

# THE STATE OF PEASANTS' RIGHTS IN SINDH IN 2022

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# About the Hari Welfare Association

The Hari Welfare Association (HWA) is a non-governmental organization established in 2002. The Association aims to promote and protect the social, economic, civil and political rights of peasants, rural workers, women, children, youth and religious minorities especially in rural areas of Sindh and Pakistan more broadly.

Based in Benazirabad, Sindh, the critical mission of the HWA is to educate, mobilize and organize marginalized communities, particularly peasants, rural workers, women and religious minorities, around their rights and facilitate participatory development, social justice and equality for the empowerment of vulnerable sections of society.

As part of its work for marginalized communities, promoting peasants' rights is a fundamental objective of the HWA. Since its inception, the organization has been carrying out various activities to empower the peasants and rural workers by advocating for their rights.



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## Abbreviations

DVC	District Vigilance Committee
GoS	Government of Sindh
HRC	Human Rights Council
HWA	Hari Welfare Association
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
PPPP	Pakistan Peoples' Party Parliamentarians
SBLSAA	Sindh Bonded Labour System Abolition Act
SCP	Supreme Court of Pakistan
SHC	Sindh High Court
STA	Sindh Tenancy Act
SWAWA	Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act
UC	Union Council
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
SIRA	Sindh Industrial Relations Act



## Sindh Map



Sindh is one of the four main provinces of Pakistan. Geographically, Sindh is positioned along the lower bank of the River Indus. Sindh constitutes a major part of the great Indus plain. The river Indus is about 2,000 miles in length. In Sindh, it covers nearly 590 miles before finally discharging into the Arabian Sea. In the southeast of Sindh is Rann of Kach and the Kach state of India. On the eastern border is Rajasthan (India). Punjab and Balochistan provinces of Pakistan lie to the north and west, respectively. Sindh has 29 districts, and a population of 47,886,051, according to the provisional estimates of Census 2017.

## Sindh Province: Key Statistics

- The Sindh Province has a population of around 50 million. Of these, 52 percent live in urban areas while 48% in rural areas and around 38% of them derive their livelihoods from agriculture, livestock, fishing and forestry.<sup>1</sup>
- About 30-35% of the province's population lives below the poverty line.<sup>2</sup>
- The rural areas of Sindh stand as the second poorest in the country, following the rural areas of Balochistan. The 2016 report on Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) notes the province's MPI to be 0.231, with a high incidence of poverty at 43% and intensity at 53.5%.
- The rural areas of Sindh rank 75.5% and 54.9% in incidence and intensity of poverty. The situation in Sindh is only slightly better than in Balochistan, which is the poorest in the country.<sup>3</sup>
- The key segment of the poor in the province is represented by the large proportion of rural poor who have very small holdings or are landless. Almost 60% of all peasants are sharecroppers in Sindh.<sup>4</sup> A survey conducted in eight districts of Sindh revealed that 84% of rural households did not own any cultivable agricultural land. The survey also revealed that 21% of the population worked on farms whereas more than half (55%) of the working-age population worked as off-farm unskilled labour. Other groups with a high poverty ratio are the nomadic or semi-nomadic populations, small-scale artisanal, fisher people and sharecroppers.
- The structure of Sindh's economy is composed of the agriculture, industry and services sectors. Despite being the most industrialized province in the country, the agriculture sector is the largest employer of workers in Sindh. Sindh's agriculture policy approved in 2018 estimated at Rs 1,600 billion agricultural GDP.<sup>5</sup> The main crops in Sindh are wheat, rice, cotton and sugarcane.
- Sindh has a large livestock population with 18.1 million cattle and buffaloes. Livestock production accounts for over half of the agriculture GDP of Pakistan.<sup>6</sup>
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<sup>1</sup> Ishrat Hussain. 2022. Sindh floods and rural economy.

<sup>2</sup> Agriculture Policy 2018-2030

<sup>3</sup> Sabina Alkire and James Foster created a new method for measuring multidimensional poverty. It identifies who is poor by considering the intensity of the deprivations they suffer, and includes an aggregation method. Mathematically, the MPI combines two aspects of poverty:  $MPI = H \times A$ . H refers to the incidence of poverty – the percentage of people who are multidimensionally poor, or the headcount of poverty. A refers to the intensity of poverty – the average percentage of dimensions in which poor people are deprived.

<sup>4</sup> As described in the Agriculture Policy of Sindh 2018-2030

<sup>5</sup> Government of Sindh. Sindh Agriculture Policy (2018-2030). <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/pak191432.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Agriculture Policy 2018-2030

- According to the Labour Force Survey 2021-2022, the monthly mean wages earned by male workers in the agriculture sector are Rs. 24,948 per month whereas females earn Rs. 14,036. With this meagre income, a male or a female worker cannot support a family.<sup>7</sup>
- The Global Slavery Index 2022 indicated that Pakistan has a prevalence of 10.6 per thousand people living in modern slavery while 80.3 per thousand live in vulnerability for modern slavery. Bonded labour is most common in agriculture, fisheries, construction, carpet industry and domestic work sectors in Pakistan. A large majority of the bonded workers are based in Sindh.
- Hindus make up a small minority of about 1.2 per cent of the total population in Pakistan. The vast majority (96 per cent) of them live in the rural areas of Sindh. The Hindu community is mostly concentrated in the Sanghar and Tharpakar districts.
- In Sindh, among Hindus, Dalits (scheduled castes) are one of the groups excluded not only by the mainstream sectors but also within the Hindu community. Their social, economic and political mobility, as well as the rights linked to these and many other dimensions, are restricted due to the entrenched caste barriers constructed and created within Hinduism. In Pakistan, the majority of Dalits are landless and work in the agriculture and brick kiln sectors. In these sectors, they are mostly employed as bonded workers, a status that reinforces their social and economic vulnerability.
- Poverty and economic vulnerability in rural areas reinforce poor health. According to the 2021 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Acute Malnutrition (IPC AMN) analysis of the nine districts analysed in Sindh, Pakistan, acute malnutrition is at a Critical level (IPC Phase 4) in eight districts and at a Serious level (IPC Phase 3) in one district. The situation is particularly severe in six of the eight districts classified in the Critical phase, whereby one in five children is affected by acute malnutrition. The major factors contributing to acute malnutrition include inadequate quality and quantity of food, high food insecurity, poor hygiene practices and sanitation coverage, high rates of diarrhoea, acute respiratory infection and fever, and poor health seeking behaviour.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Table 4.20, Average Monthly Wages of Employees in the main job by occupation and sex", Labour Force Survey 2021-2022 at [https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/labour\\_force/publications/lfs2020\\_21/LFS\\_2020-21\\_Report.pdf](https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/labour_force/publications/lfs2020_21/LFS_2020-21_Report.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/map/#mode=data:compare-countries=PAK:dimension=p:compare-dimension=v>

<sup>9</sup> [https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/ipc\\_pakistan\\_acute\\_malnutrition\\_analysis\\_report-sindh-final.pdf](https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/ipc_pakistan_acute_malnutrition_analysis_report-sindh-final.pdf)

## Who is a Peasant?

The definition of peasants and peasantry is marked by complicated connotations and is indicative of the historical and contemporary oppression of peasants in many societies.<sup>10</sup> A briefing paper on the theme of the definition of peasants, prepared for the first session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, Geneva, 15-19 July 2013, provides a detailed background of the historical evolution of the definition of peasants, rooted in the socio-economic and political struggle as well as the emerging global context of this class of workers. According to this paper, the social scientific definitions of “peasant” generally recognize both that the category is extremely heterogeneous and that individuals and groups in the category typically engage in multiple forms of livelihood, including agriculture, wage labour, pastoralism and livestock production, artisanal production, fishing and hunting, gathering of plant or mineral resources, petty commerce, and a variety of other skilled and unskilled occupations. However, it is also advisable to refer to the activist definition of the peasantry, which seeks to bring the experience of social movement into the definition of peasants.

Contemporary agrarian activists emphasize commonalities of “peasants” and “farmers,” citing arguments on economic vulnerability combined with a quest for autonomy. Activists, therefore, tend to use “peasant” and “farmer” interchangeably. Via Campesina—a coalition or movement with member organizations in over 70 countries – has been the leading force advocating for a new international instrument on peasants’ rights. The coalition promotes the following definition of the peasant:

“A peasant is a man or woman of the land, who has a direct and special relationship with the land and nature through the production of food and/or other agricultural products. Peasants work the land themselves, [relying] above all on family labour and other small-scale forms of organizing labour. Peasants are traditionally embedded in their local communities, and they take care of local landscapes and agro-ecological systems. The term peasant can apply to any person engaged in agriculture, cattle-raising, pastoralism, handicrafts related to agriculture or a related occupation in a rural area. This includes indigenous people working on the land.”

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<sup>10</sup> See Marc Edelman, “What is a peasant? What are peasantries? A briefing paper on issues of definition”, Prepared for the first session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, Geneva, 15-19 July 2013 at <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/WGPLeasants/Edelman.pdf>

The term peasant also applies to the landless. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the following categories of people are considered to be landless and are likely to face difficulties in ensuring their livelihood:

1. Agricultural labour households with little or no land;
2. Non-agricultural households in rural areas, with little or no land, whose members are engaged in various activities such as fishing, making crafts for the local market, or providing services;
3. Other rural households of pastoralists, nomads, peasants practising shifting cultivation, hunters and gatherers, and people with similar livelihoods.

Guided by research, debate and contemplation on the definition of the term “peasants”, the Human Rights Council of the UN on 28 September 2018 adopted a resolution – also supported by Pakistan – in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. The Declaration defines peasants as:

### Article 1

1. For the present Declaration, a peasant is any person who engages or who seeks to engage alone, or in association with others or as a community, in small-scale agricultural production for subsistence and/or for the market, and who relies significantly, though not necessarily exclusively, on family or household labour and other non-monetized ways of organizing labour, and who has a special dependency on and attachment to the land.
2. The present Declaration applies to any person engaged in artisanal or small-scale agriculture, crop planting, livestock raising, pastoralism, fishing, forestry, hunting or gathering, and handicrafts related to agriculture or a related occupation in a rural area. It also applies to dependent family members of peasants.
3. The present Declaration also applies to indigenous peoples and local communities working on the land, trans-human, nomadic and semi-nomadic communities, and the landless, engaged in the activities mentioned above.
4. The present Declaration further applies to hired workers, including all migrant workers, regardless of their migration status, and seasonal workers, on plantations, agricultural farms, forests and farms in aquaculture and agro-industrial enterprises. Lastly, it is also important to refer to the definition of peasants used by the Pakistan Standard Classification of Occupations (2015), which establishes all occupations as the protocol of data collection and presentation.<sup>11</sup>

## What are the Peasants' Rights?

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas comprises 28 articles covering almost as many rights. Most basic rights include the right to land and other natural resources; the right to seeds; the right to a decent income and livelihood and the means of production; the right to adequate food and food sovereignty; the right to social security; the right to participate in decision making; and, flowing from these rights, the general obligations on States.<sup>12</sup>

According to a paper published by the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, “As human beings, peasants and other people working in rural areas are entitled to all human rights that have been recognized by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, including those enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) adopted in 1966. However, almost 50 years after the adoption of these two instruments, the vulnerability of peasants and other people working in rural areas, including herders, pastoralists and fisherfolk, remains of particular concern. They represent 70% of the people living in extreme poverty and 80% of the world’s hungry. Hundreds of millions of them are victims of multiple discrimination and violations of human rights and most of them are not effectively protected by the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions because they are not engaged in the formal sector” (Golay, 2013).<sup>13</sup>



<sup>12</sup> Colin. H. UN Declarations on the Rights of Peasants, *A tool in the Struggle for Our future*, 2019, <https://www.cetim.ch/wp-content/uploads/The-UN-Declaration-on-the-Rights-of-Peasants.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Christophe Golay, “Legal reflections on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas”, Background paper prepared for the first session of the working group on the rights of peasants and other people Working in rural areas (15-19 July 2013). Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/WGPLeasants/Golay.pdf>

## Preface



**Akram Khaskheli**  
President  
HWA Sindh

The Hari Welfare Association (HWA) presents its eighth report, titled “The State of Peasants’ Rights in Sindh in 2022,” with the aim of enhancing understanding of peasants’ rights in the Sindh province and identifying areas that require intervention to uphold the fundamental rights outlined in provincial laws, the Pakistan Constitution, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas.

This report focuses on significant changes, initiatives, and activities that took place in 2022, highlighting both positive developments and identifying the areas where expected progress was not realized due to a lack of commitment, political will, and seriousness on the part of the respective governments. Regrettably, neither the federal government nor the provincial Government of Sindh (GoS) has shown a prioritization to improving the conditions of the peasants and rural laborers. During the local government elections held in June and July 2022, peasants and rural workers were entirely overlooked and they were not included in the party-based electoral process.

Additionally, the report draws attention to the challenges faced by the peasants and rural laborers as a result of heavy rains and floods that occurred in August and September, underscoring the difficulties and hardships endured during these natural disasters. It also sheds light on food security and land reforms

In October 2019, the Sindh High Court (SHC) delivered a pro-peasant verdict, which was a significant milestone for the peasant movement. Additionally, the Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act (SWAWA) was passed, marking another important advance in 2019. However, no progress beyond the legislative acts occurred in 2022. The SHC’s decision had the potential to bring about significant changes in the feudal system, establishing a fair mechanism to regulate the interaction between peasants and landowners. The landed elite has traditionally benefited from the existing

agricultural system. Unfortunately, the GoS chose to appeal against the landmark SHC decision by filing a plea before the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Disappointingly, the GoS did not withdraw its appeal to the Supreme Court in 2022.

The SWAWA passed in 2019 and did not see any implementation efforts in 2020, 2021, or 2022. The GoS has not appointed or notified the board responsible for overseeing the Act's provisions. Furthermore, women agricultural workers have not been registered under this Act at the grassroots union council level, and no measures have been taken to address this issue. While the SWAWA is undoubtedly a significant milestone for peasant and female agricultural workers in Sindh, it may not be effective in addressing the broader problems, just as other relevant laws, such as the Sindh Tenancy Act 1950, the Sindh Tenancy Amendment Act 2013, the Sindh Bonded Labour (Abolition) System Act 2015, and the Sindh Industrial Relations Act 2013, have failed to serve their intended purposes due to the GoS's failure to enforce them. These laws have not been properly notified, and there have been no allocations of budgets, human resources, or public awareness campaigns for their implementation. The non-implementation of the SWAWA could follow a similar trajectory. The Labour Department had not notified the SBLCAA, SIRA, and SWAWA rules.

Considering the prevailing circumstances, this report serves as valuable documentation of the ongoing struggle for peasants' rights in Sindh. It acknowledges that there is limited involvement in the peasants' rights movement, with only a few activities being conducted by NGOs. The report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the developments in the agricultural and labour sectors, which have a direct or indirect impact on peasants and rural workers.

In line with previous reports, this document also includes recommendations for the provincial government and civil society to actively participate in the realization of peasants' and rural workers' rights in the province. By offering these



recommendations, the report seeks to encourage and guide relevant stakeholders in their efforts to address the issues faced by peasants and rural workers and work towards ensuring their fundamental rights are upheld.

The Hari Welfare Association acknowledges with thanks the financial and technical support received from the Norwegian Human Rights Fund –NHRF in preparation and publication of its 2022 annual report The State of Peasants Rights in Sindh 2022.



### SUMMARY POINTS

“The State of Peasants’ Rights in Sindh in 2022,” aims to enhance understanding of peasants’ rights in the Sindh province and identify areas that require intervention to uphold the fundamental rights outlined in the provincial laws, the Pakistan Constitution, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas.

### Legislation, policy and administrative frameworks

In 2022 not a single positive initiative was taken in favour of peasants and rural workers. A negative development was the GoS’ failure to withdraw its petition filed in the Supreme Court of Pakistan against a landmark verdict by the Sindh High Court in October 2019.

After the floods in August 2022, the GoS introduced the Sindh Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (2022). The Sindh Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (2022) falls short of adequately addressing the needs and rights of peasants in Sindh, particularly the poor landless peasants who have been severely affected by the devastating floods in August 2022. In the policy, social protection measures for peasants and rural workers are absent.

Federal and provincial laws include legal and policy initiatives by the government, however, women’s access to and control of land is hindered by the prevalent social structure. The SWAWA is an important law but in 2022, no measures were taken to implement the law. The SWAWA covers a wide range of provisions, including payment regulations, working hours, child nutrition, access to healthcare and government agricultural institutions, maternity leave, worker registration, protection against harassment and abuse, the formation of women agricultural workers’ associations, the Benazir Women Support Programme, and the establishment of tripartite arbitration councils. If enforced diligently, the law would benefit rural women in Sindh.

Under the SIRA, peasants are recognized as workers, thus they could form trade unions. However, the law remains to be implemented. The STA is a crucial law that governs the rights and relationships between landlords and tenants, including sharecroppers, in rural areas of Sindh. However, in 2022, the GoS did not implement or improve the law as directed by the Sindh High Court in 2019. The GoS also did not notify the rules of the business of the SBLSAA, and the SWAWA.

### Agriculture Budget 2022-23

The GoS had allocated Rs16.6 billion for the agriculture sector in the fiscal year 2022-2023. The GoS's allocated budget is higher than the previous budget, but it is not sufficient for agriculture needs as ground realities had changed, and the cost of production had increased manifold.

In July 2021, the GoS announced the provision of Rs.3 billion in subsidies to small farmers (holding less than 16 acres). In 2022, there was no news about the distribution of subsidies to small-scale peasants.

### Rains and floods

Due to the heavy rains during August and the consequent floods in August and September 2022, the entire Sindh economy was devastated but the most critical impact was on landless peasants, sharecroppers and rural workers, who lost their livelihoods, livestock and shelters. The GoS' consequent measures were not adequate to compensate for the loss and restoration of the livelihoods of these groups. Civil society organizations showed grave concerns over the Sindh's and the federal government's weak response to the scale of devastation the peasants and rural workers had faced in Sindh.

