

## **Irreconcilable Differences - Union Organising in the Informal Sector in Ghana**

### **Abstract**

The informal sector is expanding in developing countries while the formal sector is shrinking. The loss of employees through workforce reduction strategies has adversely affected trade union membership in Ghana. To make up for the loss of members, the trade unions recruit the informal workers into their fold. Using in-depth interviews, this study explores trade union organisation of informal workers and the suitability of these forms of organisation within the informal sector in Ghana. The results indicate that formal trade unions are desperately adopting traditional methods and structures to organise informal workers into their fold without success. There is therefore the need for the informal workers to self-organise and for the trade unions to create streams of membership for affiliation.

**Keywords:** informal workers; informal sector; trade unions; union membership; organisation; sub-Saharan Africa.

## 1. Introduction

Just as in other sub-Saharan African countries, the resulting mass redundancies in the public sector in Ghana in the 1980s due to the Structural Adjustment Programmes pushed millions of people out of formal employment into the informal economy (Gallin 2000) and declined union membership. Table 2 shows the decline in membership of the Ghana Trade Unions Congress from 1939 to 2007. The TUC has not published its membership trend beyond this point. There is therefore a need for a study to track and analyse the TUC's membership drive and its implications for representation. By 1994, the GTUC had lost 40% of its membership to various sector reforms (Britwum and Martens 2008). This, together, with the hiring freeze in the public sector has also significantly reduced the source of recruitment of members for the trade unions because trade unions are mainly concentrated in the formal sector (industrial and services sectors) in sub-Saharan African. The union decline has been compounded by the collapse of private sector firms as a result of the on-going economic crisis and consequently union membership (ISSER 2008). In Ghana, about two-thirds (67.6%) of the labour force are employed, 9.1% are unemployed and 23.3% are not in the labour force (see Tables 2A, 2B, 2C). Out of the employed labour force, 90% are in the informal sector (GSS, 2016).

In an attempt to reverse the membership decline the boundaries for trade union organising has extended from the formal to the informal. The informal sector is the set of activities that are not usually measured by traditional means (i.e. administrative registers) (GSS, 2016). These activities refer to the unregulated activities owned and operated by an individual or by an owner or with employees in small premises or in open air (African Union, 2008). Given the shifting numbers from the formal to the informal sector (refer to Table 1), the Ghana Trades Union Congress (TUC) initiated its informal sector organising activities in 1990 but as yet it has been able to organise only about 0.1% (about 9 associations) compared to about 68% in the formal sector (Anyemedu 2000; Baah 2007; Croucher 2007; Osei-Boateng & Ampratwum 2011, War on Want 2006). The GTUC was able to create an affiliation with 14 informal associations into the Union of Informal Economy Workers Association (UNIWA), a parallel umbrella body (federation) for informal workers but the suitability of union organising strategies in the informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa has not been adequately researched. This study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the strategies adopted by the trade unions to organise informal sector operatives. Thus, it attempts to answer the following questions: How do the trade unions organise the informal sector workers in Ghana? Are the strategies compatible with or appropriate for organising informal sector workers? What extent have these strategies been successful in the general organisation and recruitment of members in the informal sector? Are there problems associated with the GTUC union recruitment strategies in the informal sector?

The rest of the paper is organised as follows: the next section provides a review of the trade union organising attempts in the informal sector in developing countries, section three presents the methodological approach for this research, section four discusses the empirical results and section five concludes this study.

## 2. Overview of Union Organising

There are dominant theories describing the strategies unions adopt to recruit and maintain members and these reflect the life styles of the society they are in. For instance, Commons in 1919 observed the capitalist nature of society to explain the economic self-interest of the workers as the preoccupation of the unions. The unions were driven by the struggles of the labour market which was also determined by the industry, diverse work relationships for diverse worker groups and capitalism. Similarly, Perlman (1928) identified the 'scarcity-

consciousness' as the driving force of unions to secure resources in the labour market in the workers' interest. But when unions pursue worker classes instead of clearly stipulated goals their political power is subverted by the aristocrats. In a contrary dimension, Lenin (1971) explains in the concept of 'economism' that it is illusionary for unions to shield workers from employer power because the societal systems will cause the owners of capital to retake the gains unions make. What he proposes that unions need is political power with actors who would lead the political struggle for a beneficial socialist system. Later, Barbash (1972) pointed out that Lenin uses the union as a revolutionary instrument but Marx (1945) stressed that the structure of the union would evolve to industrial or general unionism when worker awareness develops for political action. Even with this development Marx believed that union reformism would not be able to take away worker exploitation in the labour market. Union officers therefore strive for political power through representation but Lane in 1961 noticed that unions lacked tactics, organisation and skills to withstand the employer even though a 'web of rules' have been developed to guide labour – management relations (Bakke, Kerr and Anrod, 1967; Dunlop, 1957). The unions are therefore looking for these opportunities to consolidate worker efforts which was concentrated in the formal labour market. Now, with the upsurge of economic recessions, unemployment even for the youth and graduates especially in developing countries, the unions find every opportunity to mobilise the labour force, employed or not, for political power and action. The union have extended this drive for representation to the growing informal sector in developing countries like Ghana.

The forms of trade union organising in the informal sector in developing countries usually follows the partnership, servicing and organising approaches to recruit and engage with union members, to stimulate activity and to develop union confidence (Heery 2004; Carter 2006). The models above follow the hierarchies within formal unions and extend its application to the informal sector to grow their membership in the communities because the operatives have weak or no associations and often work in isolation ( Gallin 2002; Horn 2002; Lindell 2009; Schurman Eaton Gumbrell McCormick Hyman et al. 2012). See Tables 3 on the forms of these organisations as cooperatives (Sanyal 1991; Von Holdt and Webster 2008; Silver 2003; Bonner & Spooner 2011a) or those incorporated into trade union organisations (Lindell 2009, 2010a) either for organising the informal workers or for self-organisation. Some trade unions in Ghana and South Africa (SACTU and SATAWU) adopt strategies 1 and 2 in Table3(C); but strategy 4 is dominant in Africa. These strategies indicate that trade unions in Africa establish an associate rather than an affiliate relationship with informal worker associations (Schurman et al. 2012). While affiliate unions have full membership rights, the associates do not. These membership forms are discussed in the empirical discussion because the literature does not clearly explain these. Table 3(D) refers to the organising model of informal workers specifically adopted by trade unions in Ghana.

The suitability of these approaches to organising needs interrogation (Gant 2009, Afenah 2010) and Obeng-Odoom (2011) makes a call for research on the operatives in Accra to represent themselves or be represented. Worker representation and participation has taken on multiple dimensions because workers today seek more voice than the industrial relations system offers and this drives trade unions to provide a response in the informal sector (Freeman and Rogers 2006). Unions therefore, apply the traditional toolkit to promote self-help organisations for such mobilisation. While the informal operatives need the negotiation and bargaining skills from the unions, the unions need their affiliation to strengthen their political position as the representative employee voice. Due to this, the GTUC has carved out its 5-path strategy to organise in the informal sector (refer to Table 3(D)) (Adu-Amankwah 1999) as a creative

approach encouraged at the Arusha Conference when the informal workers were recognised as a “new partner in the workforce community”. This article draws on the experiences of the unions to explore the mode of organising the associations and that of the other actors promoting this organisation.

