



Prayas Centre for Labour
Research and Action (PCLRA)



Rosa Luxemburg
Stiftung

THEY
LEAVE
THEIR
HOMES
TO BUILD
OURS



Issues and perspective
of migrant construction
workers in Surat

A Study

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NOTE TO THE READER

The report is divided into two parts. Part A contains the study undertaken by Dr. Indira Hirway from Centre For Development Alternatives. Her study attempts to understand the reasons for migration and to comprehensively understand the working and living conditions of migrant construction workers – both skilled and unskilled workers in Surat city. Further the study seeks to understand the impact of various labour laws and schemes pertaining to these workers and examine how far they reach the workers; to study aspirations of migrant workers, both skilled and unskilled workers and their plan for the future, to examine the relationship between migration and development and to investigate segmentation of labour market and to address it to promote integration of labour market.

Part B of the report should be seen as a complementary section to Part A. It contains findings of a mapping exercise undertaken by Prayas team in *kadia nakas* and *bastis* of construction workers in Surat. The construction labour market can be divided into two broad divisions. One caters to the repair and small construction needs of the existing housing stock in cities and the other caters to the large construction projects. The workers for the first are sourced from the *nakas* that are spread all over the city. Workers assemble here every morning to find work. For large projects, workers are sourced directly from the villages through labour contractors. These workers live at work site and do not come to the *nakas*. Such labour and migration mapping is a unique tool developed by Prayas- Centre for Labour Research and Action during its work over the last decade to trace seasonal migrant streams. The methodology comprises of generating information on source and destination of workers and other basic information like number of workers in family, wage rates prevalent, and recruiting agent in a one line format or very short survey schedules. The major purpose of the mapping exercise carried out in Surat was to establish a data base of construction workers standing at *nakas* in the city and living in *kadia bastis*. The schedules have been developed to contact the construction workers across different spaces and time with separate schedules used for the *kadia naka* and the *kadia bastis* and is a continuous process.

THEY LEAVE THEIR HOMES TO BUILD OURS

MIGRATION IN BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN SURAT

AREAS OF
SERIOUS CONCERN

By Indira Hirway



**Prayas Centre for Labour
Research and Action (PCLRA)**



Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung



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FOREWORD

The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS) is a German-based foundation working in India and other parts of the world on the subjects of critical social analysis and civic education. For last two years it has supported studies on seasonal migrant workers in and around Surat.

Seasonal migration has emerged as a dominant mode of labour engagement in India in many industries that require large number of manual workers. Construction is one such industry. However, because of the informal nature of employment, there is no information on the number of workers undertaking seasonal migration. This is a serious gap in planning. For the last two years, RLS has supported studies on seasonal migrant work streams. The present study on construction workers of Surat is a result of this work.

The building and construction industry is one of the fastest growing industries in India today. It contributes to infrastructure development, which plays a critical role in the development of the Indian economy. Though several concerns relating to this industry are discussed at the policy level, not much concern is shown about the well-being of these workers. While a national Act has been formulated, its implementation remains patchy at best. This study is about construction workers who are backbone of the industry and contribute significantly to rapid economic growth of our economy. Majority of the workers in the industry are seasonal migrants who migrate from within the state and outside the state to work in the industry.

The study provides a socio-economic profile of construction workers in the city. It also provides a comprehensive data base on the construction workers market that comprises of *naka* workers who stand at city cross roads every morning to find work. A large number of the migrant workers who find work through these *nakas* live in squatter colonies nearby. These colonies are not enumerated as slums by the municipal authorities and therefore remain devoid of any access to public amenities like drinking water, sanitation, and electricity. The study documents these settlements also.

I am sure that the study will fill a critical gap for workers organisations, social researchers and urban planners.

Rajiv Kumar

December 2018



PART 1



Construction Workers in Surat: Issues and perspective

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



The building and construction industry is one of the fastest growing industries in India today. It contributes to infrastructure development, which plays a critical role in the overall development of the Indian economy. Though several concerns relating to this industry are raised in policy-level discussions, there is not enough concern shown towards the well-being of the workers in this industry. This study is about construction workers who are the backbone of the industry and contribute significantly to rapid economic growth of our economy. Surat is one of the fastest growing cities in the world and attracts a large number of migrant workers from all over India. This study examines the working and living conditions of migrant construction workers in order to understand their problems and constraints and to see what can be done to improve their conditions and capabilities.

Migration of labour, particularly seasonal or temporary migration from poor rural areas to relatively prosperous urban areas is not a new phenomenon in India. The advent of neo-liberal policies in India however has given a big push to informal employment and particularly to seasonal migration - thanks to the radical restructuring of production and of labour under these policies (Hirway 2011). These workers migrate for a season in a year or for a part of the year to earn additional incomes, but return to their own village when the work gets completed. The phenomenon of migration is due to unequal development across regions where on the one hand, developing regions need more and more workers while on the other hand poor regions are unable to offer enough employment opportunities to its people due to a number of reasons, one of them being environmental degradation. People deprived of employment opportunities in their own regions are pushed out to urban areas or to prosperous areas in search of work. Though migration is rising at a very rapid rate, no data is available on the size of this migrating population in India. Broadly, according to certain estimates, the number of seasonal migrants is between 120 million workers to 200 million workers!

Majur Adhikar Manch (MAM) under the aegis of Prayas - Centre for Labour Research and Action (PCLRA), a Non-governmental Organization (NGO), has been working towards promoting the rights of migrant workers in the informal sectors in India. MAM's primary agenda is to organize workers into trade unions that can take up the struggle for decent wages and improved working conditions. Most mainstream trade unions have failed to organize this vast underclass. Much of the traditional organizing activity has focused on improvement of work places for workers. However these mainstream unions have neglected the issues concerning migrant informal workers, whose work places are dispersed, where deployment of workers is on a seasonal basis and workers are too dependent on their employers - for debt, for emergencies and when there is not much support coming from either their state of origin or the state of destination. The focus of PCLRA is on migration stream rather than conditions in the work place only. Organizational activity is spread over the whole cycle of movement - from source areas to work places in destination. It has taken violation of labour rights beyond the realm of labour laws and has sought

to juxtapose these as violation of human rights invoking criminal statutes.

Migration to the State of Gujarat and to the City of Surat

Gujarat ranks high in rural to urban inter-state in-migration. Broadly, it accounts for 54.1% of the total migration in the state as compared to about 42% in the case of Maharashtra, another state that attracts migration from all over the country. This is because Gujarat offers more broad-based opportunities, especially in urban areas. Intra-state migration is also high in Gujarat.

The major rural to urban migration streams to Gujarat are mainly in: (1) agriculture; (2) construction industry; (3) brick kiln industry; (4) diamond cutting and polishing industry; (5) textiles, power looms, and garments; (6) engineering and electrical industries; (7) salt pan industry and; (8) domestic work. Several major industries in Gujarat owe their progress to these migrant workers. To put it differently, migrant workers are the backbone of the rapid economic growth in Gujarat.

Surat is a major city, the economy of which is rapidly growing, and thus attracting migrant workers into its various industries. Migrant workers in Surat are employed mainly in: (1) construction industry; (2) brick kiln industry; (3) diamond cutting and polishing industry, and; (4) textiles, power looms, and garments. Just as in the rest of India, construction industry has been one of the fastest growing industries in Surat, particularly since it is one of the fastest growing cities in the world, therefore demanding all types of infrastructural facilities. The real estate and infrastructure market has been developing very rapidly in Surat. According to an ASSOCHAM study, the real estate sector in the state has attracted 41% of new investments across India during the last few years, and Surat has grabbed an important share in it!

Objectives of the Study

There is no dearth of works which documentation of the plight of migrant workers – their working and living conditions and their overall

vulnerability. This study, after referring to the conditions of migrant workers, goes beyond to explore some new fields, such as aspirations of migrant workers – skilled and unskilled workers and their plan for the future, the relationship between migration and development, addressing the segmentation of labour market between migrant and local workers, etc. and suggest recommendations on future action to Prayas to expedite the positive processes.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- ◆ To study the reasons for rising migration and to comprehensively understand the working and living conditions of migrant construction workers – both skilled and unskilled workers – in Surat city;
- ◆ To study the impact of various labour laws and schemes pertaining to these workers and examine how far they reach the workers;
- ◆ To study the aspirations of migrant workers, both skilled and unskilled workers and their plan for the future;
- ◆ To examine the relationship between migration and development;
- ◆ To investigate the segmentation of labour market and to address it to promote the integration of labour market, and;
- ◆ To make suggestions to Prayas on how they can possibly expedite the positive processes.

Approach of the Study

As mentioned above, this study is about migrant workers in construction industry in Surat. This includes building and construction workers both. The main reason for selecting construction industry workers is because this industry is one of the fastest growing industries in Gujarat (and in India as a whole) and especially in Surat. Surat attracts perhaps the maximum migrant workers in the state.

While studying construction workers in Surat, it was necessary to study all types of locations where migrant construction workers are employed. We therefore selected the following sites where construction workers are employed:

- Public sector construction site: road construction
- Private construction site at Kumbharia
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) housing construction at Vesu
- *Naka* workers

Naka (open labour market place) workers largely look for unskilled work and mainly in construction work. It is not an independent category as such; however, we selected them as they are casual workers, not attached to contractors and do not work under any formal or informal contract. There are about 20 Nakas in Surat, and we selected three Nakas for the study. Workers come here in the morning looking for work.

Employers or their men go there in the morning, select the required number of workers, and employ them for a day or two. Not all of the people waiting on Nakas get work. Those not selected go back home or move around looking for whatever other work might be available. Road construction sites selected for the study include: (1) Jahangirpura site; (2) Randar site, and; (3) a site near PMAY construction. Private construction of housing site was located at Kumbharia and PMAY site was at Vesu, where 600 housing flats were being constructed. The selected sample is presented in the following table:

In all, we have randomly selected 201 workers for our study. The table shows that the majority of the workers are Scheduled tribes (STs), followed by OBCs and then by SCs. Others constitute just 1% of the total sample. It is mainly SCs, STs and OBCs who migrate looking for work.



