

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

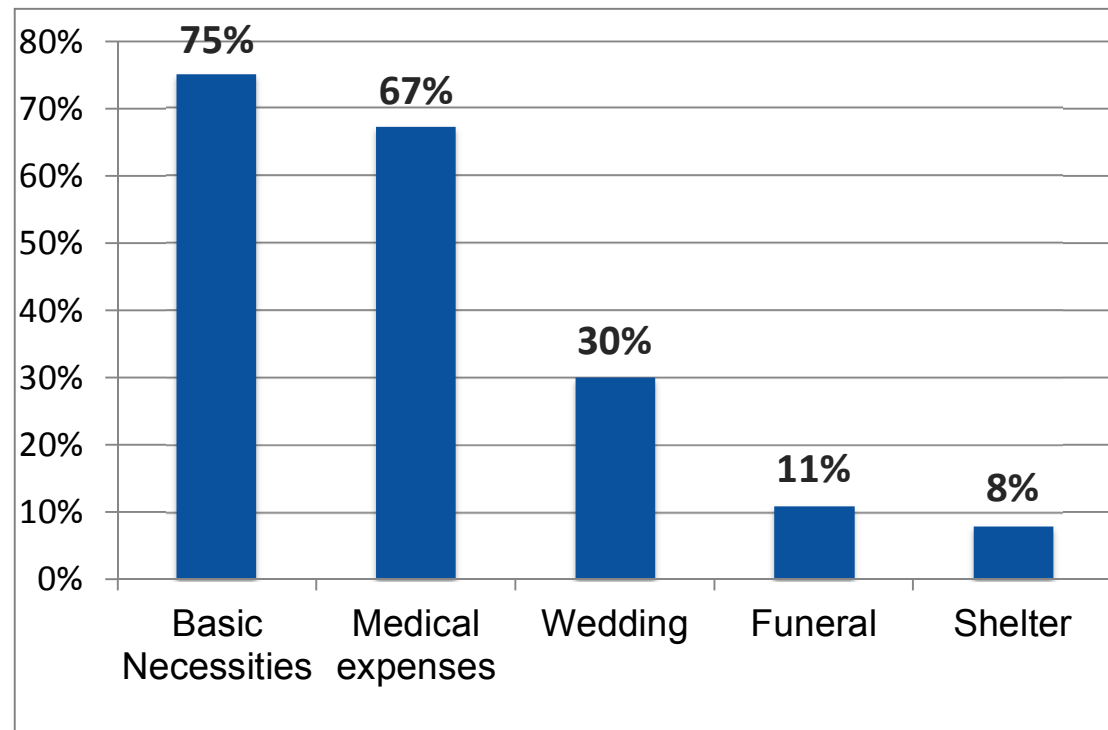
Bonded labour offers:

- Access to credit
- Transportation costs
- In-kind payments
 - Shelter
 - Electricity
 - Water

Cycle of vulnerability:

Vulnerability of exile perpetuated even after return within kilns

Household reasons for advances from kiln owners



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



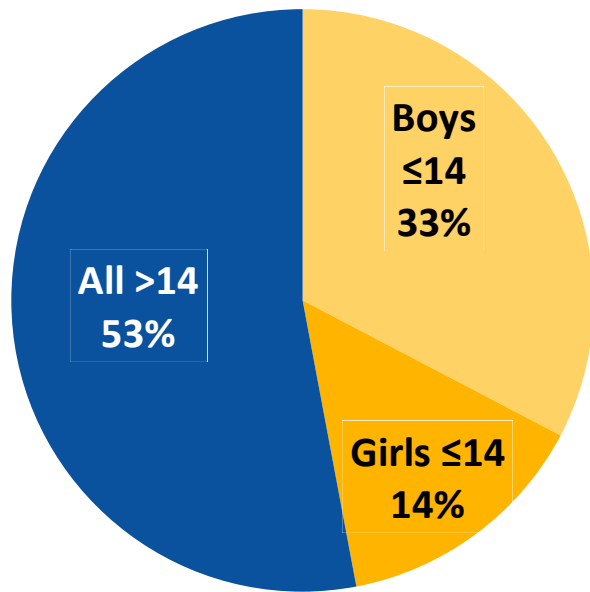
District	Worker	Piece rate per 1,000 bricks	Bricks/day	Wage per day
Deh Sabz	Adult	370 AFA	1,100	407 AFA/ 8.54 USD
	Child		750	278 AFA / 5.82 USD
Surkhroad	Adult	270 AFA	1,100	297 AFA / 6.23 USD
	Child		630	170 AFA / 3.57 USD

Cycle of poverty

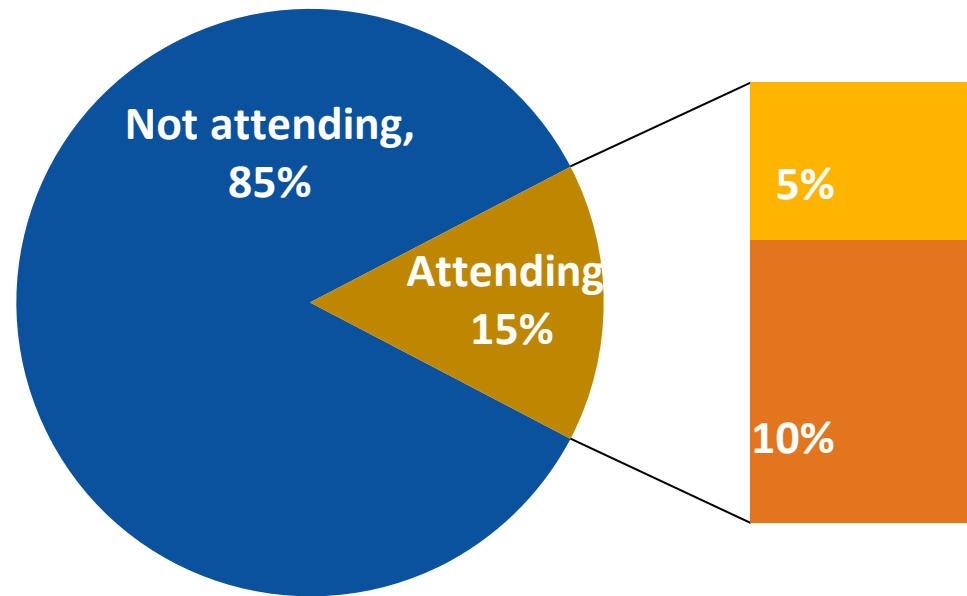
Why is there an intergenerational pattern of poverty?

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

Age & Gender Breakdown of Workforce



School Attendance



- Attending - Deh Sabz
- Attending - Surkhroad

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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