

Media Update

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PRESS RELEASE

Law Enforcement Officers from Balochistan Empowered Against Forced Labor and Human Trafficking

Law enforcement departments unite for the first time to identify and address situations of forced labour, especially in exposed sectors like brick kilns and agriculture.

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (ILO News) – On 16-17 April, the International Labour Organization (ILO) completed a training programme for 40 officers from the Department of Labour, Federal Investigation Agency, Police, and Mines departments of Balochistan province, equipping them with essential knowledge and skills to tackle forced labour, bonded labour and human trafficking.

The activity took place under the project "From Protocol to Practice: A Bridge to Global Action on Forced Labour" (BRIDGE), which the ILO is implementing in collaboration with the United States Department of Labour. The project aims to bolster efforts to eradicate forced labour.

The BRIDGE project adopts various strategies, including promoting the ratification of the 2014 Protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, improving national policies and legislation on forced labour, conducting research, strengthening the capacities of employers' and workers' organizations to address forced labour, and providing support to victims of forced labour. The project is currently active in Uzbekistan, Peru, Nepal, Mongolia and Pakistan.

In Pakistan, the project has prioritized strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies in Balochistan to combat forced labour, bonded labour, and human trafficking. The initiative commenced with a comprehensive training needs assessment of law enforcement agencies in Balochistan, serving as the foundation for the development of a specialized training manual tailored to the region's needs. Following meticulous refinement and testing through a pilot training session held in March 2024 in Quetta, the manual was finalized.

Speaking on the occasion, Sardar Mushtaq Ahmad Jaffar, Director General of Labour in Balochistan, commended the ILO for its enduring partnership and support. He urged officers to seize the opportunity to enhance their capacities and play a pivotal role in eliminating bonded labour, and human trafficking from Balochistan. He particularly highlighted the significance of addressing these issues in sectors such as brick kilns and agriculture, where women and children often suffer as part of borrowers' families.

Geir Tonstol, Country Director ILO Pakistan said "Respect for fundamental principles and rights is essential to bring an end to unacceptable forms of work. While having laws in place is crucial, effective implementation is imperative. This training represents a significant step towards improving inter-departmental coordination and building the capacities of officials to tackle unacceptable forms of work in the province. The ILO stands ready to support our social partners in advancing social justice for all."

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