Table 1: Sample Distribution by Caste

Area	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
Naka basti	50		1		51
PMAY	31	3	15	1	50
Road construction site	45	1	3	1	50
Private construction site	26	6	18		50
Grand Total	152	10	37	2	201

CHAPTER 2



Profile Of Migrant Workers

Table 2: Migration Status of Family Members

Area	Family Members who Migrated	Family Members who did not Migrate	Total
Naka basti	124	124	248
PMAY	118	128	246
Road construction site	118	103	221
Private construction site	108	125	233
Total	468	480	948

The above table shows that nearly half of the family members of migrant workers migrate, while the other half remain at home. The old, women and children seem to be staying at home while all boys who can work migrate with elders of their family.

Of our sample, only 7 (4.5%) are women workers, and most migrant workers are men workers (95.5 %), while women workers are less than 5%. This is because women workers mainly come as supporting labour; that is, subordinate labour. We shall discuss this matter later in detail.

State of Origin

Migrant workers come to Surat from a number of states. While many workers (26.9%) are from Gujarat's tribal areas, the rest are from different states of India.

Madhya Pradesh has the highest proportion (19.4%), followed by Rajasthan (14.9%), Maharashtra (12.9%), and then Uttar Pradesh (9.0%),

Bihar (7.5%) and Chhattisgarh (6.4%). Some have also come from as far as West Bengal (1.5%) and Jharkhand (1.5%). The strategy of employers and contractors is to get cheap labour from backward areas. Contractors go to distant places to catch distressed workers who want work badly no matter what the wages or the working conditions are like.

There are certain trends to be observed here: machine operators are from UP and Maharashtra, skilled workers (trained on job) are from places which have had a long tradition of migration.

Age, Sex, Marital Status and Education

97% of the workers are between the ages of 19-60 years. Of this, 60% migrant workers are from the 19-30 age group. That is, majority of the workers are young and others are also within the working age. Only 2.5 workers are below 18 years of age. However, we found during our field work small children, more of girls and a few boys helping their parents in their work.

Supervisors are Mukaddam, foreman or head of workers. 36% of them are illiterate, while the literate ones have studied up to primary level (50%) or above it up to high school. Machine operators are all

Table 3 State of Origin of Migrant Workers by Skill Levels

State	Machine operators	Skilled Work	Supervisor	Unskilled Work	Total
Bihar		7	7	1	15
Chhattisgarh		10	2	1	13
Gujarat		39	10	5	54
Maharashtra	1	9	1	15	26
Madhya Pradesh		17	11	11	39
Rajasthan		23	4	3	30
Uttar Pradesh	1	9	3	5	18
West Bengal		3			3
Jharkhand		2		1	3
Total	2	119	38	42	201

Table 4: Age Distribution of Workers

Type of Workers	Age Groups				
	0-14	15-18	19-30	31-50	51-60
Machine operators	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
Skilled work	0.50	1.00	33.83	22.39	1.49
Supervisor	0.00	1.00	11.94	4.98	1.00
Unskilled work	0.00	0.00	13.43	6.97	0.50
Total	0.50	1.99	60.20	34.33	2.99

Table 5: Education Status of Migrant Workers

Types of Workers	Illiterate	Primary	Middle	Highschool	Graduate	Grand Total
Machine operators	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
Skilled work	17.9	15.9	11.4	13.4	0.5	59.2
Supervisor	7.0	6.0	2.0	4.0	0.0	18.9
Unskilled work	8.5	4.0	3.0	5.0	0.5	20.9
Total	33.3	25.9	17.4	22.4	1.0	100.0

literate who have studied till middle school. 60% of skilled workers (trained on the job) are literates, being educated up to high school. Interestingly, not all unskilled workers are illiterate. In fact 60% of unskilled workers are literates, 25% of them have studied up to high school level, and 2% are even graduates! This speaks of our education system also. Either the education level in the states of origin (which are lagging states) is very poor or there are no employment opportunities to school educated boys and girls!

Majority of workers, as expected, are married workers. As the table below shows, 78% are married while 1.5 are widows. The rest are unmarried may be they are too young to marry.

Housing in Surat

Migrants live in various precarious housing conditions. 49% live in Kaccha huts while 48% live on roads or in make shift huts on roads or in Bastis. It is to be noted that the temporary house that are made available to workers on-site by contractors are clearly not pucca housing. Only 2.5 % workers live in semi-pucca houses. In short, the migrant workers have precarious housing conditions.

Reasons for Migration and the Process

Though push factors are predominant, pull factors to Surat also seems to have played a role in bringing migrant workers to Surat. Table 8 shows that income insecurity at home and nothing to live on (not adequate for family) are two major factors that push them out from their place of origin (70% workers leave their home for these reasons). At the same time

reasons for coming to Surat (easily available work, higher wages) are also important (30%).

Not all migrant workers are landless, though almost 40% migrants are landless. The rest of them are either marginal farmers or small farmers. The table makes it clear that the higher the size of the land holding owned by a household, lower is their chance of migrating out. Our investigation shows that when the land is too small to accommodate all family workers, the family decides to send some of the family members out for work.

One can infer from this that due to poor irrigation facilities for agriculture and environmental degradation (including land and forest depletion and degradation) do not provide enough employment to workers at home to these workers.

Poverty Status of Migrant Workers

Almost half the migrant workers are in the below poverty line (BPL) list and the other half is either above poverty line (APL) or have not taken any of the cards. Table 10 presents the data on poverty status of migrant workers:

However when we see this table in the context of household incomes, it becomes clear that this APL-BPL classification does not reflect the reality!

Process of Migration

Most of these migrants like other such migrants in India, decide to migrate mainly through some relative, friend, colleague or contractors who provide them information and guide them through the process.

Table 6: Marital Status of Workers by Caste

Caste	Married	Unmarried	Single	Widow	Total
ST	126	23		3	152
SC	7	3			10
OBC	22	14	1		37
Others	2				2
Total	157	40	1	3	201

Table 7 : Status of housing for migrant workers

Caste	Own	Rent	Others	Kachcha	Semi-Pakka	Pakka	Others	Total
ST	4	1	147	58		1	93	152
SC	1		9	8	1		1	10
OBC	1	1	35	32	3		2	37
Others			2	1			1	2
Total	6	2	193	99	4	1	97	201

Table 8: Reasons for Migration

Reasons for Migration	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
Income security	78	3	15	1	95
Nothing to live on	33	2	10		46
Easily Work available	29	1	2	1	36
High wages in Surat	50	4	27		89
Others	4				6
Total	152	10	37	2	201

Table 9: Distribution of Farmers by Caste and Landholding Category

Land Category	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
Landless	48	4	26	2	80
<1 Acre	40	6	6		52
1-2 Acre	45		2		47
2.1-5Acre	19		2		21
>5Acre	0		1		1
Total	152	10	37	2	201

Table 10: Poverty Status of Migrant Workers

Poverty Status	Total	ST	SC	OBC	Others
APL	99	78	4	16	6
BPL	101	77	5	18	6
Others	1		1		
Total	201	155	10	34	12

Table 11: Type of Workers and Source Aiding the Migration Process

Type of workers	Relatives	Friends and acquaintances	Contractors	Others	Total
Machine operators	1	1			2
Skilled work	22	64	33	16	119
Supervisor	12	17	8	1	38
Unskilled work	6	19	7	2	42
Total	41	101	40	19	201

Table 12: Monetary Support for Migration

Sources	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
Self	143	9	32	1	185
Friend	5	1	2		8
Relatives	2		1	1	4
Other	2		2		4
Total	152	10	37	2	201

Contractors are usually people known directly or through someone else. Their share is 20% in providing information and motivating the workers to migrate.

Most migrant workers use their own money or family savings to reach destination (92%) while others take help from friends and relatives. They come to destinations where known people are working.

Women Workers in Building and Construction

There are only seven women workers in our sample. This is mainly because majority of women work mainly as helpers and as subordinate workers, and do not present themselves as workers.

We have therefore conducted 2-3 focus group discussions with women.

Married women come to Surat with their husbands while unmarried girls with their fathers, brothers etc. Most women come to Surat with their children. They carry young children with them to work where older children (girls) take care of their younger

siblings. Women also keep a check time to time on their children while working.

Most women do unskilled manual work such as, placing bricks on the heads of masons, separating stones from sand and other such work. Their wages are at least Rs 50 less per day than that of men. In the case of Naka workers women reach the Naka at 7.00 a.m. with men, and get hired with their male relatives.

The lives of women who do construction work is very tough. Their day starts at 3-4a.m. in the morning as they need to go out to defecate in the open before men get up. Then they cook food for the day, take care of the children, serve hot food to men and get ready to go to work. At work too they have to keep an eye on their

small children. In the late evening, they come back and start cooking for their family, serve them food and go to sleep only after ten or eleven. Men do not share household work, as per the norms of patriarchy. A female construction





worker ends up working 18-19 hours per day!

Many women workers told us that they suffer from regular headaches and body aches. Due to lack of proper arrangements for menstrual management, they suffer from other diseases also. None of our women in all focus group discussions were aware of maternity benefits schemes and their legal entitlements. They work almost till the last days of their pregnancy without much medical help.

We observed that there are very few (just 2) big locations where there is some arrangement for small children in a room or under a tree!

Most women workers live on the road side or in Bastis where basic amenities are scanty. Alcoholism is rampant in Bastis, with domestic violence as well as the fear of drunkards at nights. Though they admitted reluctantly,

women in all focus group discussions revealed that they have to be very careful about sexual abuse at the hands of the contractor/ foreman or other drunk workers.