The fundamental and strategic issues of the GTUC framework need to be critically assessed in respect of labour rights and representation and the economic and business development of own account workers. Associations which are clearly trade unions are excluded from the labour laws because of their inability to demonstrate clear employment or collective bargaining relationships. It is unclear how the labour regulations relate to own-account workers, without employees, who have full control of their working hours and income. Article 21 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, Section 79(1) of the Labour Act and the ILO Convention No. 87 (ratified) guarantee the freedom of association but Section 80(1) of the Labour Act limits this freedom to organise to two or more workers employed in the same undertaking. The only assistant or employee of many operatives are therefore not covered by the legal provisions of the Labour Act to unionise. In addition to this, Section 80(2) of the Labour Act provides for two or more employers in the same industry or trade, each of whom employs not less than fifteen workers to form or join an employers’ organisation. Most of the employers in the informal sector have only an assistant or fewer workers. While the Labour Laws carve out considerations for unionisation in the formal sector, the informal sector is not covered. These prompt the reflection of the trade unions as actors to organise in the informal sector. These constraints educe the related question of the recognition of informal sector associations, which is necessary to afford them access to government authorities and services (ILO, 1997). The TUC has therefore made a call for active research into practical union organisational activities but few experts discuss this. This research responds to this call and that made by Obeng-Odoom (2011) to explore the forms of trade union organisation in the informal sector in Ghana.

### **3. Methodology**

Drawing upon a wider qualitative study, this paper examines accounts derived from a purposive sample of informal workers (n=10), members of associations (n=13), unions (n=9) and institutions (n=5), focus groups (n=10) and individual interviews (n=47) (see Table 4 ).

The researcher purposively sampled from the urban informal work activities in Accra - East, West, South and Central - to provide an adequate representation throughout the city. The workers were chosen across the agricultural, construction, manufacturing and service providers (refer to Table 5).

Access was gained by word-of-mouth reference from a fellow researcher to the National Informal Desk Officer at the GTUC who likewise verbally introduced the researcher to the National Unions and the Informal Workers’ Associations, informal workers and other relevant bodies but other informal workers who were not members of the associations were contacted directly.

The interview questions were designed to suit the groups the participants represented. The questions for this study covered:

For Informal Sector Workers and Associations

1. Background information: the background information was to help understand the nature of informal work in Ghana.
2. Business or Trade: questions based on trade or business helped to examine the factors influencing the choice of the specific informal activity performed.

3. Association activity: the researcher sought to discover how the informal workers' associations recruit their members and the factors that influence the workers' choice to belong.
4. Non-involvement in association activity: the question on this area sought to find out why informal workers choose not to belong to any association if they knew the associations existed.
5. Challenges of organising: this section sought to discover the factors influencing participation and the organisers' plan to overcome them if any.

#### For the Formal Trade Unions

1. Background information: to learn about the types of unions that are in Ghana and the kinds of membership they have. This background guided the researcher to understand the origin of the unions and where they are heading in relation to organising.
2. Organising activity: this area of questioning was to discover the group of workers or the sectors of business the unions recruit their members from. It is also to provide an understanding of the framework within which the unions source members.
3. Challenges in organising: this section of questions aim at learning how the unions organise informal workers, how the recruitment of these members have met their expectation. It is also to find out how the unions have been able to retain these members.

#### For the other institutions

1. Company background information: questions raised here were aimed at understanding the objectives of the businesses working with informal workers.
2. Involvement with informal sector: this section was designed to elicit information on the activities these institutions perform in the informal sector that promote their organisation. To also understand the impact of these activities on organising.
3. Information was finally gathered on the challenges these organisations encounter from the activities they perform in the informal sector in relation to organising. The questions further helped the researcher to discover the plans these institutions have for the future.

Individual and group interviews were conducted with suitable questions in the categories (the informal workers, informal workers' associations, the unions, and the other institutions). There were focus groups comprising of between four to nine people (Corbin Morse 2003) from the informal service sector, agricultural, construction and manufacturing sectors (refer to Table 5). The conversations were in English and two main local Ghanaian dialects, Twi and Ga. This is because about 23.4% of the population in Ghana have not attended school (refer to Table 6 for details) (GSS 2012) and were not able to express themselves in English. Permission to audio record the interviews was taken from the participants. There were times when valuable information was shared after the recorder was turned off, at these times, the researcher took notes. The interviews in the local languages were first transcribed in the primary languages. The transcripts were then translated into English for the purposes of the analysis. To ensure that differences in the meaning of words do not lead to distortion of the data, the transcripts in English were back-translated into the primary language, the back-translation was then compared with the original version (Bryman Bell 2007). The interviews lasted for a period of between 30 minutes and 2 hours (Roscoe Lang Sheth 1975). The notes were typed out with the interviews and open-coded together. The transcriptions were typed verbatim from the recorded interviews because it is suitable for the interpretive perspective of research adopted (Lapadat Lindsay 1999; MacLean Meyer Estable 2004). The data collected was systematically analysed

using recurring ideas identified from the interview transcripts. The data collected was thematically analysed to follow the emerging trends (Braun Clarke 2006; Dey 1993).

## **4. Empirical Results**

### **4.1 Trade union organising of informal workers**

The evidence was analysed to examine the nature of trade union organising in the informal sector in Ghana. The TUC began organising before it officially announced its interest in informal workers as associates in 1996 and changed its constitution to include the operatives. Then, it set up an informal desk to help the national unions to organise, to appoint informal desk representatives and to network. The TUC provided demarcations for the national unions but a union leader of the TUC noticed that the unions are not sure about those responsible for some informal sector workers. The unions recruit members from the informal sector as associate members, without full membership rights. Despite this, some informal workers join but others are disinterested in the unions.

Some informal operatives expressed interest in becoming associate members and the unions also visit work places to recruit workers in groups. Despite these attempts, the TUC's Informal Desk noticed that not much was being done. The unions were not ready to bring the informal workers on board even though a few had joined because of a lack of political will and/ or funding because the activities in the informal sector are free of charge (Gallin 2000; Ishengoma Kappel 2006). A union leader without an informal association explains that:

*"I can tell you that we don't have even one member from the informal sector. No, we do not. The reason is that we organise in the formal sector... The reason for not organising informal workers is that there is a thin line between what is illegal and legal. As a responsible union, we don't meddle in the activities where the government sees it to be illegal (illegal miners 'galamsey')."*

Given the internal organisational challenge described above, the TUC created an associate membership position in 2003 for informal workers to belong to the TUC. As this concern grew, the TUC discussed organising the informal workers with two institutions for support to bring the informal associations together on one platform. The union official talked to some of the informal associations to partner with the TUC but the association members perceive the unions as bigger organisations which are unable to relate to them because they are mainly illiterates. They do not feel comfortable in the unions where meetings are in English (Sanyal 1991), they are unable to fully participate. Sometimes, they do not feel they belong to the unions. The TUC had to find an effective way to organise the informal workers but it needed support from external donors or sponsors. The FES and the LOFPF in Togo supported the TUC to create the platform for the informal workers. In 2012 and 2013, the TUC organised two informal conferences with support from FEF and LOFTS (a Danish trade union), the two main donors. At the second conference, it was agreed that a platform (CIEWA now UNIWA) should be formed solely for informal workers to organise themselves. At the third conference, the council for the informal workers was set up to work with the TUC. In 2015, the President and General Secretary for the council worked as the organising department. The TUC helped the council to elect an interim executive to assign roles and help them to build their capacity to lobby, communicate, relate within the council, with the TUC and the government through the TUC. The lawyers of the TUC worked on the council's constitution to register it. The council will then know the itinerary the TUC has for them to follow. Then, they can elect regional



representations to organise the workers - the first of its kind in West Africa, if not Africa. The TUC is expecting many more informal workers to join the council because they will be seeing people of their kind, they then become automatic associates with the TUC.

