

## **Member's Connect:**

During our interaction with members in Pakistan, consortium trend of funding was discussed. These days, funders are encouraging to apply as consortia instead as in isolation. Also, donor focus is more on service delivery as oppose to right base funding. Hence, members in Pakistan are really facing problem in obtaining funds. However, it was very interesting to converse with members to know about the ongoing work for homebased workers. Through Member's connect, we were able to communicate with six organisations. Find below the information of same communication.

**1. HomeNet Pakistan** has been successful in leading the provincial policy on homebased workers in Punjab and Sindh. Amongst the south Asian countries, Pakistan is the only country successfully able to advance the provincial policy on homebased workers. HomeNet Pakistan would like to share the journey of its endeavour in advocating for policy with various stakeholders in the country.

**District Action Committee are** formed for advocacy and networking at local level. These DAC as citizen's volunteers collect information on government schemes and are linking homebased workers to it. For instance, making NADRA cards, linking to Benazir income support programme. The DACs are district advocacy network who are facilitating the HBWs in all ways.

**Status on Punjab and Sindh Homebased Workers Policy:** The policy is queued up in Punjab cabinet, whereas, in Sindh, policy is been reviewed by the committee to notify. Government of Punjab wanted to announce the Labour policy first, as it has included informal economy workers. Three trades of informal economy has been included in labour policy- bricklin, homebased workers and domestic workers. Punjab Labour Policy 2015 was approved in May 2015.

**Follow up on Delhi Declaration:** HNP translated the Delhi Declaration in local language to share with members in provinces. It has referred in training sessions and workshop. Also, it has been presented to parliamentarians in all provinces. HNP has initiated signature campaign, where component on livelihood and social security is referred from Delhi Declaration. The components of urban livelihood was also linked with Asian Youth Urban forum 2015. The Delhi declaration was shared in the group discussion of the Asian Youth Urban Forum held in Oct 2015.

**Research and Survey by HNP:** In Pakistan, Occupational Health & Safety policy processes are underway. Inclusion of Informal workers have been ensured. In light of this HNP is conducting survey to collect data for homebased workers and domestic workers. 100 per district would be sample size and total districts to be surveyed is 20.

During the conversation, LEAF showed the interest and requested to add Badin.

**Representing Homebased Workers issue at International Fora:** HNP is aiming to represent homebased workers at commission on Status of women (CSW) 2016 next year. Also, they are exploring to have the panel in UN Assembly next year. Discussion underway.

**2. LEAF: based in Badin is community based Organisation.** Through outreach programme (supported by HNSA) LEAF has identified 2000 homebased workers in embroidery, tie & dye work.

LEAF as catalyst for livelihood: LEAF has initiated market linkage for 25 homebased workers as PILOT. These 25 homebased workers are skilled in tailoring, but, unable to go out as restricted by family. Identified under OUTREACH Programme, these women were looking for work. Hence, LEAF got in touch with local market (Badin Shabaz Road and Shahi Bazar Market) to get job orders for (Baby Girl suits) these homebased workers. With this initiative, LEAF provides raw material to these workers and does the costing for their wages. This initiative has helped the workers to get regular work with earning between Rs. 300-400 a day. LEAF is trying to bridge between market and homebased workers to provide work and get work done. If this goes successful, LEAF is inclined to engage other homebased workers with the market

**3. Women Workers Help Line based** in Lahore will participate in Lahore Festival. They will install their stall and will do small play on homebased workers issues for their visibility.

**WWHL Cooperative initiative:** Women workers helpline is organising homebased workers in Lahore, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, and Kasur of Punjab province. They have identified around 4500 homebased workers engaged in keyboard cleaning, fixing bulb holders, football stitching, making mobile covers, etc. Some of the homebased workers who have come together are formed in Cooperative by women workers helpline. They have 11 groups of which five are in the process of registration as Cooperative and others are functioning as Cooperative. One of the Cooperatives called Kavish with 25 members engaged into garments is one good model of collective enterprise. The Kavish Cooperative has 6 members executive committee, elected by members have distributed their roles and responsibility.

The Executive Committee member gets raw material from Liberty market, Ichra Bazar, Anarkali, and Delhi Darwaza (Lahore) and also, get the raw material from factory for the groups. Women Workers Helpline helped the cooperative in purchasing equipment and also trained the homebased workers and the area leaders to record keeping to build their capacity and work with full potential.

**Advocacy & Lobbying Meeting:** Women workers Help Line conduct conferences, study circles, training workshops for the homebased workers. They do lobby meetings with Labour department. Recently, they have approached Election Commissioner to allow homebased workers to contest local elections by the homebased workers. The organising of homebased workers have made them vocal and therefore, middleman are getting more conscious in giving work to homebased workers. They say “earlier these women accepted any wages, but, now, since they have organised, they want to fight for wages”.