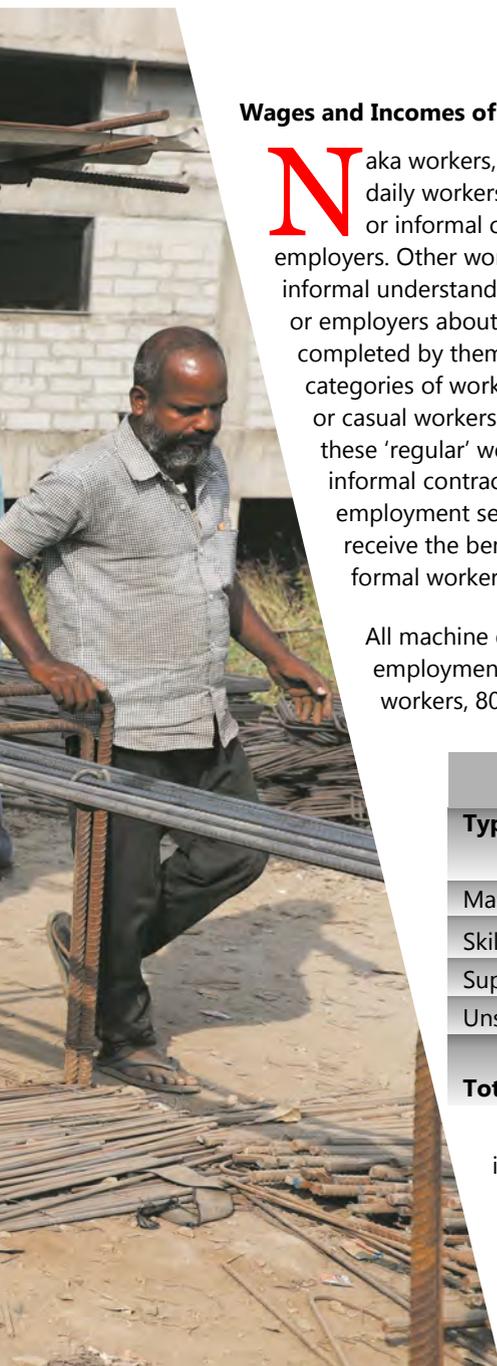
When we asked men why they bring women with them, they said that they need women to cook and feed and to take care of their family. They also said that they contributed to family incomes and that is very important to them.

It seems that women construction workers are the worst sufferers in this industry. Not much has been really done for them.

CHAPTER-3



Incomes and Remittances



Wages and Incomes of Migrant Workers

Naka workers, who are usually casual daily workers, do not have any formal or informal contract with their employers. Other workers, however, have an informal understanding with the contractors or employers about the tasks to be completed by them. Therefore there are two categories of workers: regular and irregular or casual workers. It is to be noted that these 'regular' workers too are under informal contract under which there is no employment security and they do not receive the benefits of permanent or formal workers.

All machine operators get continuous employment. In the case of skilled workers, 80% get regular work, while

employment. Approximately, one can state that 20% are casual workers, most of whom are Naka workers, while the rest of them are informal contract workers. The table below shows that on an average, a migrant worker gets work for 226 days (that is, a little more than 7 months). During the rest of the days they go back home to their native place. Casual workers get work in a scattered manner; on an average for 190 days in a year (that is, for about 6 months). Machine operators get work for 240 days, followed by unskilled workers (230 and 180 days) and supervisors (233 and 200 days). Skilled workers get 222 days and 200 days for continuous and not continuous employment respectively.

There is a system of taking advance from contractors (called *kharchi*) to meet day-to-day expenses till wages are paid. The above table shows that about 46% of the workers take *kharchi*. All machine operators take *kharchi*. Among the rest of the workers, two-thirds of

Table 13: Employment Status by Skill Level

Type of Workers	Continuous Employment	Non-continuous Employment	Total
Machine operators	2		2
Skilled work	95	24	119
Supervisor	35	3	38
Unskilled work	31	11	42
Total	163	38	201

in the case of supervisors the percentage is 85%. In the case of unskilled workers, 73% are casual workers who do not get regular

work. In the case of skilled workers take *kharchi*, 46.21% of skilled workers take *kharchi* and 18% of supervisors take *kharchi*. By paying *kharchi*, the contractors tend to delay payment of wages, and this enables them to save interest on wage payments and gives them time to cook up

Table 14: Status of Wages Payments

Type of workers	Total worker	Workers who Take Advance (in Rs.)		Workers who Do Not Take Advance (in Rs.)	
		Workers	Rupees	Workers	Average of Rupees
Machine operators	2	2	2000.0	0	0
Skilled work	119	55	1972.2	64	0
Supervisor	38	7	1885.7	31	0
Unskilled work	42	28	1423.5	14	0
Total	201	92	1848.75	109	0

Table 15: Status of Job and Avg. Days by Skill Level

Type of workers	Job Status			Avg. Days		
	Continuous work	Not continuous work	Total worker	Continuous work	Not continuous work	Total worker
Machine operators	2		2	240		240
Skilled work	79	40	119	229	186	214
Supervisor	32	6	38	236	200	231
Unskilled work	29	13	42	237	173	217
Total	142	59	201	232	185	218

Type of workers	Job status (%)			Avg. Days		
	Continuous work	Non- continuous work	Total No. of workers	Continuous work	Non- continuous work	Total No. of workers
Machine operators	1.00	0.00	1.00	240		240
Skilled work	39.30	19.90	59.20	229	186	214
Supervisor	15.92	2.99	18.91	236	200	231
Unskilled work	14.43	6.47	20.90	237	173	217
Total	70.65	29.35	100.00	232	185	218

Table 16 : Wage Rate by Skill Level

Workers	0-250	251-450	451-500	Above 600	Total No
Machine operators				2	2
Skilled work	25	62	23	9	119
Supervisor	6	24	6	2	38
Unskilled work	42				42
Total	73	86	29	13	201

Table 17: Status of Wages, Work Hours and Workers' Risk

Type of Workers	No. of Workers	Average Wage Rate	Average of Hours	Risk of Work
Machine operators	2	600.0	8	
Skilled work	119	366.8	10	44
Supervisor	38	355.3	8	4
Unskilled work	42	235.7	10	30
Total	201	339.6	10	78

accounts. If timely wages are paid, there will not be any need for kharchi!

As seen in Table 16, all unskilled workers get average wages less than Rs. 250/ per day. Machine operators get Rs. 600 per day, while 52% skilled workers get Rs. 251-450 per day and 20 % skilled workers get wages between Rs. 451-500.

As we can see from Table 17, machine operators on an average get Rs. 600/ per day, skilled workers get Rs. 366 and supervisors get Rs. 355 per day. Unskilled

workers get the lowest wages per day. The table also shows that 39 % of workers consider that the work they do is risky and lack of physical safety at the work place is a cause for concern. As expected, the highest % here is of unskilled workers (71%). If we consider the fact that skilled and unskilled workers work for longer hours – longer than 8 hours, the wage rate will be much lower.

Table 18 presents data on total household incomes of these workers. On an average, these workers receive



Table 18: Average Income by Caste and Skill Level

Workers	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total	Monthly avg.
Machine operators	179,000.0		184,000.0		186,150.0	14,458.3
Skilled work	146,671.0	110,000.0	128,895.0	696,000.0	146,758.8	12,229.9
Supervisor	129,779.2	200,375.0	129,950.0		157,255.3	13,437.9
Unskilled work	134,108.8	240,000.0	150,516.7	115,500.0	138,531.0	11,544.2
Total	141,406.6	159,150.0	133,094.6	405,750.0	143,389.6	11,949.1

Table 19: Access to Health Facilities by Skill Status of Workers

Type of Workers	Public Health Centre	Private Health Centre	Other	Total
Machine operators		2		2
Skilled work	23	95	1	119
Supervisor	18	20		38
Unskilled work	17	23	2	42
Total	58	140	3	201

Rs. 11,949 as monthly income. Unskilled and skilled workers are clearly below the poverty line.

This is indeed very unfortunate that even though Gujarat as a state benefits from migrant workers, it is not able to provide them even poverty line income!

Health being a necessity in life, almost all workers access either a public or a private facility. Our discussions, however, revealed that most of them go for these facilities when illness/injury needs urgent attention of medical people. However, 70% use private facilities while just about 29% go for public facilities. This is largely because public sector services are not reliable (factors like medicines not being

available, staff not being present, timings not being suitable, distance not convenient). Private facilities are expensive and as we found out from our investigation; many times workers incur debt after availing services from there. This tends to an increase in vulnerability of the workers.

With respect to education too we also found that small children could not attend local Anganwadis either because they were located far away from construction sites, or these were open only for two hours, which did not help migrant workers, and because worksite anganwadis were not common on worksites!

CHAPTER-4

Courtesy: Aditi Sharma



Remittances And Their Uses

Is There Any Upward Mobilization of Migrant Workers?

Migration is useful to migrant workers, if they can send home some remittances to family, accumulate some savings, buy assets or enjoy other benefits. Our investigation (shown in Table 20 below) shows that not all construction workers are able to send home remittances. In all, 93 workers out of 201 (46%) sent remittances. In the case of machine operators, all workers send home some money; while 52% of skilled workers, 21% supervisors and 47% of unskilled workers send remittances. Whether a worker is sending remittance or not is not closely related to income. Our discussions also revealed that those who do not send

remittances sent) by migrant workers are presented below in the two tables:

As regards to the use of remittances, it is interesting to note that almost all households send money home so that people at home can eat better. This indicates that families of migrant workers are almost always underfed, and migration helps them to eat properly! The next major use of remittances is on health (93.0). This is because most households use private health facility, as (1) local public health facilities are not accessible, and; (2) they have more faith on private health facilities. It is good to see that one-third of the households spend money on education of children in the family! The third use is equally very important: social functions, funerals and after death religious functions, etc. The other uses are as below: only 3% spend their earnings on home

Table 20: Distribution of Workers who Send Money by Remittances According to Work Categories

Range in Rs.	Machine operators	Skilled Work	Supervisor	Unskilled Work	Total
Less than 5,000		3	5		8
5,001 to 20,000	1	11	1	5	18
20,001 to 50,000	1	29	2	11	43
500,001 & above		20		4	24
Total	2	63	8	20	93

remittances also tend to carry some money home when they visit home.

