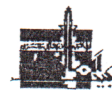


Update Sialkot



"The Project to Eliminate Child Labour in the Soccer Ball Industry in Sialkot, Pakistan" is a joint project under the Agreement signed by the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Atlanta, Georgia (USA) on 14 February 1997. The project is being implemented by ILO, UNICEF, SCCI, Save the Children - UK, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal and Bunyad Literacy Community Council



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ISSUE 2

SIALKOT & ISLAMABAD

EDITORIAL

The second issue of Update Sialkot focuses on the present exciting developments taking place in and around the Sialkot Soccer Ball Project. On all fronts activities have taken off and are continuously gaining momentum. Since November 1997 the Sialkot Implementation Team has been meeting regularly and preparations are being made to convene the Sialkot Programme Forum. In the present issue each of the participating agencies gives a brief update of its achievements to date. Additionally, we offer a report on the SCF-UK/DFID Planning Workshop, which was held from 15 to 17 December 1997 in Sialkot. Internationally, things have not been quiet either. We report on the mission that Mr Khawaja Zaka-uddin (SCCI), Mr Rijk van Haarlem (ILO) and Mr David Husselbee (SCF UK) undertook to the US in November 1997. This visit has not only given the Update Sialkot a global circulation, but also, and more importantly, has contributed to a better international understanding of the challenges of this project. We hope that we can continue to inform an ever-increasing (or so it seems) audience on the developments in this project.

Rueben Dudley,
Director ILO Office for Pakistan
and Afghanistan, and Chair, PCC

SCF-UK Planning Workshop

BUILDING BRIDGES

From 15 to 17 December 1997 Save the Children UK organized a Planning Workshop on the implementation of the Sialkot Soccer Ball Project. Experienced British consultant Mr Len Bridge acted as facilitator of the workshop, which was made possible by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The participants were representatives of all the stakeholders of the Sialkot Project, including PCC members ILO, UNICEF, SCCI, SCF UK, PBM, and BLCC, as well as other organisations such as the National Rural Support Programme and the All-Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (its Deputy Secretary General attended the first day). Moreover, a number of women stitchers and contractors participated in the workshop. The wide range of participants presented an opportunity for those less familiar with the project to really get to know the people and issues involved.

The workshop used the guidelines provided by the Partners' Operational Framework, the formal project framework, to produce the next phase of the implementation strategy for the Sialkot Implementation Team, the members of which are responsible for the day to day management of the project. The workshop followed the logic of the Log Frame. This implied that participants were invited to formulate goal, purpose, output and activities respectively of the project. The result was a lot of lively debate, at the end of the day resulting in a clearer and more structured picture of all the tasks that lay ahead of all the participating agencies.

SCF will produce a brief report on some of the outcomes of the planning exercise, subject to approval of the Project Coordinating Committee.

Having said this, it is beyond the shadow of a doubt that the workshop has contributed a lot to the cohesion and spirit of cooperation among all participating agencies. Once more a word of thanks to the facilitator Mr Len Bridge and Save the Children.

mission to the US

SIALKOT ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

American consumer pressure is, according to some, the driving force behind the Sialkot Project. While this may not be the complete story, it is a fact that the project is carefully followed by several stakeholders in the US. In this context Mr Rijk van Haarlem (ILO), Mr Khawaja Zaka-uddin (SCCI), Dr Faiz Shah (Saga Sports Ltd) and Mr David Husselbee (SCF-UK) travelled to Los Angeles, Washington DC and New York last November to explain the workings of the Project. The following summary is based on the mission report by Mr Van Haarlem.

Business for Social Responsibility organised a conference in Los Angeles from 6 to 8 November 1997, during which the Sialkot Project was subject of a panel discussion. Dr Faiz Shah presented the part on the monitoring system, Mr Zaka-uddin explained the role of the Chamber and Mr Husselbee outlined the social protection programme. In these presentations, the need for active cooperation of the employers and workers was highlighted.

