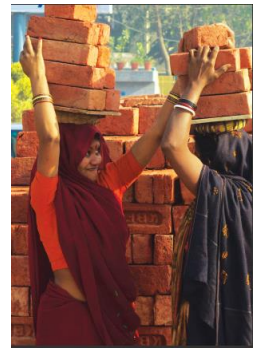


## Preventing Bonded Labour among Seasonal Migrants

For the poorest migrants, the terms and condition of work are akin to bonded labour. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has collaborated with the Ministry of Labour and Employment and state governments in India to promote decent work, especially in the brick kiln sector, with the aim of preventing seasonal migrants from becoming vulnerable to bonded labour. Seasonal migrant labourers are often provided cash advances by labour contractors in return for their labour and, in turn, contractors retain financial and often physical control of labourers. Because of this arrangement some migrants remain locked in debt-migration cycles, using earnings from migration to alleviate past debt.

Based on the outcomes of a pilot undertaken in Tamil Nadu, the project aims to cover the brick kiln sector in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. The project aims to reduce household vulnerability to bondage among migrants in the brick kiln sector, which has thus far continued despite the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act (1976). The promotion of decent work includes: improvement of workplace conditions, transparency in wage payments, social dialogue to resolve workplace problems, enrolling migrant workers in government schemes at source and destination states, unionising workers and providing migrant children with schooling opportunities.



In particular, to tackle cases of bondage among inter-state migrant workers, the project seeks to establish an inter-state coordination mechanism with anchorage at the national level. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Odisha (sending state), Andhra Pradesh (receiving state) and the Ministry of Labour and Employment on 8 June 2012 for inter-state coordination to reduce the vulnerability to bondage of migrant workers. Subsequently, a Migrant Workers Cell was constituted on July 6, 2012, to look into the issues of inter-state migrants and to provide assistance to the states and for facilitating resolution of grievances between the states.

Similar MoUs are expected to be signed by Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Bihar with corresponding destination states.

Sources: ILO ([www.ilo.org/newdelhi](http://www.ilo.org/newdelhi)); Ministry of Labour and Employment ([www.labour.nic.in](http://www.labour.nic.in))  
Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India, UNESCO, 2013