The two members leading the council are from MUSIGA and the Ghana Actors' Guild where the majority of the members are literate. There is a steering committee of the other associations listed in Table 7 and the two leading members for the council. They have monthly meetings with representation from the regions. According to a respondent from a partner institution:

*"We have already looked at the structure for CIEWA, the TUC plans to accommodate them in the TUC building. We are discussing procedures on who takes a decision, record management, how they handle complaints and sanctions because it will come up. We want to also look at issues with policy, financial management and how they bring on board more members, their communication or PR strategy and who will speak for the union. We also looked at the services that CIEWA will give to its members. And how we can influence its officials and risk management...The strategy is to bring them on board to the TUC."*

The institution's representative explained that they prefer to work within the platform (CIEWA). When they have meetings with the council, they (the organisers, the institutions and the TUC) raise the issues and leave the council leaders to discuss and decide. A union leader explained that they mostly organise farmers who do not have employers but who will be interested in talking to the Ministry of Agriculture to request for agricultural extension officers so they teach them to negotiate and demand for their rights. A second union hires officers and posts them to an area. A newly appointed officer for the Funsu area in the Upper West Region was completing office procedures to leave for his station. The TUC representative mentioned that:

*"One of our techniques of organising is that we don't organise individuals, we organise associations because it is quite difficult knocking on every door asking them to come to the TUC. If you are already in a group, have registered, knowing that they are talking about their welfare, it's quite easy to go in and talk to them about what the TUC can do for them..."*

When a group of informal workers is identified, the TUC usually finds the presidents to explain how the TUC can help them to deal with the local authorities and the government concerning their grievances. Some of the associations' leaders have worked in formal organisations and were members of trade unions. The TUC checks the constitution of the association, their aims and objectives, registration certificate and its profile to see if it can fit into the TUC before granting the associate membership to reflect their letterheads for recognition by the government authorities. The strategies the TUC uses to organise informal workers are presented in Figure 1.

#### **4.2 Self-organising by the informal workers**

It is important to discuss how the informal workers self-organise to establish a fundamental understanding of the strategies used by the unions and the informal workers. Some informal workers begin organising by talking about their concerns and then get together to form a group.

The initial group members invite others to join. The group then nominates an organiser who visits individual traders to inform and invite them to their meetings. An association's leader narrates how they formed their group.

*“Matok brought some vehicles and nets and we went to negotiate but when we got there they gave the things to the associations. We found it difficult, the prices they gave to us were much higher. The government gave it to them at 4,900 cedis (about \$13) but I bought mine at 7,200 cedis (\$19) from the Tema association. I won the 2009 and 2010 Greater Accra Region and District Awards for the best fisherman so I decided that we should also form an association so that we can also have allocations when we need them. We started meeting but organising ourselves into an association was difficult so we invited the Tema association and they came to explain how they run their association to us. So we were able to form ours.”*

The workers registered their association and they are waiting for feedback on their documents. In another instance, another worker began to organise to stop the local authority from harassing them (refer to Sanyal 1991). The respondent said:

*“I was at the Madina market when they were constructing the new market. They asked everybody to go inside; we don't have sheds so the Amasaman task force was harassing us because we were not united. They sacked us from where we were selling anytime so I decided to get together with others. We started with eleven people and we formed the Shoe Sellers' Association to fight for the right of being at the marketplace. We struggled a lot, then we asked for a place and they allocated a temporary place to us. We were there when other traders came, everybody came there. We decided that if the people there are many we will call it Madina Traders' Association so that every trader can join. So it grew and we registered it, we were affiliated to the TUC as associate members because we are also workers.”*

Any association that desires to join the TUC is expected to provide copies of its certificate of registration, constitution and a brief profile. This is why this association went through the processes of registration. The leader of this association heard that the TUC has included informal workers so they went there. This association sees the TUC as the umbrella body that protects and speaks up for workers. When they went to the AMA to discuss the physical violence their members were facing from its task force, they did not pay any attention to them until the TUC took up the issue. The TUC inaugurated the association and requested it to change its name to reflect its relationship with the TUC. They are given the name associates because they do not pay dues so they are not considered members of the TUC. The TUC explains that:

*“They were given the name associates because they don't pay dues. It means that they are an observer group. They can't vote when they come to our meetings and they can't pass a motion and others. Because they don't follow democratic ways of doing things, they are here to study how we run the organisation so that they do the same in their associations.”*

The kayayee workers' association was started by NADMO and the queen mothers at the Agbogloboshie market registered the porters even though they themselves were not porters (see



Gallin 2000 for a review). Some members of the association had a misunderstanding with the market queens (female leaders of the sellers at the market) and left, the remaining leaders of the association organised its workers. They helped their members with their welfare. The members tell others about the support and attract a few more people to join. A respondent from an association for musicians mentioned that they do not struggle to find members for their union. The Passport Office requires every musician who applies for a passport to submit an introductory letter from their association. Most musicians therefore register with the association. This group also organises outreaches and workshops in the regions and encourages the musicians to register. Just like the TUC, the informal associates organise worker groups and not the individual operatives. One of the leaders commented that:

*“Now that we have a union, we have smaller associations joining us. We don’t go to organise individuals but we go out there to look for similar groups like ours and ask them to affiliate to us and we merge.”*

While the TUC will accept groups to become associate members, the association takes on similar new groups and merge. The associations also organise other groups of informal workers and maintain their leaders. The narrative above indicates that a divergent association that is totally different in operation or behaviour will not be invited into the merger. They then write to the TUC about the new member to inaugurate the leaders into office. This new member becomes a branch and has the responsibility to organise individual sellers. The council intends to have branch secretaries and organisers and then they can form a board, they can have executives who will represent them properly at meetings and not as the observers they are now. Figure 2 illustrates the self-organisational strategies by the informal operatives.

### **4.3 Problems faced in organising informal workers**

The factors that hinder organisation in the informal sector range from personal to organisational challenges, even for the unions.

Leadership practice in the informal worker associations is informal and unplanned. Some spare part dealers formed an association to regulate prices but it collapsed because the leaders could not manage the variations within the trade. Another association collapsed because it had traders of different goods with varied problems and the leaders could not find a common ground to manage them. The repairers also stopped belonging to their group because their leaders misappropriated their contributions. To the seamstresses, when sewing machines and other materials were given to the group to buy on hire purchase, the leaders shared them among themselves without considering the members. Another worker reported his master to the association for buying inferior materials to build; the association reported him to his master and he lost his job so he does not trust the leaders.

Apart from the inability to manage these situations, there is also a lack of knowledge of the existence of associations or an unwillingness of the workers to join a union. Leaders do not create awareness of the associations mainly because they tend to concentrate on their trades to survive. A trader who knew that an association existed did not know what it was doing so there was no interest to join. Others also do not understand why they should join an association.

Other workers quit their associations because some workers from the same tribes (ethnicities) formed cliques within the group to the discomfort of others. Some of the workers who knew about this did not want to join because the leaders were not bothered. A spare part dealer shared his experience.

*“I came to that association but they highly regard themselves than others so some people do not want to join, they are tribalistic in the group because if we want to join some people will be asking of class and calibre joining them”*

An association was only able to register some of its members because they found members who could speak their local language (Schurman et al. 2012).

The market queens have life term leadership, the queens reigned till death but the TUC is teaching them democratic ways of electing a leader. But, at the end of every voting period, they elect the same leader till death before an election is conducted again. If she becomes too weak to lead, she nominates a representative. The daughter of a market queen said:

*“My mother is the queen mother of this market but she is unwell so I have taken over. In the market, whoever is elected as the queen leads until death. If she is not dead then she is still in power; that is why I have taken over until she dies.”*

The porters have had the same leader since 1993 and they do not want him to leave the post, he is the partially educated man among the group. There is no substitute.

Some women selling maize have been identified as smuggling cassava into the market to sell without permission but the market leaders have not been able to stop the defaulters.

Another problem the leaders and the unions face is the inability of informal workers to attend meetings. The members believe that when their customers come to their shops and they do not find them, they leave to the next shop. Consequently, associate members stopped going to meetings. A union leader organising domestic workers reports that it is a problem for the members to meet. They believe that they are either working or they are off and gone away from the area. The union, therefore, communicates through leaders to the group. This union has not found out how to get these workers to attend meetings because they do not know how to get the employers to release the domestic workers from home.