It was feared that in the absence of government support, most of the peasants and farm workers would start working under informal terms and conditions determined by landlords, in which poor families are getting loans/peshgi/advance to survive. Such sharecropping informal arrangements result in debt bondage. No check or monitoring was undertaken by the district vigilance committees on the incidences of debt bondage.

Thousands of peasants and rural workers' families in 17 districts of Sindh are still without adequate shelter, work opportunities, safe drinking water, and health and education services. The GoS rather than helping to restore their lives by providing them with shelters and livelihood opportunities have turned a mass of flood-affected peasants and rural workers into beggars.

### Political representation of peasants and land reforms

The significant presence of landlord and individuals associated with agriculture in the provincial and national parliaments have influenced the legislative priorities. This is indicated by the absence of any call attention notices specifically addressing the rights

of peasants and rural workers in both the Sindh provincial assembly and the National Assembly of Pakistan in 2022. Furthermore, in the budget speech for 2022-23, the Chief Minister of Sindh did not use the term “hari” or “peasant.” Additionally, the budget for 2021-22 did not allocate funds for the functioning and activities of the District Vigilance Committees (DVCs).

In 2022, local government elections took place in two phases. As a common practice, these elections were contested on party-based politics rather than issue-based politics. The issue-based elections offer a more focused and substantive discussion of the challenges and concerns facing different groups of society. Here waderas and landlords remain unable to speak about specific policy issues and propose concrete solutions. Otherwise, citizens including peasants and workers could vote based on a better understanding of the candidates' positions on key issues.

### Bonded labour

In 2022, 653 (69%) workers found in bondage were from the agriculture sector and 292 in brick kiln sector. Of the total in the agriculture sector, 198 were children and 172 women; whereas, of the total 292, in the brick kiln sector, 93 were children and 89 women. In both sectors, total 945 bonded labourers were released. Of the total 29 districts in Sindh, the largest number (262) of bonded labourers were released from Umarnkot, 155 from Sanghar, 70 from Hyderabad, 57 from Khairpur Mirs, and 51 from Matyari districts.

The vast majority of bonded peasants and their family members recovered from the illegal detention of landlords in Umarnkot, a district which is marked by human development deficits in the form of under-five mortality, food insecurity, malnutrition, lack of health services and poor quality of drinking water. It indicates a correlation between these socio-economic challenges and the prevalence of bonded labour in the district. Bonded labour issues are hardly covered by the national media, with the exception of editorials and commentaries. Local newspapers in Sindh are the primary source of data collection. It implies a lack of attention, priority and sensitization at the national level regarding the prevalence of bonded labour and the need for its eradication.

In ten years, from 2013 to 2022, 10,838 bonded labourers were released from the agriculture sector. While a large number of bonded labourers were freed in 2013, the number continued to fall over the next four years. With 1,421 labourers released in 2018, it again saw a rise: 1,722 were released in 2019 and 3,086 bonded labourers in 2020. The number of bonded labourers freed dropped in 2022 compared to 2021. It is worth noting that a substantial proportion of children are taken into debt bondage alongside their families.

In 2022, 21 news stories reported the release of 292 bonded labourers (including 89 women and 93 children) from the captivity of brick kiln owners. On the court orders, the police raided brick kiln sites and recovered bonded labourers.

### District Vigilance Committees (DVCs)

The formation of DVCs is slow and inconsistent. In 2021, two DVCs in Matiari and Shikarpur districts were formed. In 2022, five DVCs were notified in Karachi's five districts. New DVCs include Central, East, South, Keamari and Malir. In these districts, there are no reports of bonded labour or debt bondage are. Yet these DVCs could play an important role in identifying latent forms of slavery, which refer to modern practices that share similarities with traditional forms of slavery but may not always fit the conventional definition. In these forms, individuals' vulnerability is exploited and they are deprived of their rights and freedoms, and the control over their labour is maintained. Though it does not involve overt ownership or physical chains, latent forms of slavery can still result in severe exploitation and oppression. By the end of December 2022, there were DVCs in 19 districts of Sindh out of total 29 districts.

### Peasants' protests in 2022 and causes

In 2022, a total of 125 protests by peasants were reported across Sindh, in which more than 4600 peasants including women and children took part. The number of demonstrations indicates that there were numerous complaints and discontent among the peasants, which motivated them to take collective action to express their concerns. A large number of protests and the participation of women and children show that the problems Sindh's peasants faced were serious and had a significant effect on the community.

The recommendations in this report are mostly focused on the Sindh government (GoS). Areas for civil society and human rights advocates intervening for a more proactive role in asserting farmers' and peasants' rights have also been noted.



# **SECTION 1: LEGISLATION, POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORKS**

## SECTION 1:

**LEGISLATION, POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORKS**

Similar to the preceding years, in 2022 HWA noticed the absence of positive developments in favour of peasants and rural workers. Rather, a negative development was evident: the GoS failed to withdraw its petition filed in the Supreme Court of Pakistan against a landmark verdict by the Sindh High Court in October 2019. The HWA has continuously urged the GoS to withdraw its appeal in the Supreme Court which depicts a clear stance of the GoS in favour of the feudal and tribal system.<sup>14</sup> The Sindh High Court's verdict, which struck down regressive amendments to the tenancy law and addressed bonded labour, is progressive and in line with the rights enshrined in the Pakistan Constitution and international treaties. Appeal against this verdict is a continuation of the government's alignment with the feudal and tribal system, which is detrimental to peasants' rights and the advancement of a pro-peasant legal framework.

**1.1 Sindh Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy, 2022**

After the floods in August 2022, the GoS introduced the Sindh Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (2022). The Sindh Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (2022) falls short of adequately addressing the needs and rights of peasants in Sindh, particularly the poor landless peasants who have been severely affected by the devastating floods. The 59-page long document mentions landless peasants three times in the context of vulnerable, marginalized and disadvantaged groups. The vulnerable groups including landless peasants are given priority to be "identified for dedicated social inclusion/development program with additional support and assistance under the project." However, the policy fails to prioritize the specific challenges faced by peasants and rural workers, especially those whose livelihoods are in the agriculture sector. The policy does not address the impact of the floods on agricultural land, crop loss, access to water resources, and the resulting economic hardships faced by peasants

Another critical point is that the policy does not provide concrete measures to address land redistribution and ensure land rights for vulnerable groups. In rural areas, landless peasants often lack secure land tenure and face marginalization. This factor further exacerbates their vulnerability and perpetuates existing inequalities. The policy also does not identify comprehensive measures to provide immediate and sustainable support for livelihood restoration, such as access to alternative employment opportunities,

<sup>14</sup> The Express Tribune. (2022). No respite for peasants on day to mark their struggle. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2352992/no-respite-for-peasants-on-day-to-mark-their-struggle>

<sup>15</sup> The Government of Sindh. (2022). Sindh Resettlement & Rehabilitation Policy, 2022. <https://www.sindh.gov.pk/storage/resourcePage/v2WDTRFB0XUJqB2E50thFoaWrtOnhBiyMPN9I1MX.pdf>

interest-free credit, agricultural inputs and vocational training. During the formulation of the policy, peasants' perspectives and input were largely overlooked. In such policies, the voices of peasants are a must in decision-making processes to ensure that their needs and rights are properly addressed.

In Sindh, social protection measures for peasants and rural workers do not exist. In this policy too, such measures are absent. The floods have exposed peasants to heightened risks, including displacement, food insecurity, and health hazards. Thus, it should have contained strong social protection mechanisms to provide relief and support to affected peasants, ensuring access to healthcare, education, housing, and social assistance during their rehabilitation and resettlement. The last important point is that the policy's implementation, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms should have been scrutinized to determine whether it delivers tangible improvements in the lives of the affected communities. The civil society has raised serious concerns over the non-implementation of the policy.<sup>16</sup>

### 1.2 Laws for Women Agriculture Workers

Though there are legal and policy initiatives taken by the federal and the Sindh governments, women's access to and control of land is hindered by social structure. While there are some efforts by the government to empower women by providing cultivable land, the challenges are noteworthy in a social structure where deep-rooted attitudes against women prevail. The distribution of land in Sindh as part of a land distribution program represents a starting point for women's empowerment, but it falls short of comprehensive land reforms and has not significantly impacted power structures.

The distribution of government land (through the Landless Hari Project) can make a symbolic change in women's status and introduce the concept of women owning land. Substantial initiatives specifically addressing women's land rights are lacking in Sindh. There is limited evidence of concrete action or policies aimed at implementing national and international commitments in this regard.<sup>17</sup> The Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act, 2019, has yet not been implemented though it is viewed as a positive step from several aspects. It provides opportunities to women in the agriculture sector to protect their minimum rights including the right to have minimum wage and form their groups at the union council levels.

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<sup>16</sup> Dawn. 2023. Sindh Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy doesn't solve problems of local people, moot told. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1738618>

<sup>17</sup> Haque, R., Aslam, R., & Malik, A. A. (2022). Land Ownership And Inheritance Rights Of Women In Rural Pakistan. *Webology* (ISSN: 1735-188X), 19(3).



Over the last three years including 2022, there were persistent calls for the implementation of this law, but its effective enforcement has been challenging.<sup>18</sup> Implementation of any legislation requires the formulation and notification of the rules of business. The SWAWA covers a wide range of provisions, including payment regulations, working hours, child nutrition, access to healthcare and government agricultural institutions, maternity leave, worker registration, protection against harassment and abuse, formation of women agricultural workers' associations, the Benazir Women Support Programme, and the establishment of tripartite arbitration councils. However, despite its passage, the full realization of these provisions and the actual implementation of the SWAWA have faced obstacles.

### 1.3 Sindh Industrial Relations Act (SIRA) 2013

Under the SIRA, peasants are recognized as workers, thus they could form trade unions. Local organizations in Sindh are taking initiatives to form rural workers' and peasants' unions, but such initiatives are limited without complete facilitation from the relevant government departments. In 2022, a local NGO in cotton growing districts formed ten trade unions at the village level of 350 women so that they could improve their literacy skills and advocate for improvements to wages and working conditions.<sup>19</sup>

### 1.4 Sindh Tenancy Act 1950

The Sindh Tenancy Act (STA) of 1950 is a crucial law that governs the rights and relationships between landlords and tenants, including sharecroppers. However, in 2022, the Government of Sindh did not implement or improve the law as directed by the Sindh High Court in 2019. This lack of implementation has resulted in serious issues and problems for peasants. The STA outlines the rights and responsibilities of both landowners and workers or sharecroppers, as well as regulating the sharing arrangements between them. It has undergone several updates, with the most recent one in 2013. The law also includes administrative regulations at the district level, which dictate how various service providers should interact with landlords and tenants.

Due to the non-implementation of the STA, peasants face significant challenges. These issues arise from the absence of clear regulations and guidelines regarding land tenancy, sharecropping arrangements, and the rights and obligations of the parties involved. The lack of enforcement of the law hampers the protection and welfare of peasants and rural workers, exacerbating their difficulties in accessing land and obtaining fair treatment in their relationships with landowners. Some of the relevant cases reported in the media in 2022 include:

<sup>18</sup> The Express Tribune. (2022). Sindh govt under fire for 'ignoring peasants' <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2363207/sindh-govt-under-fire-for-ignoring-peasants>

<sup>19</sup> Free the Minds. (2022). A new project on improving the literacy skills and rights awareness of women cotton pickers in Pakistan <https://feedtheminds.org/a-new-project-on-improving-the-literacy-skills-and-rights-awareness-of-women-cotton-pickers-in-pakistan/>

- In Dhabeji, Thatta, Choudhary Bashir, a landlord, demolished the huts of peasants and subjected them and their family members to physical and mental torture.
- In Kotri, Jamshoro, Sher Muhammad Palari, a landlord, seized the livestock belonging to Juman, a peasant who was unable to resist this injustice.
- In Padeidan, Noushehroferoze, peasants were forcefully evicted by landlord Khano Rajpar without any compensation.
- In Bulri Shah Karim, Waleed Mahesar, a landlord, displaced peasants from their homes.
- In Sehwan Sharif, Jamshoro, Akbar Behan, a landlord, failed to pay wages to the peasants and forcibly evicted them from agricultural land.

### 1.5 Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 2015

The issue of bonded labour was handed over to the provincial governments after the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010. The GoS took five years to pass the legislation to protect peasants and workers in agriculture and other areas of the economy from debt bondage, slavery, and slavery-like conditions.. The GoS made no revisions to the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1992, despite the five-year wait; it simply replicated the same law and the SBLCAA was passed in 2015. One drawback was that the SBLCAA does not use the concept of bonded labour found in the ILO Forced Labour Convention of 1930 (C. 29), or the ILO

Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957 (C. 105). Various stakeholders urged the GoS to establish District Vigilance Committees (DVCs) as mandated by the law and activate them to ensure effective implementation of the SBLCAA.

The HWA also expressed concerns about legal gaps and called for prompt resolution of these issues. The GoS, rather than adopting suggested changes in the Sindh High Court's 2019 pro-peasants' rights judgement, has continued to support the feudal class by supporting its petition against the Sindh High Court's Judgement in the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Despite claiming to be pro-peasant, the actions of the GoS seem to contradict its stance, suggesting a lack of genuine commitment to the welfare and interests of the peasant community.

The Sindh High Court's landmark pro-peasant rights decision in October 2019 includes direct and indirect protections for peasants and workers from slavery, abuse, exploitation, and debt enslavement. According to the SHC's decision, the Act of 1992 outlawed debt bondage on workers under Articles 11, 15 and 23 of the Constitution, as

well as any financial burden that resulted in the worker's debt bondage. The court stated that the Act of 1992's legal provisions apply to all people working in agriculture, except for those who have tenancy contracts under the STA 1950. The court stated that the employer/landlord could not advance money to his hari as credit. Furthermore, the court's decision included a reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. Slavery and bonded labour are specifically addressed in Article 13 (6) of the Declaration.<sup>20</sup>

The execution of bonded labour regulations (national or provincial) has remained a significant challenge and a major issue. Apart from numerous other provisions, the role of DVCs is critical, but only 19 DVCs had been established by 2022.<sup>21</sup> Another major worry is the DVCs' usefulness and performance. In 2022, civil society organizations urged the GoS to activate the DVCs by providing necessary funding and technical assistance. The HWA issued letters to the Deputy Commissioners of Sindh and the Deputy Director of Labour Sindh in 2022, encouraging them to form the DVCs.<sup>22</sup>

The Sindh Labour and Human Resource Department had announced in June 2018 at a consultation workshop that the Rules of Business for provincial labour laws, including the Rules of Business for SBLsAA, were drafted through discussions.<sup>23</sup> The Rules, however, have not been shared as yet with civil society organizations or published in the gazette.

## 1.6 Agriculture Budget 2022-23

The GoS had allocated Rs16.6 billion allocated for the agriculture sector in the fiscal year 2022-2023 to improve the irrigation system with the World Bank's loan money under the Sindh Irrigated Agriculture Productivity Enhancement Project (SIAPEP).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The Article says, "No one shall be required to perform forced, bonded or compulsory labour, be subject to the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking or be held in any other form of contemporary slavery. States shall, in consultation and cooperation with peasants and other people working in rural areas and their representative organizations, take appropriate measures to protect them from economic exploitation, child labour and all forms of contemporary slavery, such as debt bondage of women, men and children, and forced labour, including of fishers and fish workers, forest workers, or seasonal or migrant workers."

<sup>21</sup> The News International. (2019 October 9). Call for massive policy reforms to ensure rights of workers, activists. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/538425-call-for-massive-policy-reforms-to-ensure-rights-of-workers-activists>

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> ILO. (2018 July). Sindh labour department completes the consultation process of drafting rules of business for implementation of labour laws. [https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_633548/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/info/public/pr/WCMS_633548/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>24</sup> Hanif, U. (2022). Rs16.6 billion allocated for agriculture sector. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2361639/rs166-billion-allocated-for-agriculture-sector>

It aimed to improve water courses, instal high-efficiency irrigation systems to conserve scarce water resources and increase crop productivity to tackle the issue of food security.

The GoS also claimed that the budget would promote kitchen gardening and tunnel farming for vegetable production. Heavy earth moving machinery and drilling rig machines were provided to the farmers on a subsidised rent for better production. However, the representatives of the Sindh Abadgar Board claimed that though the GoS allocated budget is higher than the previous budget, but it is not sufficient as per the agriculture needs because the cost of production has increased and is increasing day by day. Diammonium phosphate (DAP) price has doubled (around Rs12,000 as compared to Rs 6,000 last year). It is the same with other fertilisers. Urea fertilizer is subsidized but is available at around Rs2,400 per bag against Rs1,800 just less than a year ago.

The GoS had not addressed the basic structural issues in the agricultural sector. This has further exacerbated the challenges faced by small and medium-sized farmers, who struggle to buy basic nutrients, let alone new technologies for growth. Of the total agriculture budget, the GoS had allocated 13 bulldozers. However, it was beyond understanding why the GoS had allocated money for this heavy machinery now which the province needed 40 years ago when lands were not levelled! The province also allocated a budget for bulldozers last year.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.7 Rs. 3 billion subsidies and Hari (Peasant) Card

In July 2021, the GoS announced the provision of Rs.3 billion in subsidies to small farmers (holding less than 16 acres) to be given in 2022. In 2022, there was no news about the distribution of subsidies to small farmers. The fertilizer subsidy was to be distributed to the peasants via a Hari Card. During that time, the GoS was supposed to establish 16 cold storage facilities with the help of producers. The GoS aimed to cover 80% of the costs, while the growers had to cover 20%. Additionally, in Thar, the GoS planned to build water treatment plants to make saline water generated from coal mining useful for agriculture. The GoS was supposed to install special plants to make Thar's saline subsoil water suitable for cultivation.<sup>26</sup> Concerned organizations like the Sindh Chamber of Agriculture (SCA) had expressed displeasure with the GoS delay in issuing the Peasant Cards.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Hanif, U. (2022). Rs16.6 billion allocated for agriculture sector. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2361639/rs166-billion-allocated-for-agriculture-sector>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> Khan, M. (2022). Sindh to issue Hari Cards for poor farmers. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1667388>

## 1.8 Minimum wage policy for rural workers

In July 2022, the GoS announced the minimum wage rates in the province.<sup>28</sup> If this wage rate is implemented in rural areas of Sindh, together with materializing other decent working conditions, it would:

- ensure that unskilled worker is fairly compensated;
- reduce poverty among workers in rural areas;
- ensure stability and security of income;
- safeguard workers from abuse and less than minimum pay;
- decrease income disparity and advance social fairness.
- support rural households' well-being and means of subsistence;
- encourage rural residents to remain in their neighbourhoods rather than move to cities in quest of higher-paying employment;
- increase rural workers' purchasing power, boosting regional economies;
- encourage the development and expansion of the rural economy;
- decrease the possibility of forced labour and labour exploitation in rural regions.



