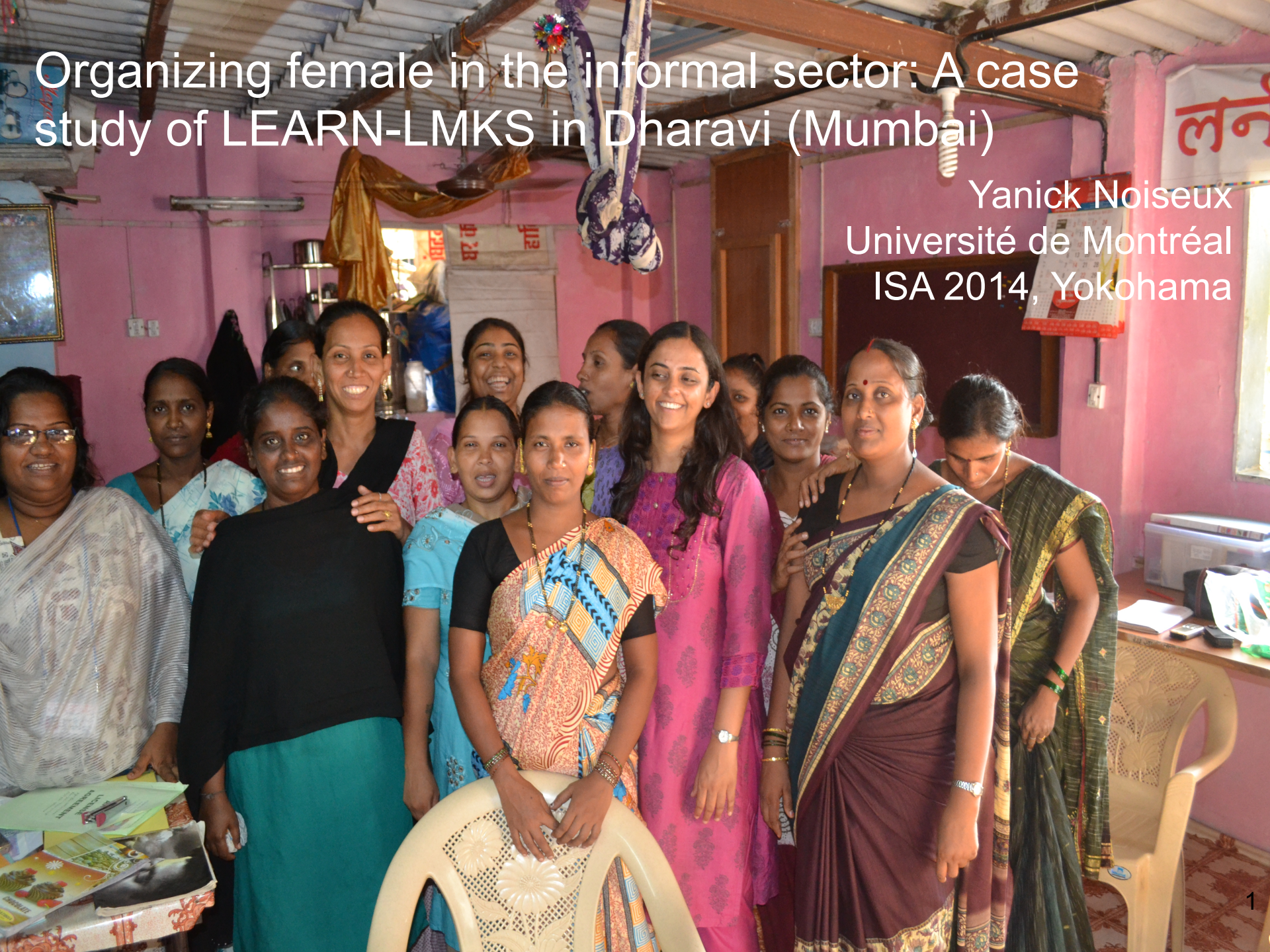


Organizing female in the informal sector: A case study of LEARN-LMKS in Dharavi (Mumbai)

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Overview

Conceptual framework

Inspired by Boaventura de Sousa Santos' Sociology of absences, emergences and the work of translation

Objective

Gathering research material allowing us to make mutually intelligible practices, strategies and claims conveyed by the collective organization of workers entangled on peripheral labour markets in order to nourish both a renewed "union language" as well as organizational matrices and new directories of action.

Methodology

- Literature review
- 3 groups interviews, 18 semi-directive individual et semi-individual interviews with 13 union activists and 25 short interviews with LMKS members.

I. Context

1. Jobless growth, casualization of formal employment and rise of the informal sector (93 %)
2. Dharavi citysystem as an ideal case of Durand's job centrifugation dynamic



II. Working and living conditions

- Very low income
 - Housework (cooking): 6000 Rps (100 USD/month)
 - Homebase (zari, papad, etc): 3000 Rps (50\$/month)
- High risk of work related illnesses
 - Skin problem
 - Lung problems and cancer
 - Low vision
- Difficult access to potable water
- Unsanitary shelters
- False allegations of robbery/non payment of wages
- Bribery and police harassment
- Sexual harassment/ domestic violence



III. LEARN's Evolution

1. Foundation of Labour Education And Research Network (LEARN) in 2000.
 1. Training program for self-help groups on microfinance
 2. Leaders training
 3. Gender education
2. Foundation of LMKS (2004); (recognition 2008).
 1. 5000 members
 2. 5 sectorial sub-unions (Domestic workers; Zari/embroidery; Garments, Mess; Street-vendor)
 3. New sub-union : waste collection (2012)
3. Child care center (2013)

III. What can we learn from LEARN/LMKS's experience (1)

- The quest for visibility, recognition and dignity.



Lessons learned (2)

- Promoting training, education and information circulation



Lessons learned(3)

- Building a 360 degrees approach adapted to the differentiated characteristic of “informal workers”.



Lessons learned (4-5-6-7)

4. Overcoming the public-private divide
5. Engaging leadership from below and securing democracy
6. Developing tools and means to resolve conflicts between workers internally
7. Do it yourself : to a certain degree, LMKS can finance its activities



Thank you !

- Draft available on request.
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