Politics is also a problem for organisers, the union leaders lack a political will for the fear of losing face with union members. Elected leaders dread investing monies collected from the formal sector into organising informal workers who hardly pay dues. They work at retaining their seats so they will not make their members uncomfortable. As a result, some of the unions are not organising in the informal sector as they should.

#### **4.4 Member Disappointments, Diversity, Divergence and Culture**

The associations also find it difficult to manage the expectations of the workers. According to some workers, the association’s promise will either not happen or take too long to work. So the associations tell the workers about the immediate benefits to sustain their interest such as welfare support, training and educational opportunities. Due to this, the workers have high expectations of the unions. A leader observed that:

*“Their expectations of the unions are so high because the unions promise to help them, when these hopes are not met the workers get disappointed. The union should help since it promised to. The government is the greatest buyer of goods and it is buying these Chinese products competing with them so the union is unable to meet this expectation.”*

The association has no control of the government's choice of goods to buy so the members get disappointed that the association is not able to help. A leader of an association explains that:

*“Since we tell the members we will help, that is what they focus on. We try to focus our members on the future of this association but that is not what they want. If they ask for benefits and we are unable to help them then they give up. Convincing them then becomes difficult. And sometimes when a member is sick or at hospital, we must help. Once he or she is in the association, the person is family.”*

The unions and the associations find it difficult to keep the promises they make, they raise the workers hopes and if they are unable to meet these expectations then the workers get disappointed. Some of the workers also join the associations hoping that it will fight for them irrespective of the battle. For instance, a seller by the roadside questions why they are in the union when the assembly harasses them. These bad experiences make the workers stay away from joining or forming associations. An association believes that it will take a long time for an organisation to gain ground in Ghana because the membership of the association increases when some members come along with their friends but this is not happening. A worker mentions that he has his own work so there is nothing else an association can do for him because the group is unable to get help from the government. This is difficult and a leader describes it as pathetic. The TUC observes that:

*“The working population in Ghana is about twelve million and about nine million are in the informal sector so if you have just nine associates with less than a tenth of the total informal working population then we will say we are not doing well. There is room for improvement but it takes time and money. It is true that there are hurdles but we can bring them together.”*

Diversity within the sector is a problem, members invite traders into existing associations irrespective of the sector and unique differences split the membership. The unions find it difficult to define clear work categories or identify workers in the remote areas belonging to its categories to organise them. The TUC categorised groups in the informal sector to include:

*“The ‘apampam’ store owner who dies and the business ends, subsistence farmers, those who trade in seasonal goods and those who employ family members to join them in their business. Some have one or two workers who are paid but the rest will not be paid. With our domestic workers, they say that if they eat and use utilities then they don’t have to pay them.”*

Based on the above, some other organisers debate the TUC that some of the informal workers are employers and not employees to be organised by the TUC. A union leader reported that:

*“Some people tell us that the workers in the informal sector are employers but we tell them they are not employers because they know nothing about entrepreneurship. An employer is someone who knows how to grow a business and not someone who is trying to survive. So the majority of these “survivors” don’t see themselves as people who should join the TUC.”*

The workers also have relational problems based on the Ghanaian culture and family system. The employers consider the domestics as family relations, while some pay these workers, others do not because they take responsibility for every need. But, the unions see them as workers. Some organisations have also started supplying workers to be employed as domestic workers. In line with these, employers do not make time to assist the union in drafting an agreement for their employees because they dread being obliged into working conditions to comply with negotiating agreements year in, year out and increasing salaries. A union leader comments that organisers and recruiters of informal workers need to be trained to understand the informal issues but the TUC expects that the unions organise these workers.

*“I think it is not everybody who has the skills to organise in that sector. I think we need education to organise those people there. You could have a strategy for organising those in the formal sector. It is quite easy because before you are even taken on as a worker you could be briefed by the HR department. You learn about unions at school and what they do. But the informal sector is different so you need other skills all together to get the people on board. Some are individuals so to call on them to leave and attend a meeting is a problem. How are you going to get the employer to release the informal employee to attend meetings? You need special skills to understand the work that they do and how to get them to form or join associations.”*

#### **4.5 Lack of funding**

Finally, workers and organisers in the informal sector have a problem with funding their activities. When the fishermen association decided to raise money by levying its members to pay an initial 100 cedis each to promote activities for the group, the membership dropped and only 33 members paid up. Some market women pay 5 cedis every month for welfare services to support members of the group. According to another association, they do not expect to have any dues because the members “do not understand what they are doing.” Some members who took loans out two years ago have not paid up but they have been reinstated after their suspension even though they have not paid up. A leader of an association reports that sellers within the market refuse to join them because the group will ask them to pay monies. A union leader had a discussion with its management for funds to educate and organise the operatives, but due to a lack response the union has not been able to embark on the activities. He reports that:

*“The dues are not enough to buy fuel for the official vehicle to service them because they can never pay. The dues are to let them have a sense of belonging, commitment to show that you are a member of this union. It is a token amount which is determined in absolute terms. I think it is like 120 cedis a year or 1 cedi [less than \$1] a month and the formal sector is 10 cedis a month and yet it is difficult for the informal workers to pay their dues.”*

This leader continued that the formal sector put their money in a pool and then it is used to pay for expenses for organising the informal workers. The reality is that there are other organisations in and out of the country which support the union to organise the workers. The workers do not pay as planned partly because the leaders find it expensive to collect the dues due to the dispersed nature of the operatives. The informal workers of the TUC affiliates are not obliged to pay dues but if they intend to pay, it is 50 per cent of the rate of the lowest paying member in the formal sector. Formal workers’ pay 2% of their salaries as dues, but they do not

know how much the informal workers earn and it varies from time to time. So in this union, the associates decide what they want to contribute and pay once in a while. Some associations have not paid anything for an entire year. Apart from the non-payment of dues, a union pays transportation cost and gives lunch to the informal workers when they attend meetings. The unions do not find it easy to talk to the informal workers about their organising intentions without giving them money because their jobs are survival strategies but the TUC says it does not have that much money to keep giving out. A union leader believes that more money needs to be 'pumped' into sustaining their interest and to commit to organising them. The union leader hopes that this initial stage of bringing the workers on board will soon be over so that they will pay dues. Another union leader explains that the workers do not pay dues because when they start requesting for dues they will not respond to be organised. So they will talk about the payment of dues later. Some associations that have been organised by the unions have not paid any levy since 1995. He continues that they will love to do more but they are limited to how much money they can take from the monies paid by the formal workers.

### **5 Further discussion of the results**

The major strategy the TUC adopted was to redefine the concept of a worker to embrace the informal workers even though most of them are illiterate to raise their membership with help from the TUC's Informal Desk. However, the unions have difficulties in meeting all the expectations or to make their presence felt in every work location in the sector and to sustain the initial enthusiasm shown by the workers. Also, they are unable to organise according to the diversified needs. For example, the carvers and sellers affiliate to the same union while domestic workers are being organised by a union for construction workers. Some of the unions also feel incapable of organising in the informal sector because they do not have adequate skills to manage the informality and dispersion across the country. They do not know how to approach the individual operatives. Therefore, the unions accept any association of informal workers that approach them to affiliate irrespective of their trade. This implies that the informal workers affiliate without considering the union's expertise to support the unique needs of the workers. There is also disagreement between the TUC and other institutions like the NBSSI on whether subordinates/ assistants of operatives should be classified as apprentices or employees and whether operatives with these apprentices are employees or employers. The TUC categorises all operatives and their apprentices as well as employees as workers but other employers' associations and institutions working with informal employers disagree with the TUC's definition of workers in the informal sector. In view of these disparities, some of the TUC leaders believe that they do not have adequate expertise to organise these informal workers. Thus, the TUC has not been able to recruit as many operatives from the informal sector as expected.