<sup>28</sup> Employees Federation of Pakistan. (2022). Sindh Minimum Rates of Wages Notification 2022.



## **SECTION 2: RAINS AND FLOODS**

## SECTION TWO: RAINS AND FOODS

During rains in August and the consequent floods in August and September 2022, the entire Sindh economy was devastated but the most critical impact was on landless peasants, sharecroppers and rural workers, who lost their livelihoods, livestock and shelters. The GoS consequent measures were not adequate to compensate for the loss and restoration of the livelihoods of these groups. As a result of rains and floods, cotton was the worst hit, bananas and mango orchards were damaged and vegetables, particularly onions, were washed away. According to an estimate, 2.082 million acres of the cropped area were damaged across Sindh. The 2022 rains were similar to the 2011 rains which had triggered flooding in lower Sindh after the 2010 super floods that destroyed seven to eight districts in upper Sindh owing to a breach in the Indus River dyke.

One or two pickings of cotton were carried out in the early sowing areas of Sindh. The downpour destroyed almost the entire crop in Sanghar, Naushahro Feroz, Khairpur, Nawabshah, Tando Allahyar, Mirpurkhas, Matiari and Tando Mohammad Khan. Around 80 per cent of the cotton crop had been simply washed away and losses to the cotton crop were no less than Rs.70bn. In the lower Sindh rain-hit Matiari district, which has no drainage system to dispose of rainwater, cotton crops, domestic edible oil production, and livestock feed were the casualties of the deluge, along with the cottage textile units.

After a period of continuous decline in the cotton crop, it had witnessed growth recently in Sindh, leading to the production of 3.5m bales in the 2021-22 season compared to 1.8m bales in 2020-21. It was grown over 539,000 ha against the sowing target of 640,000 ha. Losses to the cash cotton crop meant economic losses to farm labour as well as cotton pickers. The pickers, mostly women, lost an important source of seasonal earnings. Some picking this season was done before the rains. Sindh agriculture department assesses close to 100% losses to the remaining cotton crop. Delays in dewatering from farmlands would have serious implications for the sensitive cotton crop. Standing water blackens the crop. Those still having clean picking would be among the luckier ones. They would be getting Rs10,000 plus a rate for 40kg.

Devastating rains have undermined the rural community's economic well-being and inflicted mental agony and psychological trauma. Peasants would still be preparing to meet the challenges of the upcoming Rabi sowing season, provided the water recedes from fields. About 89,622 livestock had perished by August 2022 due to the rains. Roughly 84,783 of 89,622 livestock perished in the upper Sindh Kashmore district. Herds of livestock are mostly managed by the peasantry, who have a 50-50 share in farmlands with the growers. The downpour rendered this peasantry displaced. They have shifted to roadside improvised tents along with animals including cows, buffaloes, goats and sheep. Their villages, located on farmlands, have been inundated and

their houses made of thatched straw have collapsed. Their livestock is now exposed to diseases. Carcasses of cattle were seen on the Miprukrhas-Jhuddo route which was badly hit by the overflowing canal.

About 310,039 acres in Sanghar – Sindh's home of cotton production – followed by 247,659 acres in Shaheed Benazirabad and 247,607 acres in Naushahro Feroz districts were damaged. Khairpur district reported damages to the agriculture of 214,626 acres, resulting in the loss of its date palm crop in the July's spell of monsoon rainfall.<sup>29</sup>

## 2.1 The GoS response

Civil society organizations showed grave concerns over Sindh and the federal governments' response to the scale of devastation the peasants and rural workers had faced in Sindh. The government turned a deaf ear to peasants and workers who lost their crops, wages, cattle and houses during rains and floods in 2022. The governments failed to remove water from the main towns of Sehwan, Dadu, Larkana, Thatta and Badin districts. The GoS failed to protect peasants and workers during and after the rains and floods, which caused peasants and workers to become easy prey to greedy and exploitative landlords.

Thousands of peasants and rural workers' families in 17 districts of Sindh are without adequate shelter, work, work opportunities, minimum wages, safe drinking water, and health and education services. The GoS, rather than helping to restore their lives by providing them with shelters and livelihood opportunities, have turned a mass of flood-affected peasants and rural workers into beggars. Millions of children and their adult family members require food, safe drinking water and social security support; if not provided with these, around five million children under 5 years would be in danger of diseases and death due to malnutrition, hunger, water-borne diseases (especially diarrhoea), malaria and cold.<sup>30</sup>

Even though the Sindh Bonded Labour System Abolition Act (SBLCAA) was passed in 2016, it has never been implemented. Furthermore, District Vigilance Committees have not been established in all districts to monitor the situation of bonded labour. This lack of implementation and economic opportunities in the agriculture and livestock sectors puts rain-affected peasants and labourers at risk of falling into bonded labour. Many individuals have migrated from Mithi, Umerkot, and Mirpurkhas to Sanghar, Nawabshah, Naushahro Feroze, Khairpur, Matiari, and Hyderabad. It is crucial that every district administration promptly assists them based on their status as migrant workers.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Khan, M. H. (2022). Compounded losses of cash crop cotton. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1707362>

<sup>30</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2381326/rights-activists-fear-spike-in-bonded-labour>

<sup>31</sup> Dawn. (2022). HWA worried over plight of rain-hit peasants, labourers. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1705557>



## 2.2 Federal government's promises for big and small-scale landholders

In November 2022, the federal government unveiled around Rs600 billion relief package for the peasants and landlords because it was stated that only agriculture had the potential to drastically change the nation's economy while lowering the need for food imports.<sup>32</sup> The federal government introduced the package to help the landlords. In this regard, loans of Rs. 1800 billion were supposed to be given to landlords and peasants, an increase of Rs. 400 billion from the amount given to the former in 2021. The federal government aimed to pay Rs10.6 billion to waive the markup on small landlords' loans in flood-affected areas, and for the first time in rural areas, it has also agreed to offer Rs. 50 billion in loans to young people looking for work in the agricultural industry. Due to the markup, this would cost Rs 6.40 billion. After negotiations with the industry, the federal government reduced the price of DAP by Rs. 2500, and peasants and landowners could purchase it for Rs. 11250 per bag as opposed to Rs. 14000 per bag. The government also stated that peasants and landlords would profit by Rs. 58 billion as a result of the price drop for DAP, and farmers would receive 1.2 million bags of certified seeds at a cost-sharing ratio of Rs1.2 million. Together with Rs 5 billion for a markup on loans for landless Haris, Rs.13.20 billion had been set aside for this action. The other initiatives included:

- Second-hand tractors are being imported with a 40% duty rebate due to the local industry's refusal to lower tractor costs.
- The duty on CKD parts for new entrants in the tractor sector is being reduced from 35% to 15%. This decision has been criticized for being challenging for existing businesses. The current tractor industry has failed to achieve 100% localization in the last 50 years and still relies on imported parts.
- The government is importing 0.5 million tonnes of urea, with 200,000 tonnes already imported and another 300,000 tonnes planned. Rs 30 billion has been allocated for urea subsidies.
- To address the impact of floods, the government is importing 2.6 million tonnes of wheat, with one million tonnes already imported and another 1.6 million tonnes to follow.
- Power would be provided to farmers at a fixed rate of Rs.13 per unit as a quick-relief solution, costing the government a subsidy of Rs. 43 billion.
- The government plans to replace the 300,000 agriculture tube wells currently using power with solar energy. Interest-free loans would facilitate this transition.<sup>33</sup>

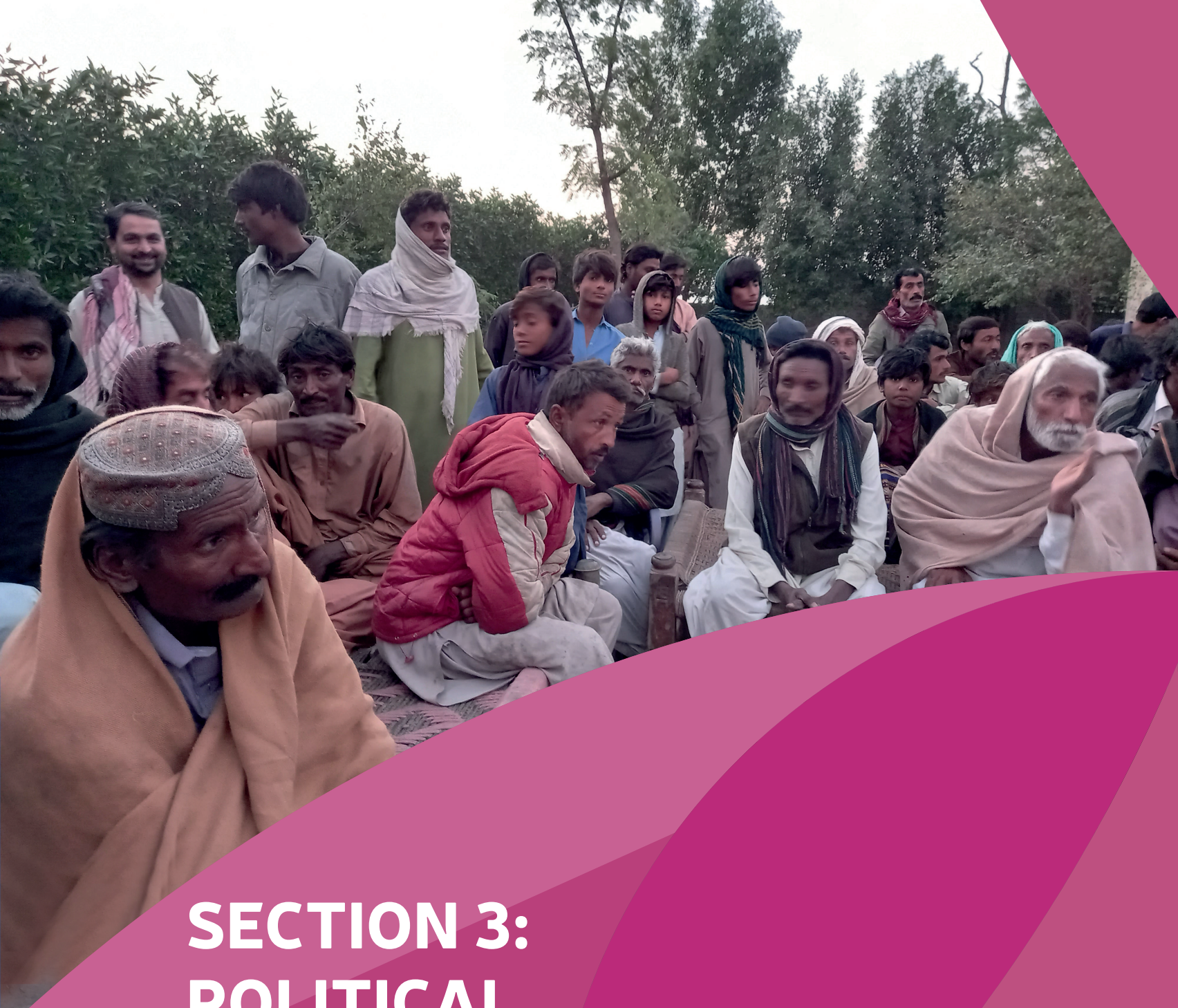
<sup>32</sup> Abbasi, Z. (2022). Big farmer relief package announced <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40206355>

<sup>33</sup> Abbasi, Z. (2022). Big farmer relief package announced <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40206355>

Several protests were directed at the district administration and provincial government due to a lack of assistance to farmers during and after heavy rains and flooding. The protests were held by hundreds of affected families, including peasants and rural workers, who were displaced from their homes and forced to seek temporary shelter along roadsides for several months. The displaced families faced dire conditions, enduring hardships without proper shelter or access to food. In an attempt to attract the attention of the relevant authorities, they resorted to periodic protests.

The fact that hundreds of families were displaced and forced to live on the roadsides for months suggests a systemic failure in disaster management and relief efforts. This does not only highlight the inability of the authorities to provide immediate assistance but also their lack of political will to opt for long-term solutions to help affected individuals rebuild their lives. The continuing protests also revealed that vulnerable communities were desperately attempting to draw attention to their dire circumstances and compel the relevant authorities to take action. It implies a breakdown in communication and trust between the people and their government, as the protests are indicative of the perceived indifference and negligence on the part of the authorities.





# **SECTION 3: POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF PEASANTS AND LAND REFORMS**

## SECTION 3: POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF PEASANTS AND LAND REFORMS

Two interconnected issues are emphasized and examined in this section. The first is the representation of peasants in existing political systems at the national, provincial, and municipal levels. The section examines the national and provincial legislatures as well as the local governance system and politics in this regard. While legislation and policy are the responsibility of the national and provincial legislatures, the local governance system aims to provide services and infrastructure to individuals and communities at the local level. The second issue is the lack of land reform, which is tied to feudal political parties controlling national, provincial, and local legislatures.

### 3.1 Representation of Peasants in Sindh and National Assemblies

Within Sindh's Provincial Assembly, a total of 21 out of 167 Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) stated their occupation as landlords from 2018 to 2022. Additionally, 13 other members identified themselves as "agriculturists." Similarly, among the 61 National Assembly members (MNAs) from Sindh, 35 (57%) listed their occupation as landowners, with 30 MNAs belonging to the Pakistan Peoples' Party. This composition of the provincial and national parliaments has had an impact, as evidenced by the absence of any call attention notices regarding the rights of peasants and rural workers in both the Sindh provincial assembly and the National Assembly of Pakistan in 2020. Call attention notices can be submitted by any assembly member and are subsequently discussed on the assembly floor.<sup>34</sup>

The significant presence of landlord and individuals associated with agriculture in the provincial and national parliaments have influenced the legislative priorities. This is indicated by the absence of any call attention notices specifically addressing the rights of peasants and rural workers in both the Sindh provincial assembly and the National Assembly of Pakistan in 2022. Furthermore, in the budget speech for 2022-23, the Chief Minister of Sindh did not use the terms "hari" or "peasant." Additionally, the budget for 2021-22 did not allocate funds for the functioning and activities of the District Vigilance Committees (DVCs) in the districts.

### 3.2 Sindh Local Governance and Peasants

In 2022, local government elections took place in two phases. The third phase was scheduled for 2023. In the first and second phases, elections of local bodies of metropolitan corporations, municipal corporations, municipal committees, town

<sup>34</sup> According to the Sindh Assembly's Rules of Procedure, "The 'Call Attention Notice' shall be in the form of a question addressed to the concerned Minister and shall be given in writing to the Secretary not less than forty-eight hours before the commencement of the sitting on the day on which it is proposed to be fixed."

committees, union committees and union councils and District council wards were held on 6 June and July 24 respectively.<sup>35</sup> As a common practice, these elections were contested on party-based politics rather than issue-based politics. The issue-based elections offer a focused and substantive discussion of the challenges and concerns facing different groups of society. In our party-based politics, waderas and landlords are unable to speak about specific policy issues and propose concrete solutions. In the issue-based elections, the citizens including peasants and workers could vote based on a better understanding of the candidates' positions on key issues. Thus, waderas and leaders can be made accountable because voters get a clear picture of making the candidates responsible for the key promises. In Sindh, party and community-based local elections are not suitable because of the given scale and nature of problems peasant and rural communities are facing. In such elections, citizens do not have an in-depth understanding of public policy issues, and such practices further lead to polarization and the deepening of political divisions. Additionally, party-based politics have provided limited voter choices and voices to rural and peasant communities.

In both phases, in 2022, PPPP won the most seats at all levels across the province,<sup>36</sup> which indicates that rural communities are not coming out of the trap of party politics and their urgent issues linked to livelihoods, irrigation water, wages, and economic exploitation remain unaddressed.

As per the 2021 amendment to the Sindh Local Government Act, around 1,270 union councils were planned to be established in Sindh. Each of these councils would consist of a total of 3,810 councillors, representing various groups such as labourers/peasants, minorities, and women. The substantial number of councillors ensures effective representation and the ability to voice and tackle the concerns of peasants, workers, minorities, and women.



<sup>35</sup> Election Pakistani. (2022). <https://www.electionpakistan.com/sindh-local-government-2022/schedule-II.html>

<sup>36</sup> Sikander, A. (2022). PPP dominates Sindh local bodies elections, clean sweeps various districts. <https://www.samaaenglish.tv/news/40011405>

**Table 1: No. of Union Councils and Total Number of Peasant/ Worker, Minority and Woman Councillors**

District/city	No. of Union Councils	No. of peasant/worker, minority and women councillors in each district
Badin	49	147
Dadu	52	156
Ghotki	42	126
Hyderabad	53	159
Jacobabad	44	132
Jamshoro	30	90
Karachi (all districts)	167	501
Kashmore	41	123
Khairpur	86	258
Larkana	47	141
Matiali	80	240
Mirpurkhas	41	123
Naushahro Firoze	51	153
Shaheed Benazirabad	51	153
Qambar Shahdadkot	52	156
Sanghar	55	165
Shikarpur	33	99
Sukkur	54	162
Tando Allahyar	20	60
Tando Muhammad Khan	16	48
Tharparkar	64	192
Thatta	55	165
Umerkot	50	150
Sujawal	37	111

These union councils will have a total of 3,810 councillors. This number is noteworthy as it includes representatives from various sections of society, such as labourers/peasants, minorities, and women. The emphasis on inclusive representation reflects a commitment to address the concerns and issues faced by these marginalized groups. The significant number of councillors will enable effective representation. There is a better chance for the voices and concerns of peasants, workers, minorities, and women to be expressed and addressed. The presence of a diverse range of councillors implies that the concerns and challenges specific to peasants, workers, minorities, and women can be given attention and consideration. However, the real challenge lies in solving the public problem, which appears not to be possible in the given party and community-based politics.