On 8 November the "delegation" travelled to Washington. In a meeting with Mr Andrew Samet, Acting Under Secretary for International Affairs of the Department of Labor, the progress of the Project to date was discussed. Meetings were also held with Mr Mike Eastman, of the office of Congressman Mr Jim Moran. Mr Eastman was particularly interested to know whether bonded labour was to be found in the stitching of soccer balls in Sialkot. The industry and Mr Husselbee denied the existence of bonded labour in this context. Furthermore they made it clear that reports about three-year olds stitching soccer balls for 13 hours a day, which are mentioned in Congressional documents, must be labelled as false. In the office of Senator Harkin the group had a discussion with Ms Rosemary Gutierrez, the Senator's legislative assistant.

In a discussion with Mr Bill Gould and his colleagues of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus on the various activities in Sialkot, the issue of women stitching centres raised a number of questions. In the Pakistani culture, women are less likely to work outside the homes, especially in the rural areas, so home-based stitching will continue. To be able to monitor these activities, four female monitors have been selected who work in close collaboration with the leadership of the local Village Education and Action Centres. Dr. Shah explained that Saga Sports is already doing a lot of work in this context, such as providing for transport, creches, medicare, which amounts to some 50% of the total salary costs.

The meeting with the Child Labour Coalition of the American trade union federation AFL/CIO was another opportunity to highlight the Project. Probably due to the in-depth explanations of the efforts to make the Sialkot Project successful, the results so far were quite well received.

On 12 November the group had a meeting in New York with a delegation of Consumer Report, a powerful consumer organization, led by Ms Charlotte Becher. The industry was very keen to inform them on the endeavours of the project. In the lively meeting some misinformation about the use of child labour in the soccer ball industry could be corrected. A final meeting took place on the same day with the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, a New York based NGO. Questions from the audience mainly related to the reliability of the monitoring system and to the social protection programme of the Sialkot Project.

Mr Van Haarlem and other members of the group were interviewed by a host of internationally reputed newspapers and other media, among which the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, ABC News, New York Times, US News and World Report.

In conclusion it may be said that the mission was a very fruitful one. The numerous interviews produced a good opportunity to highlight the efforts that are being made and to clarify possible misunderstandings.

AGENCIES UPDATES

Following is a brief update by each of the participating agencies on their progress during the last three months.

ILO

The ILO has responsibilities under the Partners' Agreement for Prevention and Monitoring and for its components of Social Protection.

The Prevention and Monitoring component started on 1 October 1997. The Team was extensively trained throughout October and November. Meanwhile all the operational preparations were made to ensure the smooth working of the monitoring operation. This included not only the logistics such as ordering motor bikes and office furniture, but also involved the difficult task of mapping of all the stitching centres and the zoning of Sialkot District for monitoring visits. The mapping and zoning are based on the data provided by the (at the time of writing) 31 manufacturers who have now joined the project. Many manufacturers are learning how to deal with the comprehensive internal monitoring forms, on which the data are requested for the monitoring purposes. This zoning is also the basis of the establishment of the centres for non-formal education under the Social Protection component of the project. Monitoring visits are being undertaken on a regular basis now and the monitors are busy collecting and verifying data.

The ILO's Social Protection component started in November 1997. Under this programme, Bunyad Literacy Community Council (BLCC) is setting up rehabilitation centres (Umang Taleemi Centres) for children and families affected by the Prevention and Monitoring programme. Children, who during the last six or eight months, may have moved from soccer ball stitching to other work are also being targeted by the programme. Approximately 5,400-7,000 child workers and their young siblings will be reached through the Umang Taleemi Centres. So far, 17 UTCs have been opened following mobilisation of the communities. These UTCs are at various stages of implementation. About 600 children are already in the programme.

SCCI

In the last three months, the SCCI has continued to promote the Project among its members. The number of participating companies went up to 31, 19 of which are meeting ILO's information requirements. A joint advertisement of the participating firms was placed in the WFSGI Handbook. In October 1997 the Programme Support Group (PSG) was formed at the Chamber, with an allocation of Rs. 1,000,000 committed by the participating firms. The PSG will coordinate all activities relating to the Chamber's obligations under the Atlanta Agreement, acting as the Sialkot Implementation Team (SIT) Secretariat for the duration of the Project. Office space for the SIT secretariat/PSG has been made available by the SCCI. Under chairmanship of the SCCI, the SIT has held six meetings since October 1997.