The lack of progress made the TUC consider setting up The Informal Sector Desk in 1996 to find creative ways to organise them. But, this has not worked either. After 17 years of organisation in the informal sector, the informal council has been set up for the informal associate members of the TUC to belong to an association of their kind or category. But, the informal workers feel apprehensive when the TUC holds hybrid meetings with formal and informal workers. They feel displaced and find it difficult to follow proceedings. The Informal Desk Officer, therefore, makes an extra effort to ensure that issues arising from the meeting are explained to these workers, which rather makes them feel awkward for their lack of understanding. Another problem is that the associate members are not considered members of the unions, they can only observe meetings and not participate in the proceedings to learn democratic ways of organising from the unions and later practise that on their own in their



meetings if they have any. Consequently, the TUC realised that it cannot organise the informal workers to be part of the same unions as formal workers.

The informal workers are unable to fit into the formal system of organising and could also not fit into a hybrid organisation for formal and informal workers. The unions talk for them and label them as voiceless even though they are able to defend themselves with the local authorities against harassment and to successfully defend their rights for allocation of space to sell without assistance from external actors. The TUC has therefore not been able to use their traditional system to attract the informal workers in substantial numbers. The TUC's approach implies that where the informal workers are not in associations, they are unlikely to be organised by the unions. This explains why some of the unions are at a total loss as to how to identify and organise remote informal workers. Thus, no informal worker has been organised in the informal health sector because they are dispersed in very remote areas in the country.

The unions extend advocacy and training to informal workers and organise informal associations (Gallin, 2002). The first two stages of Schurman et al.'s (2012) 4-stage organising model in Africa conform to Gallin's (2002) model of trade unions' extended definition of workers and the unions' recruitment of informal workers into their existing union structure. The third stage to Schurman et al.'s is where the trade unions collaborate with informal worker organisations without structural leadership but the unions continue to advocate for the associations. According to this study, the TUC's organisational strategies of informal workers reflect Schurman et al.'s model but the second stage of the model does not give details on the forms of informal workers that the unions recruit. In this research, it was found that the TUC mainly recruits associations of informal workers without considering individual operatives outside these associations, they are mobile. Another finding indicates that the formal unions are affiliates (members) of the TUC but the informal organisations are associates (not members). This is the current practice of the TUC; it accepts informal organisations but does not recognise them as members within its formal structure. The structure does not accommodate informality or better still does not have room for both concepts: formality and informality. Hence, the informal organisations loosely associate with the TUC but are not led by its leadership. This strategy does not attract the informal workers so the TUC has decided to create a structured informal federation for the informal associations and then collaborate with them. The fourth stage of Schurman et al.'s model does not specify the federation that the informal organisations are affiliated to but according to this research, that informal federation is separate from the formal union federation. Evidence from this research indicates that the TUC has set up the informal council, which follows the prototype structure of the TUC, to stand on its own and to speak on its own issues. It will serve as an advisory body. The TUC will like the informal workers to organise themselves because it is not able to do so. Both the formal and the informal workers consider that they do not belong together and the TUC is unable to organise them into their fold. Figure 1 illustrates the TUC's organisation strategy.

Literature and empirical evidence indicate that informal workers are able to self-organise into associations and self-help groups (Gallin 2002; Justice et al. 2002; Schurman et al. 2012). In particular, the informal associations have not been able to exercise democratic practices of electing leaders, some leaders have been at post for more than twelve years without any contest. Other associations do not conduct elections during the lifetime of the elected leader. The trade union cannot tolerate this form of leadership which is contradictory to its formal democratic elections in every three to five years.



Another informal characteristic of the associations is the elasticity of time the informal workers enjoy. When they call for meetings, those who attend finish doing what they have to do before showing up. They extend the starting time for their meetings to wait for those who intend to participate at the meetings until they have adequate numbers to begin, and they have enough time to extend the meeting beyond the scheduled closing times if there is any. The relaxed times give the workers the opportunity to converse and enjoy each other's company and to share their concerns with each other. The members know each other, what is happening with each other and with their families; each member is concerned about the well-being of the others. At these meetings, members discuss personal, business and family issues with those who care for them and take counsel from each other because they cannot read information anywhere else. The informal chats are therefore very important to them. The unions cannot afford the relaxed times for meetings because they have to return to their offices. The union members read the information and meet to discuss issues on the agenda. They work by fixed schedules and timelines. During the interviews for this study, the informal workers returned to their wares to exchange greetings with those they know, wave hands at those who passed by or go to sell to customers and then return to the interview. When the participants in this sector were contacted for the interviews, most of them did not schedule times but requested the researcher to show up and that they will make time for the interview while the union leaders fixed a time and were mostly looking at the clock to attend to other duties. This sector is unorganised and that makes it informal. It needs people who have experienced their situations and understand the dynamics within the sector to organise them. The TUC can hardly tolerate these flexible behaviours within its existing structure without compromising the formality within its traditional formal sector. The findings from this study reveal that the informal sector associations which have been accorded associate status by the TUC tend to move towards formality. But, the further the associations move towards formality, the question arises as to how they can support informality within the sector.

Most workers' association exists with informal rules (see Figure 2), which are mostly unwritten because the members are unable to read or write. Members usually draw defaulter's attention to the expectations of the group. For instance, a member who lost the accommodation is helped to get one with contributions from other members irrespective of whether the person is fully paid up or not. They consider the suffering member as family and they cannot leave the worker to suffer alone. When an issue arises, they communicate and voluntarily contribute what they can afford to support. Contributions vary from person to person depending on how much money is raised each time. The unions will find it difficult operating this method among its members in several companies because of the fixed dues they collect from members. Each member will therefore expect to be supported in the same way others are provided for. Therefore, the unions cannot afford to provide free services to the informal sector so they rely mostly on donors to fund their organisational activities and to pay themselves as facilitators.

The TUC does not have funds to continue with these activities without donors. When the TUC initially considered the organisation of the informal workers to ensure growth in their membership, the unions were not able to undertake the activities because of a lack of funds. It is, therefore, unable to organise these workers when donors cease to fund its organisational activities (see Anyemedu, 2000). However, most of the leaders of the associations are not paid for the services they provide for their members. A leader who has been in office for more than ten years is not paid; he could hardly get consistent payment of dues from his members. Likewise, most of the leaders of the associations are not paid for the support they render to the groups they represent. This suggests that unless the unions find alternative ways to organise

the workers, their current structure of remunerating leaders, consultants, advisers and negotiators can hardly survive with informal worker associations without donors. Otherwise, the associations will also become heavily dependent on donor organisations to carry out their activities if they do not look for innovative ways to organise without incurring costs. Though the TUC has recognised that the informal workers are better off self-organising, it has created a parallel organisation by forming the informal council without incorporating it into its system. How the newly established council supports informality is not considered in this study. Further research needs to investigate this development.

Another observation is that some local unions have developed multiple networks with an international organisation, the unions and the associations of informal workers. The leaders of an informal association are also leaders of the international informal organisation, StreetNet Ghana. One of the executives of an association hardly sells in her stall at the market because she is also the organiser for this international organisation. This organisation is also an associate member of the TUC. It creatively adopts the organisational strategies for both the associations and the TUC to recruit from the informal sector (Schurman et al. 2012). This combined organisational strategy was not studied in this research. It will be important for future research to study the impact of this approach on the organisation of workers in the informal sector. This study also revealed the effect of this networking on local associations. The association's leadership is compromised because they have to organise for the international organisation. As such, they spend considerable time on the affairs of the international organisation and neglect the businesses of their own local associations. For instance, the informal association leaders spend a lot of time campaigning to recruit members for the international organisation, StreetNet, and fail to follow up on issues concerning their members because these organisations provide generous funding; as such, the leaders are financially well motivated.