Following the decommissioning of the local government, it was necessary to conduct an objective assessment of the system's operation, which has not been done yet. The current situation indicates that the citizens have not demanded changes to the local governance system, and the civil society hardly expressed concerns about the time it takes to hold new local government elections. This complacent attitude toward local government highlights its failure to meet the expectations of the public. If the system is implemented with genuine political will, it can effectively address the issues faced by peasants, workers, and potential-bonded labourers. It is crucial to thoroughly evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the local government system. The assessment should take into account the concerns and expectations of the general public and civil society, as well as the potential benefits that can be achieved through genuine political commitment.

### 3.3 Land reforms and food security

In 2022, there were no policy or practical measures announced to bring about land reforms, which is a critical problem in Sindh, for the province's general development, its economy and its people. Land reforms are extremely difficult to achieve within the given political structure and without sustained efforts in view of the STA. Land reforms are essential for food security; otherwise, Sindh may face serious food insecurity issues in the future.<sup>37</sup> After the August 2022 floods, peasants and rural workers faced a high frequency of displacement, harsh weather, hunger, malnutrition, and poverty. Also, the situation concerning food security significantly deteriorated as a result of high costs for food and fuel, the drought, torrential monsoon rains, animal diseases, and fewer job prospects.

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<sup>37</sup> The Express Tribune. (2023). Land reforms termed must for food security. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2412301/land-reforms-termed-must-for-food-security>

### 3.4 Negative impacts of large landholdings <sup>38</sup>

The large landholding by feudal lords or a few hundred families in Sindh has several negative impacts on various aspects of society, economy, and governance. Some of those include:

- Feudal lords control a significant portion of the land which has led to extreme wealth concentration in a few families, which contribute to a stark wealth gap between the feudal lords and the rest of the population.
- Feudal lords exert considerable political power and influence due to their landholdings.
- The dominance of a few families in landownership restricts social mobility and upward economic mobility.
- Small-scale peasants and landless peasants struggle to access land for cultivation or settlement due to feudal control.
- Peasants/sharecroppers are often exploited by the landlords who charge exorbitant rents or demand a significant share of agricultural produce.
- Feudal lords employ exploitative labour practices, such as low wages and poor working conditions, including debt bondage.
- Land monopolization limits agricultural diversification and innovation, hindering productivity growth.
- Some feudal lords reside outside Sindh, leading to absentee ownership and neglect of land and the peasant communities.
- Concentration of land ownership hinders the production of essential crops, affecting food security.
- Mismanagement and lack of sustainable practices on large landholdings may contribute to land degradation and soil erosion.
- Feudal lords use their influence to gain political patronage and secure favourable policies or positions.
- The influence of feudal lords can lead to weak governance structures, with decision-making favouring their interests at the cost of peasants' welfare.
- Feudal dominance perpetuates corruption, as powerful individuals manipulate systems to maintain control over resources.
- Feudal control can impede access to quality education, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and inequality.
- Feudal families often engage in political nepotism, ensuring positions of power remain within their circle.
- The political clout of feudal lords hinders land reform efforts aimed at redistributing land to marginalized communities.

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<sup>38</sup> Sanderson, S. R. W. (2013). *Land Reform in Mexico: 1910–1980*. Elsevier. Akram-Lodhi, A. H. (2007). Land reform, rural social relations and the peasantry. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 7(4), 554-562. Manji, A. S. (2006). *The politics of land reform in Africa: From communal tenure to free markets*. Zed Books.



- Large landowners often prioritize investments in their estates, neglecting broader infrastructure development.
- The concentration of land in the hands of a few families restricts opportunities for entrepreneurial activities.
- Feudal control leads to reduced investment in health, education, and other social sectors outside the feudal sphere.
- Feudal dominance weakens democratic processes, as power becomes centralized and citizens' participation is marginalized.
- The influence of feudal lords results in the underrepresentation of marginalized communities in decision-making bodies.
- Feudal lords suppress dissenting voices and discourage activism, limiting freedom of expression.
- The power imbalance between feudal lords and the marginalized leads to unequal access to justice.
- Feudal dominance reinforces patriarchal norms, disempowering women.
- The control of land by a few families reduces opportunities for alternative livelihoods dependent on land.
- Feudal control discourages the adoption of modern agricultural techniques, impeding progress.
- The concentration of landownership limits investment in agricultural research and development.

### Positive impacts of land reforms or redistribution

Based on past experiences and interactions with the peasants, rural workers, landlords and other stakeholders, it appears that land reforms in Sindh have the potential to:

- correct historical wrongs and provide indigenous people access to land, which will help reduce poverty.
- entice domestic and international investment in rural and agricultural development, supporting economic expansion and employment creation.
- promote sustainable farming methods and diversify land ownership to increase agricultural resilience.
- ensure openness and accountability while helping to improve land governance processes.
- support effective land use planning, ensuring efficient and sustainable use of land resources.
- encourage land management techniques that lessen the effects of natural catastrophes and build disaster resilience.
- create opportunities for small-scale peasants and landless peasants to improve their livelihoods.

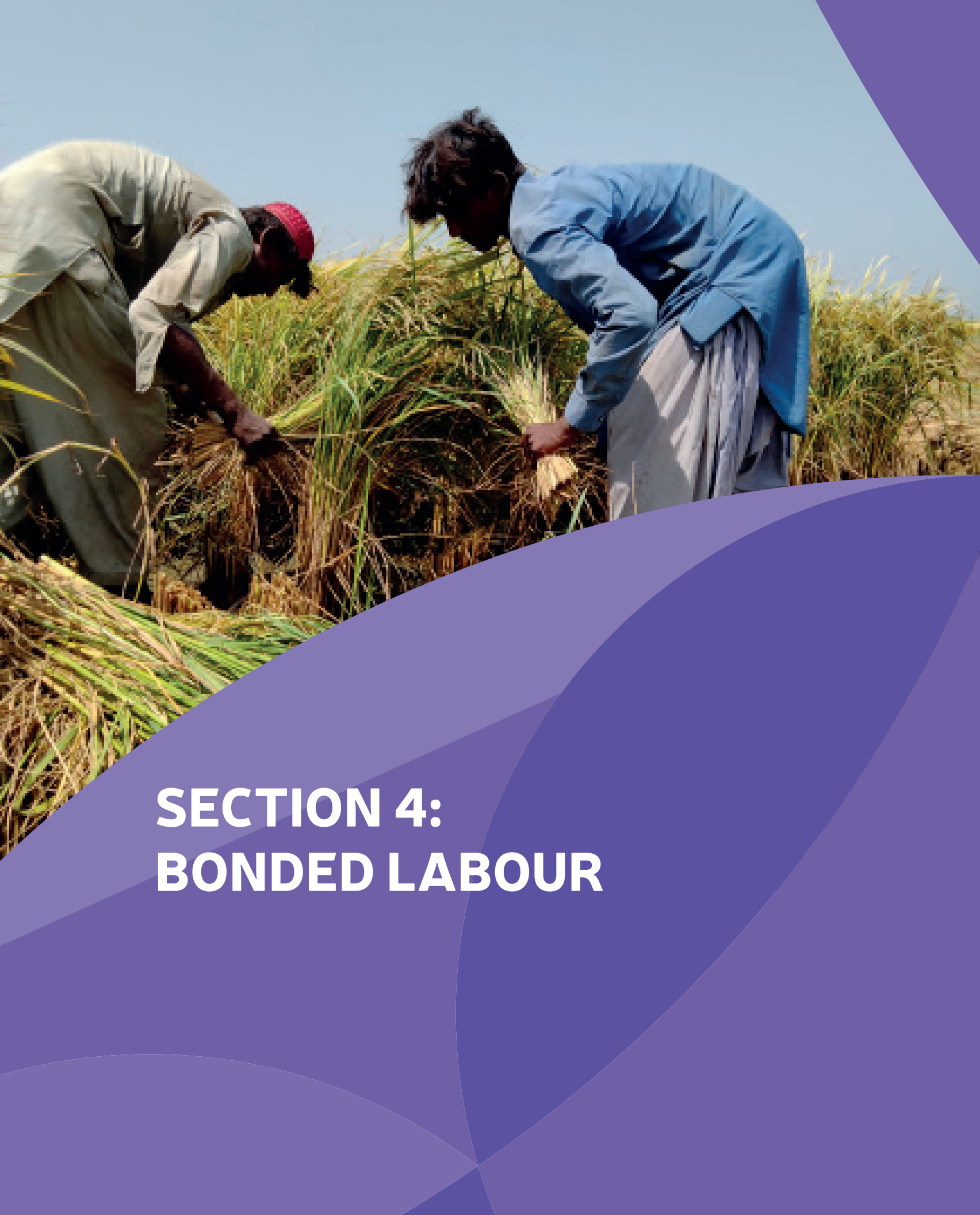
- empower marginalized communities by giving them control over productive resources.
- enable small-scale peasants to access credit and financial services, stimulating economic growth.
- ensure that marginalized communities have access to land for cultivation and settlement.
- increase agricultural productivity, improving food security for the population.
- improve access to justice for marginalized communities, ensuring their land rights are protected.
- increase investment in social sectors, improving access to education and healthcare in rural areas.
- preserve biodiversity by promoting sustainable land use practices.
- open up avenues for social mobility, allowing individuals to move out of poverty and improve their social standing.
- give rural communities access to economic prospects, hence minimising the need for migration to metropolitan areas.
- reduce disputes and conflicts over land by providing better land tenure stability.

### 3.5 The Landless Hari Project

Like in the previous year, in 2022 too, the HWA, civil society organizations and political parties demanded another project to provide land to landless peasants and rural workers in the province.<sup>39</sup> The HWA still anticipates the resumption of the Landless Hari Project (LHP) in both the existing and new districts, as originally initiated in 2008. The initial list of districts in 2008 included Badin, Dadu, Umerkot, Thatta, Jamshoro, Sanghar, Larkana, Ghotki, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Khairpur, Matiari, Mirpurkhas, Qambar Shahdadkot, Benazirabad, Shikarpur, and Sukkur. A total of 41,520 acres of land were allocated, with 2,883 women (70.6%) and 1,220 men (29.4%) being the beneficiaries. The land distribution varied from one to twenty-five acres per person. The program also encompassed financial aid, provision of seedlings, and land-use training, with the primary objective of optimizing the utilization of underutilized land. The women who obtained property titles also received nutrition kits, fruit plants, chickens, and micro health insurance. A total of 4,103 women and men received land titles, in addition to receiving a cumulative amount of Rs. 42,772,251 in in-kind assistance and Rs. 47,254,833 in cash to support land development.

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<sup>39</sup> Dawn. 2022. Country turned into security state, say nationalists <https://www.dawn.com/news/1676848>



## **SECTION 4: BONDED LABOUR**

## SECTION 4: BONDED LABOUR

This section reports the number of freed bonded labourers from the captivity of landlords in 2022 and previously. It also recounts the number of freed women and children, along with details on the procedure employed to free them from the landlord's control.

The hari camps, which house peasants and workers who have fled from landlord imprisonment or been set free, are described in detail as well. It also includes an analysis of Sindh's compliance with ILO bonded labour conventions.



Table 2: In Sindh, bonded labourers released from agriculture in 2022

District	Children	Women	Men	Total
Badin	5	4	7	6
Dadu	3	1	1	5
Ghotki	9	8	13	30
Hyderabad	1	2	6	9
Jacobabad	-	-	2	2
Jamshoro	7	7	15	29
KK	-	-	1	1
Khairpur Mirs	7	13	30	50
Larkana	-	3	5	8
Matyari	7	5	7	19
Mirpurkhas	8	6	7	21
Nousheroferoz	2	3	6	11
QS	-	-	1	1
Sanghar	31	23	32	86
SBA	-	1	2	3
Shikarpur	5	5	13	23
Sujawal	-	-	3	3
Sukkur	2	4	5	11
Tando Allahyar	25	15	21	61
TMK	3	4	4	11
Tharparker	1	4	8	13
Thatta	9	9	20	38
Umarkot	73	55	74	202
Total	198	172	283	<b>653</b>

**Table 3: Bonded labour in brick kiln released in 2022**

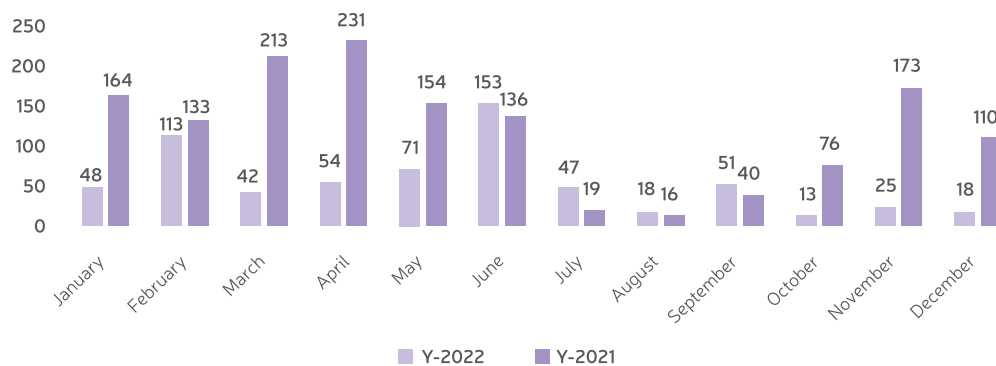
District	Children	Women	Men	Total
Ghotki	-	1	3	4
Hyderabad	22	19	0	61
Jacobabad	-	1	2	3
Jamshoro	2	2	5	9
KK	2	2	3	7
Khairpur Mirs	2	3	2	7
Larkana	2	3	4	9
Matyari	14	9	9	32
Sanghar	21	20	28	69
SBA	8	11	12	31
Umarkot	20	18	22	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>292</b>

The HWA collected data related to bonded labourers released in the brick kiln sector in Sindh. In 2022, 21 news stories reported the release of 292 bonded labourers (including 89 women and 93 children) from the captivity of brick kiln owners. On the court orders, the police raided brick kiln sites and recovered bonded labourers.

In 2022, 653 bonded labour were from the agriculture sector and 292 from brick kiln sector.

Of the total in the agriculture sector, 198 were children and 172 women; whereas in the brick kiln sector, of the total 292 bonded labourers, 93 were children and 89 women. In total 945 bonded labourers were released from both sectors in 2022. Of the total 29 districts in Sindh, the majority (202) of bonded labourers were released from Umarkot, 155 from Sanghar, 70 from Hyderabad, 57 from Khairpur Mirs, and 51 from Matyari districts.

Figure: Bonded labour released from the agriculture sector in 2022 and 2021



The above figure reveals that in both years most of the bonded labourers were released in the first six months. There is noticed downward trend after July.



Bonded labourers in agriculture released in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022

Table 3: District-wise bonded peasants released from the agriculture sector in Sindh in 2019, 2020, 2021\* and 2022

Districts	Children	Women	Men	Total	Children	Women	Men	Total	Children	Women	Men	Total	Children	Women	Men	Total
Badin**	25	5	5	35	25	5	5	35	25	5	5	35	25	5	5	35
Dadu**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ghotki	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hyderabad	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2
Jacobabad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jamshoro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kandhkot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Khairpur Mirs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Larkana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Matiali	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mirpurkhas**	83	87	86	256	83	87	86	256	83	87	86	256	83	87	86	256
NF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
QS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sanghar	36	44	36	116	36	44	36	116	36	44	36	116	36	44	36	116
Sukkur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benazirabad**	29	22	27	78	29	22	27	78	29	22	27	78	29	22	27	78
Shikarpur	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Sajawal	4	6	5	15	4	6	5	15	4	6	5	15	4	6	5	15
TA	76	59	54	189	76	59	54	189	76	59	54	189	76	59	54	189
TMK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thaparkar**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thatta	5	3	5	13	5	3	5	13	5	3	5	13	5	3	5	13
Umerkot**	348	356	313	1,017	348	356	313	1,017	348	356	313	1,017	348	356	313	1,017
Total	606	583	533	1,722	606	583	533	1,722	606	583	533	1,722	606	583	533	1,722

\*Data compiled by the HWA; \*\* DVCs already notified.



In four years, from 2019 to 2022, of the total 6,926 bonded labourers released from the agriculture sector, 2430 (35 percent) were women. Most (1154) of the women were released in 2020. Umarkot is the most notorious district where the highest number (1103) of bonded labour freed were women.

A large number of bonded peasants and their family members were released from Tando Allahyar (61), Sanghar (86), Khairpur Mirs (50), and Thatta (38) districts. These are the districts which in the past had no or little incidence of bonded labourers in the agriculture sector.

This table also offers data from 2021, which shows that a vast majority (1,436) of bonded peasants and their family members were recovered from the illegal detention of landlords in Umerkot., from Mirpurkhas (497), Sanghar (514), Matiari (234), and Badin (133) districts. The table also shows that the number of peasant bonded labourers released in 2020 was significantly higher than in 2019. In 2020, 176 news stories on the release and escape of bonded labourers were recorded in Sindh's nine districts. Five cases were reported in Badin, four in Hyderabad, two in Khairpur Mirs, 11 in Matiari, 39 in Mirpurkhas, 31 in Sanghar, four in Sukkur, five in Tando Allahyar, and 74 cases in Umerkot.

On 15th January 2022, in Noushehroferoze, a worker filed a petition in the District and Session Court against landlord Ghulam Ali Arain for engaging him and his family in bonded labour. He also protested. However, it could not be traced whether he was able to get justice or not. On 15 June 2022, in Mirpurkhas, a peasant Ashoo Mal filed an application in the District and Session Court and pleaded that he and his family should be protected from the bonded labour being forced on them by landlord Waseem Qaimkhani (Daily Kawis).

Out of the 29 districts indicated in the Table above, DVCs are formed in 19 districts. However, these DVCs were not involved in the release and rehabilitation of the bonded labourers released through court orders. This raises concerns about the effectiveness and the role of the DVCs in addressing the issue of bonded labour.

