

Inclusive by Design

CEMENTING THE FUTURE FOR INFORMAL
WORKERS IN INDIA'S CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

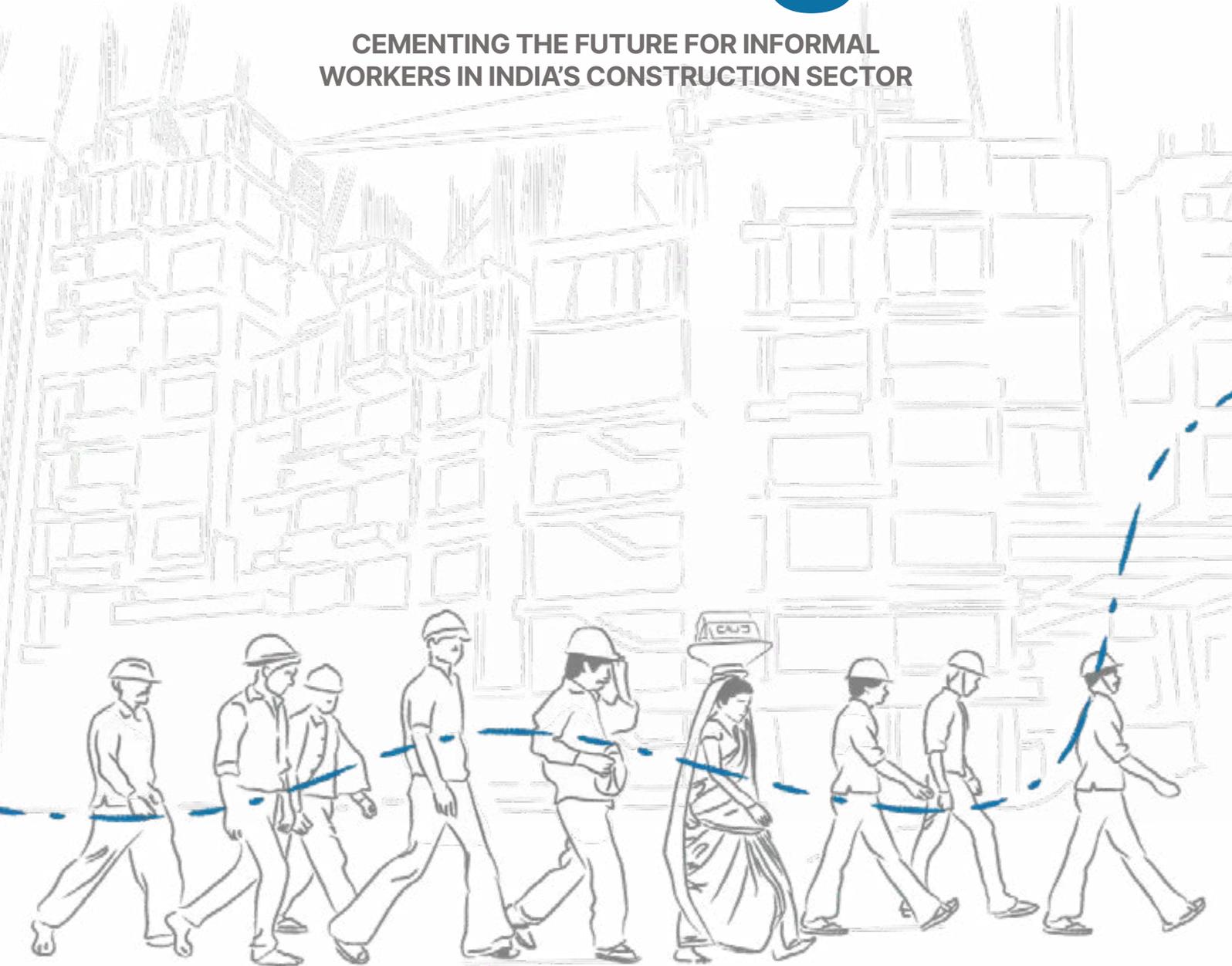


Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Executive Summary	4
Harnessing India's strength in numbers	6
Exploring redevelopment for construction workers	10
Identifying the cracks in the system	16
Cornerstones for worker well being	36
Playing our part, to build back better	40
Interventions by Non-profit Organizations	46
Appendix	68

Foreword

At Godrej Properties Ltd. (GPL), we believe that a socially responsible business is a successful one and our workers are a big part of that responsibility. While workers are brought on board by our contractor partners, we endeavour to ensure that their working and living conditions uphold human dignity. From an industry perspective, we invest in both skilled and unskilled construction workers in order to strengthen their capabilities/income potential and contribute to a future ready work force.

We upheld this commitment even as the pandemic paralysed industry operations. Thousands of workers continued to stay on at our construction sites; we provided them with meals and sanitized living conditions through the lockdown. The unprecedented situation however brought with it the realisation that millions more were impacted differently and there is a lot more to be done. The lockdown and resultant migration underscored the need for us as an industry to better understand the fault lines that allowed for a human crisis of this scale.

GPL commissioned a report 'Inclusive by Design: Cementing the future for informal workers in India's construction sector' that offers actionable insights on the systemic barriers that heighten the vulnerability of workers employed in this sector. Outside of agriculture, the construction sector is the largest employer of blue-collar workers. It is estimated that 80% of the workforce is informally employed, with a predominance of migrants.

We took away five points of strategic advice from this exercise that highlight the significance of convergence between multiple stakeholders:

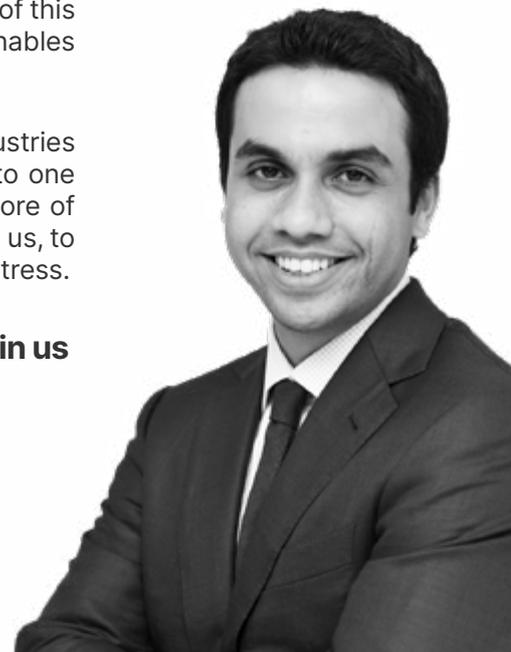
- **Improve data collection and integration across workers' migration corridors and value chains to enable greater visibility and security**
- **Enable financial, social, and legal protection by securing requisite identity proof and worker registration**
- **Create expectation alignment for workers through a channel informed by industry demand**
- **Ensure gender equity in opportunities, working conditions and wages through inclusive policies and practice**
- **Empower construction workers' families and communities by access to diverse livelihood opportunities to prevent distress led entry into the sector**

The vision is ambitious. It calls upon systemic government support, on-ground insights, a coalition of industry peers, a network of non-profits and the patience of philanthropic/ CSR capital to join forces. But most importantly, it calls upon us, the employers of this 50-million strong workforce, to champion this aspiration. We as business leaders must take greater responsibility for worker practices in our ecosystem. It also calls upon industry bodies to acknowledge the criticality of this workforce and uphold higher standards of worker wellbeing in a way that enables socially responsible businesses to continue as viable and successful ones.

As we emerge from the pandemic, India's real estate and construction industries are faced with a choice, to rebuild as before OR to reset the foundation to one that befits an industry of the future that places worker wellbeing at the core of resilient/sustainable business. In these challenging times, the onus lies with us, to chart the future as one where workers join out of aspiration rather than distress.

At GPL we are committed to playing our part and invite you to join us on this journey.

↳ **PIROJSHA GODREJ**



Executive Summary

The plight of the informal and migrant workers has remained unnoticed because of systemic barriers and our collective apathy until the pandemic hit us

The construction sector is one of the largest employers of informal and migrant workers in India, on account of fast-paced urbanization and a high demand for low-skilled workforce. Despite them being responsible for building our homes and cities, it took an unprecedented crisis brought on by the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), to spotlight the plight of this thus far invisible workforce.

Multi-layered systemic challenges faced by these workers are exacerbated by their intersectional identities

The construction sector contributes to **~9% of India's GDP**³. However, the inequalities faced by the vulnerable workers employed in this sector, are a stark contrast to its economic progress. While migration is a critical solution to build economic opportunity, for this demographic of workers, it is currently **driven by distress**. Further, vulnerabilities caused by gendered skill gaps and societal norms result not only in **10 times more men**⁴ as compared to women being employed in the sector, but earnings at levels **30-40%**⁵ lower than their male counterparts, specifically in urban areas.

Key stakeholders featuring at various touchpoints affect construction workers' experiences through complex journeys

Delving deep into the many journeys of informal migrant workers in the sector, reveals not only the inequities arising from the primary breakpoints impeding their progress, but also how key stakeholders play defining roles in their interactions. The stakeholders are classified under the broad groups of the government, community, contractors, and industry, characterized as their principal employer. Since the phenomenon of migration is closely linked with their journeys – the challenges they face have to be analyzed across source, destination and at systemic levels. It is also important to adopt a gender lens, given the exclusionary practices towards women in the sector. The 'key breakpoints' at a glance are:

- **Government and policy are backed by a strong legal framework but fall behind in implementation**
- **Industries survive due to underpaid informal migrant workers, amidst paucity of local laborers**
- **Contractors who are primarily responsible for recruitment and welfare, are often mired in informality themselves**
- **Exclusionary practices and policy inaction make gender equity a growing concern in construction**
- **Communities share experience of distress from source to destination, and over generations**

Cornerstones can establish the foundation for a more inclusive tomorrow

The breakpoints can be transformed into opportunities for each stakeholder to seize, towards ensuring an equitable future for workers. In a nutshell, these 'cornerstones' are:

- Enable financial, social and legal protection by securing requisite identity proof and worker registration
- Create expectation alignment for workers through a channel informed by industry demand
- Empower construction workers' families and communities by access to diverse livelihood opportunities to prevent distress led entry into the sector
- Ensure gender equity in opportunities, working conditions and wages through inclusive policies and practice
- Improve data collection and integration across workers' migration corridors and value chains to enable greater visibility and security

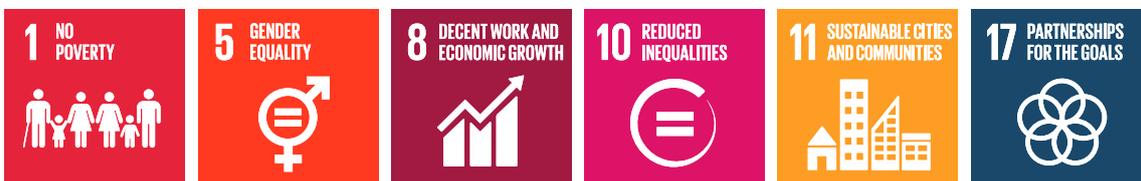
This report profiles change-making non-profit organizations, taking these workers from vulnerability to empowerment

Discussing leading interventions of these non-profit organizations that are changing the story on ground - the report landscapes their work across geographies and programs. Their efforts are laying the foundation to improve outcomes for this workforce.

Industry leaders and the Government should now lead the way towards an inclusive future of work

The need of the hour is holistic transformation, for which it is imperative that **all key stakeholder categories play a more catalytic role** in bridging identified systemic barriers and promoting greater dignity and equity for informal workers in the construction sector. As the government plays its part in effectively safeguarding workers' rights and easing access to entitlements, business leaders must take the first step to reset aspirations towards inclusive workforce participation and growth. Industry associations and similar influential stakeholders must play a supporting role too, by championing the cause of worker well-being to create a level playing field for responsible businesses, to ensure that they survive as successful businesses. Non-profit organizations can provide critical impetus to this movement through their ground-up insights and trusted networks, while philanthropists can offer risk capital and push for innovations that build missing bridges and address the most distressed communities, providing labour to the sector.

A combined effort, whilst upholding the abovementioned cornerstones, from all these stakeholders, has the potential to achieve triple wins: enhance lives and provide dignity to a major vulnerable population, conduct good business and boost the economy. This will also contribute towards 6 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, namely:



PRELUDE

Harnessing India's strength in numbers



It is now requisite to count in the invisible workforce for creating a just, fair and transformational development story

India is home to 14% of the world's labor force¹ and yet contributes only ~7% of the world's GDP share in PPP terms². The latent potential of a high demographic dividend with 35% of the population being younger than 19 years old³, has been widely considered a promising narrative for the future of India.

However, India's majority labor force of the present remains missing in India's development story. 85% of the non-agricultural workforce is informal.⁴ They build our homes and cities, manufacture goods and provide daily services. The hard work of these ~270 million workers ensures that we live comfortably. Yet they have remained invisible because of systemic barriers and our collective apathy.

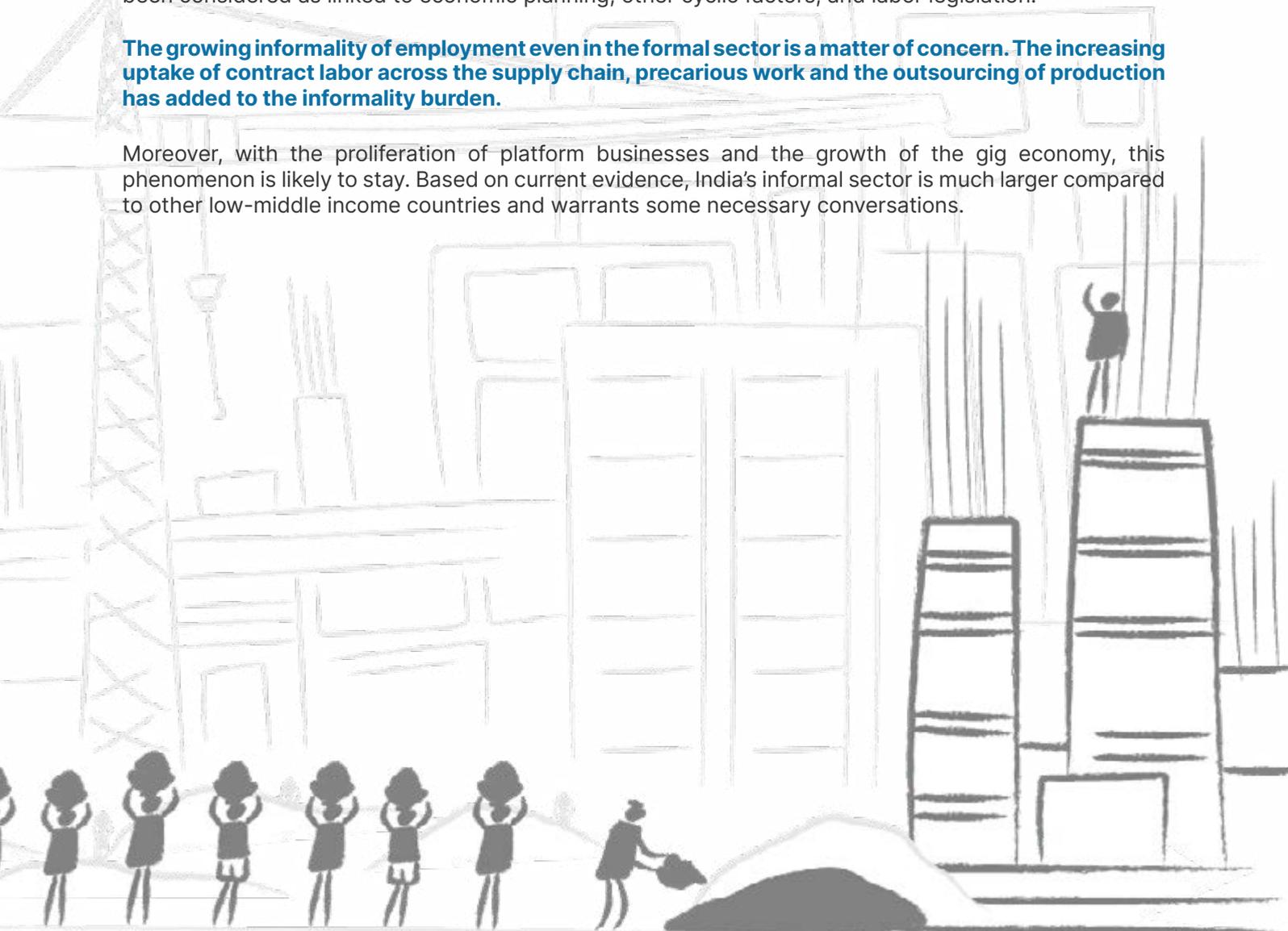
Human resource and employment are showing alarming trends that need to be addressed and prioritized with urgency.

India is experiencing the highest levels of unemployment in over four decades. This affects India's most vulnerable groups most – Schedule Caste and Tribe groups achieved 59% & 66% literacy versus 72% literacy nationally⁵. Gender continues to be a barrier for women across socio-economic categories due to patriarchal societal norms in India – the World Bank data on female labor force participation rate (FLFPR) shows that India lagging far behind globally⁶.

Apart from these dismal trends in human development, informality and unemployment in India have also been considered as linked to economic planning, other cyclic factors, and labor legislation.

The growing informality of employment even in the formal sector is a matter of concern. The increasing uptake of contract labor across the supply chain, precarious work and the outsourcing of production has added to the informality burden.

Moreover, with the proliferation of platform businesses and the growth of the gig economy, this phenomenon is likely to stay. Based on current evidence, India's informal sector is much larger compared to other low-middle income countries and warrants some necessary conversations.



The multiple vulnerabilities of this workforce, exacerbated by lack of opportunities, pushes them into the cycle of intergenerational poverty

The systemic challenges faced by these workers are multi-layered and affected by their intersectional identities. Further, the lack of education and skills of India's most vulnerable workers impedes their ability to gain formal employment. Despite wide acceptance that human-centric approaches to development are critical for India – these workers continue to suffer due to the following factors:



Persistent inequalities

- Poverty remains a challenge
- Lack of safe and decent work
- Unjust discriminatory practices



Gendered vulnerabilities

- Women's work is not valued
- Precarious and menial work
- Wage disparity is wide



Distress migration

- High degree of financial stress
- Unequal regional development
- Unsafe and uninformed migration



COVID-19 impact

- Reverse migration to source
- Severely impacted livelihoods
- Lack of socio-economic security

What is informality of employment? ¹⁰

Employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is, by law or in practice, not subject to:

- National labour legislation
- Income taxation
- Social protection or entitlements
- Employment benefits

What are its real-world manifestations



Lack of registration
in employers' or
government databases



**Wages less than
the recommended
threshold of Rs. 375**



**No formal enforceable
contracts**, unaccounted
time/effort

Reasons for workers being informally employed

- Non-declaration of the jobs/ employees
- Employee's place of work outside employer's enterprise
- Casual or limited short duration jobs
- Labour regulations not applied/ enforced/ complied with
- Jobs with inadequate number of working hours or wages
- Employment by unincorporated enterprises/ within households



Robust ecosystem for migrant domestic worker protection in the Philippines⁷

Being within the confines of the employers' private residences, coupled with informal working arrangements, renders domestic workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation. In the Philippines, domestic work is one of the most important sources of employment for women - both within the country and abroad. About one-quarter of Filipino workers deployed overseas every year enter domestic service. There is widespread concern for their safety and protection.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Association (OWWA), an agency of the Philippines Department of Labour and Employment, is charged with the welfare of registered Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) and their families⁸. It performs functions in all three stages of migration: pre-departure, on site at the work destination, as well as on arrival back in the country. Prior to workers leaving, it educates them about the realities of working overseas and provides language training, if required. At the destination, it helps resolve employer related issues (including facilitating return of distressed workers through a repatriation program), and upon return, it undertakes programs focused on a multiplicity of key services such as ensuring financial literacy, training and capacity building, and job placements.

To this effect, the OWWA is present not only regionally within the country, but also globally, in several other countries where Filipino workers migrate in search of livelihood.