**Women and their work condition in Lahore:** Homebased worker in Lahore are in poor working condition, as home is their work place. They are staying kacchi basti, where amenities are not available. The biggest problem is with load shedding, which hampers their work and therefore, resort to candle light to do their work. In result, their eyes are affected and their health due to poor working conditions. 80 per cent of them stay on rent and these houses congested and cluttered. Rent are around PKR5000-PKR. 6000 with Only One room and without the facility of washroom and kitchen and electricity bills are very high. There are instances, where, homebased workers have committed suicide to receiving of high bills. The reason of high bill is imposing sales tax. No hospitals facilities are nearby their vicinity and no transport is available to them. In recent times, water shedding has also started, which is hampering their overall work.

Government is investing in ORANGE LINE Metro TRAIN, bridge, metro but, no investment on habitat and amenities for these poor homebased workers, who dwells in the city. Instead of investing on them they are destroying the kaachi Basti, Old and Inherent Building Mosque, Schools, Church, Shops etc

**Intervention in Kasur:** WWHL is organising homebased workers in Kasur- three hours from Lahore by road. Around 800 homebased workers family stays. This is jungle area, densely populated with tree. Therefore, dwellers are at risk of wild insects like snake and Scorpio all the time. Most of these workers are chic workers, handmade fans adda work, Waan (Rope for making Charpai (casually used as a bed). These dwellers are staying for last 20 years and don't have lights. WWHL spoke to MNA (Member of National Assembly) and MPA to provide lights and asked to construct road. WWHL is hopeful to obtain electrification to these houses in immediate future.

**4. PILER – Research organisation is based in Karachi:** PILER is engaged in facilitate the consultation on Asia FLOOR WAGE to be launched in **Pakistan on 26-27<sup>th</sup> December**. Ms. Annama Bhatt and Mr. Asim Roy from Asia Floor Wage Alliance are invited for this meeting. PILER is in progress to prepare background paper for same.

**Homebased workers work in Sindh:** Women's Development Department in Sindh invited Japan International Cooperation Agency to brainstorm on support programme for homebased workers in Sindh. The consultation are in progress to get the extension projects for homebased workers in Sindh.

**Labour Policy in Pakistan:** Since 2010, Labour policy has become provincial subject. In light of Sindh policy on homebased workers, members were not notified in Sindh, and therefore, it was redundant by members of Cabinet and also, seeing it as burden on Employers. Women Parliamentary were active at least of MQM. However, it still didn't the push the policy.

There is a need to push Labour reforms strategically if policy on homebased workers to be taken in.

**General System of Preference:** GSP status recently received by Pakistan from European Union for the tax free textile and garment export to European countries for next decade. Accordingly to GSP 100% custom duties are waived off for 71 products under textile. GSP includes 27 international conventions required to be ratified by developing countries. 16 out of 27 are human and labour rights, which is very apt for the homebased workers, who are largely involved in textile work as homebased workers. GSP is another strong legal instrument to fight for the homebased workers along with C.177.

**5. Pakistan Rural workers Support:** is based in Bawalpur (Punjab Province in Pakistan).

Women are organised around various trades like bricklin, tailoring, jewellery, bangle workers. Around 800 piece rate workers are been identified and organised. Programmes conducted are capacity building, developing linkages with micro finance.

Organising homebased workers and providing them labour education for their rights. In Bawalpur, there are more than 10000 homebased workers having men and women working as homebased workers.

**6. Sawera Foundation** is a not for profit ,non-governmental organization working in South

Punjab of Pakistan since 2003 working, Lodhran, Rahim Yar Khan, Vehari and Pak Pattan. They have organized 1500 home based workers in urban and more than 1200 in rural areas of these two districts. Home based workers are engaged into **stitching, embroidery, peeling, paper and cloth bag making, weaving , knitting, block printing and basket making etc.** They have provided skills development trainings to more than 500 home based workers. These home based workers are provided with market linkages by provision of outlets to sell their products.

Home based workers are very poor and facing many problems. The major problem is housing. They don't have their own house to live. They are staying in slums and katchi abadies which are established as encroachments on government or private owned lands. Hence, there is no electricity, and amenities available. Clean and safe drinking water availability is another issue of HBWs. More often water supply is not at near distance. Although rural and urban HBWs are facing many problems but urban HBWs are more vulnerable. They are living in very small and narrow houses in katchi abadies without any facility like electricity, drinking water and sewerage system. They are living in very **unhygienic environment** and facing many diseases. They have no schools nor play grounds for their children. No health facility is provided and no heath care centres established. Mother and child mortality rate is very high in such areas.

Unfortunately, government system was not existing in Pakistan from last many years. Now, local government would in place, as local elections are on calendar. After 18<sup>th</sup> amendment in constitution of Pakistan, health, education and many other subjects are provincial domain now. Through Voice and Accountability programme, they are organizing HBWs to raise their voices for their rights. Also, they see local government in place as constitutional steps. It would be opportune time for SF to leverage their vast experience to work closely with district administration and local government representatives.