Uses of extra incomes earned (including

repair. In short, most of the remittances are used in consumption.

As can be seen in Table 22, 93% spend their incomes on marriages. We have taken it separately, as marriage is a major function in villages. 12.4 % use their funds on repayment of debts. 1% of households spend remittances on purchase of new houses. It is just 4% of

Table 21: Uses of Remittance Money - 1

Type of Workers	Food	Education	Health	House Repair	Other
Machine Operators	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Skilled Work	100.0	40.3	89.9	3.4	3.4
Supervisor	100.0	10.5	97.4	0.0	2.6
Unskilled Work	97.6	35.7	97.6	4.8	7.1
Total	99.5	33.3	93.0	3.0	4.0

Table 22: Uses of Remittance Money - 2

Type of Workers	Debt Paid	Social (Marriage) Functions	Purchase New House	Small Business	Savings in Bank, etc.
Machine Operators	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Skilled Work	15.1	95.8	1.7	0.8	5.0
Supervisor	5.3	97.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unskilled Work	11.9	83.3	0.0	0.0	4.8
Total	12.4	93.0	1.0	0.5	4.0

Table 23: Average Amounts of Expenditure on Different Items (in Rs.)

Type of Workers	Food	Education	Health	House Re- pair	Social	Other
Machine operators	4,500.0		2,750.0		2,000.0	
Skilled work	3,593.3	1,456.3	1,525.2	15,300.0	3,362.1	3,050.0
Supervisor	2,586.8	750.0	1,224.3		1,894.6	2,200.0
Unskilled work	3,278.0	1,373.3	1,407.3	2,500.0	2,645.7	4,166.7
Total	3,346.5	1,395.5	1,452.9	1,1033.3	2,903.4	3,362.5

Table 24: Average Amounts Spent on Different Items. (Rs.)

Type of Workers	Total worker	Debt Paid	Marriage	Purchase new House	Small Business	Saving in Bank
Machine operators	2	0.0				
Skilled work	119	75,277.8	74,545.5	222,500.0	100,000.0	33,150.0
Supervisor	38	90,000.0				
Unskilled work	42	67,600.0				2,000.0
Total	201	74,920.0	74,545.5	222,500.0	100,000.0	34,862.5

Table 25: Skill Acquisition as a Result of Migration

Skill level of Workers	Total Workers	Skills Gained in Surat (%)
Machine operators	2	100
Skilled workers	119	30.25
Supervisors	38	2.63
Unskilled workers	42	2.38
Total	210	19.9

households who spend remittance on small business and only 4 % save their money in banks.

Tables 23 and 24 show that the highest amount is spent on house repairs and on the purchase of a new house. Only machine operators have bought a new house while the rest have just repaired their existing houses. It is only machine operators who have been able to use their remittances for small business, for

savings of good amount and who have not incurred any debts. All the rest of them have used remittances for the repayment of debts (Rs. 74,920) and marriages and other social functions.

In short, for most, not much upward mobility in terms of incomes or assets is achieved through migration. If one expects that this temporary migration will ultimately lead them to better

their lives, it has not happened! The main achievement is that they are able to eat well and some of them managed to repay old debts. A lot of money is wasted on social functions and marriages (20 of the total remittances!). For skilled and unskilled workers, this % comes to about 40%!

Another hope for upward mobilization for migrant workers is acquisition of new skills. Have

Table 26: Perception of Migrant Workers About their Own Work

Type of Workers	Total worker	Debt Paid	Marriage	Purchase new House	Small Business	Saving in Bank
Machine operators	2	0.0				
Skilled work	119	75,277.8	74,545.5	222,500.0	100,000.0	33,150.0
Supervisor	38	90,000.0				
Unskilled work	42	67,600.0				2,000.0
Total	201	74,920.0	74,545.5	222,500.0	100,000.0	34,862.5

Table 27: Expectations for the Future

State	Do not think about future	Same work	Progress in my work	Own home	Better Education of their Children	Small business in future	Good contractor	Good job	Total
Bihar	5.5	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	7.5
Chhattisgarh	3.0	1.5	0.5	0.0	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	6.5
Gujarat	22.4	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.0	26.9
Maharashtra	2.0	5.0	1.0	0.0	1.5	2.0	0.5	1.0	12.9
Madhya Pradesh	8.5	4.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	3.5	0.0	0.0	19.4
Rajasthan	3.5	4.0	3.0	0.5	2.0	1.5	0.5	0.0	14.9
Uttar Pradesh	4.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0	9.0
West Bengal	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
Jharkhand	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
Total	50.2	18.4	6.5	2.5	8.5	10.9	1.5	1.0	100.0

migrant workers acquired new skills from migration? By the term skills, we imply a kind of human capital formation. Table 25 presents the data:

Skill acquisition reflects new/additional skills acquired by workers during migration. Table 25 shows that only 20% of workers have acquired new/additional skills. Both machine operators have gained in skills, while in the case of skilled workers 20% have acquired skills. Supervisors perhaps are not interested in new skills, but hardly any unskilled workers have shown any progress in skills. Once again this shows that upward mobility has been bypassed by migration. Migrant women workers, who are largely employed in low-skilled work and have remained as they were in terms of skills!

Migrant Workers' Perception of their Future:

Not surprisingly, migrant workers do not have much of a positive perception of the work they do. The following table presents how they feel about their work.

Majority of workers (42%) think that the work they do is too hard. This feeling is reported by all categories of workers. 21% workers believe that the working hours are too long and this bothers them. As seen above, 50% of the migrant workers work for 9-10 hours and above. In order to complete tasks early,

contractors insist that workers work for long hours. One-third of the workers miss their native place and think that staying out for 6-7 months in a year is too long! A significant numbers feel isolated. They do not have any social interactions with the local society! Further, they do not have any affiliation with the local environment.

Clearly, the workers do not appear to be very satisfied with their work except that they get some income and help their families at home. The next question we probe into is, What do the workers plan for the future or what are their aspirations from life?

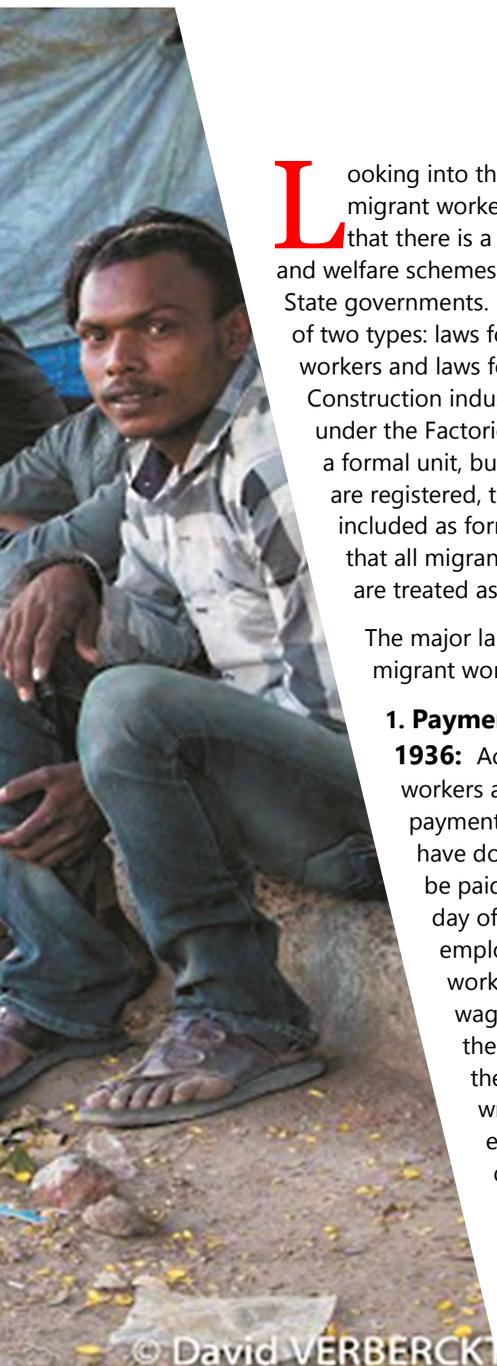
Half the workers are so busy in their present work that they do not think about their future. Another 18.4% think that they will continue doing the same work. That is, 69% workers do not have many expectations from their future! The maximum they think is that they will own a home in the native place! However the rest of them are positive: 11% want to start their own business and 15% want to be contractors. 8.5% want to give their children good education so that they do not have to perform unskilled migrant work. Finally another 1% want to get a good job in Surat! That is, 30% of migrant workers hope to have a better future for them or for their children and move up in the ladder of life.

CHAPTER-5

Courtesy: DavidGoldman



Labour Laws and Development Schemes for Migrant Workers in Gujarat



Looking into the dismal conditions of migrant workers, it is difficult to believe that there is a long list of labour laws and welfare schemes designed by Central and State governments. Labour laws in India are of two types: laws for the formal sector workers and laws for the informal workers. Construction industry units, if registered under the Factories Act, will be counted as a formal unit, but even when these units are registered, these workers are not included as formal workers. This means that all migrant construction workers are treated as informal workers.

The major labour laws applicable to migrant workers are as follows:

1. Payment of Wages Act,

1936: According to this act, all workers are entitled to wage payment for the work that they have done. These wages should be paid regularly, before the 7th day of a month if the unit of employees less than 1,000 workers are paid monthly wages. For smaller units too the wages must be paid for the work done as per the written or oral contract. The employer is permitted to deduct part of it for taxes or social security, etc. It is laid down in the act that if these provisions are violated, the penalty will be between Rs.200–

Rs.1000. Delayed wage payments attract a penalty of Rs.100 per day. Clearly, these penalties can hardly be a deterrent to employers who tend to violate the act.

2. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970:

According to this act each contractor bringing/engaging 5 or more workers should obtain license from the authority and pay fees/deposits. Contractors are expected to provide basic amenities such as rest rooms, facilities for night halt, water supply, sanitation (sufficient number of latrines and urinals) and washing facilities to workers while on work and after the working hours. They are expected to ensure facilities like

first aid box and access to health services.

Contractors are also expected to provide to workers facilities for education of children, fair price shops, conveyance or allowances, leave travel concessions and other facilities. It is the duty of principal employers to see that contractors enforce this act so as to provide the legal entitlements to migrant workers. Violation of these provisions attracts up to 3 months' of imprisonment and/or fine up to Rs. 1000.

3. The Minimum wages Act, 1948: The appropriate government is expected to fix minimum wage rates for workers employed in various industries/sectors of the economy. Concerned employers are expected to pay these wages. For overtime work, the wages to be paid are one-and-a-half times the minimum wage rate. Employers are expected to keep registers and records under this act. The state government can set up a tripartite committee to fix or revise a minimum wage rate, or pass an ordinance announcing the rate.

For violation of each of the clauses of the act, the punishment for the employers can be imprisonment of 6 months or fine up to Rs. 500.

4. Employees Compensation Act, 1952 (1982): This act, which was known as Workmen's Compensation Act, is about compensatory workers for injury and death. Under this act if a worker dies of an injury on work, his family is entitled to a compensation of up to Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakhs. The act lays down compensation amounts for different types of injuries, types of disablement as well funeral charges and other charges.

Violation of this act attracts payment of the amount with interest to concerned workmen as well as a fine of up to Rs. 5,000.

5. Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976: This law prohibits all forms of bonded labour. Under this act, all debts that require people to perform bonded labour are automatically cancelled or abolished when the job ends. Any property held by an employer in connection with a bonded debt must be restored to the bonded labourer. After a bonded labourer is freed from bondage, the District Magistrate is to ensure that his economic interests are secured as far as practicable so that he does not end up in bondage again.

Punishment for violation of this act is nothing less than imprisonment of up to 2 years.

6. Inter-state Migrant Workers Act, 1979: No employer or contractor can employ any inter-state



migrant worker without getting a license from the concerned authority and without any registration of the workers. Contractors also have to get a license from the state government from where the workers are brought. Any movement of workers without this license is prohibited. It is the duty of both the state governments that provisions of this act are enforced through appointment of proper officers.

Contractors as well as principal employers are obliged to perform the same duties as laid down under the contract act. Intra-State migrant labours are entitled to journey allowance, displacement allowance, and other facilities from contractors, who are also responsible for the enforcement of other relevant labour laws, such as Payment of Wages Act, Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, Minimum Wages Act

and others. Inter-State migrant workers are also entitled to similar wage rates as local workers. The act also provides that any loan obtained by a migrant worker from his/her employer or contractor during employment will be cancelled automatically when employment ends. This is an important provision for preventing bondage of migrant workers.

The principal employer is also responsible for implementation of the provisions of the act. Contractors/Employers are obliged to keep records of workers, payment through bank account, issuing passbook and providing amenities at the site. Finally inter-state migrant workers and internal migrant workers are entitled to the Central/state social security schemes, welfare schemes and schemes pertaining to children and women as well as pertaining education



and health services.

Contraventions of provision of the Act attract punishment of imprisonment up to one year and/or fine up to Rs. 1000, or both. For repeated contraventions an extra fine of up to Rs.100 per day can be charged.

7. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986:

This act prohibits employment of children in certain specific hazardous occupations and processes and regulates the working condition in others. For child workers, there are specific rules and regulations regarding period of work, working environment, protection measures such as fencing of machinery, use of power etc., facilities and amenities for children and security of children. The act has laid down punishment of imprisonment of 3 months and/or fine of Rs.10,000–Rs.20,000 or both.

State governments are expected to make suitable rules for each of these central acts. As labour employment falls in the concurrent list of

the subjects under our Constitution, the major responsibilities for the enforcement of these acts lie with the state governments.

In addition to the above, there is the Building and Construction Workers Act and several social security acts.

B. Social Security Acts and Schemes for Migrant Workers

As regards Social security for migrant workers, there are two major acts, namely, the Building and Other construction workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Services) Act 1996 and the unorganized workers' Social Security Act 2008.

Under the **Building and Other Construction**

Workers Act the state government appoints Advisory Committee to design activities for implementation as well as monitoring of the implementation of the Act. Each state is expected to set up Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board. Government of Gujarat has designed several schemes and programmes for migrant workers. Construction workers in Gujarat are entitled to the following:

- ◆ Registered Construction Workers (with the Board) are entitled Rs 3 lakhs if died accidentally on work site. If not registered, this amount will be Rs. 1.5 lakhs.
- ◆ Monthly pension of Rs. 1,000/- to all construction workers after 60 years; under Atal Pension Yojana all workers get contribution from the government of Rs. 500, and if a construction workers dies between the age of 18-70 years, his/he heir will get Rs. 5,000 one time help.
- ◆ Under Shramik Annapurna Yojana all registered workers get nutritious meal for Rs. 10.
- ◆ Under all municipal corporation, Arogya Rath (health chariot) will provide free medical help to construction workers on site; in the event of serious illness all workers are entitled to assistance up to Rs. 1lakh.
- ◆ Children of registered construction workers studying in standards 1 to 12 will get assistance from Rs. 500 to Rs. 2500 (for hostel); their children studying for engineering degree course, MBA, MCA, IIT etc will get Rs. 30,000 (monthly) assistance; and children studying in para medical courses, Ayurveda, Homeopathy will get Rs. 20,000 monthly assistance; and others in higher education will get between Rs. 15,000-Rs. 20,000.
- ◆ The workers are also entitled to get the benefits of various schemes like Housing scheme, PM Social Security Scheme, Vatsalya Yojana (for young children) and skill training schemes.

In addition, construction workers are also entitled to housing (temporary) facility on worksites, (Deen Dayal temporary housing scheme). The Gujarat Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board has been set up under the Act. For getting benefits from the Board, each of the construction workers have to get registered under the Act. Registration is given to those workers who have satisfied the following conditions: the worker should be between the age of 18-60. In addition, he/she has to provide the following documents:

- Proof of age,
- Aadhaar card, Ration Card or Voter's ID card
- Three photographs of passport-size
- Bank passbook
- A certificate of construction work of at least 90 days (self certification).

When we look at the performance of these acts and schemes at the field level, the performance is worse than miserable! If we look at women construction workers, they get maternity benefits of Rs 7,500/ for two child births. However, there is no mention of paid leave! The other schemes for women construction workers include assistance for education (to wife of construction workers) up to the age of 30; in the event of birth of a daughter, she will get a Bhagylakshmi bond of Rs 10,000 to mature at the age of 18; and if organized into SHGs, these workers will get training (with stipend) for constructing toilets. On the worksite, children will get an Anganwadi facility.

Implementation of Laws and Schemes

The long list of laws and schemes are not observed at the field-level. Our study and focus group discussions showed that labour laws are not really implemented in practice, particularly in the case of construction workers. Negligible number of workers get some benefits like compensation in the case of serious injury and death (not to all workers) and provident fund. One major problem is that labour is not a priority area for Central government and more so to Gujarat government. Since the focus of the present development paradigm is on growth, almost at any cost, the development goals with respect to workers have taken a back seat in government policies. The indifference of the government is reflected in tremendous understaffing. Recently however the state



government has recruited 60 new staff and 10 AGLOs to the labour department.

The problems are: (1) they do not go around to create awareness among workers; (2) the strength is not enough to perform regular inspection and monitoring; (3) since there is no strict monitoring of the performance of the labour department, the staff also is not fully committed; (4) not all small and big contractors are registered and are not answerable; (5) employers/ builders, as principal employers are responsible for the implementation but they do not normally bother, and; (6) the punishments under the laws is nominal and therefore contractors do not worry much about the laws.

The Inter-State Migrant Workers Act is an important law for migrant workers, but it is one of the

Table 28: Performance of the Surat Construction Workers Board

Registration	21342
Assistance in Education	6613
Accidental Death Assistance	02
PMSBY	430
PMJJBY	382
Maternity Benefits	51
Funeral Assistance	08
Bhagyalakshmi Bond	31
Housing Assistance	12



weakest labour laws in design and in implementation. There is not much awareness about the Act even within the labour department! Under this Act, the state government is responsible for the well-being of migrant workers, migrant workers are entitled to all social security measures that are available to unorganized workers and migrant workers are also entitled to services under ICDS, RTE and Mid-Day-Meal and health services. The good part, however, is that the Gujarat government has accepted and passed rules.

As regards the Board, the Surat office of the Building Construction and other Construction Workers Welfare Board shows very poor performance when viewed against the wide range of schemes and programmes so far (2018), the Board has shown the performance as follows:

Against the fact that Surat has 50,000-100,000 migrant workers in construction work, the performance is negligible! State government's big claims that it is standing behind vulnerable construction workers falls flat like a rock!

It needs to be added here to the credit of the Government of Gujarat that a few schemes have been introduced for promoting education and health of migrant workers and their children: (1) scheme for education of school age children at worksite; (2) allowing migrant workers to access national health services, and; (3) giving them access to PDS shops at low prices. However the scheme has not spread much – at least to migrant workers of construction workers,

particularly in Surat.

Union Membership of Migrant Workers

There was no union for migrant workers till now. It is only recently that PRAYAS has begun unionization activities recently in Surat. Union provides collective strength to workers to demand for their rights. However, we observed that there is not a single migrant member that is a member of any union. The result is that these distressed migrants have no courage to raise their voice against severe exploitation.