In all of the cases in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, the police raided the landowners' property and brought peasants' family members before the courts on court orders. The police did not arrest the landlords in any of the incidents and no charges were filed against them under the Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 2015. It shows a lack of enforcement and accountability for the landlords involved in the exploitation of peasants.

Furthermore, the role of DVCs was not mentioned in any of the areas where DVCs are established. The ILO's Committee of Experts on C029 requested information on cases filed under the SBL SAA 2015, as well as on the trials and prosecutions. The government does not have these facts, implying a lack of recordkeeping and transparency. These factors hinder efforts to combat the issue of bonded labour and hold perpetrators accountable.

#### 4.1 Bonded labourers released in ten years (from 2013- 2022)

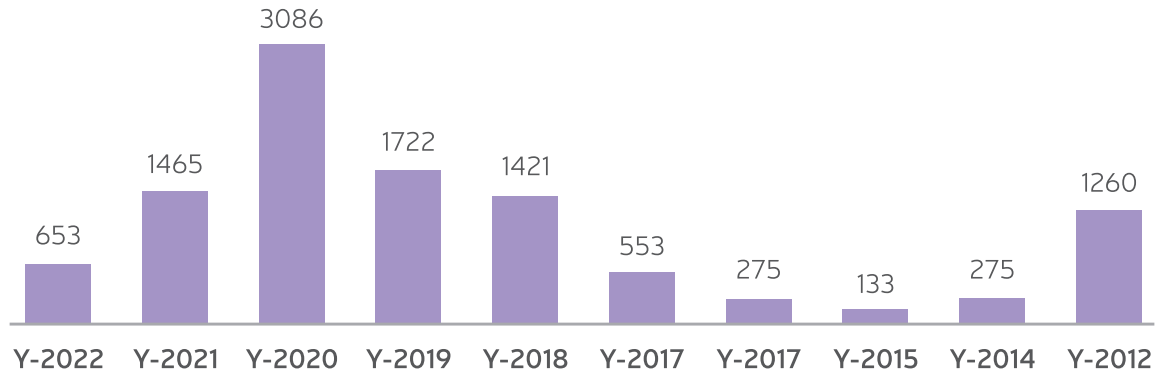
The HWA has developed a ten-year record of bonded labourers who were released or fled landlords' captivity in Sindh's agriculture sector, based on the media reports. While a large number of bonded labourers were freed in 2013, the number continued to fall over the next four years. With 1,421 labourers released in 2018, it saw a rise: 1,722 were released in 2019 and 3,086 bonded labourers were released in 2020. It shows an increase in the number of bonded laborers released from 2019 to 2020. It appears to be a positive sign indicating an increased focus on combating bonded labour and enforcing laws and regulations. The number of bonded labourers freed dropped in 2022 compared to 2021. It is worth noting that a substantial proportion of children are taken into debt bondage alongside their families.

**Table 4: Bonded peasants and their family members released/ escaped 2013-2022**

	Men	Women	Children	Total
2022	283	172	198	653
2021	445	521	499	1465
2020	1017	1154	915	3086
2019	533	583	606	1722
2018	442	485	494	1421
2017	196	221	136	553
2016	103	110	62	275
2015	29	53	51	133
2014	107	53	115	275
2013	345	264	651	1260
<b>Total</b>	<b>3500</b>	<b>3611</b>	<b>3727</b>	<b>10838</b>
<b>Percent</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Data gathered by the Hari Welfare Association

**Graph 3: Bonded peasants and their family members released/ escaped during 2013-2022 as reported in the media**



**Table 5: Bonded labour in brick kiln released in 2022**

District	Children	Women	Men	Total
Ghotki	-	1	3	4
Hyderabad	22	19	0	61
Jacobabad	-	1	2	3
Jamshoro	2	2	5	9
KK	2	2	3	7
Khairpur Mirs	2	3	2	7
Larkana	2	3	4	9
Matyari	14	9	9	32
Sanghar	21	20	28	69
SBA	8	11	12	31
Umarkot	20	18	22	60
	93	89	110	<b>292</b>

The HWA collected data related to bonded labourers released in the brick kiln sector in Sindh. In 2022, 21 news stories reported the release of 292 bonded labourers (including 89 women and 93 children) from the captivity of brick kiln owners. On the court orders, the police raided brick kiln sites and recovered bonded labourers.

## 4.2 The Status of Hari Camps in 2022

Hari camps in Sindh rarely get the attention of civil society or the State. It shows a lack of awareness and concern for the living conditions and challenges faced by the released peasants and their families residing in these camps. Each year, hundreds of released peasants and their families come to live in the camps, and many go back to the same agriculture sector as they do not have other skills. No agency records the in- and out-flow of the families in the eight camps set up in Sindh. This issue also indicates difficulties in tracking the movement and needs of the individuals and families in the camps, hindering effective support and intervention.

Every year, the HWA compiles stories from the informal camps established across Sindh to provide temporary shelter to the fugitives or bonded labourers released from different sectors of the economy. These camps are not run by any single person or an organisation: the community living in the camp comes together to share mutual interests and to welcome newcomers. They rely on communal support and mutual interests among the camp residents, but there is a potential lack of formal oversight and support structures.

Husari, Baba Bhit Shah, Sikandar Abad, Azad Nagar, Himmat Abad, Sukhpur, Sher Khan Malokani, and Umarkot are the places where these eight camps are found. Husari camp, the oldest, was founded in 1997, while Umarkot camp, the most recent, was founded in 2011. The Sikandarabad camp houses the largest number of ex-bonded labour families. Families in these camps often raise their voices about the lack of basic health services and the security or protection of families. The provisions of essential services are inadequate and the vulnerability of the residents further exacerbates their difficult circumstances. Since these families did not have marketable skills and opportunities for skill development and alternative livelihoods, thus, they remain compelled to work as wage workers in neighbouring houses, towns and industrial zones, and remain trapped in a cycle of low-paid wage work.

## 4.3 District Vigilance Committees (DVCs)

The number of DVCs is limited and their formation inconsistent. In 2021, two DVCs in Matiari and Shikarpur districts were formed and in 2022, five DVCs notified in Karachi's five districts were established. New DVCs include Karachi Central, Karachi East, Karachi South, Kemari and Malir. By the end of December 2022, 19 DVCs were in Sindh out of 29 districts.

The limited number of DVCs indicates a lack of attention and commitment from the GoS and other relevant authorities to address the pervasive problem of slavery and

debt bondage in the agriculture sector of the province. The DVCs are formed under section 15 of the Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act of 2015 with a mandate to monitor implementation, but these are notified only after continuous requests from the Labour Secretary, the HWA, and other organizations to the Deputy Commissioners across the province.

By 2020, only 12 DVCs were notified in Badin, Dadu, Tando Allahyar, Tando Muhammad Khan, Korangi, Kashmore, Mipurkhas, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Sukkur, Shaheed Benazirabad, and Naushero Feroz. Unfortunately, almost all were inactive and had not conducted a single meeting to learn about the scope and the mandate. The DVCs have remained ineffective in addressing the issues of bonded labourers.

Neither the GoS nor the district governments have allocated any funds for the functions of the DVCs. Under the law, the district authorities must set up DVCs, consisting of elected authorities and representatives of the district administration, bar association, media, social services, and labour departments. According to the Act, the role of the DVCs is to advise the district administration on the effective implementation of the law, help in the rehabilitation of the freed bonded labourers, and monitor the working of the law. But the Rules of Business for SBL SAA of 2015 have neither been shared with the civil society organizations nor notified in the gazette. It indicates the lack of transparency and accessibility to important legal information, which limits the involvement and engagement of civil society organizations in monitoring and advocating for the effective implementation of the law.

Both before and after the SBL SAA was passed, bonded labourers were being released as a result of habeas corpus petitions submitted by the bonded labourers' families or representatives of human rights organisations. In the province, 10,190 bonded labourers were freed between 2013 and 2021. According to court instructions, the police had entered the landowners' homes in each case and brought peasant family members before the judge. In every case, the landlords avoided police arrest and had no SBL SAA complaints filed against them. Furthermore, not a single instance involved a report on the function of DVCs in areas where they have been established. The government was asked to disclose information about the cases filed under the SBL SAA of the trials and prosecutions by the ILO's Committee of Experts on C029. However, the absence of these facts from the government suggests the lack of recordkeeping and transparency.

THE STATE OF PEASANTS' RIGHTS IN SINDH IN 2022

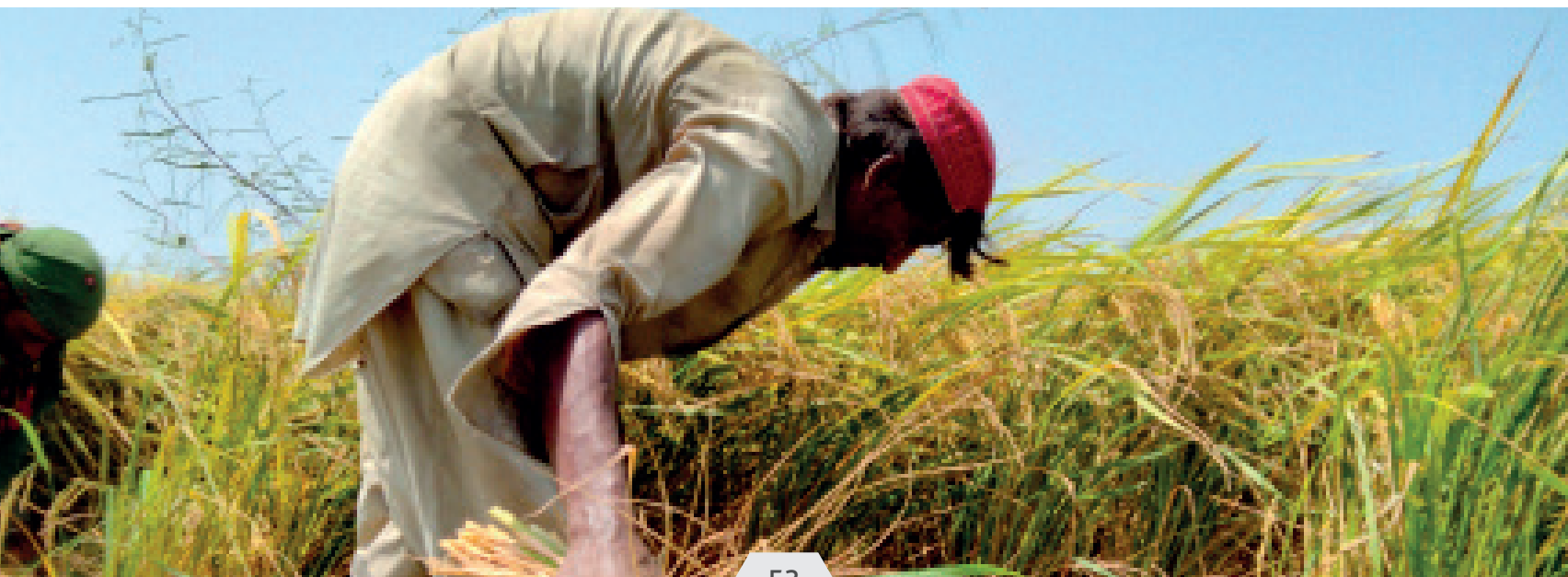
99	Division	District	DVC Notified	District not notified
1	Hyderabad	Badin Thatta Sujawal Dadu Hyderabad Jamshoro Matiari Tando Allahyar Tando Muhammad Khan	Badin Dadu Tando Allahyar Tando Muhammad Khan Matiari	Thatta Sujawal Hyderabad Jamshoro
2	Karachi	Karachi Central Karachi East Karachi South Karachi west Keamari Korangi Malir	Korangi Karachi Central Karachi East Karachi South Kemari Malir	Karachi West
3	Larkana	Jacobabad Kashmore Larkana Qambar Shahdadkot Sikarpur	Kashmore Shikarpur	Jacobabad Larkana Qambar Shahdadkot
4	Mirpurkhas	Mirpurkhas Tharparkar Umerkot	Mirpurkhas Tharparkar Umerkot	
5	Sukkur	Ghotki Khairpur Sukkur	Sukkur	Ghotki Khairpur

6	Shaheed Benazir Abad	Shaheed Benazirabad Abad Naushehro Feroze Sanghar	Shaheed Benazir Abad Naushehro Feroze	Sanghar
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### 4.4 Bonded Labour and Sindh's Non-Compliance with the ILO's Conventions

The Government of Pakistan (GoP) filed a statement in response to the CEACR's criticisms and recommendations related to Convention No. 29, and the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) adopted those responses in 2019. The Committee had pleaded with the GoP to implement strong measures to put an end to bonded labour. The Committee took note of the GoP's assertion that it was impossible to supervise bonded labour practises through the regular inspection process concerning the DVCs. The DVCs were thus established under the relevant provincial labour regulations. The SBLSAA 2015, a new law on bonded labour required the DVCs to be reconstituted, according to the Committee.

Interestingly, the Committee missed the fact that the 1992 version of the SBLSAA still applies. In addition, the Rules have still not been framed even after seven years. The government was ordered to disclose information about the cases filed under the SBLSAA of 2015, including the results of the trials and prosecutions, by the ILO's Committee of Experts on C029. However, the administration withheld these facts from the general population. The GoS did nothing in 2020 to help the thousands of families living in hari camps in Sindh.



**Table 7: Recommendations<sup>40</sup> of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations to Pakistan and its provinces, and compliance of GoS concerning Convention 29 on Forced Labour Convention (adopted in 2019, published in 2021)<sup>41,42</sup>**

S. No	Themes	Recommendations by CEACR	In 2021, the HWA's assessment: Compliance by Sindh	Comments in t2021
1	Legislative framework	Effective implementation of the newly enacted provincial laws abolishing bonded labour	No compliance	No measures are taken to implement the SBLSAA
2	Programmes of action	Combat and eliminate bonded labour.	No compliance.	-Culprits are not tried under the law; -Bonded labourers are freed only when they approach the court; -Freed-bonded labourers are not rehabilitated.
		Continue adopting measures aimed at supporting freed bonded labourers.	No compliance.	Once freed, they go to the bonded labour camps around Hyderabad, where thousands of families are living without basic amenities.
3	DVCs	Continue its efforts to establish, reinforce and strengthen the DVCs.	Extremely poor compliance; in 14 districts, DVCs are constituted (by Dec. 2021) but dysfunctional.	In the remaining 15 districts, DVCs are not formed.

<sup>40</sup> These recommendations were published in the HWA's The State of Peasants' Rights in 2020 in Sindh; in this report, these are reproduced to remind the stakeholders about the ILO's experts committees' recommendations.

<sup>41</sup> ILO. Comments adopted by the CEACR: Pakistan. Adopted by the CEACR in 2019. [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13203:0::NO::P13203\\_COUNTRY\\_ID:103166](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13203:0::NO::P13203_COUNTRY_ID:103166).

<sup>42</sup> This Table is pasted from the previous report published in 2021 so that the readers have a better understanding of the content. In 2022, no progress is made to eliminate the issue of bonded labourers or debt bondage.



	Provide information on the functioning of the DVCs, including the number of bonded labourers identified and rescued.	No compliance; the government provided inaccurate information to the Committee, which stated that “seven DVCs working efficiently in the province.”	-Dysfunctional DVCs cannot help any peasant/labourers. -Unfortunately, Pakistan has been submitting an inaccurate report to the Committee. -All seven (at the time of reporting) DVCs are dysfunctional; -Only with the help of activists, bonded labourers approach the judiciary, and then through the police, the bonded labourers are released.
	Provide copies of monitoring or evaluation reports.	--	The government should provide NGOs the reports.
	Indicate if any legal action has been taken against persons employing bonded labourers	No compliance; instead, the government helps the perpetrators.	Instead, the government has sided with the feudal lords; One of the examples is filing a petition in the SCP against the SHC’s pro-peasant decision.
	Provide information on the number of prosecutions, convictions, and specific penalties applied, as well as copies of relevant court decisions.	No compliance; thus, no information.	The government should provide a list of cases of habeas corpus filed by bonded labourers.

4	Research	Conduct surveys and research studies on bonded labour	No compliance.	Compliance is only possible if the government is serious and has the will to address the issue of bonded labour, but it has never been the case.
5	Budgetary allocation	The Committee did not directly ask the government to allocate resources for the release, and rehabilitation of bonded labourers.	There are no traces of budgetary allocation for the implementation of the SBLCAA in the budget documents.	Without funds, the implementation of the law is not possible; also release and rehabilitation are not possible without resources.

In 2001, the federal government had issued a National Policy and Plan of Action to abolish bonded labour and rehabilitate bonded labourers who had been released. The government pledged to end bonded labour under the Plan of Action, which outlined both long and short-term solutions. A fund for the rehabilitation of liberated bonded labourers was also established. The Act was never implemented in its entirety. Bonded labourers were and are still being released under the habeas corpus petitions typically submitted by the families of bonded labourers or representatives of human rights organizations, both before and after the law's introduction.

There are numerous flaws and omissions in the statute. There were no mandatory rules requiring the revenue department or the labour department to register peasants who worked on the landlords' land. Experts further note that while the relationship between bonded labourers and landlords could have been controlled by the Sindh Tenancy Act of 1950, the bound haris could not seek protection under the Act because they are not considered tenants. Some of the landlords claimed that the Bonded Labor System Abolition Act did not apply to haris and that the advance payments paid to them were similar to Taqqavi loans (crop expenses and family necessities) that were not covered by the Act.

The Sindh Police Department also formed Human Rights Cells at the district level, which included Anti-Bonded Labour Cells in areas where the practice of bonded labour is widespread. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for dealing with such circumstances were also prepared for the Cells. However, it has been reported that when police are called to report forced labour, they still use the Pakistan Penal Code's prohibitions on illegal confinement rather than the

<sup>43</sup> Arif, Mazhar, "Land Rights: Peasants' Economic Justice", South Asia Partnership, Pakistan, 2008

SBLSAA<sup>44</sup>. Unfortunately, the Sindh police have never filed a case under SBLSAA sections 11 (Punishment for enforcing bonded labour) or 12 (Punishment for extracting bonded labour within the bonded labour system) that is known (or reported). The police do not even file FIRs under the Pakistan Penal Code's section 340 (wrongful detention).