Despite comprising of such a vast majority, the informally employed workforce remained largely invisible until the Covid-19 pandemic

In March 2020, when the lockdown was announced in India, millions of migrant workers, including women, most of whom were part of the informal workforce, were left stranded with no food or shelter. A year later – during the second wave of COVID-19, the most vulnerable informal workers suffered the repercussions of the crisis the most, once again.

The first lockdown is etched in public memory; images of hundreds of these workers walking back to their villages, as public transport was shut, and they had no monetary or other resources to ensure a safe passage home. Official records stated that about **63 lakh migrant workers travelled through Shramik Special trains from May-August 2020⁹**. Their sudden visibility during this period, brought to the fore encumbering realities of the harshest forms of labor. Ever since, stakeholders across the ecosystem have rallied efforts to improve worker wellbeing. It is critical to sustain this momentum driven by compassion.

CHAPTER 1

Exploring redevelopment for construction workers



It is important to zoom in on the construction sector, that employs the largest number of informal and migrant workers

The construction sector employs the maximum number of informal workers, who are predominantly migrants. Fast-paced urbanisation and a high demand for low-skilled workforce are pull factors for this vulnerable demographic. Government data estimates that the sector employs 57 million workers, a total of 50 million men and 7 million women¹. The construction sector is also the single largest absorber of informal workers. Due to the low entry barriers for recruitment, the industry employs a large chunk of the surplus of India's non-agricultural workforce.

Economic snapshot of the sector ²



9% of the share in GDP

Construction is the third fastest growing industry



>50 million workers engaged in Construction

Several remain uncouted because of gaps in identification and data disaggregation



10 times more men than women are employed

The demand for women is limited due to gendered skill gaps and societal norms



>80% of Informality in Employment

Outside of agriculture, construction employs the largest number of informal and migrant workers

Despite being an established industry, the knowledge on the inner workings, especially with regard to the wellbeing of its unit-level workers, remains fragmented. Industry and Government both play important yet distanced and apathetic roles for these workers. There is little actionable insight on the systemic breakpoints that undermine the construction sector's ability to ensure greater dignity and equity for its informally employed workforce.

MYTH

Activity in the construction sector is restricted to development of buildings, apartments, complexes, townships and other forms of housing.

FACT

Construction activity extends to include not only small construction work including that at brick kilns but also that within the urban development segment, covering both public works department sanctioned and privately commissioned projects, such as railways, utilities installations, bridges and irrigation works, amongst others.

Within the construction industry – spotlighting issues faced by the most vulnerable workers, is imperative to design actionable solutions

The migrant and gender status of individual workers further intensifies the complexity of the issues regarding informality of employment within construction. Most informal workers in construction, especially migrants and women, have negligible legal protection, and face a hostile and punitive policy and regulatory environment.

Though migration is a critical solution to build economic opportunity, for this section of workers it is currently driven by severe distress.

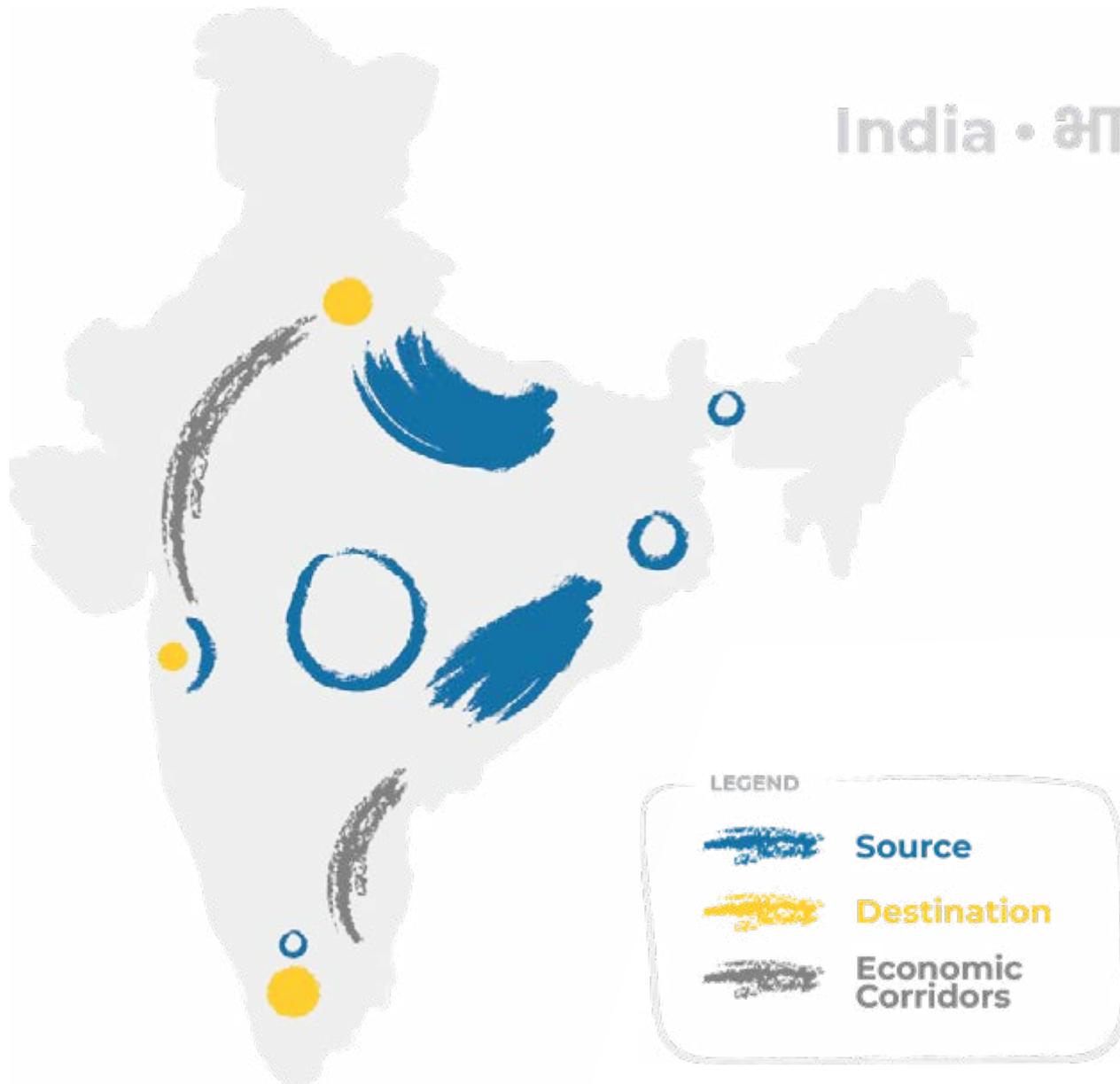
Approximately, ~27 million inter-state migrant workers are employed in construction. The Report of the Working Group on Migration by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, 2017³ showed that the share of short-term migrants in the construction sector was much higher than long-term migrants. A significant proportion of this group of construction workers is made up of seasonal migrants, workers who migrate temporarily for employment. Migration has correlations to unequal development concentrated in hubs, severe distress at source and paucity of opportunities across the span of India. While there are severe shortfalls in data, proxies are able to establish these aspects.

Ten percent of the sector's workforce comprises of women, often employed in manual unskilled labor and remain lost because of the gender-neutral discourse that surrounds this space⁴.

The starkness of gender inequity can be seen in the on-ground realities. Women are not only more likely to be engaged in the informal economy but also comprise a significantly higher number as informal workers within the formal sector. An added layer of vulnerability and time poverty surfaces from their burden of doing most of the domestic and care work.

Internal migration in India indicates discrepancies in regional development⁷

India • भारत



Who are the workers in construction?

Increasing distress and informality of employment



Highly Skilled Workers

Project Manager
Engineer

Stressors

They aspire **accessing better opportunities** in the sector and have limited systemic barriers impeding their growth.

Migration

The migration mix is variable for this section of the workforce and remains **largely permanent**. They migrate based on their aspirations and the opportunities available. They **can access well-being across source and destination**.

Gender

The **glass ceiling** acts as a barrier for the few women employed in the space. Most women continue to face the burden of **unpaid domestic and care work**.



Specialized Workers

Supervisors
Contractors
Surveyors

They can afford to **aspire for limited growth** in the sector despite the **lack of opportunities at source and economic distress**.

The workforce includes **locals and permanent migrants from across states**. They migrate permanently from areas with relatively lower economic opportunities. They **can address primary needs at source OR destination**.

There are **negligible number of women** employed under this profile.



Semi-skilled Workers

Crane Operators
Carpenters/ Plumbers
Painters, Masons

They have to find employment to emerge from **debt cycles, effects of disasters, poverty and food insecurity**.

The workforce includes **circular migrants who migrate from distant or remote areas** that score low on human development and economic indicators. They **struggle to meet primary needs at source and destination**.

There are **negligible number of women** employed under this profile.



Unskilled Workers

Brick kiln workers
Quarry workers
Load carriers
Assistants

They have to access the sector to **address financial crisis, medical emergencies and high-cost one-time expenses**.

The workforce has mostly **circular or seasonal migrants** from nearby districts. They migrate from **tribal or disaster-prone regions**, low on human and economic development. They manage primary needs at a **subsistence**.

Women are employed in the **lowest paying and most hazardous tasks** (like lifting heavy loads). Women continue to face the burden of **unpaid domestic and care work**.

Decreasing potential for upward economic mobility

The gaps in last mile delivery have to be addressed to build a long-term response that transforms the aspiration for these workers

The Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996, (BOCW Act⁵) provides a robust legislative framework for the social protection and well-being of workers engaged in the sector.

However, there are severe gaps in last mile delivery of services for construction workers⁶

62% of the BOCW cess is unutilized

A balance amount of INR 380 billion remains across all State Welfare Boards

30% of the total workers remain unregistered

Out of ~50 million workers, less than 35 million are actually registered with the Boards

Only **50%** of workers are eligible for benefits under the BOCW cess fund

~26 million BOCW workers are 'live' registered workers, whose registrations have been renewed up-to-date

Merely **36%** accessed assistance through direct benefit transfer during the pandemic

The rest suffered due to non-availability of Aadhaar and bank details of individual workers

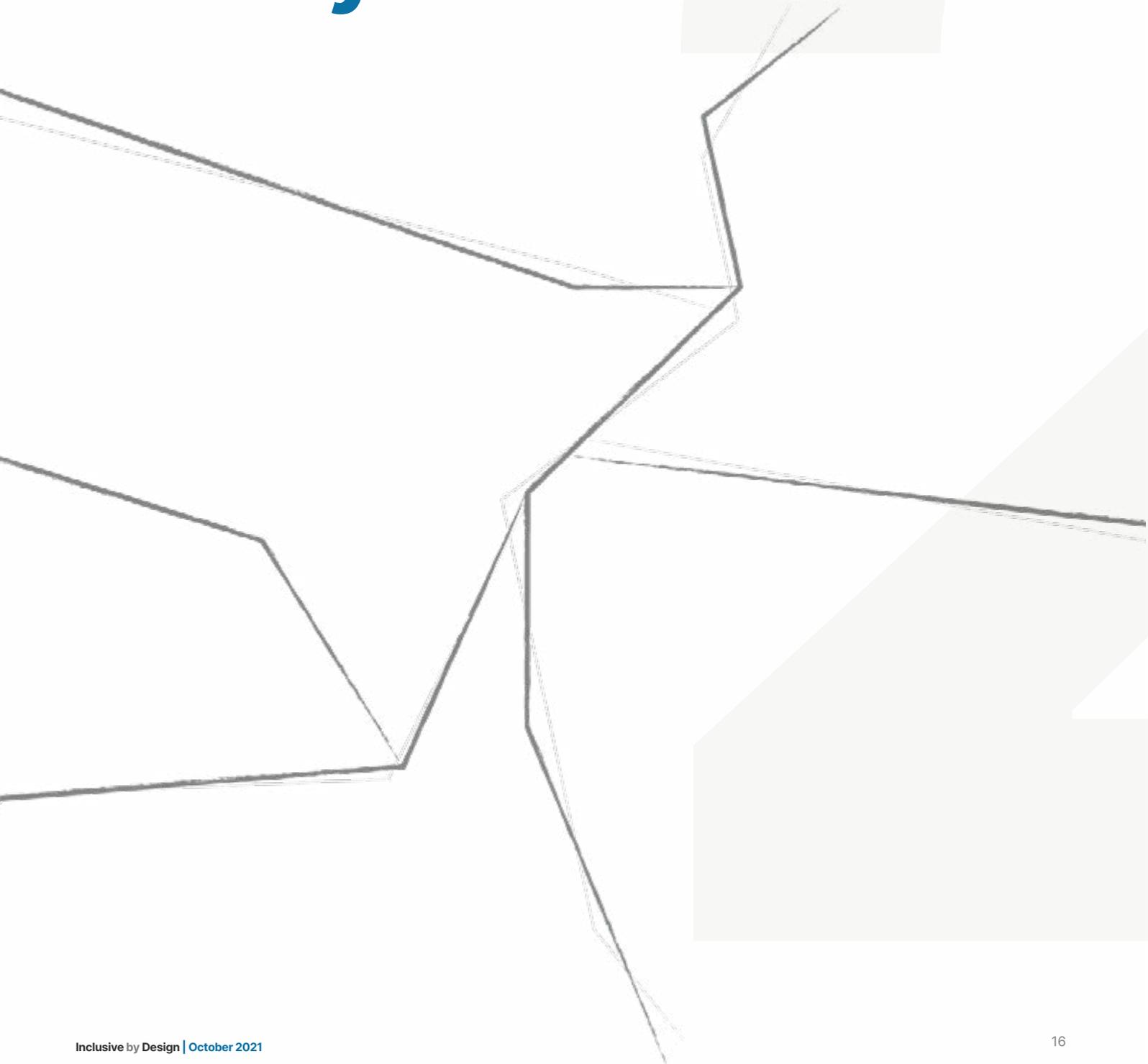
The abovementioned facts, drawing upon official data after the first lockdown, are a clear indication that there is a severe need to ensure social protection, rights, and dignity for workers in construction. However, in the few months following the first wave of the pandemic, there have been some positive trends emerging as a harbinger of improved worker registrations and well-being. The Ministry of Labour & Employment has developed the eSHRAM portal for creating a National Database of Unorganized Workers (NDUW), which will be seeded with Aadhaar. This is the first-ever national database of unorganised workers including migrant workers, construction workers, gig and platform workers. Further, few states, like the Government of Gujarat, has also launched portals like e-Nirman, which will help construction workers avail smart cards, enabling access to a variety of welfare schemes.

It is important to undertake a thorough analysis of the breakpoints surrounding workers. Entire communities of workers share the experience of distress and exploitation. The interlinkages between critical stakeholders and the complex journeys of workers (as individuals and communities) need to be deconstructed fully to target approaches for resolving the most pressing problems.

Therefore, the report attempts to visibilize their lives by building an understanding about their journeys, the role of different stakeholders and the breakpoints across the system. The objective is to generate actionable insights that promote transformational development and empowerment as well as induce expedited action for their wellbeing in the shorter term.

CHAPTER 2

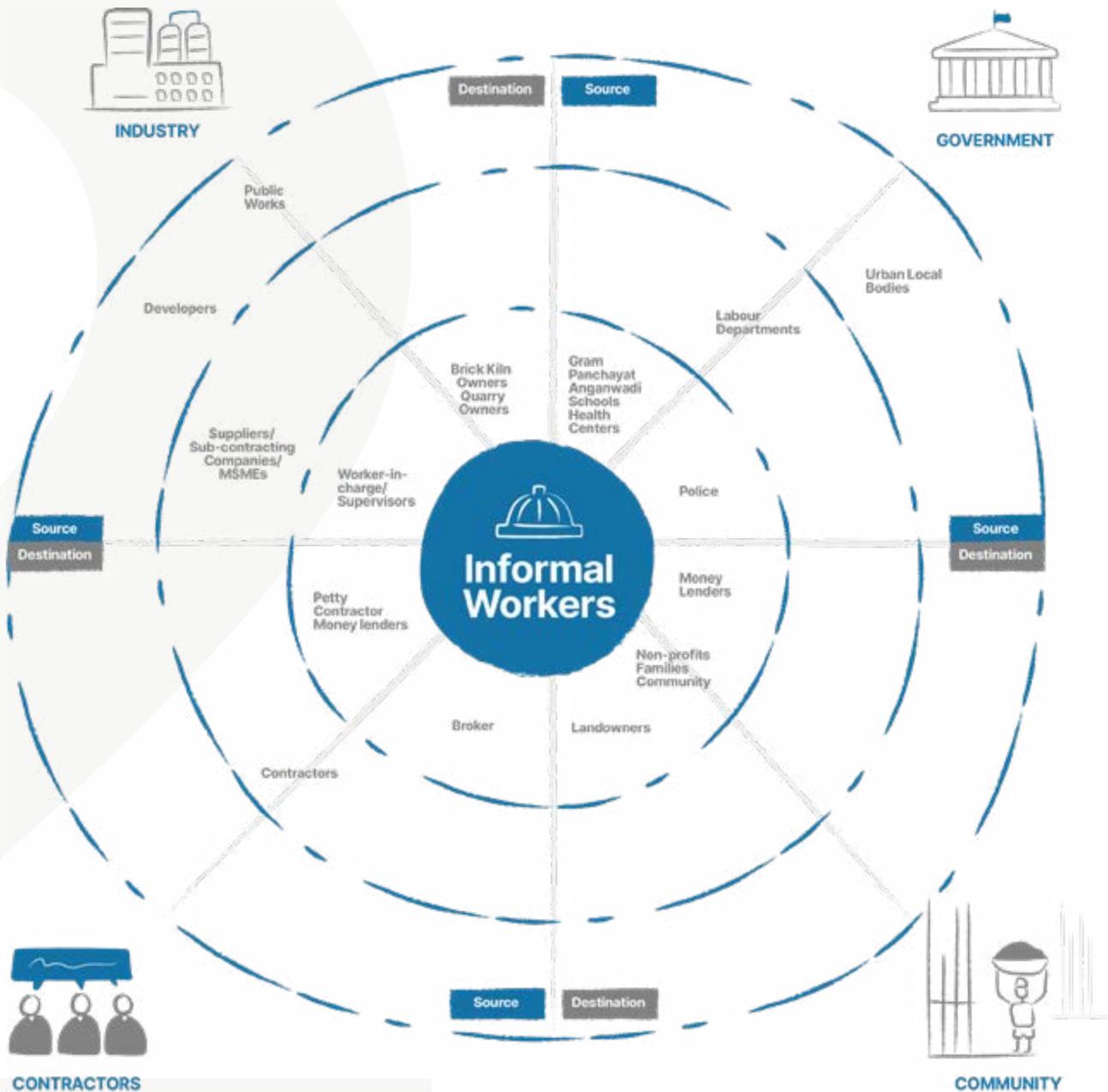
Identifying the cracks in the system



The inequities faced by informal workers in the construction sector are multi-faceted. Amidst complex labor supply chains, a number of issues impede their social and economic growth.

Probing into journeys of informal workers in the sector reveals the primary touchpoints and critical stakeholders playing defining roles in their interactions across the system and well-being.

The key stakeholders at important touchpoints in workers' lives are the government, industry, contractors and community.



The primary employers or industry are far removed from their on-ground realities as majority of the work is liaised out to a web of contractors and sub-contractors. The fragmented reach and accountability of the government is another overarching problem that affects their lives. Since the phenomenon of migration is interspersed so closely with their journeys across the system – it is important to layer this in while analyzing the breakpoints.