As seen earlier, no migrant worker has got registered with the Building Construction Workers Welfare Board. The availing of any benefits from its long list of programmes is out of question.

There are two major reasons for this: (1) lack of awareness about the relevant labour laws and welfare schemes etc, and; (2) they are discouraged if not threatened by Mukaddam or the contractors to demand their rights.

Local Workers Vs Migrant Workers

The recent exodus of migrant workers from Gujarat has revealed the dissatisfaction of local workers against migrant workers for grabbing job opportunities in Gujarat. The arrest of about 500 local workers during the exodus shows how locals were pushing migrant workers out of the state.

Our focus group discussion with contractors revealed that they prefer outside workers to local workers, as mentioned earlier. Local workers, however, are dissatisfied that migrant workers are willing to work at low wages for long hours and since their lifestyle is poor, they do not mind staying anywhere – even on roads. This conflict between local workers and migrant workers is hidden, because even local workers are unorganized workers and do not have the power to fight against strong contractors and the builders' lobby.

The state government's poor concern for local workers and their leaders is reflected in the fact that about 500 local workers are creating disturbance (pushing out migrant workers) were taken into police



custody during the days of exodus. Government's support to migrant workers in this manner has several reasons: (1) migrant workers are the backbone of rapid growth of Gujarat economy including the construction industry and the government does not want to disturb this; (2) large builders and developers provide huge election funds to political parties, as also extra payments to officers, and; (3) overall, state government's concerns for migrant workers is

not too high.

Finally, Our study showed that there is not a single member of any labour union of migrant workers. That is, there is no such possibility of migrant workers acquiring collective strength to fight for their rights!



Employers' Attitude Towards Migrant Workers

As mentioned earlier, the building and construction industry is one of the fastest growing industries in India, and particularly in Surat, which is one of the fastest growing cities in the World.

It is not surprising therefore that the city chapter of CREDAI (Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India) is very strong. This chapter was set up in 1993 in Surat, and today it has 850 strong members though Surat has about 5,000 small and big members. It is not easy to become a member of CREDAI: a construction company can be a member only after three years' of experience. Those seeking its membership have to apply along with its PAN card, details of the company and annual reports. The application is scrutinized by the managing committee of CREDAI, which gives final approval for membership. In the process small companies are usually left out more or less. Activities of CREDAI are largely limited to interest of building construction

industry, such as, service tax, implementation of RERA and relationship / meeting with state government authorities.

After a builder/developer takes up a work, they have to take permission from Surat Urban Development Authority (SUDA) or Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC), who do not give permission easily. As mentioned by some builders, bribes are not uncommon! In fact, it was

suggested that bribes are widely prevalent in the industry – though no builder will say this openly. Builders hire contractor(s) and engineers for the implementation of the project. Their main interest is to get the work completed as early as possible. Contractors hire foreman and workers and engineers and architects work with them. The educational qualification of builders/developers is usually not much to talk about. Frequently these are school/ college drop outs also.

There is not much direct contact between workers and builders, as contractors and engineers hire workers – through sub contractors, mukaddam, etc. Contractor's main interest is to get the work done fast and to maximize profits for them. Officers at CREDAI seem to be aware of labour laws and other schemes for labour; even contractors know this. But this implementation does not fall in their priority, particularly when government officers do not worry too much about labour laws. In fact, they were reluctant to discuss problems of migrant workers with us.

Contractors prefer to employ migrant workers over local workers, because migrant workers are cheaper, work for long hours at low wages and do not raise their voice to demand any right. Thus employers prefer to segment the labour market to exploit migrant workers for profit maximization.

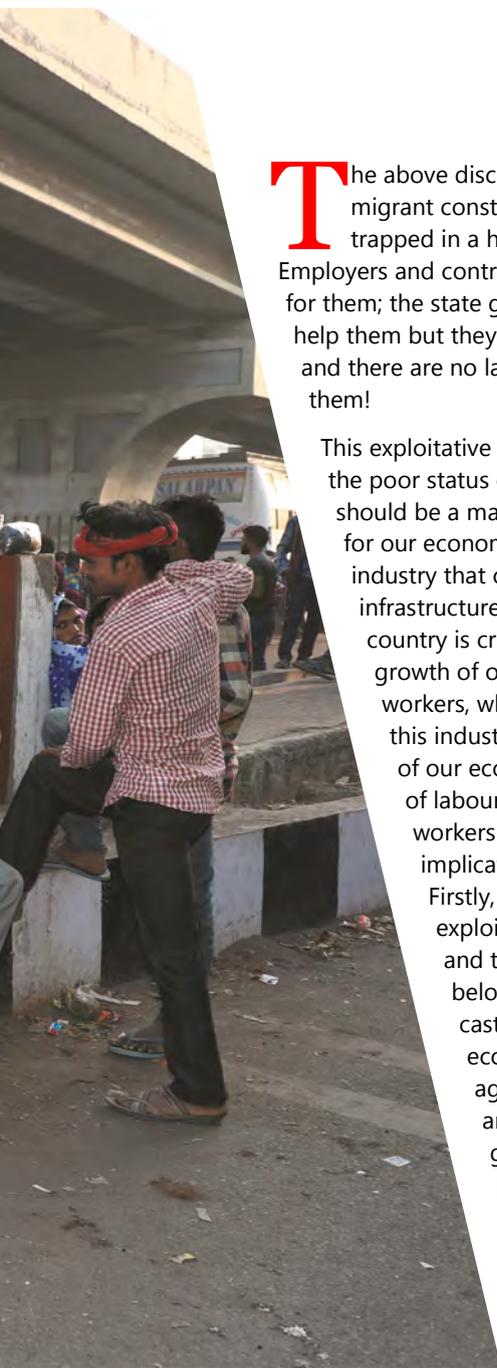
As seen earlier, no worker from our study is a member of any labour union. That is, no effort is made to develop their collective strength to fight for their rights! MAM is planning to organize these workers in Surat, but they have not yet started their work full swing.

To conclude, our study has revealed that the way the things are today, there is not much hope for migrant workers in Surat and migrant workers in India in general!

CHAPTER - 6



WAY
FORWARD



The above discussion has shown that migrant construction workers are trapped in a highly exploitive system. Employers and contractors do not much care for them; the state government is trying to help them but they have many constraints; and there are no labour unions to help them!

This exploitative process of migration and the poor status of migrant workers should be a matter of serious concern for our economy. The construction industry that contributes to infrastructure development in the country is critical for economic growth of our country. Migrant workers, who are the back bone of this industry, are also the backbone of our economy. , blatant violation of labour rights of migrant workers has many negative implications for our economy. Firstly, this implies blatant exploitation of the poorest, and that too of those belonging to the lowest castes (SC, ST, OBC) in the economy. This is clearly against the principles of any democratic government. This must stop at the earliest. Secondly, this means decline in the productivity of migrant workers, who work hard but do not get enough nutritious

food, basic services like health, education, skills and have very poor access to social protection. No wonder they retire very soon from the job! This is a clear loss to the economy. At the same time, productive use of local workers who are denied work due to the segmentation also implies a loss to the economy. To put this differently, this exploitation of workers becomes a hurdle in the optimum use of our labour force in the economy. Finally, this exploitative system has bred the culture of corruption at different levels – from the very top to the bottom! This again is an obstacle to economic growth in the short and long run.

The main strategy of contractors and employers is to divide the labour market between local and migrant workers to exploit cheap labour. This source of exploitation, segmentation, can be addressed mainly by ensuring labour rights to migrant workers. Breaking this exploitative system calls for a four-pronged strategy: (1) organizing workers to acquire collective strength to demand their labour rights as also making the government accountable to them;(2) improving labour laws and schemes and ensuring their effective implementation; (3) making employers and contractors aware of their duties and create a mechanism to make them accountable, and; (4) ensuring effective implementation of the Inter-state Migrant Workers Act by the states that send workers to Gujarat (or any other prosperous regions).

Organizing Workers in Unions

Majur Adhikar Manch, a labour union, is working towards organizing informal workers in the unorganized sector. Their focus at present is on organizing migrant workers, and they have already initiated this work. They want to organize these workers for organizing advocacy with the government to see that the rights of these works are protected. They are well aware of the difficulties in organizing them, as they have rich experience elsewhere. According to them the role of trade unions is to emancipate migrant workers from the present situation and to promote their education, health, skills and social security. In order to protect labour rights of these workers as per the laws and rules of the government they need large scale of activities to be powerful enough to be effective. Therefore they also plan to enter into alliance with other labour unions, including established unions of organized workers in the economy. It is a positive development that they have already viewed their long-term strategy for the good of informal workers in India.

At this stage we have two suggestions for them: (1) do not leave out local workers and in the light of the present segmentation of the labour market, try to set up a bridge with them for the well being of all workers; (2) do not leave out contractors and CREDAI members. As both are responsible for the implementation of the labour laws and social security schemes.

Improving Labour Laws and their Implementation

Looking to the fact that migrant workers come to Gujarat in a large number of sectors and are a backbone



of its rapid economic growth (it is recently argued by Gujarat Chamber of Commerce that recent exodus of some migrant workers caused decline in the industrial production in Gujarat – *The Indian Express*, 2018), the state government should set up a Special Cell for Migrant Workers. This cell will be the nodal point of all labour-related affairs of migrant workers. The first task of the Cell will be to organize several field studies to create a strong database on migrant workers coming to Gujarat. The cell should prepare a complete list of all labour laws and schemes applicable to migrant workers for the implementation by labour officers and staff. Our field work has shown that not all of them are aware of the laws and schemes applicator migrant workers, Also make their staff sensitive about the needs and rights of migrant workers.

The governments are no more in the construction sector. Like private sector builders, they also hire

contractors when it comes to implementing public roads and public infrastructure. And as principle, employers also do not care for how the work is going on or how much workers are paid. The government is also expected to encourage workers to form unions; in practice however union leaders who attempt to form unions are threatened if they try to organize them.