Given the evidence provided, the TUC is finding it a challenge to organise the informal workers into their fold, and it found that the mixed union approach is inadequate to combine formal and informal workers within its formal structure. As a result, the TUC decided to create the informal council platform where the workers will lead the associations and self-organise. The TUC complicates the structure for the federation of the informal workers by replicating the structure for the council after that of the TUC. The discussions clearly explain that formal trade unions are not able to incorporate informal associations into their traditional organising system. The unions need a much more informal method to accommodate the informality of the workers they are recruiting. A look at a more flexible informal system stands to appeal to workers in the informal sector.

## **6. Concluding remarks**

This paper investigates trade union organisation in the informal sector in Ghana to determine whether the trade unions are able to organise the informal workers. This paper was conducted in response to the call by the TUC for research on the exploding informal sector in Ghana. About 90% of Ghana's working population is engaged in the informal sector (GSSL 2016) and the trade unions are desperately organising the workers within it. The focus on the organisation of these workers is due to the decline in union membership. Despite the attempts, the trade unions are not attracting the informal workers into the collective organisations as they should. The TUC resolved to organise in the informal sector because it believes that the members it loses in the formal sector find alternative livelihoods in the informal sector. Thus, it decided to organise these workers including the others in the sector who do not have a chance to work in the formal sector. Though the unions revised their constitutions to embrace the informal

workers, they realised that they are unable to incorporate the informality in the sector associated with behaviour and structure such as flexibility in time, family feeling and inconsistencies in member support into the existing union structure. As a result, the unions have created a separate informal federation for the workers to self-organise but it complicates the structure for this federation by replicating that of the unions.

The unions attempt to recoup their lost membership from the informal sector but they are unable to adequately increase their membership because the role the trade unions are playing in their attempt to organise the informal workers, the forms of organisation they adopt within the sector make it difficult to organise these workers. The unions in Ghana do not have adequate structures and resources to accommodate the informal behaviours and practices within the sector. The workers are also unable to pay dues for the unions to pay their facilitators and to fund their activities within the informal sector so the unions are unable to adequately organise them.

## References

- Afenah A (2010) (Re)claiming citizenship rights in Accra, Ghana. In Sugranyes A and Mathivet C (Eds.), *Cities for all: Proposals and experiences towards the right to the city*. Santiago: Habitant International Coalition. 159–167.
- Adu-Amankwah K (2001) Trade unions in the informal sector: Finding their bearings. *Labour Education Paper: 116*: 1-148.
- Anyemedu K (2000) *Trade union responses to globalization: Case study on Ghana*. ILO/International Institute for Labour Studies.
- Baah YA (2007) Organizing the informal economy: Experience and lessons from Asia and Africa. Ghana TUC. LOFTF (Denmark) Project.
- Baah Y (2012) *Organising workers in the informal economy & creating decent employment: We need a new approach*. LOFTF/West Africa Partners Regional Meeting.
- Barbash, J. (1972). Labor and the corporate state in America. *Journal of economic issues*, 6(1), 43-57.
- Bonner C, and Spooner D (2011a) Organising in the informal economy: A challenge for trade unions. *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*. 2: 87-105.
- Braun V, and Clarke V (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2): 77-101.
- Britwum A and Martens P (2008) The challenge of globalization, labor market restructuring and union democracy in Ghana. Challenge.
- Bryman, Alan, and Emma Bell. 2007. Business research strategies. Business research methods.
- Carter, B (2006) Trade union organizing and renewal: A response to de Turberville. *Work, Employment and Society*, 20(2): 415-426.
- Corbin J and Morse JM (2003) The unstructured interactive interview: Issues of reciprocity and risks when dealing with sensitive topics. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 9(3): 335-354.
- Commons, J. R. (1919). *Industrial goodwill*. McGraw-Hill.
- Croucher R (2007) Unions and the informal sector: The case of Ghana. In Wood G and Brewster C (eds.). *Industrial Relations in Africa* UK: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 209-215).
- Debrah YA (2007) Promoting the informal sector as a source of gainful employment in developing countries: Insights from Ghana. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 18(6): 1063-1084.
- Devenish, Annie, and Caroline Skinner. 2004. Organising workers in the informal economy: The experience of the self-employed Women's Union, 1994-2004. Natal, South Africa: University of Kwa Zulu, School of Development Studies.
- Dey I (1993) *Qualitative data analysis: A user-friendly guide for social scientists*. Routledge.
- Freeman, Richard Barry, and Joel Rogers. 2006. *What workers want*. Cornell University Press.

- Gallin D (2000) Trade unions and NGOs: A necessary partnership for social development. Geneva: United Nations Research. Institute for Social Development.
- Gallin D (2002) Organising in the informal economy. *Labour Education*. 127(2): 21-26.
- Gannon, Martin . 1971. *The management of peripheral employees*. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Proceedings.
- Grant, Richard. 2009. Globalizing City: The Urban and Economic Transformation of Accra, Ghana. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Ghana Statistical Service (2012) 2010 Population and housing census. Retrieved from Accra.
- Ghana Statistical Service (2014) Final 2012 gross domestic product & revised 2013 gross domestic product. Retrieved from [thememorybank.co.uk/.../african-enterprise-and-the-informal-economy/](http://thememorybank.co.uk/.../african-enterprise-and-the-informal-economy/).
- Hart K (1970) Small-scale entrepreneurs in Ghana and development planning. *The Journal of Development Studie.*, 6(4): 104-120.
- Hart K (1973) Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. 11(1): 61-89.
- Heery E, Conley H, Delbridge R and Stewart P (2004) 'Beyond the enterprise: trade union representation of freelances in the United Kingdom', *Human Resource Management Journal*. 14(2): 20 -35.
- Horn P (2002) Organising the Informal Sector: Lessons for Labour: Organising the Informal Sector: Lessons for Labour.
- ILO (1997) *ILO activities in Africa, 1994-99*. Ninth African Regional Meeting, Abidjan. Available from: [http://www.ilo.org/global/resources/WCMS\\_071454/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/resources/WCMS_071454/lang--en/index.htm)
- Ishengoma EK and Kappel R (2006) Economic growth and poverty: Does formalisation of informal enterprises matter?
- Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) (2008) *The state of the Ghanaian economy in 2007*. University of Ghana, Accra.
- Justice DW, Castillo G, Frohlich M, Levin M, Mwamadzingo M, Ghartey NKT and Dorkenoo DK (2002) Unprotected labour: What role for unions in the informal economy? *Labour Education Paper* 2002/2.
- Lapadat, J and Anne, L (1999) Transcription in research and practice: From standardization of technique to interpretive positionings. *Qualitative inquiry*. 5(1): 64-86.
- Lenin, (1971) *The Aristocracy of Labour*, Progress Publishers, Moscow
- Lindell I (2009) 'Glocal' movements: place struggles and transnational organizing by informal workers. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*. 91(2): 123-136.
- MacLean, LM, Mechthild M and Alma E (2004) Improving accuracy of transcripts in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*. 14(1): 113-123.
- Marx, K. (1945). *Capital: A critique of political economy*. Vol. II.

- Meagher, K (1995) Crisis, informalization and the urban informal sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development and Change*. 26(2): 259-284.
- Obeng-Odoom, F (2011) The informal sector in Ghana under siege. *Journal of Developing Societies*. 27(3-4): 355-392.
- Osei-Boateng C and Ampratwum E (2011) *The informal sector in Ghana*. Accra: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
- Perlman, S. (1949). *A Theory of the Labor Movement: Reprint of 1928 Ed*. Macmillan.
- Portes, A and Walton, J (2013) Labor, class, and the international system. Elsevier.
- Roscoe, M, Dorothy L and Jagdish S (1975) Follow-up methods, questionnaire length, and market differences in mail surveys. *The Journal of Marketing*. 20-27.
- Sanyal B (1991) Organizing the self-employed: the politics of the urban informal sector. *International Labour Review*. 130: 39.
- Schurman SJ, Eaton AE, Gumbrell-McCormick R, Hyman R, DiLeo G, Berroterán GM and Viajar V (2012) *Trade union organizing in the informal economy: A review of the literature on organizing in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and Western, Central and Eastern Europe*. Available from Rutgers University: [smlr.rutgers.edu/.../review-of-trade-union-organizing-in-informal-econo...](http://smlr.rutgers.edu/.../review-of-trade-union-organizing-in-informal-econo...)
- Silver BJ (2003) *Forces of labor: workers' movements and globalization since 1870*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tokman, Victor. 2007. Modernizing the informal sector. *UN/DESA Working Paper*(42), 1-13.
- Von Holdt K, and Webster E (2008) Organising on the periphery: new sources of power in the South African workplace. *Employee Relations*. 30(4): 333-354.