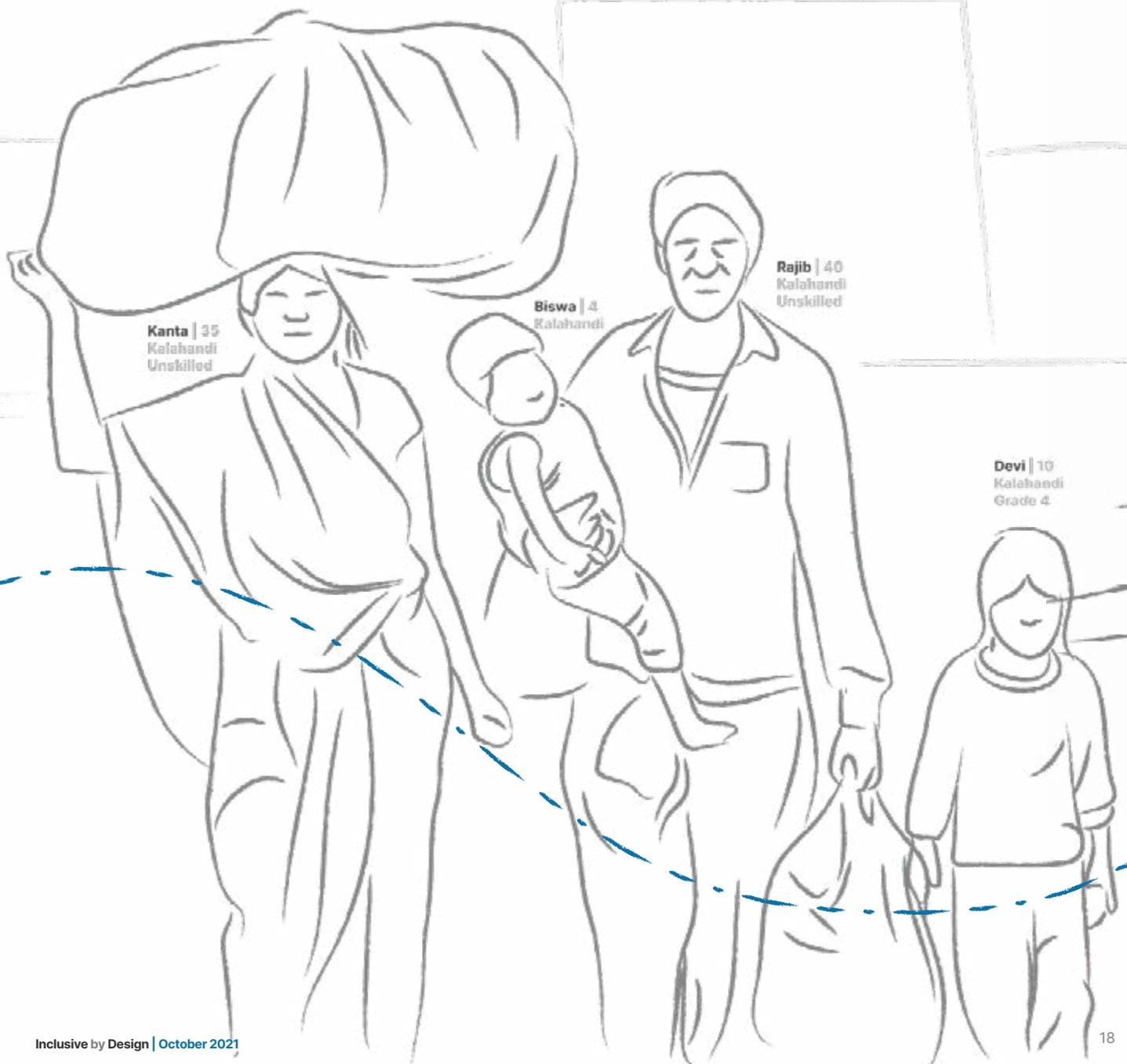
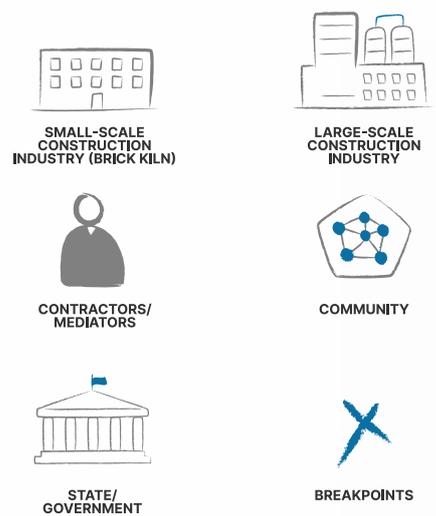
The challenges faced by workers are starkly visible across source, destination and at the systemic level. Focusing on gender is critical while discussing the challenges surrounding migrant workers given the exclusionary practices surrounding women.

Catch a glimpse of the journeys of these workers...

Please note that this is a fictionalized representation based on insights from the research process.

This is the story of **Rajib and Kanta's family**, distressed like many others in their community, due to the harsh climatic conditions in Kalahandi, Odisha

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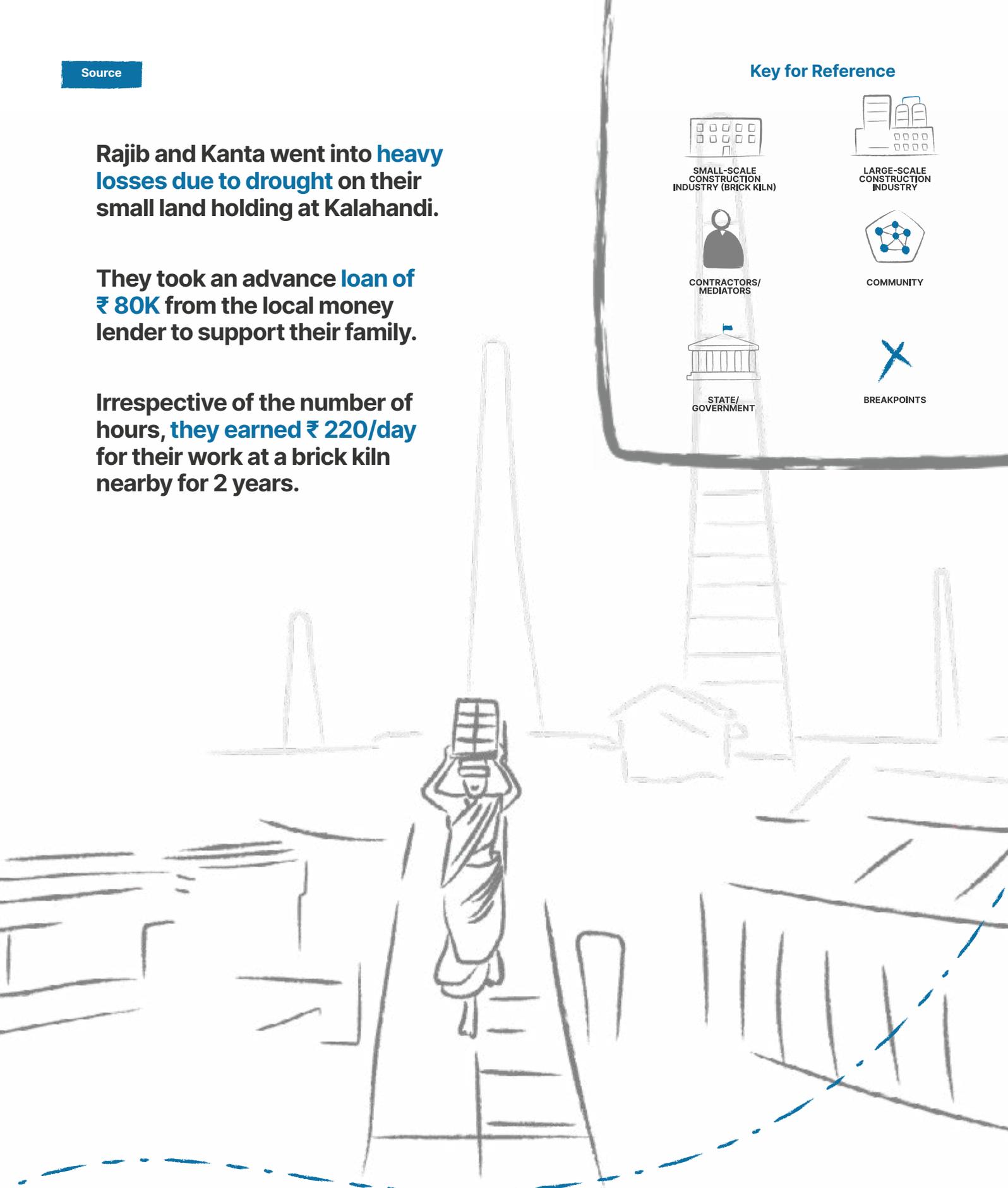
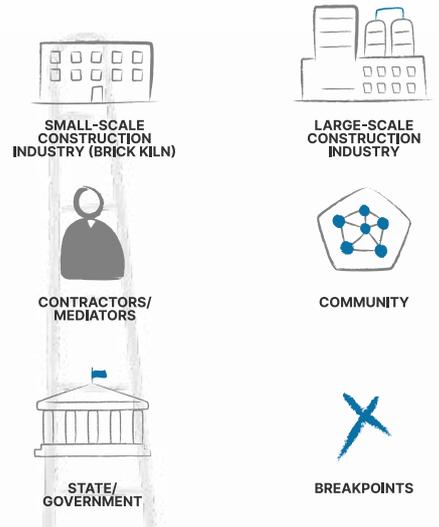


Rajib and Kanta went into **heavy losses due to drought** on their small land holding at Kalahandi.

They took an advance **loan of ₹ 80K** from the local money lender to support their family.

Irrespective of the number of hours, **they earned ₹ 220/day** for their work at a brick kiln nearby for 2 years.

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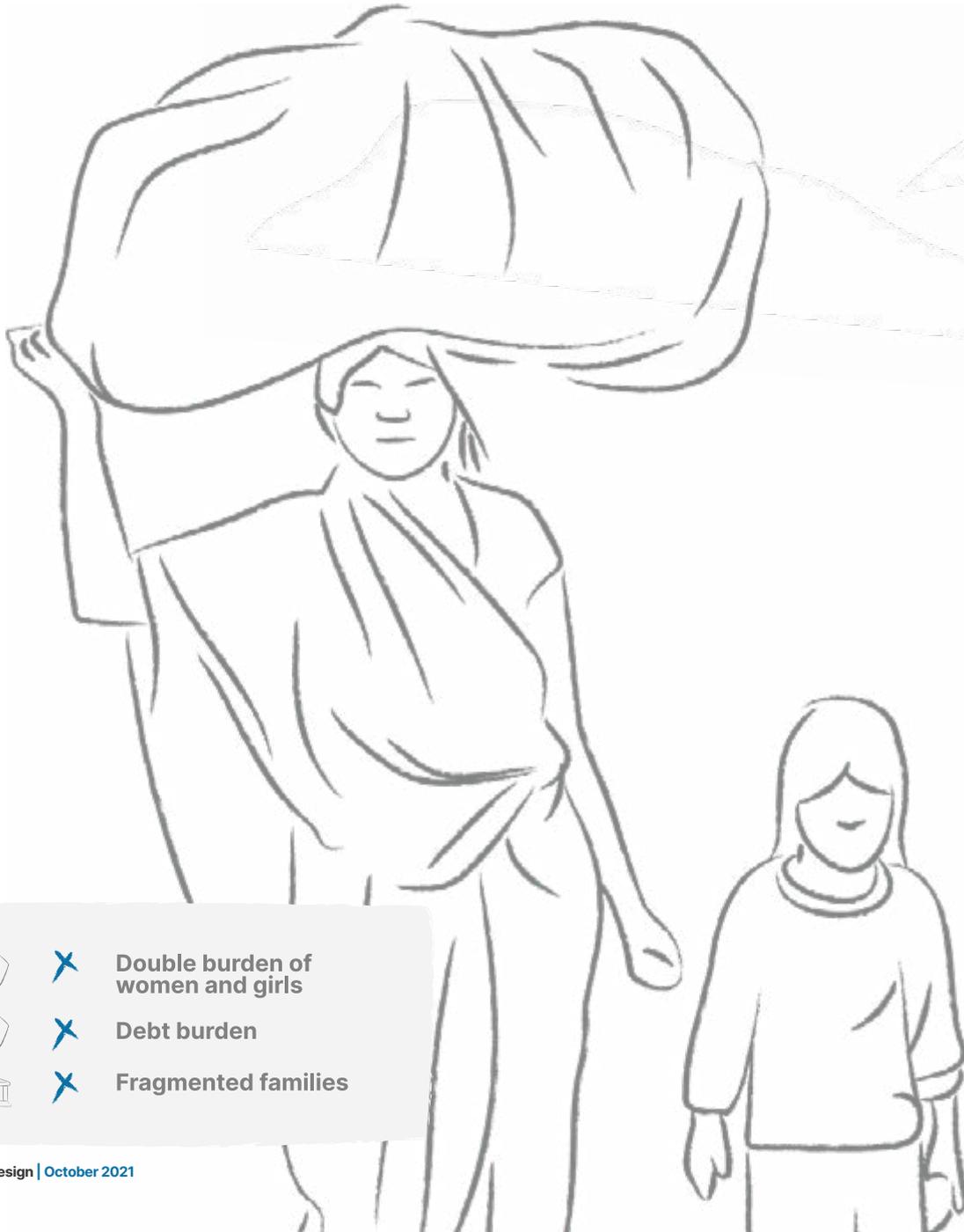
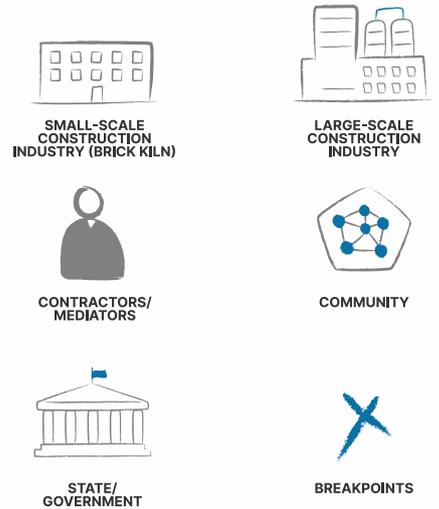
-   Higher risk of disasters
-   Lack of formal finance
-   Unfair wages

Biswa was left in the care of Devi, who supported her mother with domestic and care work.

When they weren't able to pay back, the family started being harassed by the money lender to pay the debt back.

They started working double shifts. The children remained unattended except for the time they spent at school or Aanganwadi Centre.

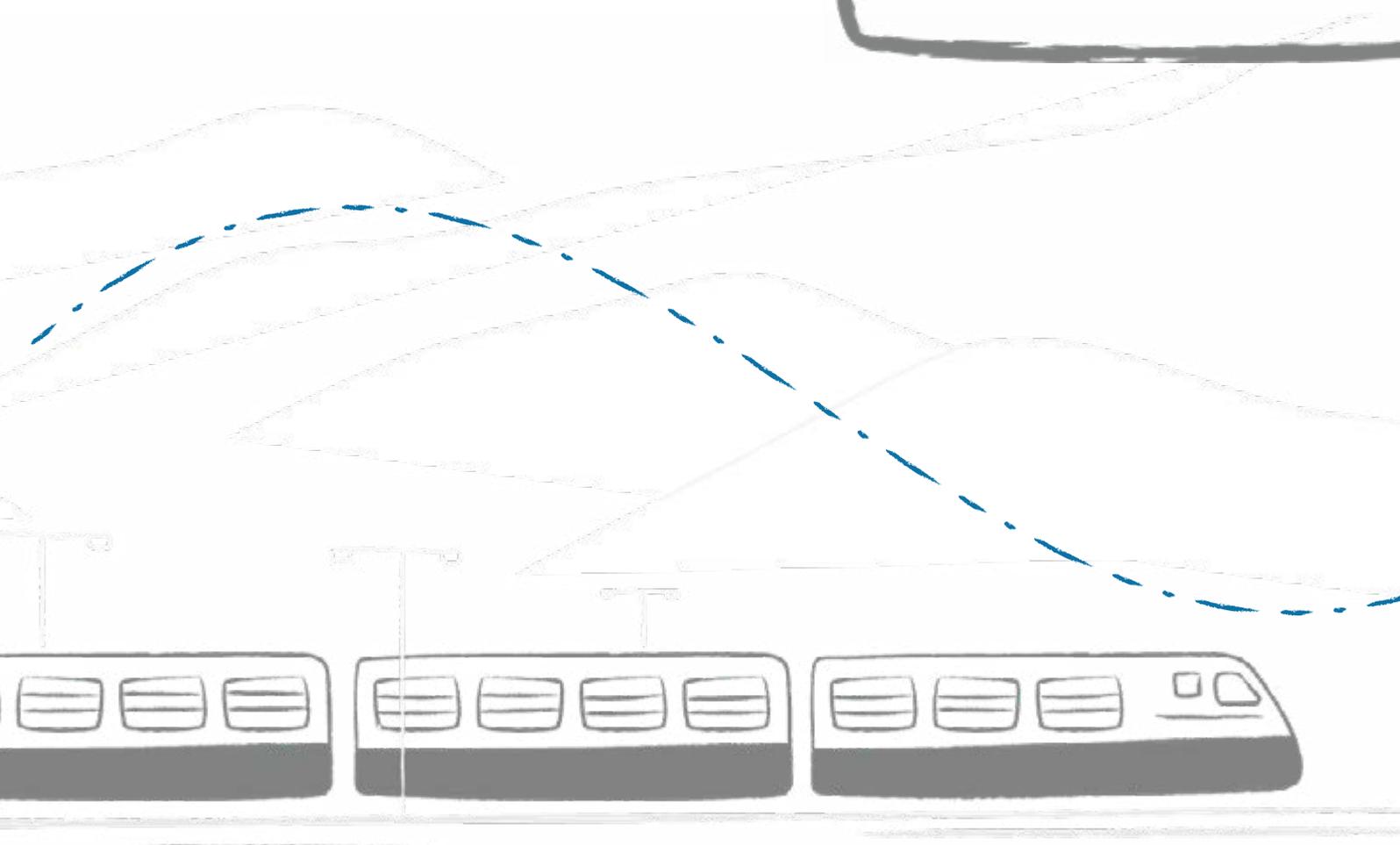
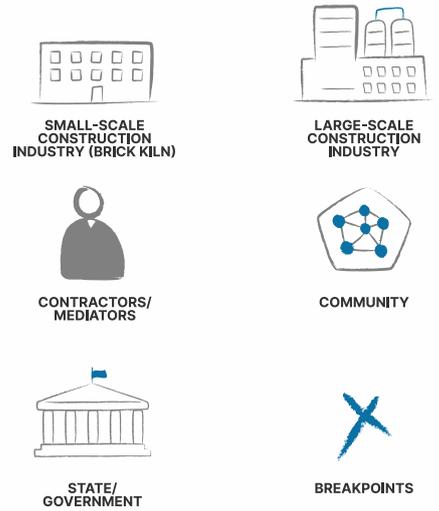
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-   Double burden of women and girls
-   Debt burden
-   Fragmented families

The family of four was **pressured into moving to Mumbai city** with a contractor known to the money lender.

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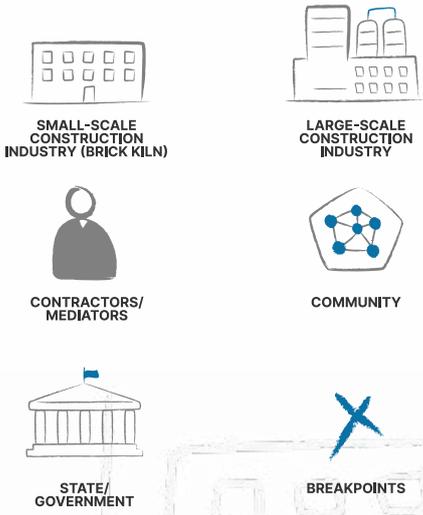


They **travelled for 40 hours** in crowded buses and trains with a group of 20 others from nearby villages, remaining hungry.

Alternate power centres of marginal actors in the community

No travel allowances or transit facilities by employers

The family began working in a large luxury township on the outskirts of Mumbai



The contractor arranged **tin-shed of 100m²** for the family to sleep in. They had to share a toilet with 50 others.