One major constraint of the labour department is that in spite of the recent recruitment, their staff is not adequate to create awareness of laws and schemes to scattered migrant workers all over the state and organize inspections and monitoring. The staff should also be asked to make employers and builders accountable for the implementation of labour laws as principal employers. Our meeting with Assistant Labour Commissioner and Labour Commissioner of the state (brief meeting) has shown that they are definitely interested in doing good for migrant



workers.

Similarly **the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board** also needs more staff, more funds and commitment. Their present performance is absolutely dismal!

A lot has been written in this report as well as elsewhere on improving working of labour laws and social security schemes. Instead of repeating these, we would like to emphasize the efficient implementation of Inter-state Migrant Workers Act, which is badly neglected today.

Builders and Developers

Builder and contractors generally believe that they have no role in implementing labour laws and schemes, because this task has been delegated by them to contractors. They need to be made not only aware of their duties as principal employers, but should also be made responsible for this task by involving them when these laws / scheme provisions are violated.

Unfortunately, most contractors are not even registered with the authorities! Particularly small contractors, who are in majority, are frequently not registered. Therefore they are able to bypass the labour laws. All of them need to be brought under the realm of labour laws. Builders

and contractors should also be sensitized about the plight of their workers. An organization like CREDAI can take up this task.

State Governments that Send out Workers

Finally **the state governments** (such as, governments of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh etc) from where migrant workers come to Gujarat, are also not aware of their duties under the Inter-state Migrant Workers Act. These governments are expected to issue licences to contractors who take Bihari workers to other states for work. The state governments are also expected to monitor the working and living conditions of Bihari workers in Gujarat.

The recent exodus of migrant workers from Gujarat to their native states has revealed the utter lack of concern by any government for migrant

workers. Gujarat government was worried because exodus of migrant workers would affect the growth of Gujarat adversely. The Bihar government was upset not because they were worried about the welfare of their workers in Gujarat, but they were worried that if the exodus does not stop, the inflow of a large army of unemployed workers to Bihar would add to Bihar's already available stock of unemployed. The UP government was happy later with the Gujarat government when they saw that Gujarat government somehow could reduce the outflow of migrant workers from Gujarat to Uttar Pradesh. Thus the worry created by the exodus of migrant workers did not bother any of the governments (Hirway 2018).

In the final analysis, what kind of vision do we have for migrant workers? To implement the laws and schemes for their well-being and limited labour rights will be a very narrow goal! What kind of vision do we have for them in the long run? What role do we visualize for them in the process of development? What role does the government want to play? I think these are very important questions that need to be answered!

In brief, I think that this labour mobility should be useful to workers, to the economy and to the overall interest of the labour force. To start with, we want this mobility to enable diversification of our workforce – as it has happened in China. By ensuring their rights, we want migrant workers to get their right to choose: either to settle down in the city of destination or to go back home and use the surplus in enhancing their levels of living and the development of the lagging state. Both the choices are good for the economy! The policy of the government should aim at this goal. The job of the government will be to facilitate this process rather than limiting to implementing “n” number of labour laws only. This vision will also mean weakening the segmentation of labour market to give a fair chance to local workers to get employment in the local labour market, as the advantage of cheap labour to migrant workers will not be there anymore! This will promote healthy growth of the economy, diversify the long awaited diversification of our workforce, enable optimum use of the workforce, and ensure labour rights to all workers. I think that now is the time to widen our horizon to reach sustainable, equitable and healthy economic growth.



Part II

MAPPING OF MIGRANT
CONSTRUCTION WORKERS
AT KADIA NAKAS AND
BASTIS IN SURAT CITY

Prayas Team

PART II



Mapping of Migrant Construction Workers across Surat



INTRODUCTION

Prayas- Centre for Labor Research and Action (PCLRA) has been working with the migrant construction workers in Surat since 2011-12. Having realized the dearth of data regarding the number of workers who work in the unorganized sector such as the building and the construction industry, the organization formulated its own tool for mapping workers in the unorganized sector. Labour and migration mapping is a unique tool developed by Prayas during its work over the last decade to trace seasonal migrant streams across the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Telangana. The methodology comprises of generating information on source and destination of workers and other basic information like number of workers in a family, wage rates prevalent, and recruiting agent in a one line format or very short survey schedules. The major purpose of the mapping exercise carried out in Surat is to establish a data base of construction workers in the city. The schedules have been developed to contact the construction workers across different spaces and time with separate schedules used for the workers at the *kadia nakas*, the *kadia basti*/ settlement of workers, and the work sites. This round of mapping has not been able to cover the construction sites, a lacunae that will be fulfilled in coming years.

The report here seeks to highlight the emergent trends and observations made from the data that has been collected through our labour mapping exercise from January 2018 to August 2018. Since January 2018, the project team of Surat has sought to map the population of migrant workers working in the Surat's construction sector across 15 *nakas* and 30 *bastis*. Given that Prayas' labour mapping exercise is a continuous process, since the month of August the project team working in Surat has found 3 more *nakas* and 2 new *bastis*, bringing the total to 18 *nakas* and 32 *bastis*. Table 1 and Table 2 will inform the reader about the total number of labour stands and the workers' settlements across the city as per our records. Table 2 additionally also provides the area location of the settlements, since some of these are found to exist in the deeper crevices of the city and hence are often difficult to locate. Thus for mapping the workers' settlements, the team members relied on the information shared by the workers they met at the labour stands in the morning to direct them to the respondents' settlements. To conduct the mapping exercise, the team of data collectors would meet the workers early at around 7 am in the morning when the workers assembled to find work. Through the workers who were mapped at the *nakas*, the team was able to trace the locations of the worker settlements across the city. While the structure of the schedule in the *nakas* was made to suit the individual worker respondents present at the *nakas*, for *bastis* the team used a family based schedule.

Furthermore, the team's objective was to map and document all the worker families present at a particular location for a given settlement. However such was not possible for all workers at *nakas*. Since the workers assembled with an objective to find work, many would not have time to respond to the survey schedule. Also, the window of time available for survey team was about two hours – from 7 am when the workers started assembling to 9 am, when most of the workers would have gone to their respective places of work for the day with petty contractors. Thus a hundred percent mapping of the *nakas* is a difficult exercise given the small window of duration. Given that different schedules were used in the mapping exercise, this part of the report is divided into two separate broader sections: Findings from the *Naka* mapping and Findings from the *Basti* Mapping. Data collected and observations thereon are presented in these two separate sections.

As the note to the reader informs, this section of the report should be seen as

Table 1: List of *Nakas* in Surat

S.no	<i>Nakas</i>
1	Amroli <i>Naka</i>
2	Archna <i>Naka</i>
3	Bhatar <i>Naka</i>
4	Chowk <i>Naka</i>
5	Ichchanath <i>Naka</i>
6	Kadodara <i>Naka</i>
7	Kapodara <i>Naka</i>
8	Katargam Khav Ashram <i>Naka</i>
9	Lalita Chokdi <i>Naka</i>
10	Nilgiri <i>Naka</i>
11	Parvat Patiya <i>Naka</i>
12	Ram Nagar <i>Naka</i>
13	Simada <i>Naka</i>
14	Udhna <i>Naka</i>
15	Yogi Chowk <i>Naka</i>
16	Amboli- Kamrej
17	Paliwal -Sachin
18	Oon Patiya

complementing the larger study on the migrant labourers working in the building and construction sector that seeks to highlight and emphasize the concerns of the migrant construction workers who work in the city of Surat.

For the information of the reader, following is the total list of *nakas* and *bastis* in Surat as on November 30th, 2018 as per PCLRA's records.