The HWA estimates that millions of agriculture and brick kilns workers lack social protection and other decent work conditions, including the minimum wage. In comparison to the Rs 25000 minimum pay stipulated by the GoS in June 2022 for unskilled workers, it was claimed that rural labourers only received Rs. 6,000 per month. Millions of young people in rural Sindh were forced to work around 14 hours a day at grocery stores, restaurants, and workshops for just Rs.5,000 per month due to unemployment and a lack of education and skills, and among them were women and girls who picked cotton and chillies for meagre wages.

In 2022, the HWA was also nominated as a member of the District Anti-Human Committee in Benazirabad. Its first meeting took place in January 2022. The Committee reviewed bonded labour issues in the district as issues were interlinked.<sup>45</sup>



<sup>44</sup>“Study on Bonded Labour Practices”, Rural Support Programmes Network

<sup>45</sup> Business Recorder. (2022). Bonded labour has surged in Sindh, say analysts. <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40209238>



## **SECTION 5: PEASANTS' PROTESTS AND OTHER ISSUES**

## SECTION 5: PEASANTS' PROTESTS AND OTHER ISSUES

Protests, rallies, and token hunger strikes undertaken by peasants and rural workers in Sindh against the injustices and excesses of influential landlords and the police indicate the existence of peasant and rural workers' mobilization and social agency. These demonstrations are expressions or manifestations of the right to freedom of assembly, association and speech. These protests are often the only way for peasants and rural labourers to express their dissatisfaction with the injustices they face. The demonstrations are carried out in large or small groups. Only the peasant's family members are frequently seen holding placards demanding their rights and justice outside the local press clubs, police stations, or the homes of local MPAs or MNAs. This section examines the peasant protests that occurred, as well as the challenges that peasant women face in particular.

### 5.1 Peasants' Protests in 2022 and Causes

In 2022, 125 protests of peasants were reported across Sindh, in which more than 4,600 peasants including women and children took part. The volume of demonstrations indicates that there were numerous complaints and discontent among the peasants, which motivated them to take collective action to express their concerns. A large number of protests and the participation of women and children show that the problems Sindh's peasants faced were serious and had a significant effect on the community. It implies that the complaints were not restricted to a few singular events but rather reflected broader systemic difficulties and injustices that peasants had to deal with daily. These also show that the peasant community is organised and motivated and that they are determined to fight for their rights and seek improvements to their living conditions. It emphasises the value of group action as a way for underrepresented groups to raise their voices and demand social, economic, and political improvements. In one of the cases, on 5 February 2022, in Larkana, women peasants protested against the police for harassing them and trying to occupy their land in the village.

**Table 8: District-wise reported protests by peasants and workers in four years**

Districts	Year			
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Badin	7	5	2	5
Dadu	3	2	1	9
Ghotki	3	2	3	6
Hyderabad	11	5	4	3
Jacobabad	1	1	1	1
Jamshoro	2	2	0	4
Kandhkot	2	1	0	4
Karachi	2	2	5	02
Khairpur Mirs	1	4	2	14
Larkana	3	1	0	4
Matiari	2	8	1	6
Mirpurkhas	16	15	3	5
Nausheroferoze	2	2	0	8
Sanghar	12	2	9	7
Sujawal	0	0	1	3
Benazirabad	3	8	1	7
Sukkur	1	1	0	8
Tando Allahyar	0	1	1	3
Shikarpur	1	0	0	6
Tando M Khan	3	2	1	3
Tharparkar	5	2	4	3
Thatta	2	2	1	8
Umerkot	13	3	5	6
Total	95	71	46	125

The causes of protest include different acts of violence against peasants and their exploitation:

- in four cases, 35 houses were burnt down in different districts by landlords and influential persons; in one village two children were burnt alive.
- in five cases, the police arrested peasants and their male family members on charges of fabricated cases and tortured them.
- in 100 cases, peasants and small-scale landlords protested against the artificial shortage of irrigation water created by the irrigation department of Sindh. This also included the stoppage of irrigation water on the pretext of cleaning canals.
- in 10 cases the peasants' children had died due to the hospital administration's negligence and lack of health facilities.
- eviction from the land without compensation from the landlord.
- eviction from their abodes.
- demand for the implementation of the Sindh Tenancy Act and peasants' rights.
- lack of support by the GoS against livestock losses in the rains.
- artificial shortage of fertiliser.
- crops were set on fire by unknown persons.
- powerful individuals released rainwater in their crop fields.
- irrigation department demanded bribes for releasing irrigation water.
- in 15 cases, landlords forced peasants into bonded labour.
- in 9 cases, landlords did not give wages to the peasants.
- a landlord had tortured peasants and taken away their share in the crop.
- a landlord took away peasants' livestock.
- landlords harassed, insulted and tortured peasants and their family members.
- landlords attempted to rape cotton-picking women.
- the Revenue Department and the Forest and Wildlife Department destroyed crops.
- the Food Department did not issue circulars for wheat purchasing.
- GoS did not dewater the agricultural lands.
- thieves had stolen a peasant's buffalo.
- a peasant woman protested against her husband's captivity by the landlord.

The above-reported causes of protests in Sindh show a wide range of underlying contexts and narratives that contribute to the grievances and frustrations of the peasant communities in rural areas. Burning of houses, eviction from lands, and forced labour by influential landlords indicate the pervasive socio-economic inequalities and power imbalances in rural areas. These contexts revolve around the unequal distribution of resources, landlessness, and the exploitation of peasants by powerful landlords. These protests related to the implementation of the STA, non-payment of wages/compensation, and occupation of agricultural land by influential landlords show the struggles over land rights and tenancy issues. It highlights how powerless peasants continue to wage small and losing battles over ownership, tenant rights, and conflicts arising from the concentration of land in the hands of a few.

Many of the protests were against the artificial shortage of irrigation water and the alleged bribery demands by the Sindh irrigation department. It reflects the challenges for poor peasants of Sindh in access to irrigation resources. The HWA also noticed deep issues of water governance, unequal distribution of water resources, and corruption within the irrigation system.

The peasants' protests due to the deaths of their children because of the negligence and lack of health facilities in hospitals, mostly in the Tharparkar region, reveal the inadequacies and deficiencies in the healthcare system and the pervasive structural violence. These cases offer insights into the failure of the government to provide proper healthcare services, the lack of infrastructure, and the resulting loss of lives. The protests related to unpaid wages, torture, harassment, and theft of livestock depict the exploitation and mistreatment of peasants by landlords and influential individuals.

Also, there were protests related to the shortage of fertilizers, crop destruction, and lack of support against livestock losses. These reflect the challenges faced by peasants in the agriculture sector and the absence of government assistance. These cases revolve around issues such as agricultural inputs, natural disasters, and inadequate government support. In addition to cases of corruption and inefficient governance, violence against women and discrimination against minorities are on the rise. The cases of attempted rape of cotton-picking women and the harassment, insult, and torture of peasants and their family members bring attention to the issues of gender-based violence and discrimination against minorities. It reveals how vulnerable are peasants and their family members in rural communities and victims of power dynamics.

It is important to note that these contexts and narratives are based on the provided information and further analysis of the specific socio-political dynamics in Sindh province would be necessary to fully understand the complexities of the underlying issues.

In 2022, 102 protests of rural workers were recorded in Sindh through the media, in which 3,381 workers including women and children took part. Of the total, most 25 protests were linked to non-payment of wages and demanding wages; 25 protests were specifically linked to this issue. Some workers were brutally tortured by the landlords and employers. In Sindh, the minimum wage is Rs 25,000 per month for unskilled workers, but workers are paid less than Rs10,000 per month. The wage discrepancy between the mandated minimum wage and the actual wages being received by workers is a recurring issue in the protests.



Also, 14 protests were related to the torture of workers in different districts of Sindh. Of these, three groups of protesters/workers claimed that they were tortured by the local police. Some workers were brutally tortured by landlords, employers, and even the local police. The problem of non-provision of wages and torture of rural workers is extremely common but rarely reported, and only reported when the workers stage protests. However, the police do not entertain their complaints because they cannot pay the police the bribe to catch the powerful parties.

There were also 10 protests related to the non-provision of support after the flood in August 2022. Peasants and workers protested because they were not provided with financial and other support after the 2022 flood. This reflects inadequate assistance and neglect towards the affected workers and communities in times of natural disasters. It underscores the importance of effective disaster response and support mechanisms for affected populations.

Overall, the large number of protests shows the grievances of rural workers in Sindh and reflects the challenging socioeconomic conditions they faced. Low wages, wage disparities, and abuse indicate extreme vulnerability of peasants with their limited access to resources and opportunities. It also reveals that there are serious gaps in the enforcement of labour laws in Sindh. The non-payment and underpayment of wages, as well as abuse, raise questions about the implementation and monitoring of regulations designed to protect workers' rights.

Of the total reported cases of protests, 13 were from Khaipur Mirs, 8 from SBA, 4 from Hyderabad, 3 from Kotri, and 2 from Noushahroferoze. Specific details of most of the protests are given as follows:

### ***Railway***

- In Nawabshah on 29 November 2022, coolie workers protested against the railway administration for the provision of basic benefits.
- In Mahrabpur, Khairpur, on 29 November 2022, coolie workers protested against the railway administration for the provision of basic benefits.
- In Jhimpir, Thatta, on 27 November 2022, railway workers protested against the administration for non-payment of wages.

### ***Fertiliser, Daharki, Ghotki***

- on 10 November 2022, a family of a worker (employed at a fertiliser company) protested against his disappearance.

- on 5 August 2022, workers of Engro fertiliser protested against low wages.
- on 16 December 2022, workers of a fertiliser company demanded the restoration of their jobs.

### *Oil and gas*

- In Mirpur Mathelo, Ghotki, on 27 December 2022, workers of Maripur Petroleum company protested against the company and demanded the restoration of their jobs.
- In Mirpur Mathelo, Ghotki, on 10 November 2022, workers protested against an oil company for unlawful dismissal.
- In Khanpur, on 13 November 2022, workers protested against oil companies for not providing job opportunities to the locals.

### *Fisheries*

- In Jati, Sujawal, on 26 June 2022, fishermen protested against Indian Navy for illegal interference in the sea.
- In Garho, Thatta, on 5 July 2022, fishermen protested against the owner Firdous for non-payment of wages.
- In Kharochan, Thatta, on 5- July 2022, fishermen protested against the processing factory administration for unlawful dismissal.
- In Hyderabad, on 22 November 2022, fishermen organised a rally on the International Day of Fishermen and highlighted various demands.

### *Sanitary workers protests against non-payment of wages*

- In Kazi Ahmed, SBA, on 16 June 2022,
- In Sukkur, on 9 July 2022,
- In Kotri, Jamshoro, on 11 August 2022,
- In Chondko, Khairpur, on 13 August 2022,
- In Shikarpur, on 16 August 2022,
- In Tando Bagho, Badin, on 17 August 2022,
- In Nawabshah, on 30 November 2022,
- In Samaro, Umarmkot, on 30 November 2022,
- In Badin, on 7 December 2022,
- In Tando Muhammad Khan, on 10 December 2022,
- In Kunb, Khairpur, on 16 December 2022,

- In Mahrabpur, Khairpur, on 12 December 2022,
- In Kunri, Umarmkot, on 23 December 2022, sanitary workers protested for not paying salaries before Christmas.
- In Nawabshah, on 23 December 2022, sanitary workers protested for not paying salaries before Christmas.

### *Factories*

- In Noriabad, on 15 February 2022, workers protested against Imamuddin Shauqeen, the owner of a cement factory who hired armed persons to take possession of a plot.

In Kotri, Jamshoro, on 29 March 2022, workers protested against the contractor of a marble factory owner Arjun who did not provide them with health insurance.

- In Tando Ghulam Hyder, on 4 June 2022, factory workers demanded an increase in salaries.
- In Kot Ghulam Muhammad, on 30 June 2022, factory workers protested against Subhan Shah for non-payment of wages.
- In Ratodero, Larkana, on 10 November 2022, workers protested against the owner of the pickle factory, Dawood Khan, for non-payment of wages.
- In Khairpur, on 19 December 2022, workers protested against the lack of basic facilities for women workers in the dates processing factory.

### *Other workers*

- In Khairpur Mirs: on 10 January 2022, against contractor Abdul Shakoor for not paying wages.
- In Tando Adam, Sanghar, on 17 January 2022, shopkeeper Ghulam Faqeer Qureshi tortured labour for damaging a sugar bag. The labour protested against the cruelty inflicted on him.
- In Shahpur Jahanian, SBA, on 25 February 2022, workers protested against non-payment of transport cost of sugar cane.
- In Thari Mirwah, Khairpur, on 28 February 2022, workers protested against contractor Sundar Das for non-payment of wages.

- In Kotri, Jamshoro, on 12 March 2022, workers protested against cable mills for non-payment of wages for years.
- In Hyderabad, on 25 March 2022, workers protested against motor workshop owner, Muhammad Ali Abbasi, who physically tortured a worker.
- In Chuhar Jamali, Thatta, on 28 March 2022, workers protested against the owner of Sea Food Farm, Abdul Bari, for non-payment of wages.
- In Bozdar Wada, on 29 March 2022, workers protested against contractor Nazeer Pitafi, who tortured a worker, Juman, and also did not pay him wages.
- In Jam Sahib, SBA, on 3 April 2022, workers from Mithi protested against unknown persons who set fire to the huts of workers.
- In Shahdadpur, Sanghar, on 5 April 2022, workers from Islamkot protested against the robbers who looted them for cash.
- In Sita Road, on 11 April 2022, workers' families protested against the administration of Sita Road Hospital as their children died due to the lack of medical aid.
- In Kunri, Umarmkot, on 21 April 2022, workers protested against the shopkeeper who tortured physically a child, Imran Shaikh.
- In Shahbandar, Thatta on 22 April 2022, workers protested against Zaman Khan, owner of the fish farm, for harassing the workers and accusing them of theft.
- In Sindhri, Mirpurkhas, on 28 April 2022, workers protested against landlord Abdul Hai who tortured a labour's son for stealing mangos.
- In Sita Road, on 29 April 2022, workers protested against the merchants for non-payment of wages.
- In Moro, Naushehroferoze, on 5 June 2022, workers protested against contractor Qabil Jatoi who did not pay wages to workers.
- In Rohri, Sukkur, on 6 June 2022, a family of garbage-picking-child protested against a shopkeeper who tortured the child.

- In Badin, on 10 June 2022, rickshaw drivers protested against the increase in petroleum prices and inflation.
- In Makli, Thatta, on 15 June 2022, workers protested against contractor Moeen Khokhar who physically tortured workers and denied them pay full wages.  
  
In Sita Road, on 20 June 2022, workers' families protested the murder of labour Sonu Kalhoro and demanded to arrest his killers.
- In Buxapur, Jacobabad, on 14 July 2022, the workers protested as the government did not provide any support against agricultural losses in the rain.
- In Thatta, on 15 July 2022, workers protested and were removed from work forcefully.
- In Bhan Saeedabad, Dadu, on 17 July 2022, the vendors protested against increasing inflation and unemployment.
- In Jhimpir, Thatta, on 22 July 2022, coal miners protested against the government closing the mine.
- In Kingri, Khairpur, on 26 July 2022, dates workers protested against the government for lack of support in the rain disaster.
- In Kot Ghulam Muhammad, on 28 July 2022, worker Aslam Arain protested against contractor Sarfaraz Ali for non-payment of wages.
- In Thana Bola Khan, Jamshoro, on 22 January 2022, shopkeeper Jetha Ram tortured his workers and handed them over to the police in a fabricated case.
- In Bulri Shah Karim, on 4 February 2022, workers protested against police for illegal raids at their homes.
- In Hyderabad on 21 April 2022, worker Afroze Khan protested against the police who tortured and arrested him.
- In Mehar, on 29 July 2022, push carters protested against the police who did not allow the space for carts.
- In Jhimpir, Thatta, on 1 August 2022, coal mine workers protested against the government for closing the mine.

- In Mirpurkhas, on 2 August 2022, flour mill workers protested against low wages.
- In Lonikot, on 7 August 2022, workers' families and friends protested against the murder of labour Amin Barejo.
- In Dokri, Larkana, on 1 October 2022, Sindh Hari Committee protested and demanded the rehabilitation of rain-affected people.
- In Mehar, on 2 October 2022, Sindh Hari Committee protested against the lack of rehabilitation of rain-affected people.
- In Tando Ghulam Ali, on 3 October 2022, a worker committed suicide due to unemployment and inflation.
- In Hyderabad, on 8 October 2022, Sindh Hari Committee organised a rally and demanded rehabilitation of rain-affected people.
- In Tharoshah, Naushehroferoze, on 16 October 2022, worker Naeem Ujjan was beaten by influential for demanding his due wages.
- Padeidan, Noushehroferoze, on 27 October 2022, workers protested against the landlord Khair Muhammad Rajpar for non-payment of wages.
- In Nawabshah, on 14 November 2022, workers protested against the Habib Mill administration for firing the staff.
- In Keti Bandar, Thatta on 14 November 2022, workers protested against the owner of sea food company Khan Muhammad Baloch for non-payment of wages and were fired from their jobs.
- In Chambar, Tando Allahyar on 16 November 2022, workers protested against the Chambar sugar mill administration for dismissal of the staff.
- In Peer Jo Goth, Khairpur, on 18 November 2022, workers protested against the landlord Noor Muhammad Mughal for non-payment of wages.
- In Mehar, on 18 November 2022, workers protested against the owner of the dairy farm, Ismail Gadi, who harassed a worker.
- In Sukkur, on 19 November 2022, workers protested against Shakir Ali who tortured a labour Babu Asadi.