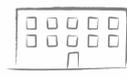
Poor accommodation and deplorable living conditions

The site had 300 workers, 90 of whom were registered under the **BOCW Act**.

Rajib and Kanta were not registered

The family **didn't receive any ration or healthcare from the government** because they did not have necessary domicile proofs in this city.

Key for Reference

 SMALL-SCALE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY (BRICK KILN)	 LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
 CONTRACTORS/ MEDIATORS	 COMMUNITY
 STATE/ GOVERNMENT	 BREAKPOINTS



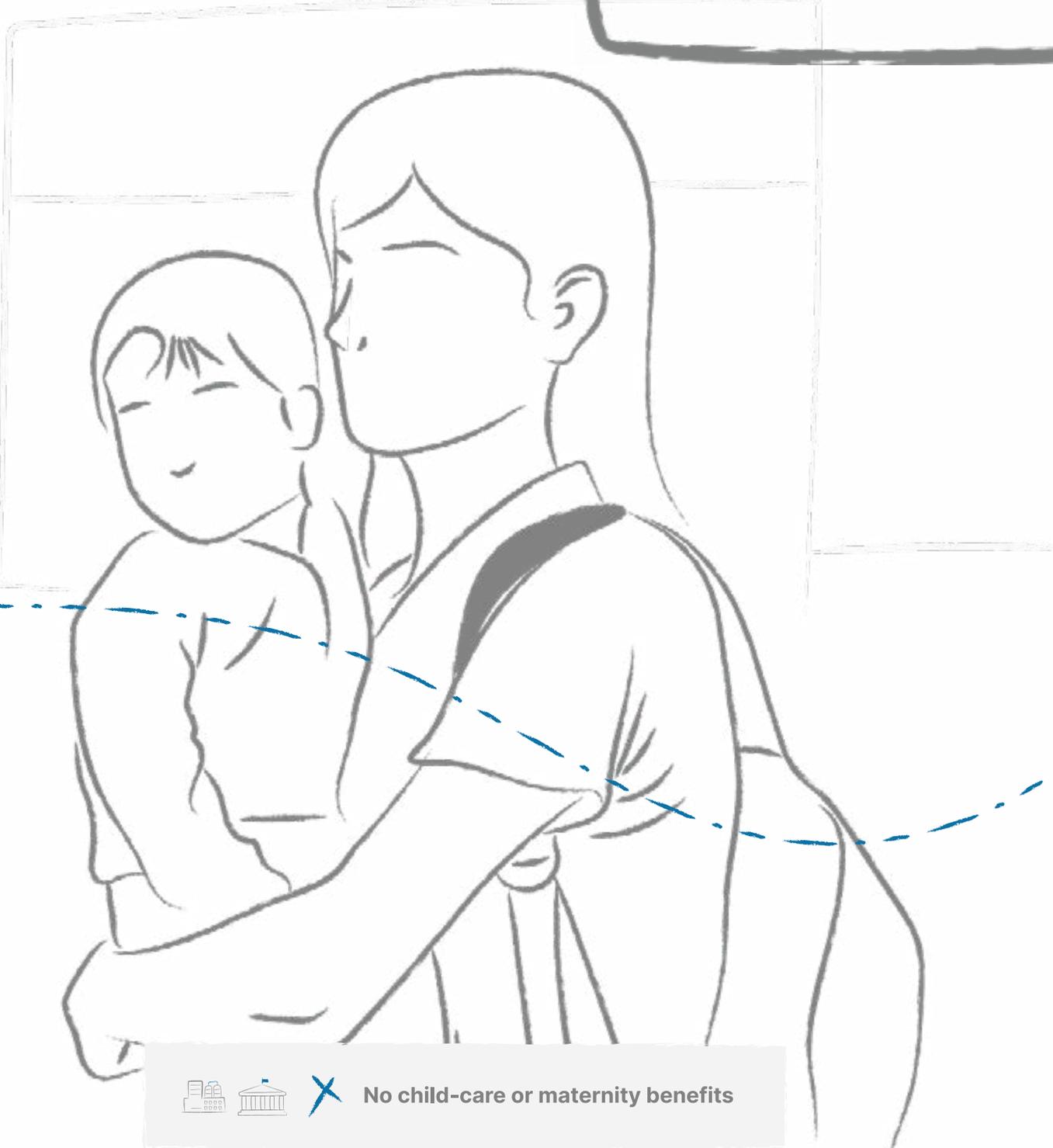
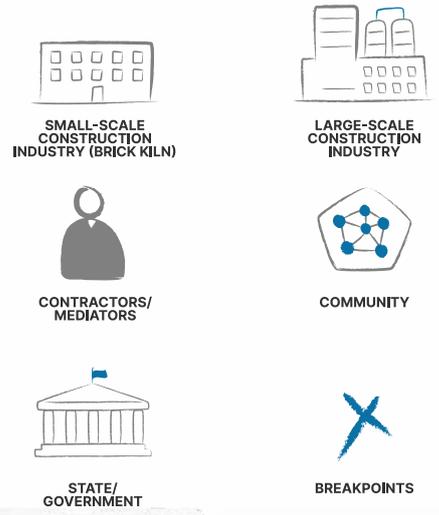
			Inadequate registration under BOCW
			Lack of portability of entitlements for social protection and welfare

Destination

The site being located on the outskirts, had **no schools or child-care facilities nearby.**

The **children were forced to drop-out** and remained neglected.

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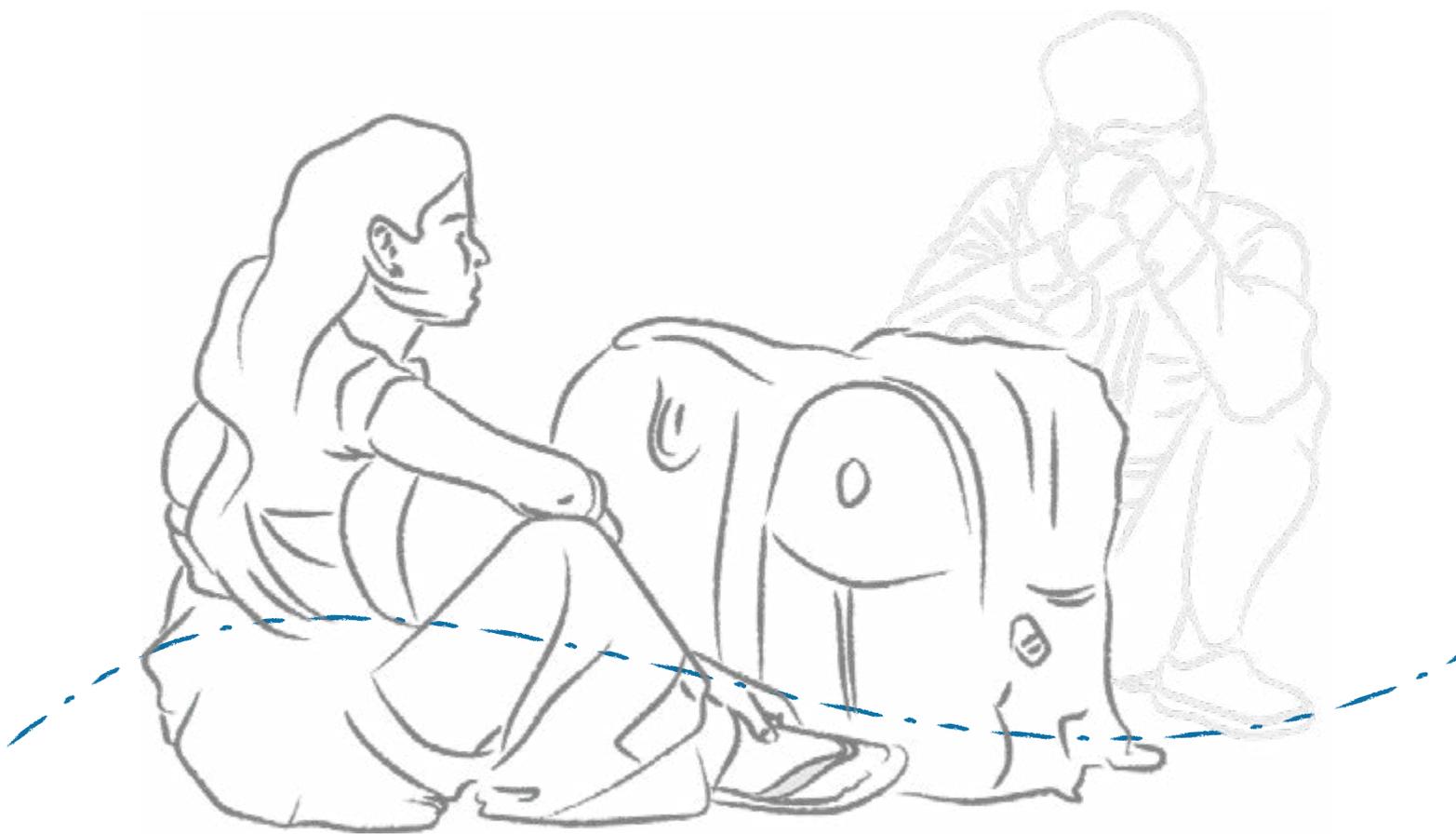
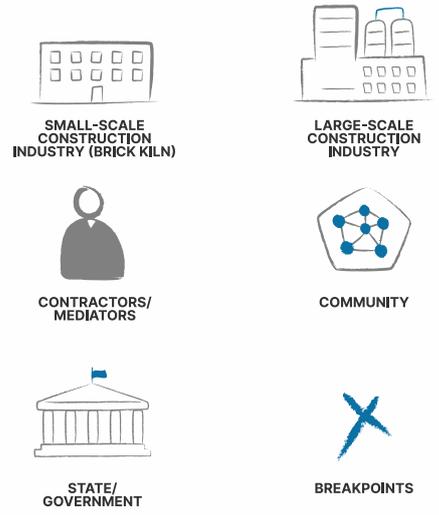


 **No child-care or maternity benefits**

Four months later, Rajib passed away due to an unfortunate mishap on-site.

In the absence of the BOCW registration, the family was paid a subpar compensation.

Key for Reference



    Unsafe working conditions and high risk of occupational hazards

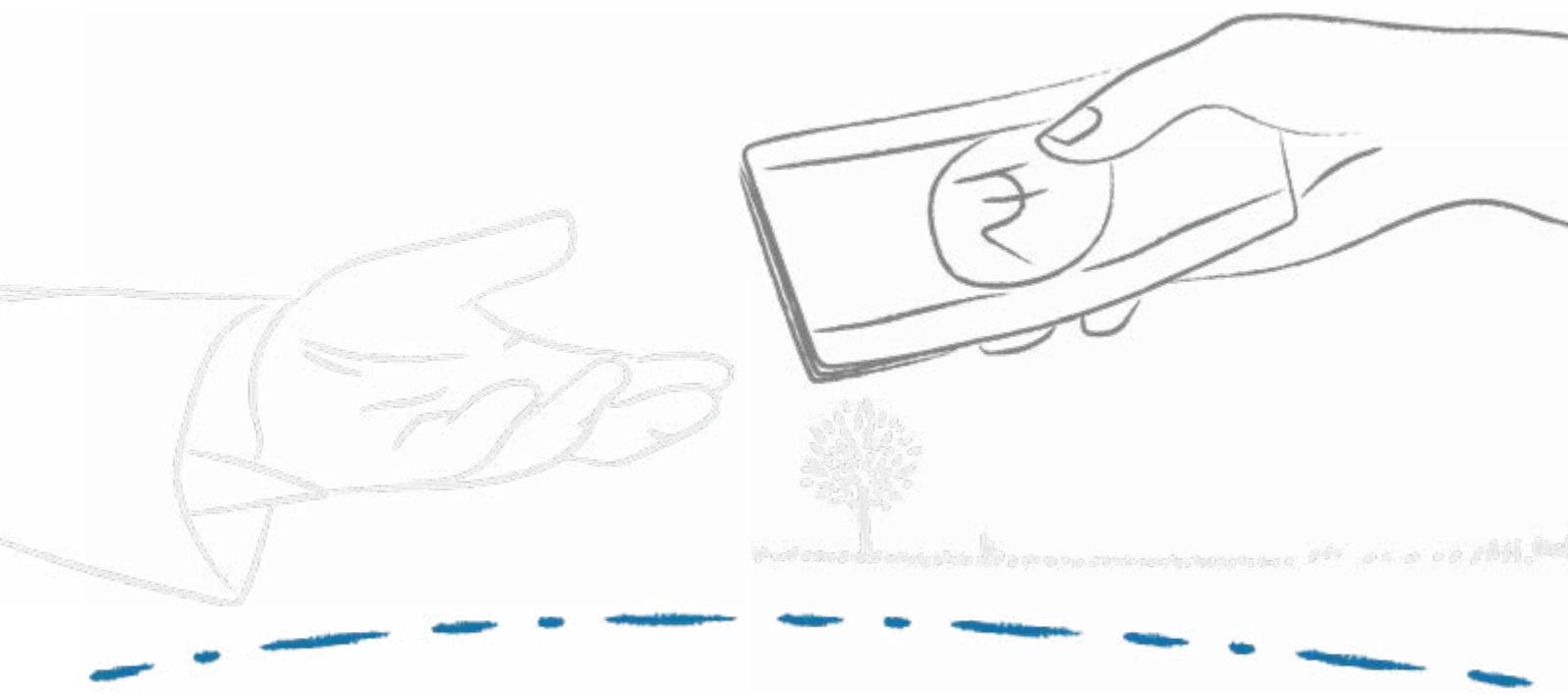
    Inadequate legal recourse and aid

The contractor took away a part of the family's share of the compensation as a repayment of the money-lender's debt.

As a single woman, it was not easy for Kanta to adjust in the labour colony on site.

Key for Reference

 SMALL-SCALE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY (BRICK KILN)	 LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
 CONTRACTORS/ MEDIATORS	 COMMUNITY
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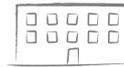


				Exploitative socio-economic practices
				 Risk of violence and sexual harassment

She decided to move back to her home village with the contractor's support.

On returning to her village, five years later, Kanta with her two children continue to farm their small land holding in the hope of a better harvest.

Key for Reference



SMALL-SCALE
CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY (BRICK KILN)



LARGE-SCALE
CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY



CONTRACTORS/
MEDIATORS



COMMUNITY



STATE/
GOVERNMENT



BREAKPOINTS



Inter-generational cycle of poverty



Over-dependency on contractors and mediators

In the sections below, critical breakpoints are highlighted across stakeholder groups including government, industry, contractors, and community. Furthermore, a section has been dedicated to gender, drawing attention to the problems in facilitating equitable outcomes.

Government

Government and policy are backed by a strong legal framework but fall behind in implementation

The BOCW Act along with the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979, and other schemes are progressive and intentional policies for worker wellbeing. Furthermore, the Union Budget 2021 seeks to address some of challenges that emerged during the COVID-19 crisis with vigor. The Government of India is now taking proactive steps towards strengthening food provisioning through universalized ration availability and increased efforts towards enumeration of workers¹. To address gender-specific needs, government policies to prevent sexual harassment at the workplace and provide maternity benefits are applicable to the construction industry. However, there are shortfalls in its implementation due to overburdened and fragmented public systems.

Gaps in enumeration of migrant workers: As the constituency of informal migrant workers gets split across local administrative bodies (across villages, cities and states) as well as departments (labor and urban local bodies), there are gaps in enumerating the large majority of the migrant workforce. This causes hinderances in the portability of basic services such as access to ration and accommodation.

Fragmented implementation mechanisms: The implementation of the BOCW Act is decentralized, which causes discrepancies in execution based on the political will of state governments. Further, there is a deficit in the human resources required for the project management and administration of the rules notified under the law.

Shortfalls in monitoring of programs: Service delivery at the last mile is also affected by shortfalls in monitoring. Insufficient reporting on key performance indicators affects the feedback loops and therefore the end beneficiary remains underserved.

The active-proactive regulatory role of the state is missing, especially in the informal economy. So, while you do have a labor department, with Labor Commissioners, who are supposed to be monitoring the conditions of workers, they don't move around in the field. Often, the reason for this is cited as them being short staffed."

Mouleshri Vyas

Professor | Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Inadequate utilization of funds available: The BOCW Act provides for a financial mechanism to collect a fixed percentage of a project from construction companies as a cess that can be utilized for the welfare of workers. While a significant amount of cess has been collected, there is severe under-utilization. As of June 2020, 62% of the cess funds collected were unutilized, including emergency aid provided at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic².

Misappropriation of the legal provisions: Practitioners have reported that cartels and mediators are exploiting the system by falsely registering non-construction workers under the BOCW Act. This is problematic because several studies have reported that many construction workers are not even unaware of the BOCW Act. Corrective measures to stop such misappropriation are also often unsuccessful due to the additional regulatory burden they bring along. The lack of stringency in enforcement hampers actual beneficiaries (especially those from Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes) from accessing entitlements.

MYTH

The government and industry are ensuring the health and welfare of construction workers through the BOCW cess funds. Workers get access to social security and are able to live within means.

FACT

More than INR 380 million (equivalent to 62%) of cess lies unutilized with the BOCW Boards. Official records state that 30% workers are still unregistered under the Act, and several others remain uncounted. Only half (30 million workers) of those registered, have updated profiles required to avail benefits.



Welfare legislation for Mathadi workers in Maharashtra has proved to be exemplary in worker protection

The term 'Mathadi' means a person carrying a load of material either on their head ('matha' in Hindi) or back, to stack at the appropriate place. Mathadi workers' engage in loading, unloading, stacking, carrying, weighing, measuring or such other works including work preparatory or incidental to such operations³.

The Maharashtra Mathadi, Hamal and other Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment & Welfare) Act, 1969 was passed in response to the struggles of these thus far unprotected workers, and has gone a long way in ensuring their improved quality of life through better employment conditions and welfare provisioning.

The said Act (together with its various schemes for worker protection), is being implemented in the state through duly constituted tripartite Boards, comprising representatives of the employers, the workers and the State Government. In essence, the Board, as primary recruiter, not only ensures adequate supply of manual labour to the scheduled employments under the Act, appropriate utilisation of labour available, better overall working conditions, health, safety and welfare measures to the workers (including but not limited to contributions to provident fund, accident compensation, gratuity, bonuses, insurance, paid leave and medical benefits), but also regular payment of wages to the workers, by ensuring registration under the said Act.



Industry

Industries survive due to underpaid informal migrant workers, amidst a paucity of local laborers⁴

The construction industry is a challenging one, where daily jobs are dangerous, posing numerous unaccounted risks for the worker, and can even be potentially life-threatening. Therefore, it is important for industry players, who are primary employers, to exercise even more caution and act responsibly in protecting the interests of workers on site. Unfortunately, the complexity of the labor supply value chain, places the 'principal employers' far away from the worker, such that they are either unaware or apathetic towards their plight.

Lack of awareness and limited accountability: Rarely is the principal employer aware of the ground realities faced by workers. On account of having several layers of contractors between the worker and themselves, employers do not concern themselves with ensuring ultimate wellbeing of workers. There is acute lack of initiative through formal company policies, to ensure payment of minimum wages, safe working and living conditions, food, health care and other basic services essential to life.



Construction is the only industry where the workers have to move out after finishing their work, in all other industries it is the product that moves out to the consumer."

Subhash Bhatnagar
Chief Functionary | Nirmana

Inadequate worker registrations: A fundamental problem with respect to worker wellbeing in this industry, is the failure to register workers under the BOCW Act, which is the basis of all wellbeing provisioning for the worker. In the absence of enforcement of registration, and legal loopholes that can be leveraged to limit accountability, employers lack incentive to enable the process⁵



MYTH

Informal workers all over India earn standardized minimum wages. They are able to make ends meet.



