

Overview of Pakistan, Nepal and India's labour movement and social situation



1.6.2016

Social Situation in Pakistan

- **Governing System:** Democratic Parliamentary Federal Republic (Islam is the state religion. Federal meaning, it will have more than one provinces/states and parliamentary republic meaning, people are sovereign and Prime Minister is the head of the govt, while President is head of the state.)
- **Population:** 190 916 866. It is the sixth most populous country in the world and population rate is growing by 2. 2% per year
- **Work Force:** 58.41 Million
- **Unemployment rate:** 5.90% (2015-16)
- **Gross domestic Product:** \$243.6 Billion (2014 est.) \$/capita, rank 174
- **Population below poverty line (< 1 €/day):** 29.5%
- **UN Ranking:** Lower Middle Income country
- **Key Economical Sectors + %:** Textiles & apparel, food processing, pharmaceuticals, construction materials, paper products, fertilizer, shrimp
- **HDI Rank:** 145
- **Life Expectancy:** 65,4 years
- **Literacy Rate:** 49.9% Male: 63% Female: 36% (2005)
- **Religions:** Muslim (official) 95% (Sunni 75%, Shia 20%), other (includes Christian & Hindu) 5%
- **Gender Ranking:** 143
- **Gini Coefficient Index:** 32,7



TU political situation in Pakistan

- **TU movement structure:** 12 Central Unions & 43 non-registered
- **Status of Ratification of key ILO Conventions:** 87-yes, 98-yes, 138-yes, 182-yes
- **General Organising rate:** 1.34 M, 2,2%
- **Major Organised Sectors:** Textile (export), public sector, water and electricity.
- **Least Organised Sectors:** Textile (local), brick kilns and construction, home base workers.
- **Main Issues for TU movement**
 - Massive **decline in membership due to aggressive privatization** policy of Pakistan, which is encouraging downsizing, retrenchment and lay off of workers.
 - **Increased repression of workers/leaders** and Unions. Various TU registrations has been cancelled while new registration is almost impossible.
 - **Violation of Core Labor Standards**, Even ILO has raised repeated concerns about Pakistan's current labor law violating CLS.
 - **Increased Informalisation** of Labor, where Unionization is not Allowed. Gender Discrimination in wages, Child Labor, Bonded labor are burning issues.

TU political situation in Pakistan (Cont.)

Main Weaknesses of the TU movement:

- Its **inability or lack of will to organize the Informal Sector**, even though more than 75% workforce is in Informal Sector;
- **Lack of Gender Equality** in Trade Unions, male centric , politically fragmented trade unions in existence (leading to lack of solidarity);
- **No institutional capacity** in general to collect and survive on membership fee, build union power;
- **Lack of Internal Democracy** in unions and its inability to develop new/young leaderships.

(However, do note that the TUs in Pakistan have been able to resist coups, and continue to exist in instable political situations. Religious extremism has not been able to touch trade unions and in recent years they have been able to fight back against privatization quite strongly)

Challenges of project cooperation in Pakistan

- **Security** situation;
- **Increased instances of violence** makes it difficult to travel and monitor projects;
- **Lack of interest from GUFs**, owing to situations mentioned above;
- **Lack of feasible local partners**, very difficult to understand which partners are good, 'real' and can deliver results;
- Extremely **hostile employers** and low respect of labour rights;
- **Threats of corruption**, as union aid is sometimes seen as means of survival.

Social Situation in Nepal

- **Governing System:** Federal Democratic Republic
- **Population:** 31 853 176
- **Work Force:** 15.3 million
- **Unemployment rate:** 2,3% (30% under employed)
- **Gross National Product:** \$1,300 \$/capita, rank 205
- **Population below poverty line (< 1 €/day):** 25,0% (has improved a lot in past 10 years)
- **UN Ranking:** Least Developed Country
- **Key Economical Sectors + %:** Tourism, carpets, textiles, small rice, jute, sugar, & oilseed mills, cigarettes, cement & brick production.
- **HDI Rank:** 145/188 (157/188 five years ago)
- **Life Expectancy:** 68,8 years
- **Literacy Rate:** 48.6% Male: 62.7% Female: 34.9% (2001)
- **Religions:** Hindu 81.3%, Buddhist 9%, Muslim 4.4%, Kirant 3.1%, Christian 1.4 % other 0.5% (current)
- **Gender Ranking:** 126 (Some indication of improvement in past 10 years)
- **Gini Coefficient Index (2005):** 32.8



