



SOUTH ASIA POLICY CONFERENCE ON HOME-BASED WORKERS TO BE HELD IN INDIA

*To develop policy guidelines on improving the status of women home-based workers
in five South-Asian countries*

New Delhi, January 12, 2007: There are over 100 million home-based workers (HBWs) in the world, out of which, half the number are in South Asia alone. Around 80% of these home-based workers are women, most of whom are amongst the poorest, the most exploited and vulnerable segment of workers today. In order to develop a policy on improving their status across the South Asia region, the **United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)** and Ahmedabad-based **Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)** are jointly organizing '**Women Work & Poverty: Policy Conference on Home Based Workers of South Asia**'.

The bulk of women home-based workers live and work in "on-the-margin" survival conditions doing a variety of jobs for industry and trade, which range from sewing garments and assembling electronic components, to simple jobs of sorting, packaging and labeling goods. As a workforce, home-based workers are largely invisible. With the growing globalization and decentralization of production, **home based work has emerged as the final link in a global chain of subcontractors encompassing a wide range of industries and services.**

With participants from **Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka**, the Conference will be held between 18 and 20 January, 2007 in New Delhi. The **Honorable Prime Minister of India, H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh**, has kindly agreed **to deliver the inaugural address** on this occasion. Ministers and Secretaries from relevant ministries in the South Asian region have been invited to make presentations on **Trade, Social Security and Labour Protection**. The over 120 delegates expected, will include representations from Home-Based Workers' organizations, policy making bodies, academic institutions, NGOs, and UN agencies, among others.

The key objective of the Conference is to advocate for making available benefits of growth to Home Based Workers in five countries of South Asia, in order to lift them out of poverty. Specifically, the workshop will deliberate on issues of policy, fair trade, social security and building voice with regard to Home Based Workers.

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