FACT

An Expert Committee set up in 2019 recommended the methodology and contemporary amount of the national floor wage, proposing INR 375, however this has not been formally acknowledged yet. Even at the proposed amount - 31 days of work, would result in earnings of only INR 11,625/ month.¹¹



Synergy between industry players and the government machinery is key to ensuring worker welfare

One of the primary reasons for workers in the construction sector being unable to secure social welfare measures, is the failure to get registered under the BOCW Act – the primary legislation aimed at ensuring the same through various schemes for healthcare, education, financial assistance, improved working conditions etc. Owing to several reasons described in detail in this report, that result in workers going unregistered, they find themselves in a highly disadvantageous position as regards their protection.

An effective way to combat this setback, has been through coordinated efforts between the industry (being workers' primary employers) and the state government (through the welfare boards under the said Act). Benefits of such a partnership were demonstrated at one of Tata Realty's project sites, (where a welfare program to register workers was already being run in tandem with the state government, with 900 workers having been registered). On account of the complexities and delay involved in getting workers registered, some workers were left without registration despite efforts being made in this regard through the said welfare program, which by extension meant no access to benefits for them under the BOCW Act. However, since the government was aware of these efforts being made to register workers, it acted dynamically in extending benefits under the Act, such as provision of midday meals at site, even to those workers who were not registered under the Act. Such a partnership can go a long way in ensuring worker welfare, especially during the period pending their registration, when they are in dire need of support on various counts.

Contractors

Contractors are primarily responsible for recruitment and welfare, often mired in informality themselves

Contractors are key intermediaries in the construction ecosystem, as they are the primary figures responsible for recruitment and payments. The BOCW Act defines a contractor as “a person who undertakes to produce a given result for any establishment, other than a mere supply of goods or articles of manufacture, by the employment of building workers or who supplies building workers for any work of the establishment and includes a sub-contractor”. However, the prohibitive degree of informality and casualization of the labor force, has severely obliterated the scope of an “employer” to include even a petty contractor.

“50-60% of migration in construction is through contractors. A contractor is just typically an experienced migrant worker, not always but quite often. They are very relatable. They are seen as heroes. Migrant workers believe that contractors have saved their lives.”

Varun Aggarwal

Founder & Lead | India Migration Now

High level of dependency: More often than not, contractors belong to the same community as workers and may have started out as informal workers themselves. A paramount aspiration for workers is to eventually become contractors. This leads to an inherent level of trust in the contractor. Therefore, workers wholly rely on them for all employment related information and liaising. Owing to the high level of dependency on the contractor, the movement of the worker is intrinsically linked to the contractor, irrespective of where they move.

Widespread exploitation: As a result of the worker being dependent on the contractor, for all practical purposes, it is the contractor and not the ‘principal employer’ who is responsible for the basic well-being of the worker – food, water, sanitation and shelter. There exists a large population of unscrupulous contractors, who seek to make personal gains by pocketing the worker’s hard-earned wages (already dismal) or place them into situations of forced labor. Further, the contractor has the absolute authority to determine skill levels and job suitability, governed by societal norms like caste and ethnic biases.

The banes of informality: The casual mode of operation of a large volume of contractors who in a majority of cases are unlicensed, directly contributes to the worker’s already precarious situation. Intentionally avoiding formal documentation and enumeration of the worker is convenient for the contractor. The contractors can escape liability for welfare provisioning with ‘hire and fire’ policies. Little effort is made to retain workers and ensure job stability.

MYTH

Contractors are only responsible for hiring workers for the principal employers and ensuring payment of adequate and timely wages.

FACT

There are up to 4-5 layers of petty contractors and sub-contractors between the worker and the principal employer. A lot of these belong to the same community as the workers. They not only perform the same work as them, but also sometimes double up as money lenders. This results in cases of debt bondage above the already high dependency for wage payment and provision of necessities.

Communities

Communities share experiences of distress from source to destination, and over generations

Socio-economic factors and geography are important determinants of breakpoints at the community level. The construction sector largely sees entire communities of migrants, seasonal and circular, moving together for working in adjoining districts or across state borders. Therefore, migration is imperative to consider, while studying challenges surrounding communities. The vulnerability of informal workers in construction is linked with inter-generational poverty, natural disasters, climate change, and discriminatory practices such as the caste system.

Limited opportunities for decent work and economic growth: The nature of work available to communities of informal workers in construction is fundamentally less paying. Their migration is led by distress and aspiration of economic growth. However, the opportunities at destination continue being precarious and underpaid. Further, the discriminatory practices based on social and cultural categories (of caste, gender, tribe, religion) reinforce inequalities.

Shortcomings in the accesses to services and entitlements: Workers' communities lack proper access to healthcare, ration, financial security, water-hygiene-sanitation (WASH) facilities and accommodation on-site and in their sources and destinations. This affects their quality of life and well-being. Overburdened public systems are not able to adequately solution for the quantum of shortcomings at hand.

The vicious cycle of inter-generational poverty: It is difficult for informal workers and their families/communities to break free from the inter-generational cycle of poverty. Irrespective of whether the family is moving together, the next generation is seldom able to access quality education and skilling which can help improve their livelihood opportunities and well-being.

Punitive and adversarial actions towards informal workers: There is widespread stigma and discrimination towards informal workers in construction, mainly those from tribal areas, by authorities and citizens at destination. Eviction, fines, and other punitive actions are taken against them. Workers lack awareness about legal recourse against exploitation. Harsh circumstances prevail because workers are not empowered or organized to negotiate better.

Power centers by marginal actors within the community: The complex supply-chain and economic system that surrounds communities has created power centers by marginal actors. Money lenders, agents and mediators have emerged. Contractors sometimes double up as money lenders, further complicating the dynamics. These marginal actors provide quick fixes to systemic issues in the absence of formal provisions. This creates unregulated alternatives which can be exploitative for the community.

“There is primarily a lack of livelihood opportunities because of which informal workers decide to migrate. Most workers don't have personal land holdings. The agriculture sector doesn't have enough work, so they need to move out. Some of them even face natural disasters like drought. Most of the workers in construction are here because of distress.”

Vrushali Naik

Programme Coordinator | Mumbai Mobile Creches

Gender

Exclusionary practices and policy make gender equity a growing concern in the construction sector

Given the overarching patriarchal system, the construction industry too is not a level-playing field between genders. Employed in the lowest-paying, hazardous and labor-intensive jobs (like heavy lifting) – women workers are marginalized and unrecognized in the construction sector. Gender disaggregated data on women’s migration and actual participation in the construction industry is limited. There is an acute difference in their access to earn equal wages and skilling opportunities. This affects women’s competitiveness in the labor market. The on-ground response to their practical needs like maternity benefits, hygiene, sanitation, and day-care facilities, is dismal. Further, women are also at a higher risk of violence and sexual harassment. It is also pertinent to mention that India’s overall score as regards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 (gender equality) is below 50 (on a composite score range of 0-100)¹², and therefore gender equity demands special attention from an SDG progress point of view as well.

Shortfall in redressal of women’s practical needs: Women face the double burden of managing domestic and care work, along with paid work at construction sites. Therefore, the shortfall in implementation of maternity benefits, day-care and creches at the workplace with the support of industry and government affects women adversely. Women’s sanitation, hygiene and menstruation needs are also not addressed appropriately. This creates implicit barriers for women.

Policy fails to address strategic gender needs: While there are policies that focus on addressing women’s practical needs concerning maternity benefits and prevention of sexual harassment, the existing laws fail at transforming gender roles in the construction industry. There are no laws or policies that seek to transform women’s skill gaps or rationalize wages equitably that can bring long-term changes. The lack of an overarching narrative on this front also affects practices on ground in similar light.

Backlash against gender-intentional policies: It has been observed that policies meant to create gender balance at the worksite are often met with skepticism by employers. Instead of taking them in the spirit of justice and affirmative action, employers and communities retort with backlash resulting in skewed hiring against women, due to patriarchal and societal norms. This causes gender imbalance and deters creating enabling or safe working environments for women.

Feminization of poverty in construction⁶: The gap in incomes between men and women persists among informal workers in the construction industry. Women are often employed as “assistants” on sites and paid lesser than their male counterparts. As women are “left behind” when men migrate, they are engaged in menial jobs on smaller construction sites and brick kilns, this further reinforces feminization of poverty.

Change in demand and recruitment patterns: There has been a change in the demand patterns in urban areas for women workers, with reduced hiring. The skill gap faced by women impedes their participation in an increasingly mechanized construction industry. Further, employers and contractors consider women less mobile, and the measures required for their safety and protection as added efforts.

MYTH

The construction sector employs both women and men. Women earn lower wages because their work is less intense compared to men.

FACT

There are 10 times more male workers employed in this sector. When employed, women are made to do the most hazardous and physically tedious jobs available. Gendered vulnerabilities affect women adversely as they earn ~30-40% less than male counterparts even when tasked with the same work, specifically in urban areas.

Risk of violence and sexual harassment: Unsafe accommodation at destination, lack of proper facilities during transit and inadequate awareness regarding legal redressal pose a greater risk of violence and harm on worksite for women and children. Instead of addressing the concerns, employers use these as an excuse to not have women and families on site.

“Our research shows that the women’s participation in the labour market is closely linked with a change in their place of residence. It is possible that women move along with their family in search of work and so we then see an increase in their labour market participation. Or it could be that when families are located away from their traditional place of residence, there is less pressure to adhere to norms that see women’s work as a marker of low-class status.

Dr. Rosa Abraham

Senior Research Fellow | Azim Premji University

Repeat Scenarios One Year Later: Second Wave Impact

The second wave of the pandemic brought all-round devastation across the country, and the construction sector is no exception, rendering its worker population even more vulnerable than before, particularly women workers and young, inexperienced workers who tend to be more precariously employed⁷.

- Circular migrants in this sector, in particular, have borne the harshest impact, in terms of precarity of employment. Factors such as class, caste, ethnic or linguistic identity, and lack of stable residence and political voice contributed to this, as such workers were difficult to reach through social protection policies⁸.
- The loss of work as a result of the pandemic, as well as even after gaining work back, has seen further informalisation and falling income taking place over the past year, leading to extreme financial stress for vulnerable households – poverty, food insecurity and stress are some of the concerns they are faced with.
- While there was recovery in employment in as much as many who lost their jobs were able to find work after the first wave of the pandemic, most are engaged in employment that is even more uncertain than before, and in possibly worse conditions, especially due to mobility restrictions.

While the lessons from the efforts undertaken during the first wave of the pandemic continue to be helpful, the degree of human devastation caused by the second wave only highlights that strong fundamentals of a society such as impregnable public health and education systems, competent governance and administration, and basic social security for all, are irreplaceable.⁹

Against this background, and through proactive measures by various relevant stakeholders, it is possible to equip workers in this sector with the resilience needed to endure job instability, through a strong fiscal response and welfare provisioning ensuring support for the long term, in order to avoid such households being set back by many years.

CHAPTER 3

Cornerstones for worker well being

The COVID-19 lockdown brought to fore the extent of the vulnerabilities of this workforce, highlighting an urgent need to put their well-being at the center of our development plans. The breakpoints reveal complex, systemic issues that plague the journey of the informal workers in the construction industry. However, they also contain inherent opportunities for each stakeholder to grasp, towards securing a more inclusive tomorrow. The abrupt pause brought about by the lockdown provides us a moment to reconsider how to build back in a more sustainable manner, in a way that makes all workers more resilient to such shocks going forward.

It's time to ensure that those who constructed our cities and towns, also have a place in them.

To trigger holistic change, there is a need to spotlight the informally employed workforce and account for them and their needs in policymaking and implementation. It is essential to bridge the gap between those with offices in high rises and those on site, by formalizing their employment and facilitating financial inclusion of the most vulnerable. Eliminating distress, providing support to families and communities, and ensuring information symmetry are key factors that will drive informed decision making and holistic welfare for workers.





Enable financial, social and legal protection by securing requisite identity proof and worker registration

Why? / The rationale

Less than ~35 million workers are registered with State Welfare Boards under the BOCW. Workers either do not know of or may not have easy access to entitlements or redressal mechanisms, especially with regard to registration under BOCW, banking and Aadhaar. At the onset of the pandemic, 64% of the workforce was not able to avail Direct Benefit Transfers, finding themselves in dire conditions without requisite essentials like food¹.

Catalytic impact

Identity proofs and registrations can unlock 4X advantages, with workers rightfully benefiting from:

- **Formal financial systems for savings, credit, insurance and pensions**
- **Safe accommodation and drinking water, especially for migrants**
- **Fundamental on-site facilities like creches, first-aid, canteens and toilets**
- **Fixed hours of working, timely payment and due compensation for overtime**



Digitizing wages benefits informal construction workers in two ways:

First, it addresses the invisibility of labor. Unlike cash, a digitized wage transfer leaves a paper trail and makes this transaction formal. It recognizes the worker and the volume of their labor in a way that can never be denied. It links the worker inextricably to the employer, something that's been particularly difficult to do in the construction ecosystem whether its remote brick kilns in Bundelkhand or large construction sites in Mumbai.

Secondly, it ensures that the workers (and their families) are financially included. Transacting through a bank account generates the data that the financial services industry needs to be able develop products and services for this customer segment. This includes products for small savings, urban to rural remittances, life and health insurance and credit.

Amit Garg

Senior Manager | The Global Development Incubator



Create expectation alignment for workers through a channel informed by industry demand

Why? / The rationale

Employment is the reason for a total of ~10 million workers in India undertaking rural – urban migration. Of these less than 14% are skilled in terms of formal education². The low barriers of entry in the construction sector act as a pull factor for the unskilled workforce, who generally leave their homes without being aware of the kind of work, wages or living arrangements available at the work destination. Their journeys are fraught with challenges due to lack of seamless support or opportunities for upskilling.



It's very hard to even identify who employers are and who workers are, given this informality and setup. That also means that you have marginal actors competing with each other. Workers will often negotiate with petty contractors, while larger contractors or larger industry players have no idea what's going on."

Raghav Mehrotra

Researcher | Center for Migration and Labour Studies, Aajeevika Bureau

Catalytic impact

Information symmetry means a double win with empowered workers and a resilient industry:

- **Informed, aspiration-led migration for communities and individuals**
- **Prevention of exploitation through seamless redressal across locations**
- **Improved power dynamics by building the capacity of contractors to negotiate for worker rights**
- **Boost to industry and economy with workers upskilled to meet market demand**



Empower construction workers' families and communities by access to diverse livelihood opportunities to prevent distress led entry into the sector

Why? / The rationale

The choice of work undertaken by the vast demographic of informal workers arises out of compulsion resulting from financial distress. Entire families and communities rarely have opportunities that allow them to break away from the inter-generational cycle of poverty. There is a paucity of viable livelihood options at source, a fragmentation in services for building individual capacities at destination and limited access to market-led training across locations. This pushes children and youth to end up in the same occupation as their family/ elders.



To think about a longer-term vision, we need to ask informal workers – would you like your child to do that work? And that's a litmus test because if they say no, that means there is no future in it. They themselves are in it out of compulsion."

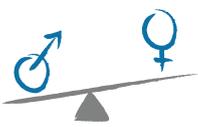
Mouleshri Vyas

Professor | Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Catalytic impact

Diversifying livelihood opportunities for families and communities will lead to 4 high-potential gains:

- **Demographic dividend by quality education and skilling of children and youth**
- **Self-reliance and improved earnings from entrepreneurship programs**
- **Uniformity in development with expanded base of urbanization in non-metros**
- **Enhanced source of income for women through self-help groups and cooperatives**



Ensure gender equity in opportunities, working conditions and wages through inclusive policies and practice

Why? / The rationale

Women are most affected by informality of employment, more likely to be engaged in low-paying unskilled work, that protracts inequity. The responsibilities of care and domestic work further adds to their burden. In India, women spend 84% of their working hours on unpaid activities, while men spend 80% of their working hours on paid work³. Not only are they likely to be paid 30-40% less than their male counterparts⁴, but they were also 1.8 times more vulnerable to job loss during the pandemic⁵.

Catalytic impact

An enabling environment boosts women's participation in the workforce, which can add 27% to GDP⁷:

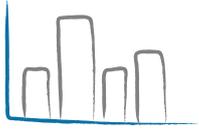
- **Wage parity and competency-based reward mechanisms**
- **Unbiased access to skilling and entrepreneurship opportunities**
- **Addressing practical needs including maternity benefits and day care facilities**
- **Safe workplaces free from all kinds of violence against women and children**



Previously families used to migrate for work. Nowadays, only few local women join the sector. Construction companies find it risky to have women staying on site. Among migrants, the number of women has reduced to a great extent. Companies are responsible to a great extent for this."

Santosh Parulekar

Director | Pipal Tree Foundation



Improve data collection and integration across workers' migration corridors and value chains to enable greater visibility and security

Why? / The rationale

The biggest hurdle in accounting for the needs of the informal workers in government and business policies has been the lack of a comprehensive database that captures their numbers by industry, migration patterns and demographic profiles. Even for available data, there are gaps with regard to timely updating and disaggregation. Only 50% of the workers registered under BOCW are eligible for benefits, since the rest do not have updated profiles⁶.

Catalytic impact

Mainstream visibility and integration of these 50 million workers will lead to inclusive growth:

- **Streamlined human resource practices through updated worker profiles**
- **Increased linkages to opportunities through sectoral database**
- **Effective delivery of social security benefits, leveraging comprehensive data**
- **Evidence-based policy and action through research and contextualized insights**
- **Safe workplaces free from all kinds of violence against women and children**

“One major lacuna that can be covered is mapping of workers. If you have more information about them, it can be made use of by others. That’s a stepping stone, bringing their conditions out in public. So, more documentation, more research on migration schemes and mapping of workers is necessary. That should be the first thing we do.”

Sudhir Katiyar

Secretary | Centre for Labour Research and Action

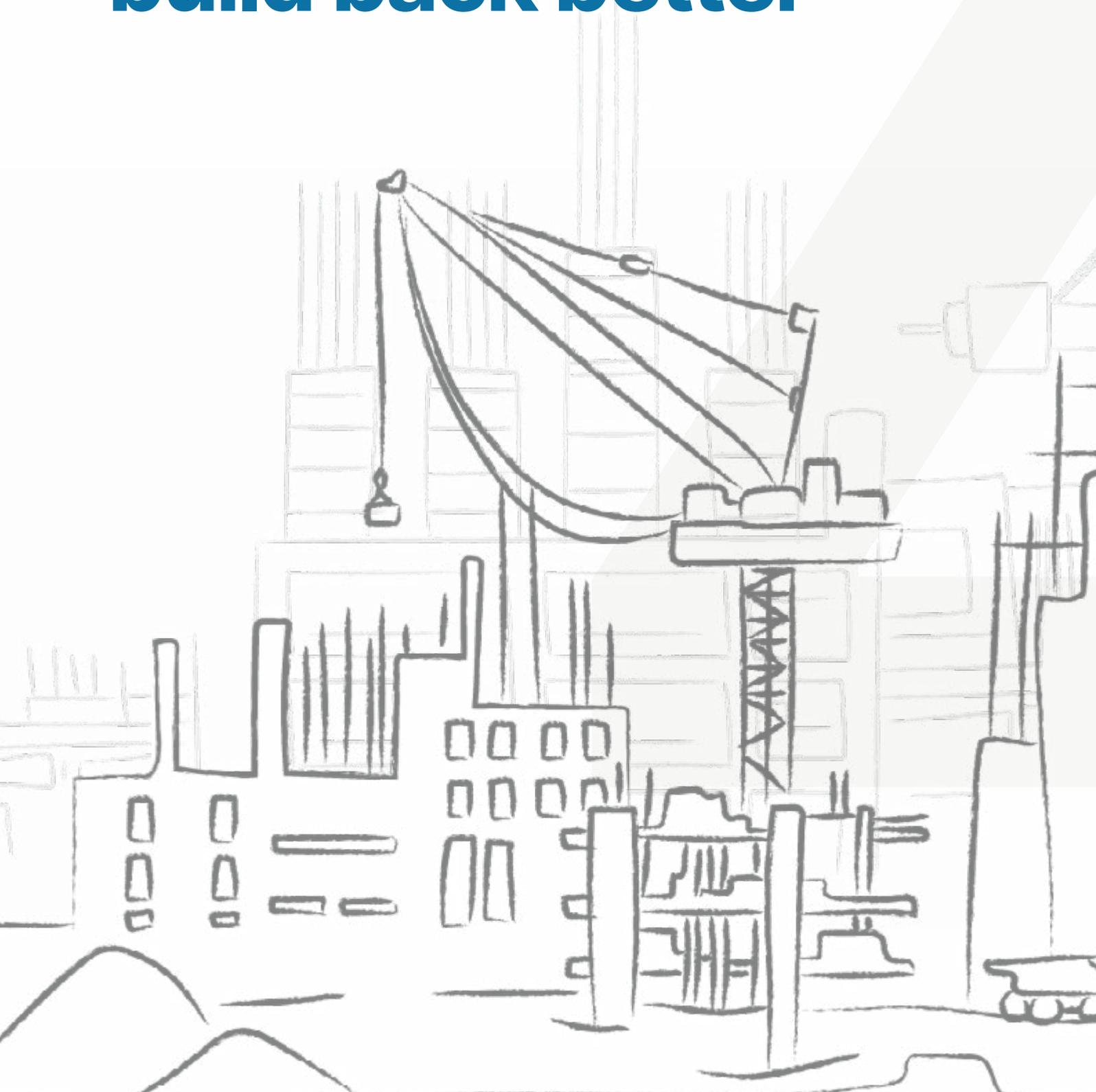
Despite the multiple setbacks in the form of demonetisation and introduction of new taxes and laws, India has seen a boom in construction activity due to fast-paced urbanisation and infrastructural development in the past few years.