## List of Tables

Table 1: GTUC membership from 1939-2007

National Unions of the TUC	Year	Membership
1. Construction & Building Materials Workers' Union (CBMWU) -	1980	40,000
	1990	15,000
2. Communication Workers' Union (CWU)	1972	16,000
	2007	7,694
3. General Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU)	1960	50,000
	2007	27,017
4. Ghana Mineworkers' Union (GMWU)	2000	15,393
5. Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU)	2007	30,000
6. Industrial & Commercial Workers' Union (ICU)	2000	54,000
7. Local Government Workers' Union (LGWU)	2007	7,568
8. Maritime & Dockworkers Union (MDU)	1958	10,000
	2007	20,000
9. National Union Of Seamen (NUS)	1940	100
	1984	5,011
	1990	1,871
	2007	600
10. Public Service Workers Union (PSWU)	1959	20,000
	2007	19,000
11. Public Utility Workers Union (PUWS)	1958	1,700
	2000	5,939
	2005	8,850
12. Railway Enginemen's Union (REU)	1935	1,500
	2007	300
13. Railway Workers' Union (RWU)	1939	21,000
	2000	4,580
14. Teachers & Educational Workers' Union (TEWU)	2007	39,000
15. Timber & Wood Workers' Union (TWU)	1952	140
	2007	25,311
16. Union Of Industry, Commerce & Finance Workers (UNICOF)	2003	4000
	2005	8,090

Compiled from Britwum (2007)

Table 2A: Currently Employed Population 15 years and older in the Informal Sector

Industry	Number	Percentage (%)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	3,322,246	37.5
Mining and quarrying	64,534	0.7
Manufacturing	1,236,044	14.0
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	6,918	0.1
Water supply, sewerage, waste management	23,048	0.3
Construction	309,132	3.5

Wholesale and retail trade	1,910,317	21.6
Transportation and storage	236,948	2.7
Accommodation and food service activities	397,866	4.5
Information and communication	44,102	0.5
Financial and insurance activities	41,505	0.5
Real estate activities	6,103	0.1
Professional, scientific and technical	61,746	0.7
Administrative and support service activities	35,051	0.4
Public administration and defence	147,082	1.7
Education	390,673	4.4
Human health and social work activities	174,590	2.0
Arts, entertainment and recreation	67,612	0.8
Other service activities	309,711	3.5
Activities of households as employers	68,531	0.8
Activities of extraterritorial organizations	1,947	0.0
All Industries	8,855,706	100.0

Source: GSS, 2016

Table 2B: Currently Employed Population 15 years and older in the Informal Sector by Status in employment

Status in Job	Number (Both Sex)	Percent (%)
Paid employee	1,884,331	11.5
Non-agric self-employed with employees	351,959	4.2
Non-agric self-employed without employees	3,152,801	37.8
Non-agric contributing family worker	229,079	2.7
Agric self-employed with employees	118,243	1.4
Agric self-employed without employees	2,362,963	28.3
Agric contributing family worker	614,131	7.4
Domestic workers	42,371	0.5
Casual workers	347,281	4.2
Apprentice	59,986	0.7
Other (Specify)	106,744	1.3

Source: GSS, 2016

Table 2C: Major Industry of Currently Employed Population 15 years and older

Industry	Number
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	3,330,089
Mining and quarrying	74,663
Manufacturing	1,253,840
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	11,105
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation act	29,630
Construction	316,368
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycle	1,925,943
Transportation and storage	252,215
Accommodation and food service activities	405,658
Information and communication	46,052

Financial and insurance activities	71,592
Real estate activities	6,102
Professional, scientific and technical activities	81,602
Administrative and support service activities	46,677
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	182,442
Education	534,379
Human health and social work activities	241,238
Arts, entertainment and recreation	69,563
Other service activities	313,711
Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated good	68,530
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	1,947
Total	9,263,346

Source: GSS, 2016

Table 3 - Forms of Organising Informal Workers

A: Forms of organising in the informal sector		B: Model for organizing informal labour force	C: African Trade Union strategies in organising informal sector workers	D: The GTUC 5-path organising strategy of informal workers	E: The TUC's strategies in organising informal workers
Primary Strategy	Type of organizing				
Grassroots organising and building	Unions, Membership-Based Organisations (MBOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Co-operatives	Sectoral union for workers in the same economic branch	Broaden union definition of workers legally represented	Encourage and support affiliated unions organising informal workers	Extend definition of workers and activities to the informal sector
Collective negotiations and representation	Unions and MBOs	A union according to trades or jobs	Recruit and organise into a unitary, sectoral trade union structure	Encourage affiliated unions not organising informal workers to explore possibilities	Organise only informal associations
Economic and livelihood development	Co-operatives	Sectoral within a sectoral union representing formal and informal workers within that sector	Collaborate without structural relationship providing advocacy and joint campaigns	Identify existing informal sector organisations and develop relations with them	Affiliate the associations to the structured informal federation
Policy, legal and rights advocacy	NGOs, CBOs, Networks, Alliances	A mixed union of informal workers, e.g. temps, casuals	Affiliate Member Based Organisation of very Poor (MBOPs) to a structured federation	Encourage existing informal sector organisations to affiliate with national unions or GTUC	Collaborate without structural leadership from the TUC

			and advocate for such		
Mobilisation and campaigning	Networks, Alliances, Unions	An organisation of unemployed workers performing tasks on informal or occasional basis		Pilot informal organisational projects for lessons for further organising	
Social, welfare and training	NGOs, CBOs	A miscellaneous union for informal workers in different sectors within the same region as an associate to a regional federation affiliated to the national.			
		A national trade union federation of informal workers			

Table 4: Interview participants

Participant	Number
Focus Groups	10 (4,7,4,3,9,5,5,7,5,4)
Individual Interviews	47
Informal workers (not in associations)	10
Members of informal associations	13
Union leaders	9
Institutions (working with informal workers)	5

Table 5: Types of informal workers interviewed

Category of Informal Work	Type of Business
Trade, craft and manufacturing: Agro-based processing activities; forest product workers	Arts and craft producers and businessmen, welder, carpenter, wood carvers
Construction	Steel bender, mason, plumber, carpenter, electrician, builder
Garage workers	Car inside decorator, sprayer, welder, fitter, auto electrician
Tailors and seamstresses	Seamstresses, tailor
Fishing and fish processing	Fishermen, fishmongers
<b>Services:</b> Food processors	Dry cow leg sellers, bush meat seller, frozen food seller
Operator of restaurant and bar	Cooked food sellers
Hairdressers/barbers	Beautician
Transport workers - drivers and porters	Taxi drivers, cargo drivers and porters
Entertainment providers	Instrumentalists, actors, singers, composers, music directors and conductors, artist managers, dancers, DJs
<b>Retail/Trading:</b> Commerce - shop and kiosk operators	Businessman - (used cars, motor bikes and bicycles); cloth sellers, towel, sponge and assorted things seller, iron pot and accessories seller, second-hand clothes dealers
Market/food traders	Yam seller, cassava seller, tomato seller, prekese and pure water seller
Street vendors/traders	Credit card vendors (mobile top-up card vendors)



