Evaluation Summaries

International Labour Office

Promoting the Elimination of Bonded Labour in Pakistan

Quick Facts

Countries: Pakistan

Final Evaluation: April 2010

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Bonded labour

Evaluation Management: Regional Programming Unit – RO Bangkok (Oktavianto Pasaribu)

Evaluation Team: Sabina Ahmad

Project Start: 01 January 2007

Project End: 30 April 2010

Project Code: PAK/06/51M/NET

Donor: The Netherlands (USD 999,363)

Key Words: Bonded labour; forced labour

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Project Outcome 1:
Reduced incidence of bonded labour through development of knowledge base and awareness on aspects of bonded labour (particularly gender dynamics)

Project Outcome 2:
Institutional capacity of government (at all levels federal to local)

Project Outcome 3:
Improved conditions of labour, particularly for women in targeted sectors

Present situation of project

The project was completed in April 2010. Signs of emerging impact are visible in the government's support and commitment to the issue with the appointment of dedicated focal points both at the federal and provincial levels. The enhanced institutional capacity of the state institutions as well as the support of the social partners is expected to contribute towards responsive and effective redress mechanisms at different levels, including in sustaining momentum and pressing for policy action in this regard.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation framework centred around the key research questions including Relevance and Strategic Fit, Validity of Design, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Emerging Impact & sustainability. A qualitative research design for the evaluation was followed with data collection tools. A series of **key informant interviews** were conducted with representatives from each of the identified stakeholders' groups in **Lahore, Kasur, Islamabad, Karachi, Hyderabad and Peshawar.** Limitations included the access to labour in bondage as they were at work at the time of visits and hence unavailable for detailed interviews. The impact of the interventions, particularly with the government could have been better assessed if there was an opportunity to meet/ interview the officers who had attended the lectures.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The findings show that the project has been successful in drawing attention to the decent work deficit in the two economic sectors by firmly establishing the bonded labour issue as a priority issue among its constituents and social partners, thus mobilizing support for action in addressing the issue. The project was instrumental in forging new partnerships, including the involvement of Brick Kiln Owners Association (BKOA) in the project. Direct engagement with the Parliamentarians has resulted in their participation in the roundtable meetings, contributing to the tabling of resolutions on bonded labour in the provincial assemblies of Punjab, Baluchistan and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa.

The findings indicate that the gender component of the project remained somewhat weak as it was not built in the project design in the shape of specific interventions. A majority of such interventions under the outcome 3 could not be fully achieved within the project period. Similarly, the component on education could be met only partially with the NFE segment taking off.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

For ILO:

1. A clear area for research and policy advocacy has emerged around a needs-based comprehensive assessment of the situation of bonded labour in various sectors in Pakistan. The integration of planning, monitoring and evaluation tools in the National Policy and Plan of Action remain a pending dialogue with government and other partners which can be considered as follow on work by ILO.

2. There is a clear need for policy advocacy for an integrated approach towards release and rehabilitation effort accompanied by policy action and supporting implementation mechanism to address the issue.

3. Continue technical support to govt. departments to draw up a clear mandate, clarify operational mechanisms

4. Expand focus on the district level particularly for strengthening implementation mechanisms.

5. Use this as an entry point to leverage joint collaboration and extended linkages with other JPCs particularly on health and education to address the issue of bonded labour as well as to collaborate with other relevant ministries, particularly Education, Health, Social Welfare and Women Development, the inter-ministerial committees and Planning Commission with a view to establish bonded labour as a vulnerable group

6. Include examining and learning from similar work at the regional level, particularly the Indian model on convergence-based approach for prevention and rehabilitation.

For Government:

7. The government needs to take in to account the recommendations on proposed amendments to the laws and put in place implementation mechanisms for effective enforcement of laws.

8. Undertake independent and comprehensive surveys to establish the number and location and needs of people held in bonded labour.

9. Strengthen the district level implementation mechanism particularly the District Vigilance Committees and monitoring by labour inspectorates by ensuring that they are adequately trained and resourced.

10. Follow a strategy of convergence by developing integrated programs offering social services including education, health, skills trainings, and opportunities for improved livelihood for the rehabilitation of freed bonded labour.

11. Leverage other national and district level poverty reduction programs like Benazir

Income Support Program and extend their coverage to bonded labour.

For employers' & workers' organizations:

12. Operationalize the model contract and the voluntary adoption of the code of conduct by member institutions in case of EFP.

13. PWF can continue to lobby for the rights of workers and adherence to International Labour Standards as well as promotion of decent work with a focus on bonded labour.

For Civil Society Organizations:

14. There is a need to bring organizations and their experiences together so that synergies can be built to effectively address the issue of bonded labour in their respective areas.

Important lessons learned

The Lessons Learnt include:

- The project has set a good example by addressing the key challenges around the knowledge and capacity gaps at different levels.

- The project experience indicated that while it is important to focus the overall policy level for long term impact, it is equally important to strengthen implementation mechanism at the local level for translating policy in to action.

- The project builds a case for exploring new partnerships especially with media, parliamentarians and religious scholars with a view to extend outreach, widen ownership and mobilize public opinion on the issue.

- The project has provided an example to view various interventions through the lens of DWCP and seek resonance of project outcomes with the larger DWCP goals.

- The project experience also reveals the potential to leverage other interventions under the One UN Program for synergizing efforts and 'delivering as one'.