TU political situation in Nepal

- **TU movement structure:** 9 Central Unions & 6 non-registered
- **Status of Ratification of key ILO Conventions:** 87 – no, 98 – yes, 138 – yes, 182 -yes
- **General Organising rate:** 2.2 M, 12 %
- **Major Organised Sectors:** Public Sector, Private textile garment, security, & health education.
- **Least Organised Sectors:** Informal sector in agriculture, forestry, commerce & private service sector.
- **Main Issues for TU movement:** (Based on current context)
 - Social Security and Labour Policy (In the **new constitution**)
 - **Reconstruction** of Nepal through Decent work
 - Creation of Ample **employment opportunities** in Nepal (to reduce Migration. Fight for safe and secure migration with TU rights)
 - Organising of workers in forest, agriculture, informal, ICTS sectors
 - Strengthening Trade Union Unity
- **Main Weakness of the TU movement:**
 - Trade Unions affiliated to political parties
 - Lack of strong second line leadership
 - Low capacity of union members and cadres

Challenges of project cooperation in Nepal

- Unions are closely **attached to political parties**;
- Often weak capacity within TUs to manage projects;
- Top level leadership define goal of projects (top-down);
- **Lack of capacity** among TU staff;
- Currently, there is risk of all project cooperation **aid shifting to reconstruction** post earthquake;
- Sometimes, risks of **corruption** arises, as unions have less financial independence, so the aid might be seen as source of livelihood;
- Fragmentation is lessened and organising rate is decent, but still a lot of work is needed.

Social Situation in India

- **Governing System:** Parliamentary Federal Republic (Secular, and follows multi-party system)
- **Population:** 1.32 Billion (1,327,366,872)
- **Work Force:** 496,960,163
- **Unemployment rate:** 4.9%
- **Gross National Product:** \$3,700 \$/capita, rank 162
- **Population below poverty line:** 21.9%
- **UN Ranking:** Lower Middle Income Country
- **HDI Rank:** 134
- **Life Expectancy:** 68.45 years
- **Literacy Rate:** 74.04%, Male: 82.14%, Female: 65.46% (2001)
- **Religions:** Hindu 80.5%, Muslim 13.4%, Christian 2.3%, Sikh 1.9%, other 1.8%, unspecified 0.1% (2001 census)
- **Gender Ranking:** 142
- **Gini Coefficient Index (2005):** 36,8

Key sectors of economy

- **Agriculture**
- **Industry:** Textiles, chemicals, food processing, steel, transportation, equipment, cement, mining, petroleum, machinery, software, pharmaceuticals.
- **Services:** energy & power, retail, tourism, Infrastructure, technology, banking and finance.

TU political situation in India

- **TU movement structure:** 12 Central Unions & 22 non-registered
- **Status of Ratification of key ILO Conventions:** 87 – no, 98 – no, 138 – no, 182 - no
- **General Organising rate:** 24.61 M, 5 %
- **Major Organised Sectors:** Mostly formal public sector, private industries like tea gardens, garment textile.
- **Least Organised Sectors:** Rural agriculture workers (60%), urban informal sectors (32%)
- **Main Issues for TU movement**
 - Fighting against **unfriendly labor law** reforms;
 - Organising **informal sector** and increasing the unionization rate (More than 90% are in informal sector);
 - Strengthening Trade Union Solidarity and **Co-operation**, going beyond political affiliations;
 - Fighting against Child labor, Forced labor and **discrimination in wages** based on gender;
 - Building awareness among TU members, fighting for better OSH and Social Security, especially for informal workers.

TU political situation in India (Cont.)

- **Main weaknesses of the TU movement:**
 - Internal factors, like **lack of democracy** within unions, unions poorly managed, ad hoc payment of dues etc;
 - **Political dominance** of unions by political parties (however increasing trend of departing from party politics is ongoing now);
 - **Unions small** in size and power, membership density low, informal sector not organised ;
 - **Lack of trained workforce in TUs**, ad hoc trainers/organisers, office bearers, no offices. (Union activity seen as voluntary and ad hoc work).

Challenges of project cooperation in India

- The tightening **grip on foreign support**, through various additional checks and balances can delay activities and new laws that regulate fund flow;
- Moreover, the current environment is not being favorable for Trade Unions and CSOs to function as any act of speaking against the government is seen as 'not favorable';
- **Registration of Trade unions** is getting harder with all the labor reforms being undertaken which can hamper unions ability to achieve organising results;
- There is an increasing **strict visa regime**, which seeks to regulate movement of people coming for Trade Union work (eg. Visas for people who were supposed to come to India to document RND work, were rejected two times).

Kiitos!
Tack!
Thank you!