Table 6: Education level of household heads by sex: 1970, 1984, 2000 and- 2010

	Male				Female			
Education	1970	1984	2000	2010	1970	1984	2000	2010
Never Attended	63.3	46.7	38.8	26.2	82.3	65.3	57.7	38.4
Primary	7.3	7.7	4.9	8.3	6.9	9.0	6.0	12.3
Middle/JSS/JHS	23.0	35.2	33.6	39.1	9.0	20.8	23.0	33.2
Secondary/SSS/SHS	2.8	5.6	8.5	11.6	0.6	2.1	4.2	7.0
Commercial/Technical/Vocational	1.4	2.7	5.6	3.3	0.4	1.3	3.6	2.8
Post-Secondary/Middle	1.5	2.0	3.9	2.3	0.7	1.2	3.3	2.1
Tertiary	0.7	1.2	4.7	9.2	0.1	0.3	2.2	4.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Compiled from the 1970, 1984, 2000 and 2010 Population Censuses of Ghana

Table 7: Members of the Informal Council

MUSIGA,
Ghana Actors' Guild,
Physically Disabled,
GHATA,
Ga East Traders,
Makola Traders
Agbogbloshie Chop Bar Operators
Makola Chop Bar Association
Ghana Youth Porters

Table 8: The TUC's strategies in organising informal workers

Extend definition of workers and activities to the informal sector
Organise only informal associations
Affiliate the associations to the structured informal federation
Collaborate without structural leadership from the TUC

Figure 1: The TUC's organising strategies of informal workers

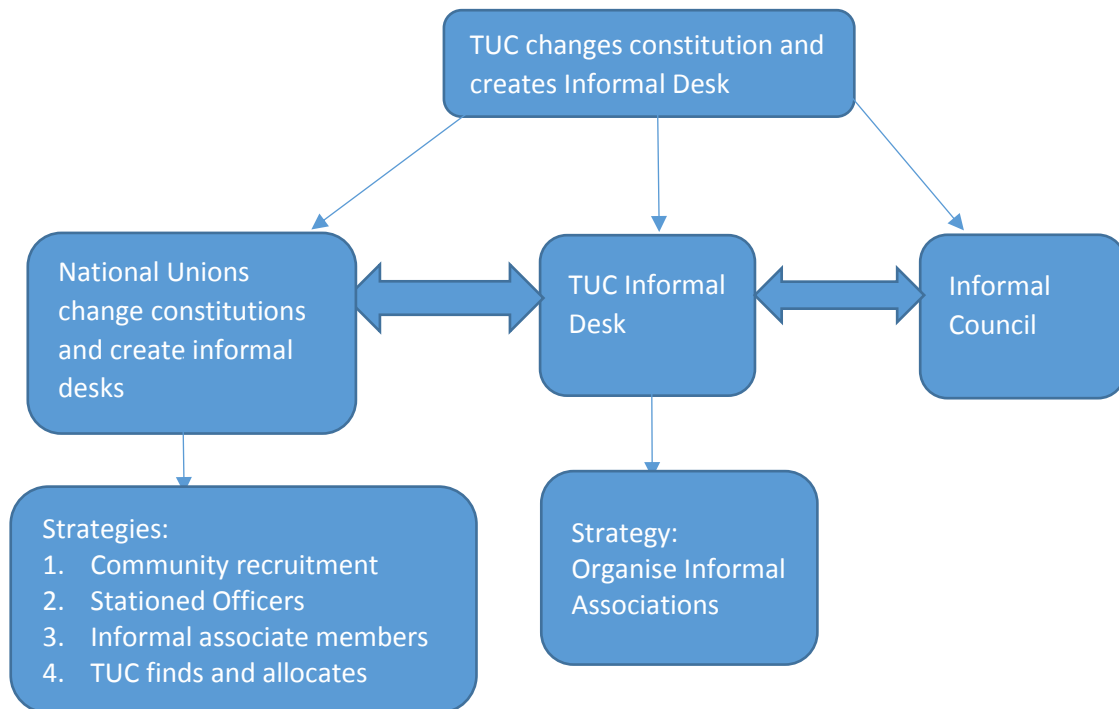
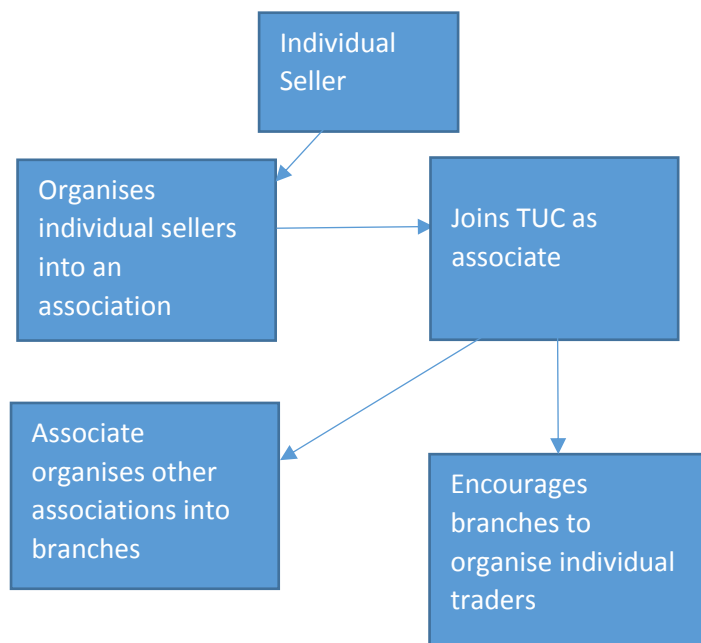


Figure 2: Informal workers' organising strategy as associates to the TUC



## Protocol

### **Interview Guide 1**

#### **Interview guide for informal workers**

1. What work do you do?
2. Why did you choose this type of work?
3. What are the problems you face in your business?
4. Do you have workers?
5. If yes, do you pay insurance or SSNIT for your workers?
6. Do you pay any tax?
7. What kind of support do you need from the authorities for your work?
8. Do you belong to any association?
9. How can all informal workers come together in a group?
10. Are you interested in forming an association?
11. If an association is formed, will you like to join?
12. What is your opinion about being self-employed in Ghana?
13. What will you say about informal work/sector in Ghana?
14. Is there anything else you will like me to know?

### **Interview Guide 2**

#### **Interview guide for Informal Worker Associations**

1. What is the name of your association?
2. Who are the members of your association?
3. Is there a specific requirement to join this association?
4. Do all the workers in your catchment area belong to your association?
5. Are there others who don't belong to the group?
6. What benefits have you derived from joining the group?
7. Do your members pay dues?
8. How does your association organise the members?
9. Is your association affiliated to the TUC?
10. What are the challenges you face in organising the informal sector workers?
11. What will you say about informal work/sector in Ghana?

### **Interview Guide 3**

#### **Interview guide for unions organising informal workers**

1. What is the name of your union?
2. Which category of your workers is in the informal sector?
3. How do you get your members?
4. How many informal sector associations are you working with now?
5. Why do you want to organise informal sector workers and bring them under the umbrella of the TUC?
6. What other institutions are you working with in the informal sector?
7. What has been your experience with organising according to the provisions of the labour act?
8. How do you finance your activities in the informal sector?
9. What support do provide to the associates?

10. Are there challenges that you have experienced in organising these workers?
11. What do you expect this organisation to look like in the future?
12. How would you describe the informal sector?

#### **Interview Guide 4**

##### **Interview guide for institutions working with the informal workers**

1. What is your organisation?
2. What are your roles and objectives?
3. What relationship do you have with the informal sector workers?
4. What challenges do you face in working with the informal sector workers?
5. Are there any agencies you work with in the informal sector?
6. What do you think about the Labour Act in relation to the informal sector?