 12th and 16th of June’15, the movement celebrated World Against Child Labour Day and International Domestic Workers’ day respectively. Rallies, Press conferences, street plays and post card campaigns were organized in each of the 17 states we work at. Domestic Workers and Child Rights Movement Groups came together in solidarity to make a meaningful impact and spread awareness about their issue throughout the nation.