This is only set to soar further, given estimates that 40% of India's population will be living in cities by 2030⁸. This translates to a requirement of 700-900 million square feet of urban space each year to meet the growing demands that accompany this trend.

We are at an inflection point where businesses have a chance to reset aspirations towards inclusive growth, taking along all their workers. Creating more lucrative opportunities and fostering a work environment of fairness and dignity will go a long way in improving productivity and the socio-economic well-being of a large section of society.

CHAPTER 4

Playing our part, to build back better



Business leaders must take the first step to reset aspirations towards inclusive socio-economic growth, as the government plays its part in effectively safeguarding workers' rights. Non-profits can provide impetus to this movement through their rich on-ground insights and networks. Philanthropists should plug the gaps by supporting novel solutions in this underserved sector.

“One of the ways in which philanthropy can support the government is by focusing on facilitating pan-India collaborations among non-profits across geographies, to enable data sharing and cross-learning through technology driven solutions. This can help migrant workers at source and destination. We need to focus efforts on building innovative solutions to address the basic needs of informal workers such as, decent accommodation and affordable food. For example, it would be great if philanthropy could support innovations around makeshift temporary housing at worksites.”

Alex Paul Menon

Labour Commissioner | Chhattisgarh



Industry

There is an urgent need for business leaders to extend welfare measures to all workers in their ecosystem through an inclusive approach.

Industry players not only have the ability and resources to create change, but also stand to gain from investing in the well-being of their workers. Human-centric outcomes that increase productivity result in a win for both parties. As the global Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) paradigm becomes increasingly relevant for Indian companies as well, there is an urgent need for business leaders to focus on the social inclusion aspect, by extending wellbeing measures to all workers in their ecosystem through an inclusive approach.

“The long-term idea is that welfare should not be seen as CSR, because the BOCW cess goes from the company. We have to pay 1-2% of the cost of construction to the labour department, then why not ensure that that cess is also getting utilized.”

Itika

Deputy Manager – CSR | Tata Realty

Improve on site responsibility: Undertake greater oversight of working conditions on site, including routine visits or reports to senior management, for maintaining workplace safety and an overall healthy environment

Promote digital formal modes of payments: Enable payments through bank accounts as a first step towards financial inclusion that eventually leads to economic security, access to formal credit and utilization of other products like insurance

Institutionalize measures to create gender equity: Enforce policies of equal pay for equal work, activate targeted behavior change communication regarding gender equity and champion the same within supply chains, and address practical needs of women to boost participation of women in the workforce

Introduce robust and stringent sub-contracting policies: Instill better checks and balances while hiring contractors to ensure prescribed standards of minimum wages (including timely payment cycles), fair treatment, health and safety measures are met

Support implementation of government measures: Mandate registration of all workers on the site, facilitated through awareness generation measures, enable access to entitlements and aid in decoding legal processes and requirements

Facilitate data collection: Create and share worker databases with peers in the same region/ geography to build a repository of profiles that can be used to facilitate registrations, match with future opportunities and build a legitimate work history that enables upward mobility

Create a level playing field: Leverage the voice and influence of industry associations / bodies to enable systemic improvements that incentivize the adoption of improved worker practices within the entire ecosystem to ensure that responsible businesses continue to thrive as successful ones

Government

The government should not only strengthen implementation and monitoring, but also simplify procedures to ensure wider access.

While both the central and state governments have undertaken progressive efforts from a policy perspective, practically, and from an implementation point of view, much remains to be done in order to see any tangible change in the overall situation of the informal workers in the country. The government should not only strengthen implementation and monitoring, but also simplify procedures to ensure wider access.

Undertake effective enforcement and monitoring: Ensure stringent implementation of existing and new laws and put in place robust mechanisms for monitoring to secure those entitled for registration and keep ineligible persons at bay

Improve inter-state co-ordination: Create an effective system for portability of social security measures and consistency in procedural requirements for existing regulations to ensure easy access to legal provisions; improve synergy between relevant departments even within the state

Leverage data and technology: Improve efficiency of data collection and disaggregation to account for workers' needs in informing policy and action, within the state and centrally; technology can be better leveraged to simplify other procedures related to implementation

Inform policy action through holistic evidence

- **Labour Codes:** Examine the practical effects of the new labor codes passed in 2020. An example of how the codes have not necessarily improved the worker's situation, is the increased size threshold of an establishment, which excludes the migrant workers employed on smaller worksites from availing OSH benefits.
- **Housing policies:** Incorporate the needs of migrant workers for affordable housing in urban planning and provide better access to government-led rental housing schemes in destination regions to ensure secure living arrangements.
- **Foster social integration:** Avoid taking unrequited punitive action with regard to housing, against the urban poor, and put in place mechanisms to address discrimination faced by them to enable better inclusion in society.
- **Gender mainstreaming:** Adopt a gender lens across budgets, schemes, programs, and policies, and run campaigns to the narrative, for enabling women in the workforce and making outcomes more inclusive.

“Construction workers have it slightly better since the government officially recognizes them through the State laws. They have very strict prescribed minimum wages and the welfare that the government provides on paper is the best that construction workers have. You don't find this for any other informal sector worker. A lot of the focus of the work is to ensure that what has been provided in the law actually reaches the workers themselves.”

Marina Joseph

Associate Director | YUVA



The Kerala Government's 'Apna Ghar' Project relieves pressure of inadequate housing on interstate migrant workers¹

The workforce in Kerala is characterized by a large and continually growing interstate migrant (ISM) worker population across several sectors. However, despite being significant contributors to the state's economy and development, they are deprived of the most basic facilities of safe and economical accommodation, clean drinking water and adequate sanitation, which in turn, raise concerns of the spread of disease.

In order to combat these deficiencies, the Kerala government's Department of Labour and Skills, through the Bhavanam Foundation Kerala, took to providing hygienic and safe hostel housing at affordable rates to ISM workers through the 'Apna Ghar' project¹ – proposed to be implemented in the areas lacking suitable accommodation for migrant workers. The scheme piloted in Palakkad, can accommodate 620 male ISM workers, in a ground plus three floor hostel complex, that provides shared residential rooms with bunk beds, indoor bathrooms, toilets, kitchens, mess areas, areas to wash and dry clothes, recreational facilities., It is also equipped with systems for firefighting, rain water harvesting, diesel generator, 24 hours security and CCTV. The hope with this project is to make ISM workers feel more at home in these destination areas.

Non-Profits

Non-profits must leverage the current momentum to build stronger collaborative movements to create sustainable impact at scale.

There are many examples in India where civil society organizations have played a key role in spotlighting the plight of informal and migrant construction workers. They stepped up during the most critical hour to serve communities by garnering support from all directions. It is imperative that they leverage the current momentum to build stronger collaborative movements to create sustainable impact at scale.

Strengthen collaboration: Actively pursue partnerships with like-minded organizations through resource, data and solution sharing for nationwide scale and to deepen step-change impact; these alliances can also be useful to create a seamless channel of support availability across source and destination

Undertake gender-transformative programming: Design and implement gender-transformative programs that go beyond societal norms and ensure equity for women workers in a way that changes the structural barriers to their development; set benchmarks for improving outcomes for women and girls

Expand base in source areas: Work with communities, including women and youth in source areas to provide easier access to alternative and additional livelihood opportunities

“CSOs have great inroads into the communities they work with, which they leveraged on effectively to support vulnerable workers in the aftermath of Covid. At the same time, the state at all levels have resources and large systems at their disposal that can be plugged into to ensure facilitation of entitlements. Synergizing the strengths of all critical stakeholders will be key to ensuring that last mile access is enabled for the most vulnerable workers.”

Divya Varma

Programme Manager, Policy and Partnerships | Aajeevika Bureau



Collective action focused on bettering the lives of informal workers in construction, is the need of the hour

While the vulnerable state of the informal workers in the country, especially those in the construction sector, has been a cause of concern for a long time, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has emerged promising collective action-oriented efforts. These multi-stakeholder efforts bring together civil society, the private sector and philanthropists in a unified strategy aimed at visibilizing and solutioning for the grossly unequal treatment meted out to these workers so far. Two such efforts are highlighted here.

Social Compact is a multi-stakeholder initiative aspiring for greater dignity and equity of industry engaged informal workers and their families in India and mainstream the aspiration that responsible business = successful business. The most critical needs and vulnerabilities of the workers have been translated into six human centric outcomes spanning wages, health, safety, gender, access to entitlements and future of work. To achieve these, Dasra, alongwith core NGO partners Aajeevika Bureau and Center for Social Justice work along with corporates to take them on a journey of remedial action comprising of three steps of reflection, integration of worker well being standards into business as usual and thereafter monitoring key metrics via a dashboard.

Migrants Resilience Collaborative (MRC), an initiative of Jan Sahas, a community centric non-profit organization, is a grassroots-led collaborative focused on ensuring safety, security, and mobility for vulnerable migrant families across India. This is being done through delivering social security entitlements, providing access to responsible recruitment, strengthening tracking, worker protections, welfare and redressal ³

Philanthropy

Philanthropic and CSR funds need to be directed towards grassroots initiatives and innovative solutions that address systemic breakpoints.

Philanthropy has played a role in enabling scale for proven models across sectors. At this critical juncture, funders and CSR units need to provide patient capital and expand focus to include grassroots initiatives and innovative solutions that address systemic breakpoints.

Boost catalytic areas: Divert CSR funds towards catalytic areas including skilling and affordable housing to create transformational change for communities in source areas and workers at destination

Align with government priorities: Invest strategically in areas that match government and sectoral priorities to complement ongoing efforts

Promote data collection: Fund data collection and research for policy advocacy to promote evidence generation and analysis which can strengthen the sector

Foster innovative experimentation: Provide long-term risk capital to nurture innovative experiments that attempt at resolving complex systemic issues and holistically transforming the lives of vulnerable workers

“So, in the long run, our investment should be to ensure that nobody migrates out of a source area of work without a plan to work in construction industry. Working in construction industry should be an informed choice when you are in a financial crisis, but you should also have access to formal financial services including credit and banking. Most importantly, migrant children should be getting out of this poverty so their education can be a long-term investment. At the same time, you can also work in building the skills of people. If you have better skills, your negotiation is also better.”

Benoy Peter

Executive Director | Center for Migration and Inclusive Development

A combined effort from all these stakeholders in the construction sector, holds the potential to achieve triple wins: enhance lives and provide dignity to a major vulnerable demographic group, conduct responsible business and boost the economy.



This will also contribute towards 5 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Interventions by Non-profit Organizations

A landscaping of the sector revealed that credible non-profit organizations are serving the needs of informal workers in the construction sector. These organizations vary in size, scale, and experience, but are all trying to make a difference in the lives of this vulnerable demographic. An analysis of their programs shows that there are 11 primary types of interventions that exemplify distinct practice, operating on ground.

In this section, we provide a glimpse of the action landscape and spotlight some key non-profits working in this space.

	INTERVENTION TYPE	ORGANISATIONS
1	Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues	Nirmana, Sampark, Prayas, Kotda Adivasi Sansthan, Mumbai Mobile Creches, Mobile Creches, Tara Mobile Creches
2	Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements	Jan Sahas, Centre for Social Justice, Aajeevika Bureau, Disha, India Migration Now
3	Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services	Aajeevika Bureau, Jan Sahas, Sampark
4	Create a database and/or tracking mechanism for workers and their families	Jan Sahas, Disha Foundation
5	Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and/ or entrepreneurship development	Aajeevika Bureau, Pipal Tree Foundation Kalahandi Organization for Agriculture and Rural Marketing Initiative (KARMI), Saath
6	Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices	Aajeevika Bureau, Jan Sahas, Centre for Social Justice, Disha Foundation
7	Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children	Mumbai Mobile Creches, Mobile Creches, Tara Mobile Creches
8	Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women	Mahila Housing Trust, Aajeevika Bureau
9	Run day care centers for children of construction workers	Mumbai Mobile Creches, Mobile Creches, Tara Mobile Creches, Diya Ghar, Sampark
10	Undertake policy advocacy and/ or research	Aajeevika Bureau, Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action, India Migration Now, Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development
11	Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation	Disha Foundation, Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development

The mapping undertaken in this table is indicative, and not exhaustive. To see a more detailed listing of the landscape of actors – please visit [here](#)

Aajeevika Bureau

<https://www.aajeevika.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2004 | **Head Office:** Udaipur, Rajasthan | **Coverage:** Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra | **Annual Budget:** INR 8.34 crore

Aajeevika Bureau's vision is to achieve an equitable and dignified world of work for communities dependent on labour migration. It works with informally employed workers (including those in the construction and manufacturing sectors, domestic workers, headloaders, hotel workers) at the source and destination and helps them access better services across their interaction with government, industry, contractors and their own community.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Aajeevika's programs are focused on providing legal aid, skill and employability training and access to social security. It also undertakes research and advocacy on issues of migration and labor across its areas of operation and beyond.

- Offering legal aid and improving the legal literacy for construction workers
- Empowering women via creches to help with childcare, health and nutritional needs and by bringing them together to articulate their needs and claim entitlements from local administration
- Building technical and life skills for rural youth who are at the cusp of the labor market, engaged in low waged and hazardous work
- Creating financial inclusion through affordable credit, savings, insurance, old-age pensions, remittances and payments and a significant financial literacy program
- Building knowledge and policy perspectives on informal work and labor migration via their knowledge hub, the Centre for Migration and Labour Solutions (CMLS)
- Supporting workers' collectives to engage in collective bargaining and representation for labour and citizen rights
- Driving change by facilitating improvement in business practices to ensure greater dignity and equity of informal workers, through Social Compact

IMPACT

- Since the time Aajeevika has been operational, about **INR 14 crores have been recovered in lost wages**, mostly from the construction sector
- **Over 13,000 women have been organized** across rural south Rajasthan which has helped thousands of families in being linked to basic social protection
- Shram Sarathi's (Aajeevika's partner org) work has resulted in the **direct inclusion of nearly 50,000 previously unbanked migrant families** having helped them gain a sense of dignity and better future

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and/ or tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
- ✓ **Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices**
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and/ or research**
- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- **Rajiv Khandelwal** is the Co-Founder and Director of Aajeevika Bureau where he leads programs and administration. He holds a degree in Management from Institute of Rural Management Anand and was elected as an Ashoka Fellow in 2005. He went onto receiving the Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Schwab Foundation in 2010.

Credibility

- 15+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Key partner to ILO and Government of India

Basic Healthcare Service (BHS)

<https://bhs.org.in/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2012 | **Head Office:** Udaipur | **Coverage:** Rajasthan, Gujarat | **Annual Budget:** INR 2.67 crore

Basic HealthCare Services (BHS) is a leading organization focusing on healthcare needs of vulnerable tribal and migration prone communities. It is driven with the vision to enable marginalized and vulnerable communities lead a healthy life with dignity through a responsive and effective healthcare ecosystem, rooted in the community.

PROGRAM FOCUS

BHS offers a continuum of preventive, promotive, and curative care while using a combination of innovations in human resources and technology. They provide low cost quality healthcare to remote and underserved populations with a special focus on migration prone tribal communities.

- Setting up nurse-led (Amrit clinics) facilities to provide low cost quality healthcare
- Public-private-partnership with the Government of Rajasthan to run a primary healthcare center
- Day care centers (Phulawaris) for young children at source and destination (at construction sites) to provide nurturing environment and nutritious food
- Public-private-partnership with Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation for a program on tuberculosis control amongst migrant populations
- Linking migrant workers with urban services through partnerships with the municipal ICDS and health systems for immunization of children, care of pregnant women and provision of dry food for children
- Thought leadership through research and publications on primary healthcare, migration and the interlinkages

IMPACT

- **90,000 people reached** through 6 Amrit clinics, 90% tribals and 56% migrant households
- In a remote community the **rate of home births has been reduced from 80% to 20%**. The proportion of severely underweight children among those enrolled has reduced from 29% to 6%
- Communities are estimated to save INR 3.5 Crore annually on account of inexpensive healthcare

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
 - Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
 - Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
 - Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
- ✓ **Run day care centres for children of construction workers**
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Dr Pavitra Mohan** is the co-founder and director at Basic HealthCare Services. Previously, he worked at UNICEF's India Country Office for ten years, leading its child health programs across India. Pavitra is a Fellow with the prestigious National Neonatology Forum and is also the recipient of the Ashoka Fellowship for social entrepreneurship.

Credibility

- Research partnership with IIM-Udaipur
- BHS case study published as innovative model for primary healthcare in rural India by Harvard Business Publishing
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Healthcare Leadership award at the World Rural Health Conference in 2018

Centre for Labour Research and Action (CLRA)

<http://clra.in/>

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2006 | **Head Office:** Udaipur | **Coverage:** Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh | **Annual Budget:** INR 2.61 crore

CLRA is a civil society organization promoting workers' rights in India's vast informal sector economy. Brick kilns and construction are its primary focus areas. Its vision is to build a society free from discrimination; and improve the lives of the workers in this sector, with a focus on seasonal migrants.

PROGRAM FOCUS

CLRA's primary agenda and mission is to support workers to organize so they can negotiate for their rights collectively. Research is a key component of CLRA's agenda, and they have undertaken mapping exercises that document socio-economic profiles of workers, migration patterns, modes of recruitment, working and living conditions, and wage rate.

- Facilitating mobilization of workers, enabling them to demand better wages and working conditions, and undertake policy advocacy with the state for improved access to entitlements
- Facilitates issuing of identity cards for workers and their families to enable access to schooling for children, and ration through the public distribution system
- Engages in ongoing efforts to prevent eviction and ensure security of tenure for seasonal migrant workers living in temporary, informal settlements across Gujarat

IMPACT

- **Active in brick kilns across Gujarat and Rajasthan that employ 100,000 workers** from Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and UP
- Focused on the construction industry in Ahmedabad and Surat employing 150,000 workers comprising mostly seasonal tribal migrants from surrounding districts.



Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
- Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
- Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
- Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
- Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- CLRA is run by its Secretary, **Sudhir Katiyar**, a seasoned professional in the development sector, whose journey in the sector has been focused on facilitating organisation of informal workers.

Credibility

- 14+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA

Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (CMID)

<http://cmid.org.in/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2016 | **Head Office:** Kerala | **Coverage:** India |
Annual Budget: INR 1.86 crore

One of the very few NGOs in India with a focus on migrant workers, CMID is an independent non-profit devoted to migration and inclusive development, advocating for and promoting the social inclusion of migrants in India. With a vision of a world without borders, CMID identifies migration as a solution where a person is able to leverage a world of opportunities and their aspirations to excel in life are not restrained by borders.

