



Documentary on rain damage in Sindh

Hyderabad witnessed a heavy rainstorm, which broke records. There was a massive damage to the crops, animals and homes of people. To compensate the losses in the agricultural business the government offered a relief package. Unfortunately the landlords wrote all the losses in their fields in the accounts of the tenants, which made them deeply indebted, and accepted the relief packages themselves as the owners of the land. This issue alone would put generations in slavery in the future.

Mehergarh coordinator Veerji made a documentary on this issue, which will be edited for a mainstream channel. He also had meetings with DPOs and Nazims of Sangar and Khipro to explain to them this issue. The lobbying on this issue goes on.

Highlighting voices of women in bondage

Somehow the perspective and voices of women were not highlighted in the discussion of future resolution of bonded labour. Mehergarh has been focusing on that aspect. At the World Social Forum in Karachi, a session was organized where women from the bonded labour community spoke up. With international participation, these women and Mehergarh were able to establish good contacts where activists from other countries were also working on the same issues.

Work with Media

One of Mehergarh's commitments is to raise public awareness of this issue. For this purpose mainstream media was capitalized upon. Several interviews of Veerji were aired; A 45 minute interview at Ptv, one at Atv, three radio interviews and many articles and press statements in the newspapers.

Research

Research is being conducted on women's lives that go through the experience of bondage. Case studies were gathered, which will be published in English and Urdu. The purpose is to take the voices of these women to all parts of the country, especially those sitting in decision-making positions. These women are asking for freedom, protection from those who enslave the poor and a national identity as a citizen.

Documentary

On the basis of the research work, Mehergarh is producing a documentary depicting the life of a woman living in bondage. The objective of this film is for people to feel their experience and become aware of this issue. We hope that the country as a whole should own the issue and start building pressure for the government to be more assertive and deal with the landlords who keep playing havoc in these poor helpless farmer's lives.

Awareness of the law against Bonded labour

Our coordinator has translated the bonded labour law and the process of accessing justice in Urdu and Sindhi. This has proved to be of great help to those who are trying to get some know how about how to file a case and how to get justice. Awareness talks on this law have also been organized for groups of people, which raised their awareness and gave them tips on how to get themselves freed.