

## **Cases of wages below the minimum wage**

### **CASE STUDY I**

Gram Panchayat: Chittoriya                      Block: Mansahi                      District: Katihar  
Work name: Umar Waski ke ghar se chappar ghat RCC culvert tak mitti bharaai karya, Potiya dhaala  
Work period: 4.1.2010                      No of days worked: 6  
Wage given: 42 (women)-68 Rs/day  
No. of workers: 120

In this case workers have been given wages lower than the minimum wage of Rs. 104/ day. Women have been given wages as low as 42Rs/day and men wages as low as Rs. 68/day. According to the wage slips (sample of 4 wage slips attached) prepared by the Panchayat Rozgar Sevak (PRS) there were 6 groups which worked at the site. Both men and women worked side by side in each group. Given that there is no way of measuring individual work, it is indeed surprising that men were given higher wages than women in the same group. This clearly shows (1) a bias where women were believed to have done less work than men and (2) that given this situation it raise doubts about the entire measurement of the work and the wages given.

One of the issues raised by workers with regard to this work was that when they were cutting earth they came across water at only a few feet and therefore they had to carry wet earth, which made their task more difficult. However when measurements were made this was not taken into account.

This issue was raised by workers and representatives of the Jan Jagaran Abhiyan (JJA) on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010 with DDC, Katihar. The DDC has given assurance that the matter will be investigated, there has been no further communication in this regard. Workers have refused to take this low wage.

### **CASE STUDY 2**

Gram Panchayat: Mohanpur                      Block: Mansahi                      District: Katihar  
Work name: Amjada Ali ke ghar se raisuddin ke ghar tak mitti bharaee karya, Kursail  
Work start date: 3.1.2010                      No of days worked: 9  
Wage given: 30-40 Rs/day                      Minimum Wages: 104 Rs  
Number of workers : 30-35

In this case workers complained that the pay advice prepared by the Panchayat Rozgar Sevak (PRS) had names of over 80 workers as against the 30 to 35 workers who had worked at the site. They also claimed that the person who used to maintain the MRs at the worksite, never showed the MRs to the workers, even after repeated requests and demands. Workers also felt that though they had to carry earth from over 200feet, payment was not calculated taking into account the lift and carriage provisions.

This issue was raised by workers and representatives of the Jan Jagaran Abhiyan (JJA) on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010 with DDC, Katihar. The DDC has given assurance that the matter will be investigated, there has been no further communication in this regard. Workers have refused to take this low wage as they believe that they cut the required earth in their work of 7 hours a day. It is worth noting that there is no system of individual measurement of work done at a worksite and there is no way of officially recording the group measurement on the MR so the usual practice is to measure the whole work before a payment is to be made.

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