

The Domestic Workers Convention C189 celebrates its 10th anniversary, Social Protection is not yet part of our reality

To protect domestic workers' rights is a must and more concrete actions are required to provide social protection to this important care economy sector.

On June 16th, the Convention 189 ([C189](#)), a huge milestone for [Domestic Workers](#) around the world, celebrates its 10th anniversary. The International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) will mark this occasion in a zoom webinar on June 13th. We will remember how in 2011, workers, employers, and governments came together to adopt the convention on decent work for domestic workers.

In the last ten years, since the adoption of the convention 189, more than 70 countries have taken action to advance decent work for domestic workers. With 32 ratifications and 29 entrance to force, these steps partially amend a history of exclusion. However, the path is still long for more than 70 million Domestic Workers who are still being denied social protection rights.

"We saw in the [pandemic](#) that social assistance, including direct cash transfers and emergency relief, does not reach many domestic workers. It is often by accident that they have access to help. If they are in the right home and with the proper documentation. However, they must be protected as any other workers, by social protection, as they incur the same risks through their employment, only more acutely," emphasized Carmen Britez, IDWF Vice President.

Our federation and its leaders have worked for more than 10 years with global unions and key partners to include domestic workers in the labour rights agenda and to fight for the improvement of their living and working conditions. However, major commitment from the states and concrete actions to ratify and implement Convention 189 is required. The Convention remains ink on paper if not properly implemented.

C189 opens a door to express domestic workers' need and rights to access social protection. The Domestic Work sector has largely contributed to the world's economy, yet the workers still experience uncertain working conditions and in most cases no social protection. Social security -which includes health insurance, maternity benefits, elderly pensions, and annual leave is usually absent from their working arrangements. Moreover, domestic workers receive less than a minimum wage, have no clear division between work and life, and are constantly facing long working hours, no vacation time, limited food access, heavy workloads, job insecurity,

harassment, and violence. Needless to mention; this situation has worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Because of COVID-19, I have lost my job. I did not dare to borrow money because I knew there was no way for me to be able to repay it back, as we do not know how much longer the lockdown will persist," said Cynthia, a domestic worker in Madagascar.

On the 10th anniversary of the Domestic Workers Convention, the International Domestic Workers Federation calls for C189 ratification and implementation around the world. To protect domestic workers' rights is a must and more concrete actions are required to provide social protection to this important care economy sector. We demand social protection for all the domestic workers around the globe.

Join our conversations on social media and support our affiliates in their actions until the C189 becomes a reality everywhere.

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