

**International Consultation on Good Practices and Strategies to  
Eliminate Caste-Based Discrimination**

**“Good practice” cases**

**Description of the practice:**

**What was/is the background to the practice? Describe any key events or actions that led to it?**

Indian government ratified the ILO Convention on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) 111 in 1960 which deals with work-related discrimination and promotes the equality in employment and occupation. Articles 2 and 3 of the Convention are providing guidelines to the Government to adopt legislation for combating discrimination through creation of educational programmes for equal opportunity, adoption of national policy on equal opportunity. However, in 2007 and 2009 a Labour trade Union filed a complaint saying that manual scavenging practice is still persist in India and approximately 7.70 lack manual scavengers forced to perform scavenging work. In order to take follow up of these complaints ILO Geneva office initiated project “Promotion of Equality at Work India” for effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination.

**What was/is the title/name of the practice?**

Promotion of Equality at Work in India

**What was/is the aim/purpose of the practice?**

Strengthen national capacities to apply international labour standards on non-discrimination in employment and Support Government's, workers' and employers' organizations efforts to eradicate manual scavenging and promote equality in employment for the Dalit community.

**What was/is the target group(s)?**

Target group of the project is manual scavenger community in India

**Who were/are the partners involved (e.g. community based, NGO-based, government institutions, and other related stakeholders)?**

International Labour Organization, India country office is implementing agency and initiated collaboration with civil society organizations (CSO) and UN agencies at different levels

CSOs like: Garima Abhiyan, Navsarjan Trust, Safai Karamchari Andolan and Social Development foundation.

UN agencies like: UNICEF, UN WOMEN and WHO.

Government Bodies: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Labour and Employment and various commission such as Safai Karamchari Finance and Development Corporation and Planning Commission etc.

Other Bodies: National Advisory Council, National Human Rights Commission, National Judicial Academy

### **What was/is the duration of practice?**

As of now the project duration is April 2011 to March 2012; it will be extended for next year

### **Legal and institutional frameworks:**

**Please explain the legal and institutional framework of the practice, if needed with inspiration from the following guiding questions:**

- *How did the practice meet the criteria of non-discrimination, equality, and inclusion? Did the practice link up to a national and/or international human rights framework? How was this linkage achieved?*

- *Did the practice involve advocacy, lobbying and involvement of the media; if yes, then how?*

- *Did the practice specifically address the situation of Dalit women or other women affected by discrimination based on work and descent? How was this done?*

- *Were there any other positive targeted measures?*

#### **Answer:**

The project objective itself determined for implementation of the principle of non-discrimination in employment and occupation in India.

The project has advocacy and lobbying components integrated such as policy advocacy with Government on effective implementation of eradication of manual scavenging programme and actively engaging relevant stakeholders such as National Advisory Council, NHRC and UN agencies for protection and promotion of human rights of the scavenger's community.

Manual scavenging practice is worst form of caste based occupation performed by Dalit in India and majority of them are women (95%). Therefore, categorically project target the plights of women scavengers.

### **Implementation of the practice:**

**Please describe how the practice was implemented, if needed with inspiration from the following guiding questions:**

- *What was the tangible impact of the practice (on the policy environment and/or as an actual change on the ground)?*

- What were the implementation methods, means, and strategies to make this practice a success? What made it possible to effectuate a change? Can you identify the key factors of success which may be replicable?

- Did the practice involve a dialogue with affected communities and was it a participatory process? If yes, then how?

- Is the practice sustainable? If yes, then how and if no, then what can be done to sustain it?

**Answer:**

The project envisaged long time before but concrete activities started in the month of April 2011 so it will be difficult to measure the tangible impact as of now. Also project approach has advocacy orientation and engaging with stakeholders so it will require more time to see the real impact. However, ILO is one of the first UN agency which came forefront to address manual scavenging issues with unambiguous understanding that manual scavenging practice is the caste based discrimination.

Through this project, ILO is playing a role of catalyst between affected community and government to realize a goal of eradication of manual scavenging practice in India.

**Major strategies and methods are follows:**

Developing understanding through “Review and Gap Analysis Paper of Government Schemes and Legislation”

Drafting UN strategy paper on elimination of manual scavenging practice

Organizing meetings, regional consultations and national seminar for engaging and motivating relevant actors as well as building pressure and momentum for eradication of scavenging practice

For instance, ILO is planning to organize national seminar on manual scavenging in Ahmedabad, Gujarat to send indirect message to Gujarat government that no longer Government can deny the existence of manual scavenging practice in Gujarat state.

**Successes and challenges:**

**Please describe the successes and challenges to implementing the practice, if needed with inspiration from the following guiding questions:**

- What were the conditions for success (what is the history, what was the capacity of the actors, what were the social, economic and political conditions)?

- What were the key challenges and obstacles to success? How were these removed?

- How was this practice innovative?

- Identify three key recommendations for similar practices/initiatives that can be replicated in the future. How could the process have been improved and sustained?

**Answer:**

Regional meetings provided platform for scavenger community to share their discrimination related experiences that they suffer day today life with international organization.

National Advisory Council acknowledged the project intervention on manual scavenging subject and invited suggestions and recommendation on NAC resolution of elimination of manual scavenging practice.

ILO and other UN agencies are developing UN wide position paper on elimination of scavenging practice and rehabilitation of manual scavengers.

**Challenges:**

1. Exploring CSR funds for providing decent work employment opportunity for women scavengers
2. Government accountability for rehabilitation of manual scavengers:

Government always denies the existence of manual scavenging practice and due to it there is no reliable or accurate number of manual scavengers in India. Therefore it is difficult to rehabilitate manual scavengers without reliable information.

3.

**Publicity:**

**Can IDSN use this case publicly, e.g. on an open conference website or in a conference report?**  
Yes/ NO