

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO)
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
PAKISTAN

Employers' Organisations and IPEC Activities

Employers' organisations have been actively involved in IPEC programmes and activities from the beginning as implementing agencies. Furthermore, in line with ILO's active partnership policy (APP) and ILO Country objectives, there has been close consultation and involvement of employers' organisations, as ILO's tripartite constituents and other partners, in identifying their priorities and needs to address the issues of child labour. IPEC support to employers' organisations is in the areas of awareness raising; capacity building/institutional development; direct action programmes with children in hazardous and exploitative work; and law and policy.

In 1997 IPEC initiated broad-based strategy and policy exercises with employers' organisations to support them to develop an **employers' policy and plan of action** on the elimination of child labour and the protection of working children. The Employers' Federation of Pakistan undertook the policy development exercises and will present the employers' policy and plan of action for the elimination of child labour and the protection of working children at a national conference in early 1998.

ACTION PROGRAMMES WITH WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS

1. **The Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP)** implemented a programme of awareness-raising, among its members, on the national legislation on child labour and advocated for the protection of working children and the elimination of hazardous and exploitative child work among its members under an IPEC Action Programme starting in 1994. It translated international instruments and national legislation on the subject and held workshops and seminars nation-wide. In the second phase of the Programme, the EFP has established a network of local employers for protection of working children with the nucleus at the EFP secretariat in Karachi and 20 focal points nationwide.
2. Under a direct support IPEC action programme, employers in the carpet industry through the **Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA)**, in collaboration with Bunyad Literacy Community Council (BLCC), started programmes for child carpet weavers in two villages in districts Sheikhpura and Hafizabad in Punjab in 1995. This pilot project developed and tested new methods to address child labour in the carpet industry. The programme provided rehabilitative services (non-formal education, counselling, skilling and recreation) to the carpet weaving children, and encouraged better working environment and conditions in the homes where the weaving takes place; it also encouraged the replacement of child workers by adults. The success of this programme led to the PCMEA taking over responsibility for the programme activities in the two villages. In a second phase IPEC programme with PCMEA and BLCC, four new carpet-weaving communities in Punjab have been mobilised and the programme activities started there. PCMEA now is planning to replicate and take to scale the model established under the

IPEC-supported programme and is seeking funds through the newly established government and PCMEA sponsored NGO, Child Care Foundation of Pakistan.

3. A major IPEC programme in Pakistan, "Elimination of child labour in the soccer ball industry in Sialkot, Pakistan", with a total cost of about US\$1.5 million is a joint partnership between the Sialkot-based employers in the soccer-ball industry through the **Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, ILO and UNICEF with the cooperation of Save the Children - UK, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, and Bunyad Literacy Community Council. The aim of the Sialkot project is to eliminate child labour in the soccer ball stitching industry over the next two years. The project has been developed on the basis of extensive preparatory work including national tripartite consultations, the child labour survey and special studies in Sialkot district.

MINI-PROGRAMMES WITH WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS

- 1-2. **Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP)**, produced additional copies of its translations of national laws relevant to child labour and International Labour Convention 138 and Recommendation 146.

PROGRAMMES WITH SUBSTANTIAL TRIPARTITE/EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS INVOLVEMENT

1. The Directorate of Labour Welfare in North West Frontier Province is implementing an action programme to raise and form a broad-based consensus on the need for action to address child labour issues. Provincial Government (public officials at the divisional and district levels, inspectors) are trained on the scope and enforcement of the national laws relating to child labour; and the local communities, including employers' organisations are mobilised. The Sarhad Chambers of Commerce and the local employers' associations have been actively involved with the programme. Similar action programmes will be started with the Governments of Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan. Several activities of the programme are tripartite.
2. The Directorate of Labour Welfare, Punjab, organised, under IPEC mini-programme, a tripartite seminar on elimination of child labour in carpet weaving and other industries.
3. The Provincial Government of Sindh, through its Directorate of Labour Welfare, has planned to organise, under an IPEC action programme, a workshop for the tripartite partners and NGOs on debt bondage, known as 'peshgi' which affects many families, including children.

WORKERS' INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER IPEC ACTIVITIES

1. Employers' organisations are represented on the **IPEC National Steering Committee (NSC)** by Employers' Federation of Pakistan.
2. Employers' representatives participated in the **First Meeting of IPEC Partner**

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Organisations, organised by ILO-IPEC in March 1996 to draw lessons from experience in implementing IPEC action programmes, to stimulate means of cooperation between IPEC partner organisations, and to encourage the replication of successful approaches among a wider group of organisations.

3. Employers' representatives also participated in the **Technical Consultative Meeting** organised by ILO-IPEC in March 1996 to discuss and finalise the programme proposal "Combating abusive child labour through prevention, withdrawal and rehabilitation", taking into consideration existing experiences in Pakistan to address child labour and child bonded labour.
4. Employers' representatives attended the presentation of the child labour national statistical survey on 9 October 1996 at a **National Symposium** in Islamabad.
5. **Informational materials** are disseminated to employers' organisations on an on-going basis.
6. Employers' organisations are involved in the **consultative process** at the project formulation stage of major child labour elimination programmes in the country. For example, the project formulation missions for the project on the elimination of child labour in the soccer ball industry in Sialkot discussed the proposed programme with Employers' Federation of Pakistan, Skills Development Council (Punjab), as well as with local employers' groups in Sialkot.
7. ILO-IPEC supported and facilitated the participation of employers' representatives, along with government and workers' representatives, to the *Asia Regional Consultation on Child Labour* (11-13 August 1997) for the Oslo Conference on Child Labour, organised by ILO-IPEC, along with UNICEF and Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad.
8. ILO-IPEC direct action programmes with working children, target employers and workers associated with the workplaces of the children. An example is the direct and positive involvement of the Tanneries Association in the IPEC Action Programme with an NGO in Kasur.

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including at the level of the home-based industry; to discuss and identify alternatives, particularly education programmes, for children working in these sectors. Opening and closing sessions of the seminars had tripartite representation.

3. **Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions of Transport Workers (PFTUTW)** undertook an awareness and advocacy campaign, which involved the production of posters, flyers and putting up of banners at various locations throughout the country.
4. **Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER)** brought trade unionists, child labour experts from universities and NGOs together in Karachi, to sensitise the unionists and inspire them to take action and develop programmes to combat child labour and improve the working conditions of children.
5. **Pakistan Labour Federation** was assisted to provide support for a school for working children established by Pakistan Labour Federation, with support from the Government of Azad Jammu Kashmir and World Asian Workers' Organisation, in Upper Chattar, Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu Kashmir.

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WORKERS' INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER IPEC ACTIVITIES

1. Workers organisations are represented on the **IPEC National Steering Committee (NSC)** in Pakistan by All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (APFTU).
2. Workers' representatives participated in the **First Meeting of IPEC Partner Organisations**, organised by ILO-IPEC in March 1996 to draw lessons from experience in

implementing IPEC action programmes, to stimulate means of cooperation between IPEC partner organisations, and to encourage the replication of successful approaches among a wider group of organisations.

3. Workers' representatives also participated in the **Technical Consultative Meeting** organised by ILO-IPEC in March 1996 to discuss and finalise the programme proposal "Combating abusive child labour through prevention, withdrawal and rehabilitation", taking into consideration existing experiences in Pakistan to address child labour and child bonded labour.
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7. As a token of the commitment of Pakistani workers to the cause of elimination of child labour in Pakistan, All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (APFTU) has made a token contribution of US\$1,000/- to the Sialkot project.

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