PROGRAM FOCUS

CMID's work ranges from policy to grassroots interventions. The organization engages with key stakeholders at the national level on policy and incubates innovative solutions for resolving challenges of migrant workers collaborating with a range of partners.

- Designs, pilots, and implements programs for mainstreaming as well as improving the quality of life of migrants and other vulnerable populations in health, education, and other critical areas
- Provides technical support to governments and relevant institutions in the formulation, refinement, and implementation, of strategies for inclusive and sustainable policies/ programs
- Commissions and undertake research and training in relevant social issues independently or in association with relevant development actors; identifies, reviews, documents and disseminates locally and globally
- Empowers the migrant workers to become market ready, enjoy jobs with social security, realize value for money for their products and services and become economically resilient
- Fosters migrant-friendly local governance by advocacy with local self-government institutions; enhances social protection and affordable housing of migrant workers and their families

IMPACT

- Prepared with International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Aajeevika Bureau, **a roadmap for developing a policy framework for the inclusion of internal migrants in India in the context of the lockdown**
- **CMID's Bandhu Clinic**, is India's first active mobile COVID screening unit for migrant workers Implemented in Ernakulam district of Kerala state - **Bandhu Clinic covers 40000+ migrant workers every month**, at their residences or workplaces providing free and quality healthcare services including COVID testing and vaccination

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
- ✓ **Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices**
- ✓ **Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children**
- Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
- Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- CMID's Chairperson **Dr. Nivedita Haran I.A.S (Retired)** was the former additional Chief Secretary of the Government of Kerala. She has also been the Principal Secretary, Department of Labour of Kerala state. **Benoy Peter**, a co-founder of CMID currently serves as the Executive Director. He is an expert on internal migration in India, with over two decades of progressive experience particularly in the area of Migration and Social Inclusion. Benoy Peter has a Ph.D. in Population Studies (Migration) from the International Institute for Population Sciences and a Master Degree in Social Work.

Credibility

- Requisite 12A, 80G, FCRA and MCA registered for CSR implementation
- Key Partners to ILO, Aajeevika Bureau, Gram Vikas, National Health Mission, Government of Kerala, India Migration Now and Kochi Corporation, Kerala

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1993 | **Head Office:** Gujarat | **Coverage:** Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand | **Annual Budget:** ~INR 4 crore

Centre for Social Justice is a socio-legal NGO whose vision is to strengthen human rights culture and to secure social justice, equity and equality, and fraternity. It is unique organization in India that uses the judicial system to fight for the rights of marginalized people, to ensure access to justice and further create leaders amongst them for empowering their people and harboring peace and harmony.

PROGRAM FOCUS

CSJ operates through law centers across the different states that they are present in, and the centers consist of lawyers, paralegals, and researchers, to create an enabling policy and a legislative environment that respects, promotes and protects human rights of vulnerable communities.

- Providing legal aid, helping document complaints, and leading fact-findings, filing cases, contacting relevant authorities, pushing entitlement claims
- Spreading legal awareness among workers and beneficiaries by undertaking public advocacy campaigns
- Training young lawyers and paralegals to serve the needs of the most vulnerable and understand the voices of the marginalized communities
- Identifying violations of civil liberties and to serve as a watchdog for human rights abuses
- Driving change by facilitating improvement in business practices to ensure greater dignity and equity of informal workers, through Social Compact
- Core member of [India Justice Report](#) that annually ranks individual Indian states in relation to their capacity to deliver justice on four pillars (Police, Prison, Judiciary and Legal Aid)

IMPACT

- **Facilitated travel of ~15,000 laborers** and currently assisting **wage recovery for 450 migrant workers** impacted due to the COVID 19 induced lockdown since Mar '20
- Responds to an **average of 3000 cases** annually for ensuring access to justice on multiple issues, for the most marginalized workers

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
 - Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
- ✓ **Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices**
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
 - Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Gagan Sethi** serves as the Vice Chairperson for CSJ. He has more than 30 years of experience in organizational development, capacity building and advocacy. Gagan was a member of a drafting committee of the Nyaya Panchayat Act as well as has authored books on legal aid, gender, and non-profit governance.

Credibility

- 27+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- 'Gold' certificate by Guidestar India for transparency.
- Certificate of Accreditation by Credibility Alliance
- Two of CSJ's lawyers received Kannabiran Peace Prize

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2002 | **Head Office:** Nasik | **Coverage:** Nasik, Nagpur, Shirdi, New Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon, North and South Goa | **Annual Budget:** INR 4.5 crore

Disha's vision is to create a just and equal society where every person has equal opportunities for holistic development. Disha's core mission is to provide a conducive environment to marginalized communities for their sustainable development by improving their quality of life and well-being, and to provide them with opportunities to become more productive assets of society – through interventions linked to health, livelihood, food security, better living conditions and access to public services.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Disha Foundation (Disha) supports marginalized social groups, mainly migrant and unorganized sector workers of tribal and other social groups through direct intervention, research, and policy dialogue with regional and national governments.

- Runs migration Information Resource Centers for facilitating positive migration with comprehensive approach via skill training, entrepreneurship development and job placements and access to health services and social security measures
- Run a legal aid and grievance handling cell jointly with the Labour Department and National Legal Services Authority of India to address employment, wages, and other related grievances of migrant workers
- Actively engage local, state, and national government authorities towards bringing policy reforms and changes to ensure inclusive development among marginal communities
- Building a 'digital eco-system' for migrant workers – Shramgaurav app, integrated helpline, and physical migration support centers

IMPACT

- **Reached over 6 lakh migrant workers till 2020** through migration support programs in Maharashtra, Goa and Delhi NCR
- **Over the last 7 years, conducted over 3,000 trainings for over 10,000 workers** in various trades including construction
- 21120 / 21135 registered cases successfully resolved for non-payment of wages and fraud, resulting in **compensation recovery worth INR 1.5 crore**
- 5,60,000 Workers screened for Tuberculosis & other health problems & 20,000+ workers treated
- 4,35,000 Migrants made aware on social security; 15000+ Workers linked to social security schemes

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- ✓ **Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children**
 - Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- Disha is led by its Founder Director, **Dr. Anjali Borhade**, social and public health professional, advisor to the WHO headquarter and SEARO office for strategy and action plan for migrant and refugee health.

Credibility

- 18+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- National Centre of Excellence in migration, health and development by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India
- Technical support agency for Goa Government's Migration cell

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2016 | **Head Office:** Bengaluru |
Coverage: Bengaluru | **Annual Budget for FY 2021-22:** ~INR 2.5 crore

Diya Ghar focuses on the migrant by working to give this community a leg up through the power of education. Their mission is to set up pre-schools and day-care centers for children of migrant workers (specifically those living in blue tent settlements) in the city of Bengaluru. They are in the process of expanding to other cities in India.

PROGRAM FOCUS

They provide holistic care for preschool age children. For this, they have set up community centers and their intervention includes:

- Run preschool classes for Early Childhood Education in their Community Centers – teaching children basic Math, English and Kannada; also improve children's fine and gross motors skills through various activities
- Provide nutritional supplements (milk, eggs, fruit, protein bars, porridge mix) for the children in the preschool program, and all their siblings
- Support families with childcare by providing clothes, slippers, blankets, and hygiene kits for children
- Facilitate healthcare by conducting quarterly health camps and support children who need treatment
- Empower parents through a curriculum of weekly videos, teaching parenting skills and activities

IMPACT

- **Until March 2020, they had impacted 400 children and 50 children enrolled in Primary schools**
- Through Covid Relief in Bangalore (between end of March and end of May 2020), the organization **distributed 76,500 dry ration kits impacting 3.25 lakh people**
- Currently, the organization **serves 600 preschool children and 700 siblings in 12 Communities**

Interventions

- Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues
- Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
- Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services
- Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
- Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
- ✓ **Run day care centres for children of construction workers**
- Undertake policy advocacy and / or research
- Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Saraswathi** is a trained Montessori teacher and Counsellor, and she is driven by a vision to make a difference in education underprivileged children. Shyamal wanted to ease the challenge migrant workers faced in providing education for their children and hence started Diya Ghar along with Saraswathi, his wife.

Credibility

- Requisite 12A and 80G
- GuideStarIndia Transparency Key award

India Migration Now (IMN)

<https://indiamigrationnow.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2018 | **Head Office:** Mumbai, Delhi | **Coverage:** All Over India | **Annual Budget:** INR 75 lakhs

India Migration Now (IMN), a venture of the Southeast Migration Foundation, has a niche expertise in migration research and policy along with its extensive network of government, private sector, non-profit, grassroots, academic and media partners.

PROGRAM FOCUS

India Migration Now conducts primary and secondary research, gathers evidence and develops insights and solutions for low-income migrant households in India for the purpose of furthering migration policy in India. It also runs the Chalo Network - a financial services arm dedicated to low-income migrant communities. IMN provides services and interventions:

- Undertaking data, research and policy are primary areas of work, wherein the organization bridges the data and research gaps around migration to, from and within India
- Running the migration media project is a unique area of focus where the organization uses films and podcasts to raise awareness as well as foster debates around the topic of migration
- Focusing on interventions and policies is a third area of focus where projects work on maximizing the benefits of migration; the organization develops on the ground, sustainable and real-time projects and services for migrants and their households

IMPACT

- IMN facilitated assistance for migrants and their families all over the country by bringing together organizations, civil society actors, and journalists from all states into one WhatsApp group called Migration Matters; **over 1,00,000 migrants were provided with assistance through the group's interactions and co-ordinations**
- IMN has published over 30 media articles in national and international media outlets, **2 international journal articles, close to 10 book chapters and has a readership of over 1,00,000**
- In the last one year, through the financial services arm - Chalo Network - IMN **provided financial and documentation services to over 2000 customers** in Madhya Pradesh and Delhi NCR

Interventions

- Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
- Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
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- Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
- Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- **Varun Aggarwal** is the founder and lead of IMN. He was introduced to issues and research in migration at the European Institute for Asian Studies in Brussels. He has worked and contributed to Dvara and the ILO with this research.

Credibility

- Requisite 12A, 80G (in process) and FCRA
- Key Partners - ILO, Dvara Trust, IFMR LEAD, TATA Trusts Government's Migration cell

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2000 | **Head Office:** New Delhi
| **Coverage:** Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Haryana and Maharashtra | **Annual Budget:** INR 5820 Lakh

Jan Sahas aims to end violence against women and children and to ensure safe migration and dignity of India's most marginalized groups. It currently operates in 80 districts across 11 states of India. By 2025, under its migration theme, Jan Sahas aims to serve 10 million migrant workers and their families by scaling their model to 20 additional districts, in collaboration with ~40 civil society organizations.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Over the last 20 years, Jan Sahas has worked closely with more than two million migrants to ensure access to social protection and enable safe migration. This includes:

- Enabling a safety net for vulnerable families and rehabilitating workers, they facilitate access to entitlements, land rights, and livelihood support.
- At a policy level, the organization partners, shares policy recommendations, and builds capacity of various state and central government agencies
- It also partners with private sector stakeholders to improve supports available to their workers
- They have a migrant tracking system to respond to migrant worker issues and providing legal aid as well as emergency support, including through a 24*7 helpline and case management system
- They have initiated the Migrants' Resilience Collaborative (MRC), a multi-stakeholder collaborative to scale this work across 100 districts and sustainably impact 10 million vulnerable migrant workers and their families.

IMPACT

- **>15 million migrant workers have been registered**, and have received entitlement or worker protection supports.
- Facilitated delivery of **1 million entitlements to 900 K migrants**

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
 - Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
- ✓ **Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices**
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
 - Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- **Ashif Shaikh** is the Co-Founder and CEO of Jan Sahas and has been working in the social sector for the past 20 years gaining national and international acclaim for his work. He has previously been a member of various committees of NITI Aayog, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and other ministries and departments of central and state governments. He was also elected as an Ashoka fellow in 2016.

Credibility

- 20+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Key partners to Tata Trusts and Azim Premji Philanthropic
- Shortlisted for Co-Impact design grant
- Ashif Shaikh was awarded Social Innovator of the year 2020 by the World Economic Forum

Kalahandi Organization For Agriculture And Rural Marketing Initiative (KARMI)



<https://www.karmiodisha.org/>

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1977 | **Head Office:** Kalahandi | **Coverage:** Odisha | **Annual Budget:** INR 1.39 crore

KARMI is an organization that caters to the tribal and rural development in Odisha, with a special focus on livelihood and socio-economic improvement of rural poor with support of the government, national and international agencies. The organization focuses on education for all round development, building capacity for the community, health management, and agricultural development to enhance livelihoods. KARMI focuses on sustainable livelihoods, awareness on safe migration, counselling, registration, and record-keeping through its Migration Resource Centre. It also coordinates with organizations at destination to ensure legal protection and entitlements are delivered.

PROGRAM FOCUS

KARMI's mission is to ensure sustainable societal development by capacitating the marginalized groups and the institutions surrounding them by organizing trainings, exposure workshops, seminars, and research. The organization focuses on the construction industry intentionally because a large number of migrants from here work in the sector. Some of their interventions affecting construction workers lives are:

- Organizing training and awareness programs on labor laws among migrant families at source areas with Labour Department, Government Officials, and Media to address issues related to migration and the Construction Welfare Board
- Helping register the workers at the source itself so that ID related issues do not arise at destination
- Supporting linkages to financial and legal services
- Strengthening the community through leadership building and developing managerial skills so workers have the agency to settle their own disputes
- Running skill development training camps for the migrant youth

IMPACT

- **112000 people in 341 villages** across 2 Kalahandi and Nuapada districts have been helped by KARMI
- 62% workers are from the **most vulnerable sections, namely the the SC and ST groups** and women workers

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
 - Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
 - Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
 - Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
 - Undertake policy advocacy and / or research
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Abhimanyu Rana** leads KARMI and has been with the organization since inception. Abhimanyu has over 27 years of experience in progressive programme coordination of social sector organizations.

Credibility

- 23+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Supported by TATA Trusts and American India Foundation

Kotra Adivasi Sansthan (KAS)

<https://kaskotra.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1998 | **Head Office:** Udaipur | **Coverage:** Rajasthan | **Annual Budget:** ~INR 1 crore

KAS addresses the concerns of the tribal communities in Udaipur and Sirohi, often engaged in frequent seasonal or circular migration for employment in construction and agriculture work, at adjoining districts and states. Its on-ground strategy operationalizes through people's institutions at the village level and through a strong focus on village level development. The organization provides support to tribal migrant and youth as well as enables women's empowerment.

PROGRAM FOCUS

KAS focuses on programs and activities for the issues of the tribal community. The organization supports tribal communities by helping them to assert their rights, develop resources and get access to education and other government programs. Their key interventions include:

- Developing opportunities at source by improving livelihood opportunities for migration dependent households through a focus on natural resource management
- Nurturing community leadership among migrant women and youth as well as organizing them to negotiate better for their rights
- Reforming holistically access and awareness on education among tribal communities to stop early drop-outs among youth and support the next generation
- Providing labourers with help and support for awareness generation, skilling, registrations, legal aid and tertiary services

IMPACT

- The organization has **set up a model Pro-Labor City in Sumerpur town, Pali district, Rajasthan, sensitive to migrant and unorganized workers**, as part of its program to make small towns migrant-friendly
- Focusing on migrant workers' **livelihoods at source – 3778 tribal families in Udaipur district** have been supported with accessing their rights to live in the forest for their livelihood
- **2250 workers engaged in stone quarrying work, vulnerable to silicosis**, have been supported with social security measures available to them and an aid of INR 14 crores has been unlocked with the support of authorities

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
 - Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- ✓ **Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children**
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
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 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- The organization's founding members were **tribal women and men who believed that to solve problems of the tribal region**, the involvement of the community was necessary. Even today, the president of the organization is **Napi Bai – who is a woman tribal leader from the region**. The organization lays emphasis on building community leadership as way of sustaining the impact and has a strong gender focus.

Credibility

- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- The organization has partnered with Goonj, UNDP, CRY and Aajeevika Bureau

Mahila Housing Sewa Trust (MHT)

<https://www.karmiodisha.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1994 | **Head Office:** Ahmedabad | **Coverage:** Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, New Delhi, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh among other states, also collaborates with partners in Bangladesh and Nepal | **Annual Budget:** INR 11.85 crore

MHT was founded, in 1994, to facilitate better housing and infrastructure for its members. Today, it is a leading advocacy organization with expertise in policy development, grassroots organizing, community development and technical know-how in housing, basic infrastructure, climate change, governance, land tenure, construction management and oversight of infrastructure projects.

PROGRAM FOCUS

MHT's mission is to organize and empower women in poor communities to improve their habitat. It believes that a quality habitat is a home with all basic services such as clean water, toilets, electricity, and adequate light and ventilation, and is a key financial asset supporting livelihoods, and making the poor more resilient to heat stress, disease, and other hazards of climate change.

- Trains poor women in construction skills like basic masonry, electrification, toilet unit construction, hand pump repairing, basic plumbing and 12 construction related trades
- Undertakes advocacy efforts towards ensuring access to financial products and services by vulnerable groups, including housing finance for the informal sector
- Supports linkage of the poor to subsidized housing schemes through provision of information, assistance in the application process as also mobilizing earnest money, as well as advocating with government at all levels for instituting pro-poor housing policies
- Builds the capacities of poor women to participate in city planning and governance processes to ensure better habitats, including access to water, sanitation, energy, housing
- Develops and implements a poor women led model of climate change resilience, for urban informal settlements and cities

IMPACT

- Through its **Karmika School of Construction Workers, it has been providing training and skill development to over 22,000 workers** cross states like Gujarat, Delhi, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Bihar
- So far, its **support has enabled 1,56,767 poor families** across 19 Indian cities to **construct toilets in their homes**
- **Ensured property titles for over 26,000 households** across India

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
 - Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and/or entrepreneurship development**
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and/or research**
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- MHT is headed by its Director, **Bijal Brahmbhatt**, a civil engineer by training. She is also a recognized expert in habitat improvement through women's empowerment, community development and housing finance.

Credibility

- 26+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Received the 2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Award for Women's Action Towards Climate Resilience for Urban Poor in South Asia

Mobile Creches (MC)

<https://www.mobilecreches.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1998 | **Head Office:** Udaipur | **Coverage:** Rajasthan | **Annual Budget:** ~INR 1 crore

Mobile Creches (MC) is a pioneering organization that focuses on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) through providing and supporting services, enhancing capacities, and undertaking advocacy to influence multiple stakeholders at National, State and Local levels.

PROGRAM FOCUS

The work of Mobile Creches spans from grassroot level interventions to policy advocacy at the national level. Their solution is three-pronged comprising of running programs on ground, nudging advocacy on this and functioning as training centre to enhance capacities of field staff and other organizations.

- Run field programs with interventions focused on health, nutrition, early learning, and care – for birth to 12-year-old children at both construction sites and slum settlements in the National Capital Region
- Undertake advocacy through dialogue with a range of decision and opinion makers and alliance building – MC's advocacy is to ensure policy change, effective legislations, and improved services with a focus on early childhood care and development and maternity benefits
- Provide specialized training to families, communities, individuals, organizations for responsive caregiving, to enable inculcation of sensitivity, the right attitude, adequate knowledge, and appropriate skills ensuring the best interests of children

IMPACT

- **867,000 children reached** through 1000 day care centres run in collaboration with 250 developers
- **6500 women have been trained** as childcare workers
- MC led from the front in providing inputs to the **formulation of the National ECCE Policy, 2013** to ensure a holistic and comprehensive approach and content

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
- Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
- ✓ **Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices**
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- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
- Run day care centres for children of construction workers
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- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- **Sumitra Mishra** is the Executive Director at MC. She comes with over twenty years of work experience in the development sector in India. Sumitra has steered organizations through the process of program delivery and partnerships, CSR development, strategic communications, and governance processes

Credibility

- 50+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Platinum Certificate, Guide Star India, 2018

Mumbai Mobile Creches (MMC)

<http://mumbaimobilecreches.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1972 | **Head Office:** Mumbai | **Coverage:** Mumbai Metropolitan Region | **Annual Budget:** INR 5.35 crore

MMC is a pioneering organization in the field of child rights, with over four decades of experience. Their vision is for all children to have a nurturing and happy childhood. Along with a focus on delivering services in communities, the organization also develops capacities to build a cadre of professionals in the field.