Other SCCI activities under the Project included the Sialkot Program Forum (SPF). This Forum is to act as the "general body" for the Partnership, drawing its membership from government, non-governmental agencies and local opinion leaders acting as its "conscience". A first meeting with its chair, the Deputy Commissioner, was held in December 1997.

The Chamber supported Save the Children UK in preparing their action plan, though participation in the DFID-funded workshop held in December. It was recommended to SCF to hold work on women stitchers' groups until consensus was found within the SCCI. The Chamber decided to seek consensus from all Partners about DFID's consent to support a similar planning exercise for the SCCI. Finally, it was also decided to participate in the Global March Against Child Labour, coming to Sialkot on 13-14 April 1998.

SAVE THE CHILDREN UK

Save the Children, with the other organisations in the social protection programme, have introduced a programme to improve education by strengthening school management committees in football stitching villages, organising structural improvements to schools and making plans for teacher training. This element of the programme is being funded by FIFA who have provided \$US 100,000 and Soccer Industry Council of America (SICA). Links with UNICEF and the Department of Education in Sialkot will be important in this work, and 10 villages have already been involved in Marala Union Council. School Management Committees have been formed in Chak Kala, and

Raan and a grant has been given for the improvement of Chak Kala government primary school for boys.

To protect family incomes when children stop stitching footballs, Save the Children is working with the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) to provide credit and savings and enterprise training. NRSP has established a programme in Marala Union Council in Sialkot District and will rapidly cover other Union Councils in the next few months.

Save the Children is also working with the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry to ensure that women can stay in the industry by working in stitching units near their homes, given the limited mobility of women in Pakistani culture. The all women stitching centres will help women to become a more organised part of the industry and their wages will be paid directly to them rather than to male members of their family. Work on this has been done in three villages.

Save the Children is also analysing the impact of the changes in the industry on the lives of the football stitching children and their families. Consequently a social monitoring programme has been established to examine whether children make more use of schools, or go into other more hazardous forms of employment, and whether their families incomes are put in danger. A computerised database has been established which so far includes details of 173 villages, and a web-site with information from this database will be established soon.

Central to the success of this project will be good co-ordination between various organisations involved, and Save the Children has played a strong role on the Project Co-ordinating Committee and arranged a three-day meeting for the project's implementation team involving representatives from all the implementing organisations.

Save the Children is convinced that a community led, long term approach is the most effective way of phasing out child labour and of protecting children, and has presented their project proposal to the British Government's Department for International Development who have agreed to fund a substantial part of Save the Children's contribution to the Sialkot Child Labour project. The funds will be released once the Government of Pakistan has approved the project.

The Director General of Save the Children, Mike Aaronson visited Sialkot in January.

UNICEF

Till December '97, UNICEF created a broad based alliance for protection of children against hazards of child labour and to help fulfill their right to education. Following activities are completed:

- * Leading exporters oriented on rights of children and obligations of government and the civil society for fulfilling their rights.
- * Deputy Commissioner (administrative head of district) briefed on key aspects of the project, and commitment received for active support from the DC Office.
- * Station Commander of the Army briefed on the project and positive response received for support and collaboration for promotion of education in the district.
- * Key NGOs briefed on the project and plans finalized for collaboration for communication with families, children and key influentials.
- * UNICEF also finalized strategies for improvement of a basic education system for Universal Primary Education.
- * A plan for collection of community baseline information developed. The survey in selected areas will start in February 1998.
- * Communication material on child labour (two posters and a brochure) has been developed, pre-tested, produced and shared with key partners for further dissemination.

In addition, briefing of the project and planning meetings are being held with provincial education directorate/secretariat and district education functionaries to fine-tune the strategies.

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