



► Promising practices for fair recruitment

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Raising Pakistani migrant workers' awareness of their right to fair recruitment

Key points

- Awareness campaign through a trade union and civil society organizations
- Training cascade enhances outreach to migrant workers
- Trained journalists produce quality stories
- Outreach materials for migrant workers in simple language
- Government briefing officers were trained on fair recruitment and reach thousands of migrant workers a day

Focus

FRI pillar: Empowering and protecting workers

Sectors: All

Country: Pakistan

Responsible organization: Pakistan Workers Federation (PWF), community based organizations and Center for Excellence in Journalism

Description of the practice

Emigration regulators in Pakistan view a more aware migrant workforce as crucial for protection from recruitment abuse. Within this context, the REFRAME Pakistan project engaged with the Pakistan Workers Federation (PWF), two civil society organizations and a group of influential media persons to develop knowledge products and train trainers (i.e. 25 briefing officers of the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BEOE) and the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), staff of

30 community centers, 60 community change makers, 71 journalists) to cascade information and raise awareness on fair recruitment in the most common communities of origin of migrant workers in Pakistan. These knowledge products were written in simple language and include attention to employment contract terms, rights and responsibilities, and complaint mechanisms, and are aimed at empowering migrant workers and reducing the risk of recruitment irregularities.



Sher Afsar Khan, community based changemaker delivers an outreach session, 2020. © Shayan Ali Khan

Proof of impact/progress

Under the initiative, the awareness of thousands of (prospective) migrant workers has been raised on fair recruitment and safe migration.

- Following training of trainers held in 2019, PWF disseminated an information booklet on fair recruitment and safe migration by convening information sessions at community and trade union forums, directly educating 4,500 potential/returned migrant workers and trade union members. In addition, thousands of community change makers were exposed to these materials through social media and the PWF website. In addition, PWF established 30 resource centres at its district offices to provide orientation and referral services to the intending/prospective migrant workers.
- Pursuant to training in 2019, five local partner organizations in Multan, Bahawalpur, Sialkot, Mardan and Swabi and 60 community change makers have cascaded awareness on fair recruitment and safe migration to more than 11,318 intending/returned migrant workers and their families and 825 community leaders. Over 89,000 persons were reached through word of mouth, social media and local community based organizations.
- 71 journalists/media influencers (including editors, bureau chiefs and senior reporters) were trained on improving research and reporting on fair recruitment and forced labour. More than 35 quality stories/news articles have been produced and published in the national media since the training.
- Training of briefing officers of BEOE and NAVTTC provided the opportunity to help around 2,000-2,500 departing migrant workers per day with accurate information on fair recruitment and safe migration.

Other promising features

Participation and representation

The practice provided the opportunity to directly interact with the prospective, intending and returned migrant workers and benefit from their active participation.

Relevance

Migrant workers who were reached through the activities under this practice expressed the importance of continuing them as they continue to be relevant for future prospective migrants.

Efficiency

The strategy to engage with workers representatives and community change makers/leaders helped spread the information extensively, and has resulted in decisions on labour migration now being taken at family level, and following family dialogue. This enhanced thoroughness in decision-making may contribute to a reduced risk of abuse of migrants at the recruitment stage.

Sustainability

Staff of the Center for Excellence in Journalism (CEJ) and community representatives have acquired sound institutional capacity, resource materials and tools to continue cascading information on fair recruitment in the future.



Leaders from the Pakistan Workers Federation participate in a training on fair recruitment, Lahore, Pakistan, 2019. © ILO

Resources

[Information is power: Empowering the disempowered through community.](#)

[Educating communities to reduce abusive recruitment practices in Pakistan.](#)

[Moving to safe and fair recruitment practices in Pakistan.](#)

[Community changemakers help Pakistan's migrant workers avoid exploitation.](#)

[ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment and Definition of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs \(GPOG\).](#)

Five years of the Fair Recruitment Initiative

- This promising practice is part of a series, and results from a stocktaking exercise undertaken five years after the launch of the Fair Recruitment Initiative (FRI).
- The FRI aims to ensure that recruitment practices nationally and across borders are grounded in labour standards, developed through social dialogue, ensure gender equality. Specifically, they:
 1. Are transparent and effectively regulated, monitored, and enforced;
 2. Protect all workers' rights, including fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW), and prevent human trafficking and forced labour; and
 3. Efficiently inform and respond to employment policies and labour market needs, including for recovery and resilience.

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