



Addressing poverty to eliminate child labour in post-crisis settings (Pakistan)



International
Labour
Organization

BACKGROUND

The earthquake that ripped across Northern Pakistan on 8th October 2005 caused extensive damage to human lives and livelihoods. The earthquake damaged and destroyed houses, household assets, agricultural stock, livestock and poultry. Water sources were blocked, irrigation channels severed, and community infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and schools crumbled down. Markets collapsed and market infrastructure suffered greatly. A drastic fall in incomes coupled with inflated commodity prices resulted in the situation becoming desperate for the poor.

The large number of families and children affected by the earthquake became highly vulnerable. Many school-going children were left without schools, teachers and teaching supplies. The destruction of the educational facilities and resources, and thus safe shelter, left children exposed to serious risks of abuse and exploitation, including the worst forms of child labour. The loss of families' livelihoods and assets resulted in numerous short and long-term consequences for children. A large number of the households affected by the earthquake were already living below the poverty line before the disaster. Child labour prevalence increased from 5% to 13% after the earthquake.

ACTION

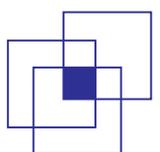
The IPEC Project "Pakistan Earthquake Child Labour Response" (PECLR) aimed to provide non-formal education (NFE) to children in the worst forms of child labour and initiated skills training programmes for mothers of working children studying in the rehabilitation centres established under the Project. It was important to equip families of working children with marketable skills for economic recovery and ultimately the elimination of child labour. Community members and families of working children were involved in the selection of the trades in which they would be trained.

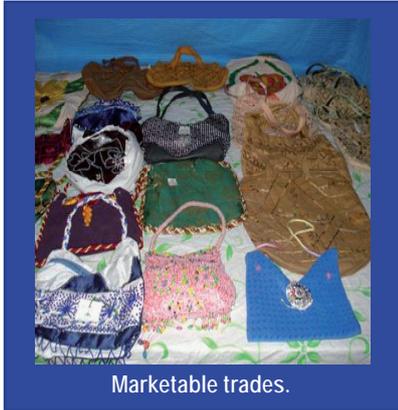
The families, especially mothers and children, received skills trainings in dress making, embroidery and tailoring. Successful trainees were given certificates on completion. The trainings were held by seven union councils in Tehsil Balakot (the Project intervention area). The selection of trades was done through a consultation process involving members of the Committee for Management of Rehabilitation Centres and family members of working children.

ACHIEVEMENTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

One of the batches of adult trainees won a bid from the Kaghan Memorial Trust for stitching uniforms for its students. The Project and implementing agency encouraged and facilitated the group's application. This particular group was trained for another three months by an experienced trainer. All the members of the batch were the mothers of working children studying in Rehabilitation Centres under the PECLR Project.

Good practice





Marketable trades.

In total, 125 families were linked with the Kaghan Memorial Trust, Sehar Foundation and Badban. These organizations were running micro-finance programmes in the PECLR Project intervention areas.

In itself, winning a bid is a good example of potential sustainability. To further promote this, an emphasis was placed on the conversion of different committees and networks at the local level into community-based organizations (CBOs) that could design project proposals, apply for funding and implement programmes on their own. The role of CBOs at community level has increased significantly during the last few years. They are now independent bodies operating at the grassroots level to design and implement programmes according to the local needs. In some areas, the Committees for

Management of Rehabilitation Centres (CMRCs) are very active and interested in rehabilitation centres management. The PECLR Project intends to strengthen these CMRCs through capacity building activities and prepare them to register themselves as a CBO. The Project is trying through implementing partners to register them as CBOs with the social welfare department. The Project will contact social welfare departments to facilitate registration.

LESSONS LEARNED

A sound social mobilization campaign leads to sustainability. Given the urgency of delivery of project components in the post-earthquake response, not much time was spent on social mobilization. Intervention was over a short span of time. Despite this, positive results were still evident.

It is suggested that interventions allocate sufficient time and resources (both human and financial) in order to obtain the best results.

The PECLR Project was started as an emergency response in an extremely difficult climate/terrain at high elevations in the Himalayan mountain range - where it was the only project addressing the need of working children in the area. Coordinated efforts were not possible with other interventions.

The people of the area lacked information on seeking support from various sources. The first step was to identify families of working children, then to include them in a skills training programme. Evaluations conducted after the skill training revealed that participants lacked knowledge on how to utilize and benefit from the skills they had learned. In response, the Project lobbied different social safety nets and micro finance institutes working in the area to include families of working children in their programmes. Awareness sessions on available source and process on seeking financial assistance were also held with the beneficiaries. A resource kit is being designed on available resources, methods for obtaining financial assistance and modes of payment and repayment.

CONTACT:

Sherin Khan, Senior Specialist on Child Labour, ILO Subregional Office for South Asia, New Delhi, India (khans@ilo.org).

Muhammad Saifullah Chaudhry, Senior Programme Officer, IPEC Pakistan (msaif@ilo.org).

Shahbaz Bokhari, Project Manager, IPEC Pakistan (bokhari@ilo.org).

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
ILO - 4 route des Morillons - CH-1211 Geneva 22 - Switzerland (www.ilo.org/ipec - ipec@ilo.org).

Copyright @ ILO - Geneva May 2010.