- In Ranipur, Khairpur, on 26 November 2022, workers accused a brick kiln owner Ahsan Ali of imposing forced labour.
- In Thari Mirwah, Khairpur, on 26 November 2022, workers protested against the shopkeeper who tortured a labour.
- In Jhangara, Sehwan, on 28 November 2022, rain-affected workers protested for lack of support of ration.
- In Jangshahi, on 30 December 2022, workers protested against not employing locals in the K-4 project.
- In Warih, Larkana, on 5 December 2022, a cobbler's family protested against Ghulam Shabir who tortured worker Asghar Machi for asking payment for the shoe polish.
- In Umar Kot, on 6 December 2022, workers of the Pithoro rice mill protested against low wages.
- In Qibo Saeed Khan, on 7 December 2022, workers protested against an influential who tortured them on the issue of a donkey cart.
- In Gharo, Thatta, on 10 December 2022, workers protested for the restoration of their jobs at Keltra Export Company.
- In Bhit Shah, Matyarion 11 December 2022, workers protested against Umar who tortured a rikshaw driver for demanding a fare.
- In Talhar, Badin, on 13 December 2022, potters protested against the government for lack of support to their work.
- In Tando Adam, Sanghar, on 15 December 2022, workers protested against the police for torturing restaurant workers on a petty issue.
- In Wahi Pandhi, on 15 December 2022, workers protested against a company for injustice.
- In Thatta, on 21 December 2022, workers of coal mines protested for lack of benefits and health facilities.



## **SECTION 6: WOMEN PEASANTS AND WORKERS**



## SECTION 6: WOMEN PEASANTS AND WORKERS

Roughly half of Sindh's total population, 48%, comprises women, totalling around 22.956 million. The majority of these women reside in rural areas of Sindh, where the literacy rate is considerably lower compared to urban areas.

### 6.1 Women in debt bondage

According to the data compiled by the HWA, a total of 10,838 bonded peasants were released over ten years, from 2013 to 2022. Among these individuals, 3,611 (33%) were women. Women bear an equal burden when it comes to modern slavery, particularly in the form of debt bondage.

They face various issues and hardships during their captivity. The most serious is their vulnerability to sexual abuse and harassment from landlords or their kamdars. They are subjected to exploitation and forced into non-consensual relationships, increasing their vulnerability and trauma. Additionally, women suffer physical and emotional abuse at the hands of their captors. They endure physical violence, verbal abuse, and psychological trauma, leading to long-lasting scars and emotional distress. In rural Sindh, women have less freedom but bonded women and girls have limited or no control over their own lives. They are confined to the landlord's premises, denied freedom of movement, and subjected to strict control and surveillance.

In addition to enduring harsh and exploitative working conditions without sufficient rest or fair compensation, women in debt bondage are deprived of essential healthcare and sanitation facilities. Their health needs and rights are disregarded, resulting in an increased risk of illness and inadequate medical treatment.

In many instances, women are separated from their families as men often manage to escape captivity, leaving their wives and children behind. This separation compounds the distress faced by women, making it more challenging for them to seek assistance or break free from their situation. It takes several years for men to arrange the necessary support for the release of their family members, thereby prolonging the suffering experienced by women.

**Table 9: Women released from the captivity of landlords in the agriculture sector.**

Year	
Y-2022	172
Y-2021	521
Y-2020	1154
Y-2019	583
Y-2018	485
Y-2017	221
Y-2016	110
Y-2015	53
Y-2014	53
Y-2013	264
Total	3611





**SECTION 7:  
PEASANTS AND  
PAKISTAN'S  
INTERNATIONAL  
COMMITMENTS**

## SECTION 6: WOMEN PEASANTS AND WORKERS

This section examines international actions and events relating to peasants' rights, as well as how Pakistan and Sindh's NGOs might participate in them. In addition, the section emphasizes Pakistan's pledges to recognise, promote, and protect the human rights of peasants and rural workers.

### 7.1 UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Pakistan was expected to submit its second periodic report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) on 30 June 2022. The CESCR oversees the implementation of the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which Pakistan ratified in November 2004, initially expressing concerns but later retracting them in April 2008. In 2010, after the Covenant's adoption, Pakistan was required to submit an initial report, which it finally submitted in October 2016, six years later than expected. However, the deadline for the second report has now passed, and Pakistan has not yet submitted it.

The significant delays in submitting the initial report raised questions about the effectiveness of Pakistan's Ministry of Human Rights and non-state human rights organizations, as they too were unable to submit their findings on time. The Ministry of Human Rights is responsible for compiling the periodic reports in consultation with relevant stakeholders. However, in June 2022, the deadline for the second report passed silently, without any efforts from the Ministry to publicize or share information about the submission date.

Unfortunately, Pakistan lacks a mechanism to update, promote and support local organizations in their participation in the Committee's engagement with the State party. The delays and shortcomings in Pakistan's compliance with its reporting requirements under the UN CESCR, raise concerns about the Ministry of Human Rights efficiency and the lack of support for local organizations in the process.

Furthermore, the Committee (CESCR) gave little attention to peasants' rights in its Concluding Observations and Recommendations on Pakistan's initial report, which the Committee accepted in June 2017. In the Concluding Observations and Recommendations, the Committee did not recognise Pakistani peasants as peasants, instead labelled them as farmers. According to the peasants' rights declaration, they should be referred to as peasants. Also, in its Concluding Observations and Recommendations (especially 67 and 68), the Committee barely gave two paragraphs to peasants' land rights in Sindh and Balochistan.

## 7.2 International Declaration on the Rights of Peasants

It has been five years since the International Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, which was adopted in the United Nations Generally Assembly in December 2018. The Declaration has peasants' and rural workers and their rights. The peasants and rural workers are essential to provide everyone with food and protect the earth planet's biodiversity. Unfortunately, they still lead a precarious survival. Small-scale peasants and landless peasants (sharecroppers) are toiling hard to feed the population in the province, but most of them are living in extreme poverty. In Sindh, peasants and rural workers are exposed to toxic substances and exploitative indecent working conditions. They suffer from poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

When the Sindh High Court's circuit bench in Hyderabad issued a significant pro-peasant ruling giving the Declaration the most weight possible in October 2019, the Declaration established a legal foundation in Sindh. The verdict cited it in full. The decision is anticipated to serve as a precedent for trial and appellate courts (including the Supreme Court, the High Courts, and the Sharia Court) and open the door for future cases and judgements to be reviewed in a pro-peasant setting. To promote robust and consultative legislation, policy-making and the implementation of pro-peasant policies, civil society organisations must take lobbying and advocacy initiatives.

## 7.2 International Declaration on the Rights of Peasants

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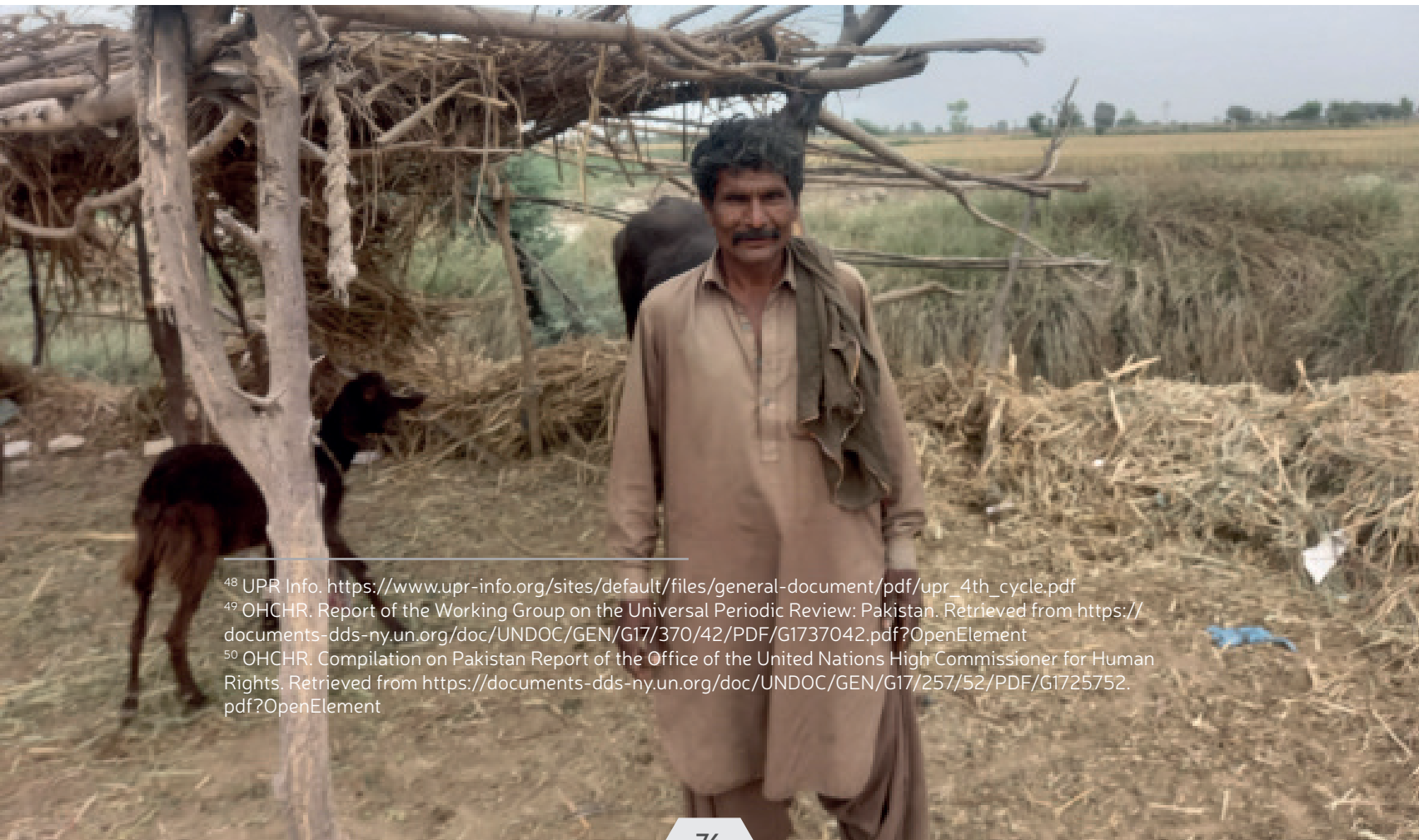
In January-February 2023, the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) Universal Periodic Review (Fourth Cycle) aimed to assess Pakistan's human rights status, notably the implementation of recommendations made by the member states

<sup>46</sup> United Nations. (2022). UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants: UN experts call for action ahead of anniversary <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/12/un-declaration-rights-peasants-un-experts-call-action-ahead-anniversary>

<sup>47</sup> Relief Web. (2022). Factsheet: Sindh Water and Agriculture Transformation Project

member states in the third cycle in 2017. The NGOs in Pakistan should start putting together their reports and recommendations which need to be submitted by October 2022 (tentative). During Pakistan's third UPR cycle, the issue of bonded labour received a lot of attention. At least three countries encouraged Pakistan to address the issue of bonded labour, including Korea, Ireland, and Russia. According to the report, land ownership concentration is on the rise, forcing a large proportion of peasants and landless peasants into poverty.<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately, in the four years after the UPR's release in 2017, neither the provincial nor the federal governments have made any significant steps to implement the report's recommendations regarding bonded labour. Human Rights Watch notes that abuses of women, children labour, peasant, and human rights are seldom mentioned in Pakistan's submissions to the Human Rights Council's regular sessions. These reports, including those from the UN, are chock-full of information about government initiatives but do nothing to alleviate the human rights violations that the disadvantaged population experiences. Except for bonded labour, peasants' rights in Pakistan's UPR are mostly ignored



<sup>48</sup> UPR Info. [https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/general-document/pdf/upr\\_4th\\_cycle.pdf](https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/general-document/pdf/upr_4th_cycle.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> OHCHR. Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/370/42/PDF/G1737042.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>50</sup> OHCHR. Compilation on Pakistan Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/257/52/PDF/G1725752.pdf?OpenElement>



## **SECTION 8: RECOMMENDATIONS**

## SECTION 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

The report's recommendations are mostly focused on the Government on Sindh (GoS). Areas for civil society and human rights advocates intervening for a more proactive role in asserting farmers' and peasants' rights have also been noted.

The following key points are made regarding what actions the Government of Sindh should take.

The GoS must withdraw its appeal against the Sindh High Court (SHC) decision and comply with all of the SHC's directives. The GoS should accept the decision made by the SHC and follow all the directives provided by the court. The GoS should not challenge or contest the court's ruling.

The GoS needs to provide compensation to peasants and rural workers who have suffered losses in terms of their lives, livelihoods, livestock, and properties. It should acknowledge the impact of these losses and take steps to provide appropriate compensation.

The GoS is advised to create a comprehensive plan of action focused on human rights in the province. The plan should address the rights of workers, peasants and bonded laborers. The government needs to ensure the effective implementation of existing human rights laws that are relevant to these groups.

The GoS should allocate funds to enforce the related laws--STA, SBLsAA, SWAWA, and SIRA. The Sindh's Provincial Assembly must participate in the monitoring of the Plan of Action's execution.

The GoS must revise the Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 2015 (SBLsAA), the Sindh Tenancy Act (STA), and the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) to strengthen the penalties for those involved in bonded labor. Specifically, the minimum prison term for perpetrators must be increased to at least five years and making the crime of keeping individuals in bondage non-bailable and non-compoundable.

The GoS should take steps to implement the SBLsAA and the STA, as well as register peasants and renters under the STA. In addition, actions must be taken to ensure that all peasants have access to the STA's agreements.

In light of the SHC Hyderabad bench's ground-breaking decision in favour of peasants' rights in October 2019, the STA of 1950 should be revised.



The Labour Department should make the SBLSAA, SIRA, and the SWAWA rules of business public.

The GoS should pass seed laws to preserve peasants' rights to produce, exchange, purchase, and sell their produce seeds in the market, as well as to protect the general public from genetically modified products. This must be done to safeguard peasants against the federal government's anti-peasant seed and plant policies, including the Seed (Amendment) Act of 2015 and the Plant Breeders Act of 2016 which breach provincial autonomy.

The GoS should develop a special plan to implement the Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act. The Ministry of Labour should notify the Board, open field offices around the province, and register women who work in agriculture.

The GoS and civil society organizations should invest in training and skill development to improve the capacity of women agriculture workers. Public awareness campaigns should be initiated for female workers to inform and empower them so that they understand and protect their rights.

The GoS shall develop a provincial plan of action to implement the SBLSAA in the province.

The GoS should establish and activate DVCs in all districts of Sindh. It should make the existing DVCs operational and strengthen them by providing necessary funds and resources. The DVCs must play the role as mechanisms for monitoring and oversight.

The DVCs must issue performance reports, which should be made public.

The DVCs should play a role in improving the conditions of the hari camps and expanding them to accommodate more peasants for dignified rehabilitation.

Civil society organizations and peasant activists should keep track of legislative and policy changes, as well as the status of peasant-related measures. A more proactive role for civil society in providing channels for successful government initiatives and accountability for farmer rights is vital.

The GoS should also ensure that the tail-end peasants receive their fair share of irrigation water, and should be compensated for their lost crops and livelihoods in this regard.

The GoS should start a campaign to get peasants to sign up for the STA.

The Sindh Human Rights Commission should be mandated to receive reports on the implementation of human rights-related laws, norms, and policies, such as the STA, SIRA, and SBLSAA, from the relevant provincial departments.

The Secretary of State should guarantee that the Police file FIRs in all situations of bonded labour released on court orders, utilizing sections 11 and 12 of the SBLSAA.

Agricultural workers should be registered and issued labour and health insurance cards in accordance with the Agriculture Women Protection Act of 2020.

Sindh's Occupational Safety and Health Act should be reviewed, with a focus on including the women workforce as beneficiaries and ensuring strict oversight.



Annexure 1

Details of the cases of Peasants and Agriculture workers released from Bondage in 2022 from Agriculture sector.

