



Brief on Work in Freedom Programme in Jordan



» Women and girls on the move Jordan

For many, migration is an important alternative to the realities of home. People move long distances in pursuit of jobs for varying reasons ranging from economic aspirations or loss of habitat resulting from processes of economic transformation, poverty, climate change or gender based violence. While some migrate internally, many also migrate abroad. For women and girls, especially of indigenous, dalit or low-income backgrounds, the experience of further impoverishment and discrimination makes migration a viable option. While many are able to improve their livelihoods in cities at home or abroad, many also face deception by unscrupulous labour recruiters or exploitation by employers – practices that amount to forced labour.

The Work in Freedom programme adopts an integrated and targeted approach to reduce vulnerability to trafficking of women and girls in South Asian countries of origin (Bangladesh, India and Nepal) and in selected destination countries (India, Jordan and Lebanon). It expects to reach at least 150,000 women and girls by 2018.

» Fair recruitment to decent jobs

The pathways to jobs in domestic and garment work within the region or to the Middle East are intersected by various agents or contractors in an environment shaped by multiple rules and practices determining the mobility of aspiring

workers. The fluidity and segmentation of labour supply chains are such that none of the key stakeholders such as labour recruiters, regulators and even employers can guarantee on their own, a fair migration outcome for any worker. In spite of strong public calls to protect migrating women from the pitfalls of trafficking, forced labour and modern slavery, in practice the presumed responsibility of ensuring fair migration outcomes is eroded among multiple formal and informal stakeholders. Migrants therefore face multiple risks and challenges in their



efforts to find jobs such as paying exorbitant fees, taking out high-interest loans ahead of their departure that can lead them into debt bondage, transit through India at a high cost, deception about the nature and conditions of work, having contracts substituted by less favourable ones on arrival, having passports confiscated, being subject to illegal wage deductions, threats or physical violence.

Work in Freedom works with employers, with labour recruiters, workers and regulators both in the places of origin and destination of migrant workers, to support better

regulation and practices of recruitment. It reviews laws and regulations on foreign employment and recruitment, and it also tests and assesses recruitment practices. It also works with migrant rights organizations and trade unions to increase accountability in the recruitment process.

The Work in Freedom programme has engaged the Ministry of Labour, Jordanian Recruitment Agency Association (JRAA), and the Worker Centre in improving regulations and practices of recruitment. The programme, with the ILO, has engaged in three rounds of consultations with key employers in the garment sector on fair recruitment and is currently engaged in consultations with the Ministry of Labour to identify entry points in monitoring implementation of association byelaw of the JRAA. It also supports the worker centre in Jordan which provides services to migrant workers including legal counseling and computer lessons.

Law and policies for dignity and decent work for migrant garment and domestic workers

Several laws, policies and administrative practices in Jordan need to be reviewed to improve prospects of safety and dignity for migrant workers. At the request of the Ministry of Justice, the programme is preparing input on Jordan's Anti Trafficking Law. Likewise, it is preparing a response to the Ministry of Labour request for input on how to manage shelters or resource centres for migrant domestic workers. The programme produced *Migrant domestic and garment workers in Jordan: A baseline analysis of trafficking in persons and related laws and policies* (2015) and is currently deliberating on recommendations made to the report. It has also produced a study on the business of recruitment from Bangladesh to Jordan and Lebanon (2015).

For more information please contact:

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