PROGRAM FOCUS

The organization's mission is to promote 'child-friendly sites', where every child living on a construction site is safe, healthy and educated, and able to enjoy their childhood. Their operating model is highly responsive to addressing children's real needs. They set up creches in collaboration with the developers in a manner that is replicable and mobile, so everything can be easily packed up and transferred to a new site once the construction is completed. MMC runs training programs for women from vulnerable communities. They have forums for community outreach.

- Set up cost-effective day-care centers for children living on construction sites, in collaboration with developers
- Run programs focusing on children's education, nutrition, health, and hygiene
- Build capacity of women from vulnerable communities as teachers in child development and education, with a formally recognized pedagogy
- Community outreach on sites to raise awareness on topics such as prevention of violence, education, health, along with locally relevant issues
- Facilitate access of construction workers to banking and other financial services

IMPACT

- **150,000 children reached** in over 270 construction sites over 4,000 children reached every year
- More than **1000 women and men trained** through teacher training programme, 30 of the women are from the construction community

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
 - Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
- ✓ **Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families**
 - Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- ✓ **Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children**
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
- ✓ **Run day care centres for children of construction workers**
 - Undertake policy advocacy and / or research
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Vaibhavi Amle** holds a Master's in Development Sector from S. P. Jain Institute of Management, Mumbai and has over 15 years of experience in CSR, social sector, and media.

Credibility

- 48+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Part of the Credibility Alliance

Pipal Tree Foundation

<http://www.pipaltreefoundation.com/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 2011 | **Head Office:** Mumbai | **Coverage:** Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Telangana, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra | **Annual Budget:** INR 3.5 crore

Pipal Tree Foundation aspires to empower 1,00,000 underprivileged youth and women across India in the next 5 years. Their objective is to empower the most vulnerable with employability skills in various sectors, leading them to be financially independent.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Pipal Tree Foundation's program is focused on improving incomes and unlocking the potential of sustainable livelihoods for youth and women. The organization undertakes a host of programs linked with employability skills in construction, retail, healthcare, BFSI and other fields, based on market demand. They also provide necessary support for placement. To ensure holistic development, they train women in skills for agriculture and allied businesses.

- Providing holistic skills training including counselling by sector executives for youth from the underprivileged communities, between the ages of 18-35
- Training women in food processing, horticulture, and livestock development, to provide them technical and financial assistance to build their own businesses and earn better incomes
- Ensuring sustainable livelihood opportunities at source areas by promoting livelihoods like apiculture and Neem processing

IMPACT

- Benefited more than **80,000 underprivileged youth and women through their 22 training centers across 8 States** and other projects such as initiatives in vocational education, sustainable livelihoods and women's empowerment
- Imparted **skills training to 10,000 migrant workers during the pandemic** in a short span, across many villages in 8 states in India

Interventions

- Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues
- Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
- Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services
- Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
- Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
- Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- Undertake policy advocacy and / or research
- Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Santosh Parulekar** leads the Pipal Tree Foundation. As an experienced management professional, over the last 10 years, he has led the way improving income generation opportunities for the youth through innovative strategies.

Credibility

- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Supported by credible corporate partners including Godrej, Tata Housing, NSE Foundation, SBI LIFE, HSBC, Hyundai

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1988 | **Head Office:** New Delhi |
Coverage: New Delhi, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh | **Annual Budget:** INR 1.11 crore

NIRMANA engages primarily in advocacy for social security and livelihood amongst unorganized sector workers, in order to achieve its overall vision of 'Building an Inclusive India', where workers are empowered to achieve social security and dignified livelihoods.

PROGRAM FOCUS

NIRMANA's mission is to build an active ecosystem for unorganized sector workers in India through (i) empowering workers to initiate and lead people's organizations and movements for social security and dignified livelihoods, (ii) collaboration with other networks, movements, organizations and initiatives for policy and systemic change and (iii) promoting advocacy, education and public awareness programs for government, employers, and citizens to become allies of the workers. In order to achieve its mission, NIRMANA addresses the entire continuum of Advocacy-to-Access (A2A) for the workers.

- Supports the enrolment and registration of construction workers through community mobilization efforts
- Assists and mentors research on various topics pertaining to unorganized sector workers
- Launches change agents through various programs such as a Leadership Academy for construction and other unorganized sector workers

IMPACT

- Provided support critical to the **National Campaign Committee on Construction Labour, leading to enactment of key central legislations such as the BOCW Act** and the BOCW Welfare Cess Act, 1996 as well as passing of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) directing implementation of the said Acts
- Project undertaken with **Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) in 2013-16 ensured proper implementation of government schemes for local communities to access social security entitlements**, including enrollment under the state construction workers welfare board across 280 gram panchayats, 8 blocks, 4 districts of MP, Chhattisgarh and UP

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
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- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
 - Run day care centres for children of construction workers
- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
- ✓ **Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation**

Leadership

- **Subhash Bhatnagar** is the chief functionary of NIRMANA, and has, for over 30 years, been working towards promoting and supporting the rights of construction workers and domestic workers.

Credibility

- 32+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Supported by a multiplicity of donors such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), Oak Foundation and Terre Des Hommes

Saath Charitable Trust

<http://saath.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1989 | **Head Office:** Ahmedabad

Coverage: Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh

Annual Budget: INR 58.15 crore

Saath works closely with the vulnerable communities and empowers the socially marginalized by providing them livelihood linkages, imparting skills leading to employment, health, and education facilities. The focus areas for the organization are livelihoods, skill development, health and education, rights, urban governance, financial inclusion, rehabilitation and resettlement and other community development initiatives. It engages organizations, corporates, and individuals from India and globally as partners and supporters.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Saath's mission is to make human settlements equitable living environments where all residents and vulnerable people have access to health, education, essential infrastructure services and livelihood options, irrespective of their economic and social status. It envisions inclusive and empowered communities and individuals.

- Run Urban Resource Centres as repositories of basic information on housing, documentation, bank accounts etc for underprivileged communities especially migrant workers; also supporting them to get identity cards through enrolment with civic bodies
- Undertake skill upgradation and vocational training of construction workers through its 'Nirman' program, to enable them to increase earning potential
- Organize slum communities through Housing Resource Centres against illegal evictions and inadequate housing provisions

IMPACT

- Successfully supported, empowered and **improved the quality of life of over 4,00,000 individuals** at the bottom of the economic pyramid
- Trained **1,695 workers in the construction sector, including 224 women**, in the trades of carpentry, electrician, plumbing and masonry
- The URCs have **reached 27,000+ slum households and provided over 10,000 services to them**

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
 - Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
- ✓ **Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children**
- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
- ✓ **Run day care centres for children of construction workers**
 - Undertake policy advocacy and / or research
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- Saath Charitable Trust is run by its Managing Trustee **Rajendra Joshi**, who has been facilitating substantial interventions in livelihood, health, education, affordable housing and financial inclusion for low-income communities.

Credibility

- 31+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Part of the Credibility Alliance

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1991 | **Head Office:** Bangalore |
Coverage: Pan India | **Annual Budget:** INR 10 crore

Sampark works to empower India's most vulnerable women, children and migrant workers through education interventions that help in increasing their incomes. Sampark focuses on providing information to increase access regarding entitlements in various sectors such as health, education, finance, social security and legal aid.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Sampark's operating model is built around Workers Resource Centres (WRCs). Along with this, they also focus on implementing activities for raising awareness, information provision, and linkages. The organization runs a support helpline to provide workers with access to information across geographies.

- Run Worker Resource Centres (WRCs) as a one-stop place for migrant workers for all their information needs and support them in accessing socio-economic and health-linked entitlements
- Undertake capacity building in leadership and communication, for workers who are actively engaged with the community members to raise their awareness about the services and entitlements
- Build evidence through in-depth studies on migrant construction workers to highlight their problems
- Operate Early Childhood Care and Education Centers for migrant workers' children and address their safety, nutrition, educational and health related needs

IMPACT

- Reached out to more than **25,000 workers with over 11,000 registered with Boards**
- **INR 1.5 crore worth of Board benefits** linked to workers unlocked

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
 - Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
 - Supplement holistic education via linkages with schools, tutoring, skilling for children
 - Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women
- ✓ **Run day care centres for children of construction workers**
 - Undertake policy advocacy and / or research
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- **Prameela** has pioneered the urban projects of Sampark and played an important role in opening and running Early Childhood Care and Education Centers for children of migrant workers. She manages team of Workers Resource Centers and has knowledge and information related to labour issues. She has also led research and studies involving gender, microenterprises, and livelihood activities.

Credibility

- 30+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Member of the Credibility Alliance and registered in NIITI Ayog and Drapan portals

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA)

<https://yuvaindia.org/>



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded: 1984 | **Head Office:** Mumbai | **Coverage:** Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, New Delhi | **Annual Budget:** INR 6 crore

YUVA strives to mitigate poverty and promote human rights in the developing world. Its vision is a humane society based on the values of equality, distributive justice and secularism; one that is liberated from oppression on the basis of caste, class, creed, gender, age, ethnicity and language; free from all forms of exploitation and violence; and which demonstrates integrity and democracy.

PROGRAM FOCUS

YUVA facilitates the formation of people's collectives that ensure sustained collective action in communities. It also engages in partnerships with the government, other civil society actors, academic institutions and the private sector to enable and strengthen the people's empowerment process. The organisation's work is complemented with research and policy advocacy.

- Running a Migrant Resource Centre and Labour Facilitation Centres for workers (including seasonal and semi-permanent migrants), to facilitate access to identity documents, welfare schemes and registrations in welfare boards to enable social protection
- Operating a wage recovery helpline that provides mediation support for recovery of unpaid wages, legal aid and counselling
- Establishing and running resource centres for children of informal workers with reading libraries, digital learning, educational games, and sports for development to offer space for expression and interaction
- Creating a support system for informal workers by building collectives of workers and spreading awareness on rights, conducting health camps at construction sites, nakas and informal settlements

IMPACT

- Since 2012 YUVA helped informal workers **recover over INR 65 lakh in unpaid wages**
- Since 2016 **YUVA has registered 1 100 construction workers** in Navi Mumbai, Thane, Panvel, Nagpur and Guwahati
- **150 children between the ages of 1 to 6 years were reached through the crèches** at sites and child resource centres in 6 different migrant communities in Navi Mumbai

Interventions

- ✓ **Build awareness among workers on rights and critical issues**
- ✓ **Facilitate on-site registration for services and entitlements**
- ✓ **Provide legal aid, information support and/or helpline services**
 - Create a database and tracking mechanism for workers and their families
- ✓ **Conduct sector-specific training, upskilling and /or entrepreneurship development**
 - Capacity building of businesses for better worker practices
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- ✓ **Develop diverse livelihood opportunities for women**
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- ✓ **Undertake policy advocacy and / or research**
 - Provide technical support to government in policy formulation and implementation

Leadership

- YUVA is headed by its Executive Director, **Roshni Nuggehali**. Her work is focused on issues of urban poverty, migration, informal economy and gender justice. She has also worked with the child rights movement, facilitating children's research and advocacy towards claiming their rights.

Credibility

- 36+ years of service to the sector
- Requisite 12A, 80G and FCRA
- Awarded gold seal by GuideStar India
- Verified by Global Giving

Appendix

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Executive Summary

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Chapter 1: Exploring redevelopment for construction workers

1. https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/doc/vol2chapter/echap10_vol2.pdf
2. <https://www.workersinvisibility.org/>
3. <http://mohua.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/1566.pdf>
4. https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/doc/vol2chapter/echap10_vol2.pdf
5. The Government of India has recently introduced four Labour Codes, namely (a) Code on Social Security, 2020; (b) Code on Wages, 2019; (c) Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020; and (d) the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 (collectively, "Labour Codes") to consolidate 29 central labor laws in India. These Labour Codes have received assent from both houses of Parliament and the President of India in September 2020. However, the date of their enforcement is yet to be notified. Public consultation on the Draft Rules under each of the Labour Codes is underway. The policy landscape described in this report is based on the existing governance mechanisms.
6. <https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/DO.pdf>
7. Adapted from a mapping by India Migration Now, <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/why-india-s-migrants-deserve-a-better-deal-11589818749274.html>

Chapter 2: Identifying the cracks in the system

1. https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/doc/Budget_Speech.pdf
2. <https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/DO.pdf>
3. <https://mahakamgar.maharashtra.gov.in/lc-mathadi-boards.htm>
4. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_763352.pdf
5. The effect of the new labor codes on registration rates remains to be seen
6. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/fs1.htm>
7. <https://scroll.in/article/996614/interview-amit-basole-on-the-pandemics-devastating-impact-and-the-need-for-a-fiscal-response-now>
- 8,9. https://cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/State_of_Working_India_2021-One_year_of_Covid-19.pdf
10. Inputs from this mapping by India Migration Now, <https://medium.com/@indiamigration/role-of-contractors-in-the-lives-of-construction-workers-during-a-lockdown-b91afbaff86b>
11. https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/Committee_on_Determination_of_Methodology.pdf
12. <https://sdgindiaindex.niti.gov.in/>

Chapter 3: Cornerstones

1. labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/DO.pdf
2. <https://thewire.in/labour/india-migrant-workers-covid-19-crisis-socio-economic-status>
3. <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/your-caste-and-class-determines-how-you-spend-time-11602657834829.html>
4. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_638305.pdf
5. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/covid-19-and-gender-equality-countering-the-regressive-effects>
6. labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/DO.pdf
7. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gender/IMFWomensEmpowerment.pdf>
8. <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/40-of-population-will-live-in-urban-centres-by-2030-hardeep-singh-puri-2281380>

Chapter 4: Playing our part, to build back better

1. <https://bfk.kerala.gov.in/apna-ghar-projects/>
2. 2 - <https://www.workersinvisibility.org/social-compact.html>
3. 3 - <https://jansahas.org/mrc>

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Non-Profits

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Anjali Borhade	Disha Foundation
Benoy Peter	Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (CMID)
Bijal Brahmbhatt	Mahila Housing Trust (MHT)
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*ex Jan Sahas

Experts

REPRESENTATIVE	ORGANISATION
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Amit Garg	The Global Development Incubator
Mouleshri Vyas	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
Rosa Abraham	Azim Premji University
Shabarinath Nair	International Labour Organisation

Industry

REPRESENTATIVE	ORGANISATION
Itika	Tata Realty
Riddhi Banerjee	Tata Trusts
Sagar Gandhi	Shapoorji Pallonji

Methodology & Limitations

Methodology

The construction sector employs the maximum number of informal workers, who are predominantly migrants. Fast-paced urbanisation and a high demand for low-skilled workforce are pull factors for this vulnerable demographic. Government data estimates that the sector employs 57 million workers, a total of 50 million men and 7 million women. The construction sector is also the single largest absorber of informal workers. Due to the low entry barriers for recruitment, the industry employs a large chunk of the surplus of India's non-agricultural workforce. It is important to zoom into the problems of the workers and examine on-ground solutions, to bolster the philanthropic capital available in this space. With this objective, the report demonstrates the lay of the land, the roles of different stakeholders involved (industry, government, non-profits, contractors, and community), challenges across workers' journeys (at source, destination and across), as well as, how their social locations shape their interactions within the construction space.

The report was completed using a mix of primary and secondary research. The different steps involved in putting the report together are defined below.

Literature review

- Articles/ reports/ documents by think tanks, government, non-profit sector, newspaper/ news website, and multi-lateral agencies examined
- Relevant information gleaned and collated to form central premises and arguments

Primary research

- 30+ non-profits working with informal and migrant workers to identify resource persons for requisite interviews, shortlisted
- Key experts from academia, government, industry, think tanks, and multi-lateral agencies, identified for interviews
- Semi-structured interviews with a selected cohort set up based on purposive sampling and availability of resource persons

Analysis and collation

- Breakpoint analysis undertaken to identify critical challenges where non-profit interventions can be posited as solutions
- Stakeholder, personas, and journeys, mapped to understand the sector from a worker-centric perspective
- Insights from interviews and secondary research analysed thematically, across breakpoints and intersections in workers lives

Writing and consolidation

- Narratives and critical messages, emerging from the analysis played back to experts, for due validation
- Report collated and written thematically to detail out the different aspects linked with workers lives, and provide an overview of the non-profit sector that is working to improve their lives

Limitations

The report was written during the pandemic (the first and second wave), and therefore, the availability of resource persons and non-profit actors, for interviews and conversations, was affected and remained limited. However, ~30 experts were interviewed for this report and the sample attempts to reflect key perspectives available in the sector, covering diverse stakeholders engaged in workers' journeys. Further, the data available is largely qualitative, and the knowledge gleaned could be subjective and influenced by the researchers' biases.

Tools Used

Interview Guide | Non-profit organizations and experts

CONTEXT: Please elaborate on the migration patterns for informal workers in India, with a focus on the construction sector.

Prompts

- What are the roles and kinds of work available to India's informal migrant workers in the construction industry? In your experience – how has demand for workers and the type of work changed in traditional construction sites viz. mechanized ones?
- What are the roles played by stakeholders (such as industry, government, non-profits and community including contractors)?

CHALLENGES: Please describe the key challenges for India's informal migrant workers in construction.

Prompts

- What are the challenges for India's informal migrant workers in construction? (probes: at source, destination and across)
- How do workers' socio-economic (specially gender, caste, tribe) locations affect their journeys across the system?
- Could you share your perspective on the impact of recent developments, specifically with regard to the COVID-19 crisis and the enactment of the new labor codes?

SOLUTIONS: Please share your thoughts on the opportunities or solutions that should be prioritized and strengthened in the medium and long-term to enable transformational change for the workers.

Prompts

- Could you share with us details of any successful interventions or best practices which have benefited informal workers in construction? What are the key factors that made this solution successful?
- Given that there are limited resources at stake – what are the actions that should be prioritized by interested stakeholders, specifically industry and philanthropists, over the next 3-5 years?
- What are some of the long-term transformational changes needed to enable greater equity, dignity and opportunities for informal construction workers and their families?

Additional Questions

Could you recommend any further reading material or experts we should consult?

Interview Guide | Additional questions for Due diligence of non-profit organisations

Could you please describe your organization's history, profile, vision and mission? (can you also share an overview document, org structure, along with a TOC – if available)

- Could you walk us through your key programs in this space? And describe the impact – qualitative and quantitative – in your livelihoods and direct relief programs?

Would it also be possible to share past three years financials, list of donors, certifications (12A, 80G, FCRA) and a budget for the next year, if available?

Interview Guide | Industry Stakeholders

CONTEXT: Please elaborate on the mix of formal and informal workers on your construction sites.

Prompts

- What % are on your payroll and how many are through contractors?
- How are contractors typically selected?
- What kinds of checks and balances are in place between you and the contractor? What is the level of involvement in selecting sub-contractors?
- How are accidents / other issues on site resolved (by contractors or by the Company)?
- What is the level of interaction between the company and on-site workers (formal and informal)?
- What are the other dependencies of the informal labour on the company? Are there standard procedures to meet these across sites?

CHALLENGES: Please describe the key challenges faced by your company during and post the lockdown, wrt labour and restarting of work on sites.

Prompts

- How did the lockdown affect the on-site operations?
- What was the main impact on the labourers at your site (formal and informal)?
- What were the main initiatives taken by the company during this time?
- When the lockdown eased, how easy / difficult was it to restart work? What additional measures had to be taken to ensure that workers come back from their home towns? Were any changes made to the working conditions wrt safety and hygiene?

SOLUTIONS: Please share your thoughts on the opportunities or solutions that should be prioritized and strengthened in the medium and long-term to enable transformational change for the workers.

Prompts

- What are the key breakpoints in their journeys at the industry, policy and community level? What breakpoints do you think should be prioritized by interested stakeholders, specifically philanthropists, over the next 3-5 years?
- What are some of the long-term transformational changes needed to enable greater equity, dignity and opportunities for informal construction workers?

Additional Questions

Could you recommend any further reading material or experts we should consult?

To know more, visit:



workersinvisibility.org