S #	District and town	District	Date	Details	Chil-dren	Wo men	M en	To-tal	Report by newspa-per, which
2	Tando Allahyar	Tando Allahyar	7-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid and 6 bonded labours were recovered included two womes from the private jail of landlord Nazeer Qaimkhani	-	2	4	6	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
2	Rohri	Sukkur	11-Jan-2022	Police conducted raid on order of district court Sukkur and recovered a peasant from the private jail of landlord Waris Baloch	-	-	1	1	Daily Juraat
3	Phulji Station	Dadu	12-Jan-2022	Two childrens of labour were recovered on the direction of deputy Commissioner Dadu	3	-	-	3	Daily Juraat & Kawish
4	Thano Bola Khan	Jamshoro	17-Jan-22	Police raided on orders of court on Private lail of Landlord Thano Bola Khan and recovered 11 Peasents	3	4	4	11	Sindh TV News
5	Mithi	Tharparker	18-Jan-2022	04 Peasants recovered on courts order from private jail of landlord Iqbal Brohi by police	1	2	1	4	Daily Sindh Express
6	Thana Bola Khan	Jamshoro	18-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kohistan of landlord Mol received 10 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	2	5	10	Daily Kawish
7	Umarkot	Umarkot	19-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Samaro of landlord Chudhary Mushtaq received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	3	4	Daily Sindh Express

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8	Tharo Shah	Noushero Feroz	21-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tharo Shah of landlord Ghulam Hussain Jatoi received 07 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	2	3	7	Daily Hi-lal-e-Pakistan
9	Chachro	Tharparker	25-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Chachro of landlord Nand Lal received 02 labours from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Juraat - Karachi
99	Kunri	Umarkot	2-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kunri of landlord Asghar Shaikh received 06 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	1	2	6	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
11	Digri	Badin	11-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Village Malokani of landlord Gullo Malkani received 07 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	2	2	7	Daily Kawish
12	Manzo-orabad	Jamshoro	7-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Manzo-orabad of landlord Afzal Shah received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish
13	Jhampeer	Thatta	9-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Police Station, Makli received 02 Fisherman	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish
14	Kunri	Umarkot	9-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kunri of landlord Rizwan Ghani received 20 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	9	5	6	20	Daily Kawish, Sindh Express & Juraat

## THE STATE OF PEASANTS' RIGHTS IN SINDH IN 2022

8	Tharo Shah	Noushero Feroz	21-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tharo Shah of landlord Ghulam Hussain Jatoi received 07 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	2	3	7	Daily Hi-lal-e-Pakistan
9	Chachro	Tharparker	25-Jan-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Chachro of landlord Nand Lal received 02 labours from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Juraat - karachi
99	Kunri	Umarkot	2-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kunri of landlord Asghar Shaikh received 06 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	1	2	6	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
11	Digri	Badin	11-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Village Malokani of landlord Gullo Malkani received 07 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	2	2	7	Daily Kawish
12	Manzo-orabad	Jamshoro	7-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Manzoorabad of landlord Afzal Shah received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish
13	Jhampeer	Thatta	9-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Police Station, Makli received 02 Fisherman	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish
14	Kunri	Umarkot	9-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kunri of landlord Rizwan Ghani received 20 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	9	5	6	20	Daily Kawish, Sindh Express & Juraat

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15	Ghaghar Phatak	Thatta	21-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on factory at Ghaghar Phatak and received 04 labours from the captivity of contractor	-	-	4	4	Sindh Express
16	Nabisar Road	Umarkot	22-Feb-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on the Private Jails of Iqrar Rind and recovered 20 Peasants and from Jail of Taro Punjabi recovered 19 oeasants	13	11	15	39	Time News
17	Larkano	Larkano	23-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at larkana of landlord Hussain Bux received 02 labours from the captivity of a Local transporter	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish & Juraat
18	Kunri	Umarkot	24-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Nabisar of landlord Aziz Nohri received 24 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	13	5	6	24	Sindh Express & Kawish
19	Ratodero	Larkano	26-Feb-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Ratodero of local landlord received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	2	2	4	Sindh Express
20	<b>Madeji</b>	<b>Shikarpur</b>	<b>28-Feb-2022</b>	<b>Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Madeji of landlord Muhammad Bachal received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord</b>	-	1	2	3	<b>Daily Kawish</b>

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21	Tando Bagho	Badin	4-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Village Arbaz Mirani of landlord Talib Mirani received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	2	3	Daily Kawish
22	Sukkur	Sukkur	4-Mar-22	Police raided on orders of court on Private lail of Landlord Near Sukkur and recovered 5 Peasents	1	2	2	5	Mehran TV
23	Kot Diji	Khairpur Mirs	7-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at village Mithri of local landlord received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish
24	Tharo Shah	Noushero Feroz	8-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tharo Shah of landlord Sadiq Kalhoro received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Sindh Express
25	Nabisar Road	Umarkot	11-Mar-22	Police raided on orders of court on Private lail of Landlord Near Nabisar Thar and recovered 10 Peasents	3	4	3	10	Sindh TV News
26	Mulakatiyar	Tando Muhammad Khan	12-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Mulakatiyar of landlord Latif Soomro received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	1	1	1	3	Daily Kawish
27	Pir Jo Goth	Khairpur Mirs	13-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kot Diji of landlord Raja Wassan received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
28	Umarkot	Umarkot	22-Mar-22	Police raided on orders of court on Private lail of Landlord Near Nabisar Thar and recovered 10 Peasents	3	2	5	10	Mehran TV

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29	Hyderabad	Hyderabad	27-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Hyderabad of landlord Ramzan Jamro received 07 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	1	2	4	7	Daily Kawish
30	Hyderabad	Hyderabad	6-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at facotry, SITE of business man Shakeel received 01 labour from the captivity of a factory owner	-	-	1	1	Daily Juraat - karachi
31	Khairpur Mirs	Khairpur Mirs	17-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Khairpur of landlord Mushtaq Abro received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	1	2	Daily Kawish
32	Mirpur Bathoro	Sujawal	20-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Mirpur Bathoro of landlord Akbar Mahesar received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Sindh Express
33	Jhando Mari	Tando Allahyar	24-Apr-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Private lail of Landlord Near Jhando Mari and recovered 19 Peasents	9	3	5	17	Sindh TV News
34	Usman Shah Huri	Tando Allahyar	25-Apr-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Private Jail of Landlord Durjan Lashari Near Usman Shah Huri and recovered 19 Peasents	8	5	6	19	Daily Koshish
35	Khipro	Sanghar	25-Apr-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Private Jail of Landlord Jan Muhammad Liskani Near Khipro and recovered 11 Peasents	5	3	3	11	Daily Jeejal



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36	Fareebabad	Dadu	26-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Fareedabad of landlord Ghulam Ali Khoso received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish
37	Udero Lal	Sanghar	29-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Udero Lal of landlord Shabeer Rahu received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish & Hilal e Pakistan
38	Hyderabad	Hyderabad	2-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Market of landlord received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish & Juraat
39	lakhi Ghulam Shah	Shikarpur	7-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at lakhi Ghulam Shah of landlord Abbas Raisani received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	3	4	Daily Sindh Express
40	Ghora Bari	Thatta	12-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Ghora Bari of landlord Anwar Mallah received 11 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	3	5	11	Daily Kawish & Hilal e Pakistan
41	Shikarpur	Shikarpur	15-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Shikarpur of landlord Mir Hazar Khan Jafari received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish

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42	Jamshoro	Jamshoro	15-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Jamshoro of landlord Yar Muhammad received 05 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	1	1	3	5	Daily Kawish
43	Tangwani	Jacobabad	18-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tangwani of landlord Talib Hussain Almani received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish & Juraat
44	Ghotki	Ghotki	20-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Sarhad of landlord Behram Khaskheli received 09 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	3	4	9	Daily Juraat
45	Khairpur Mirs	Khairpur Mirs	27-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Babrlo of landlord Saith Bhago received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	2	3	Daily Juraat
46	Chondko	Khairpur Mirs	27-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Chondko of landlord received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	1	2	3	4	Daily Kawish
47	Soofi, Umarkot	Umarkot	27-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Soofi of landlord Arif Jokhio received 21 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	9	6	6	12	Daily Kawish
48	Khairpur Mirs	Khairpur Mirs	31-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Nagoro of landlord Hosh Muhammad received 09 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	1	6	9	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express

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49	Mirpur Sakro	Thatta	4-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Mirpur Sakro of landlord Ghulam Rabani Jamot received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	2	3	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
50	Khipro	Sanghar	4-Jun-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Private Jail of Landlord Sodho Junejo Near Khipro and recovered 29 Peasents	11	8	10	29	Awami News HD/ Awami Awaz
51	Kunri	Umarkot	8-Jun-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on Private Jail of two landlords near Kunri and recovered 45 Peasents	15	13	17	45	KTN news
52	Udero Lal	Sanghar	11-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Udero lal of landlord Abdul Jabbar received 11 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	3	5	2	10	Daily Sindh Express
53	Daharki	Ghotki	12-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Daharki of landlord Azeem buledi received 16 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	5	4	7	16	Daily kawish
54	Mian Sahib	Shikarpur	13-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Mian Sahib of landlord Sultan Shaikh received 14 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	5	3	6	14	Daily Juraat
55	New Jatoi	Noushero Feroz	17-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Soap factory of Saith Abdul Salam received 02 labours from the captivity of a Saith	-	-	2	2	Daily Kawish

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56	Tando Muhammad Khan	Tando Muhammad Khan	21-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tando Muhammad Khan of landlord Chudhary Shakeel received 01 peasant from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Juraat
57	Keti Bandar	Thatta	22-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Keti bandar of fish owner Siddiq Jat received 06 labours from the captivity of a Local Fish owner	1	2	3	6	Daily Jurrat
58	Tando Jan Muhammad	Mirpurkhas	22-Jun-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail of Tariq Punjabi at village Chpudhri Ghulam Hussian and received 10 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	3	5	10	Daily Sindh Express
59	Thari Mirwah	Khairpur Mirs	23-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Thari Mirwah of landlord Abdul Ghafoor received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	2	2	4	Daily Juraat
60	Qazi Ahmed	Shaheed benazira-bad	23-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Qazi Ahmed of landlord Waris Jatoi received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	2	3	Daily Kawish
61	kandhkot, Kashmore	kandhkot, Kashmore	24-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at villag Saleh Khoso of landlord Haji Riaz received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Sindh Express
62	Khairpur Mirs	Khairpur Mirs	28-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at babrlo police station of received 04 labours	1	1	2	4	Daily Kawish

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63	Rahrki	Ghotki	30-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Rahrki of landlord Saryab khoso received 05 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	1	4	12	Daily kawish
64	Ghora Bari, Thatta	Thatta	9-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Ghora Bari of landlord Aftab Shirazi received 12 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	5	3	4	12	Daily Kawish, Sindh Express & Juraat
65	Uderolal	Matyari	12-Jul-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail of local landlord near Uderolal and received 9 peasants including two men, three women and three children	3	2	4	9	Mehboob News Network TV
66	Samaro	Umarkot	13-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Samaro of landlord received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	3	4	Daily Juraat
67	Udero Lal	Matyari	16-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Udero Lal of landlord Babo Khan Narejo received 10 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	4	3	3	10	Daily Kawish & Juraat
68	Mirpur Bathoro	Sujawal	21-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at villag Faqeer Saqib of landlord Saqib Soomro received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	2	2	Daily Sindh Express
69	Dadu	Dadu	22-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Dadu of landlord Muhammad saleh Soomro received 01 maid	-	1	-	1	Daily Juraat

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70	Digri	Badin	23-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Digri of landlord Allah Wadhayo received 06 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	1	3	6	Daily Kawish & Juraat
71	Islamkot	Tharparker	25-Jul-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Islamkot of landlord Shahbaz Arain received 05 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	2	3	Daily Kawish
72	Khairpur Mirs	Khairpur Mirs	5-Aug-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at vilage Mitan Faqeer of landlord Kareem Bux received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish & Juraat
73	Babrlo	Khairpur Mirs	6-Aug-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Babrlo of landlord Ali Bux received 02 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	1	2	Daily Juraat & Sindh Express
74	Faiz Ganj	Khairpur Mirs	6-Aug-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Faiz Ganj of landlord Saleem mari received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	3	4	Daily Kawish
75	Thari Mirwah	Khairpur Mirs	7-Aug-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Thari Mirwah of landlord Ali bahan Bozdar received 03 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	2	3	Daily Kawish

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76	Tando Muhammad Khan	Tando Muhammad Khan	16-Aug-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tando Muhammad Khan of landlord Ghulam Ali Sarhandi received 06 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	3	3	6	Daily Sindh Express
77	Ratodero	Larkano	18-Aug-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Rato Dero of landlord received 02 labours from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	1	2	Daily Kawish & Juraat
78	Chotiya-roon	Sanghar	29-Sep-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail of Hassan Rajar and Hidayat Rajar near Village Mano Gaho and received 32 peasants, which were presented at Sanghar court	11	7	14	32	Awami News HD
79	Nasarpur	Tando Allahyar	30-Sep-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail of Liaqat Shah near Nasarpur and received 19 peasants belongs to Bheel Community	8	5	6	19	Sindh TV News
80	Chachro	Tharparker	12-Oct-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Chacharo of landlord latif Dahar received 04 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	1	3	4	Daily Kawish & Juraat
81	Thana Bola Khan	Jamshoro	13-Oct-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Thano Bola Khan of landlord received 01 labour from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Sindh Express
82	Sukkur	Sukkur	23-Oct-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at lanch Mor choki and received 01 labour	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish82

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83	Jhol	Sanghar	26-Oct-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Jhol and received 02 labours	-	1	1	2	Daily Kawish & Juraat
84	Ahmedpur	Khairpur Mirs	30-Oct-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Ahmedpur and received 05 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	1	2	2	5	Daily Kawish
85	Dighri	Umarkot	1-Nov-22	Police on Court's order raided on private jail of Ramzan Arian in Kachi Village and recovered 19 peasants	5	6	8	19	Daily Sindh Express
86	Bulri Shah kareem	Tando Muhammad Khan	2-Nov-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Bulri Shah karim of landlord Saleem Rajput received 01 labour	-	-	1	1	Daily Juraat
87	Khairpur Mirs	Khairpur Mirs	25-Nov-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kot Diji of landlord Ali Gul received 05 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	2	1	2	5	Daily Kawish
88	Bharya City	Noushero Feroz	11-Dec-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Bharya City of landlord and received 01 maid from the captivity of Landlord	-	1	-	1	Daily Sindh Express
89	Kot Ghulam Muhammad	Mirpurkhas	14-Dec-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kot Ghulam Muhammad of landlord Luqman Khanzada received 11 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	5	4	2	11	Daily Sindh Express
90	Sukkur	Sukkur	19-Dec-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Abad Police Station and received 04 labours	1	2	1	4	Daily Juraat



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93	Ahmedpur	Khairpur Mirs	20-Dec-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Ahmedpur of landlord Akbar Almani received 01 peasants from the captivity of a Local landlord	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish & Juraat
94	Naseerabad	Qambar Shahdadkot	31-Dec-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at police station Naseerabad and received 01 peasant	-	-	1	1	Daily Kawish
<b>Total</b>					<b>198</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>653</b>	

### Annexure 2:

Details of the cases of Brick kiln workers released from Bondage in 2022 from Brick Kiln sector.

S No	District and town	District	Date	Details	Children	Women	Men	Total	Report by
1	Umar Kot	Umarkot	18-Feb-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK kiln near Umarkot received 24 Labourers from the captivity of a BRICK kiln owner Naiz Bajeer	3	3	5	11	Daily Sindh Express
2	Tando Jam	Hyderabad	10-Mar-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK klin of Haji Khan Muhammad Magsi, near Tando Jam and received 27 labourers	8	11	8	27	Daily Sindh Express
3	Umarkot	Umarkot	12-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kunri of BRICK Klin owner lala Nazar Pathan received 13 labours from the captivity of a Local landlord	7	4	2	13	Daily Kawish & Juraat
4	Shahpur Chakar	Sanghar	14-Mar-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Shahpur Chakar of BRICK klin contractor Syed Merawarh received 13 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin contractor	-	4	9	13	Daily Kawish & Juraat
5	larkano	Larkano	2-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at larkana of BRICK klin owner Sagheer punjabi received 09 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	2	3	4	9	Sindh Express
6	Daharki	Ghotki	15-Apr-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at village Mian Samee of BRICK klin owner Yousif Bhutto received 04 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	-	1	3	4	Sindh Express

## THE STATE OF PEASANTS' RIGHTS IN SINDH IN 2022

7	Nabisar Road	Umarkot	5-May-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid BRICK klin of Norudin Pathan near Nabi Sar Umar Kot recovered 13 labourers	4	3	6	13	Daily Sindh Express
8	Thul	Jacobabad	18-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Thul of BRICK klin owner Mushtaq Punjabi received 03 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	-	1	2	3	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
9	Chaodagi	Sanghar	19-May-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid BRICK klin of Noroz Pathan near Nabi Sar Umar Kot recovered 24 labourers from the captivity of BRICK klin owner	10	7	7	24	Time News
10	Gupchani	Shaheed benazirabad	20-May-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Gupchani of BRICK klin owner Ghulam Sarwar Brohi received 24 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	6	8	10	24	Daily Kawish & Sindh Express
11	Nabisar Road	Umarkot	30-May-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid BRICK klin of Norudin Pathan near Nabi Sar Umar Kot recovered 13 labourers	3	4	6	13	Mehran TV
12	Tando Masti	Khairpur Mirs	7-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Tando Masti of BRICK klin owner Ibrahim Khan received 07 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	2	3	2	7	Daily Kawish
13	Kashmore	Kashmore	23-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Kashmore of BRICK klin owner Sabir Shah received 07 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	2	2	3	7	Daily Kawish
14	Bhan Saeedabad	Jamshoro	27-Jun-2022	Police on court's order conducted a raid on private jail at Bhan saeedabad of BRICK klin owner Sufyan received 09 labours from the captivity of a BRICK klin owner	2	2	5	9	Daily Juraat
15	Gupchani	Shaheed benazirabad	25-Jul-22	Police on Court's order raided on BRICKs BRICK klin near Gupchani and recovered 7 bonded laborers	2	3	2	7	Mehran TV
16	Tando Jam	Hyderabad	30-Sep-22	Police on Court's order raided on BRICKs BRICK klin near Tando Jam and recovered 34 bonded laborers	14	8	12	34	Sindh TV News
17	Hala	Matyari	13-Oct-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK klin, recovered 17 Laborers, aslo found a dead body of Women Zareean Oad	8	5	4	17	Daily Pahlenji Akhbar
18	Hala	Matyari	14-Oct-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK klin and Recovered 15 Laborers	6	4	5	15	Daily Pahlenji Akhbar

## THE STATE OF PEASANTS' RIGHTS IN SINDH IN 2022

19	Shahdadpur	Sanghar	18-Oct-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK klin of Mohsin Pathan and recovered 13 Bonded labourers	5	4	4	13	Daily Pahrenji Akhbar
20	Shahdadpur	Sanghar	22-Oct-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK klin of Aslam and Jumo, near Choudigi and recovered 19 Bonded labourers	6	5	8	19	Daily Pahrenji Akhbar
21	Kunri	Umarkot	16-Dec-22	Police on court's order conducted a raid on BRICK klin near Faqeer Abdullah and recovered 10 Bonded labourers	3	4	3	10	Sindh TV news
<b>Total</b>					<b>93</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>292</b>	

## **About the HWA**

Hari Welfare Association (HWA) is a non-governmental organization (NGO). It was formed in 2002 and formally registered in 2003. Through research, advocacy and lobbying, HWA aims to promote economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of peasants and other workers engaged in agriculture in rural areas of Sindh and Pakistan. A woman chairperson leads HWA. It is working for the promotion and protection of peasants and rural communities/groups in rural parts of Pakistan with the main focus in Sindh. It also aims to struggle for sustainable agriculture and opposes corporate driven agriculture transnational companies that are destroying rural people's culture and nature. HWA campaign for environmental, social, economic, civil, political issues, and challenges to the current landownership system and patterns that have deprived vulnerable peasants and put the rural agriculture environment at stake and destruction in the hands of corporate companies.

## **VISION:**

Development of a progressive, educated, peace-loving and non-discriminatory society that is materially optimum, socially equitable and sustainable.

## **MISSION:**

Collectively ensure environmental and social justice, human dignity, and respect for human rights of peasants to secure sustainable societies.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To advocate and network for economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of peasants and other people and workers living in rural areas.
2. To build the capacity of community organizations mainly peasants on self-resilience.
3. To advocate and networking for the protection of children and women from abuse, neglect, violence, and exploitation.
4. To promote quality and gender-sensitive education in under-served areas.



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