BURIED IN BRICKS
A RAPID ASSESSMENT OF
BONDED LABOUR IN BRICK KILNS
IN AFGHANISTAN
METHODOLOGY

Survey locations:
Surkhroad, Nangarhar province
Deh Sabz, Kabul province

Dates of fieldwork:
Sept-Oct 2011

Quantitative
• Household survey of 190 workers (adults & children)
• Surveys of brick kiln owners & community members

Qualitative
• Focus groups with adult workers, child workers & brick kiln owners
• Case studies
• Key informant interviews
**Cycle of debt**

**What is bonded labour?**

**Bonded labour:** a debtor pledges work as collateral against debt without reasonable compensation or clearly defined services

**Cycle of debt:**
- Intergenerational transference
- Hazardous work = medical expenses

**Forced labour:**
- Threat of punishment
- Involuntary

Bonded labour in kilns is one of **worst forms of child labour**
Cycle of vulnerability
Why do people agree to enter into situations of debt bondage?

98% of households started working in kilns in Pakistan

Bonded labour offers:
• Access to credit
• Transportation costs
• In-kind payments
  • Shelter
  • Electricity
  • Water

Cycle of vulnerability:
Vulnerability of exile perpetuated even after return within kilns
**Cycle of dependence**

**Why do kilns use debt bondage?**

**Employer dependence on bonded labour:**
Guarantees regular, inexpensive labour

**Employee dependence on kiln owner:**
Shelter, regular work, access to credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>Piece rate per 1,000 bricks</th>
<th>Bricks/day</th>
<th>Wage per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deh Sabz</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>370 AFA</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>407 AFA/ 8.54 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>750 AFA</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>278 AFA / 5.82 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surkhroad</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>270 AFA</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>297 AFA / 6.23 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>630 AFA</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>170 AFA / 3.57 USD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Cycle of poverty**

Why is there an intergenerational pattern of poverty?

Without education and skills, child bonded labourers cannot break the cycle of poverty and will repeat the same cycle with their children.
CONCLUSION

- Banning child labour is **not** a solution
- Need a comprehensive strategy to *improve* conditions and provide people with tools to break out of these
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