The location of *nakas* and *bastis* is shown on the map of Surat Above

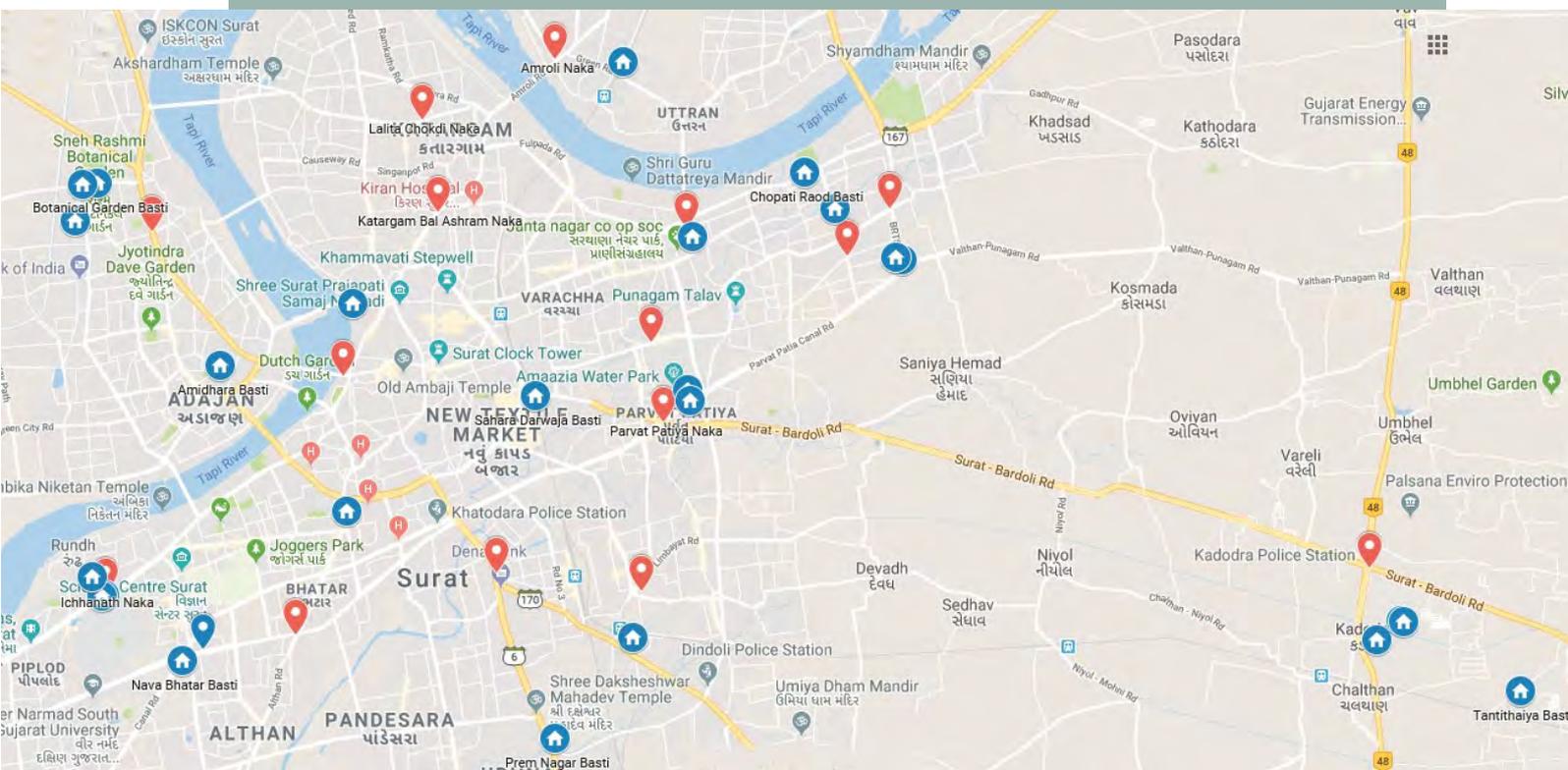
Table 2: List of *Bastis* in Surat

S.no	<i>Basti</i>	Area Location
1	Amidhara	Amidhara Hall Adajan
2	Bhagu Nagar	Kadodra
3	Bhagwati Nagar	Kadodra
4	Botanical Garden	Jahangirpura
5	Chopati Road	Nana Varacha
6	Dindoli <i>Basti</i>	Navagam Dindoli
7	Gayatri Mandir Bhatar	Bhatar
8	Ichchanath SVNIT	Ichchanath
9	Ichchanath	Ichchanath
10	Jain Mandir Footpath <i>Basti</i>	Ichchanath
11	Kapodara Wada	Kapodara
12	Krishna Nagar	Kadodara
13	Maruti Dham	Amroli
14	Nava Bhatar	Bhatar M. Road
15	Navi Civil Foothpath <i>Basti</i>	Majur Gate
16	Paliya Ground	Variyali Bazar
17	Panchwati Society	Varupi
18	Parvat Patiya	Parvat Patiya
19	Prem Nagar	BRC Dargah, Udhna
20	Sahara Darwaja	Sahara Darwaja
21	Shanti Nagar	Kadodara
22	Shri Khodal Kripa Navagam	Dindoli
23	Shriji Nagar	Jakat
24	Shyamdas Mandir	Jakat
25	Simaada Junction	Simaada Junction
26	Simaada Nahar	Simaada Nahar
27	SMC Ground <i>Basti</i>	Parvat Patiya
28	Tata Thaya	Kadodara
29	Ugat Canal	Ugat
30	Yogi Chowk	Yogi Chowk
31	Kamrej	Tapi Kinara
32	Lajamani	Mota Varachha

Mapping of *Nakas* across the city of Surat:

Drawing from the discussion above, one knows that *kadia nakas* are a significant platform that becomes a point of contact for workers and contractors seeking labourers to work on the

Map showing Kadia Nakas and Bastis across Surat



This map has been mapped by the Project Team in Surat

construction site for the day. Therefore the *nakas* become a convenient location to conduct labour mapping exercise as one can meet with workers who have migrated to work in the construction sites with ease.

The profile of the 3415 workers, as per the *naka* mapping informs that a majority of respondents belong to the neighboring states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra (in addition to few of the respondents who had migrated from other states such as Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal so on and so forth) – a finding that is re-emphasized by data found in the worker families mapped in worker settlements. As it emerges from the data collected on social categories, one finds that the majority of our respondents were Scheduled Tribes who come from the tribal districts of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. As findings of the report in Part 1 suggests that the kin-ties become an important line of contact in the process of migration and also become significant in securing the survival of the migrant in the destination of migration. Thus that at certain *nakas* and particularly the *bastis* like the Amidhara or Parvat Patiya, one finds a certain region wise clustering of the workers and their families. This also inaugurates questions around isolation, alienation, and vulnerabilities that migrants are often exposed to after moving to the destination of migration. This can further be explored through information on the nature of accommodation and the state wise concentration of workers across *nakas*.

The discussion of this section has been based on the data collected over the period of January to August 2018 by the project team of PCLRA. The survey was conducted across 15 workers' labor markets/stands or *nakas* where the team in Surat has been engaging with workers since 2011-12. This entailed that the surveyor's team would visit these stands early in the morning as men and women would assemble at the *nakas* to find work. During this period of data collection, the surveyors' team was able to document 3415 inter-state and intra-state migrant workers working in the construction industry, who assemble to find work at building and construction sites across these sample *nakas*. Among the respondents, roughly 10% were women, while the rest of the respondents were men. This skewed-ness in the number of respondents can be attributed to the fact that many women who do assemble at the *nakas* are often hesitant and apprehensive about talking with strangers. More often than not, the male relative (who is present at the *naka*) responded, and after the male member of the family had responded, women members shared that they did not see/feel a need to interact with the team surveying the *naka* after at least one member of the family had been documented. This kind of pattern in thought is observed when workers are to be registered with the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (BOCWFB). As will be visible from data collected on registration with the BOCWFB and access to benefits as members of the board (Table 12) would reflect that the male workers registered with the BOCWFB is higher than



Table3: Sample size of the study

Sex	Sample of workers mapped	Percentage (%)
Female	341	9.985
Male	3074	90.014
Grand Total	N=3415	100.00

women. This has been a general observation wherein often if a male member of the family has been registered with the Board, rest of the members particularly the women are not registered as workers. It is felt, as shared by few respondents- that one of the family members is sufficient to be registered with the board. Getting the female construction workers registered is seemingly futile for the migrant workers. This hesitation of speaking with the strangers and the perspective that the response of the male family worker is representative of the other respondents – particularly of female from the same family has led to low levels of female respondents in the

documentation. The details of the sample size of respondents can be found in Table 3.

Table 4 reflects the sex-wise distribution of the respondents as mapped across the 15 *nakas* of the city. Kadodara *Naka*,

Kapodara *Naka*, Nilgiri *Naka*, Parvat Patiya *Naka*, and Chowk *Naka* have relatively more representation of respondents, given the prime location of the labor markets in addition to the fact that these labour stands are amongst the older and popular ones in the city, thus the traffic of workers is also higher.

Table 5 depicts the social classification of workers based on administrative and religious categories. One observes that the number of respondents from

Scheduled Tribe is relatively higher, a majority i.e, 70% of the respondents fall in Scheduled Tribe category, belonging to the Scheduled Tribe belt of

1.Note: Percentages in all the tables have been derived the total sample size pertaining to the category.

Table 4: Sex wise distribution of respondents as documented across various *Nakas* (figures in %)

S. No	<i>Nakas</i>	Female	Male	Grand total
1	Amroli <i>Naka</i>	0.20	2.96	3.16
2	Archana <i>Naka</i>	-	0.38	0.38
3	Bhatar <i>Naka</i>	1.20	7.44	8.64
4	Chowk <i>Naka</i>	3.31	7.76	11.07
5	Ichchanath <i>Naka</i>	0.03	1.35	1.38
6	Kadodara <i>Naka</i>	0.61	13.73	14.35
7	Kapodara <i>Naka</i>	0.26	10.81	11.07
8	Katargam Khav Ashram <i>Naka</i>	-	0.82	0.82
9	Lalita Chokdi <i>Naka</i>	0.44	3.95	4.39
10	Nilgiri <i>Naka</i>	1.55	10.69	12.24
11	Parvat Patiya <i>Naka</i>	1.02	10.37	11.39
12	Ram Nagar <i>Naka</i>	0.85	7.50	8.35
13	Simada <i>Naka</i>	0.38	3.66	4.04
14	Udhna <i>Naka</i>	0.12	6.35	6.47
15	Yogi Chowk <i>Naka</i>	-	2.25	2.25
Grand Total (N= 3415)		9.99	90.01	100.00

Table 5: Respondents according to social categories

Categories	Percentage (%)
General	2.17
Muslim	2.37
Other Backward Class	15.93
Scheduled Caste	8.96
Scheduled Tribe	70.57
Grand Total (N= 3415)	100

Following the left table on social categorization, Table 6 depicts that many of the respondents who undertake inter-state and intra-state migration come from the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

Table 7 seeks to highlight the states that become sources of migration for the highest number of respondents who migrate to work in the construction sector of Surat.

Following the discussion above

Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

The number gets skewed more towards the tribal population, once one reads the *basti* data one realizes that more number of Scheduled Tribes are found in *basti* or open settlements, as compared to other categories in general.

of large number of workers who fall under the ST category, Table 7 reflects the source districts of these workers across the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. One observes that workers do come in prominent numbers from the Scheduled Tribe areas located in the shared borders of the four states.

Table 6: Distribution of workers according to their states of origin

S. No	States	Workers	Percentages (%)
1	Gujarat	1060	31.04
2	Madhya Pradesh	835	24.45
3	Maharashtra	790	23.13
4	Rajasthan	480	14.05
5	Uttar Pradesh	148	4.33
6	Bihar	60	1.76
7	Odisha	10	0.29
8	Chhattisgarh	8	0.23
9	Jharkhand	7	0.20
10	West Bengal	7	0.20
11	Other States	10	0.292826
Grand Total		3415	100

Table 7: District-wise distribution of migrant workers across various states

States (total number of respondents)	Districts						Grand Total
	Banswara	Dahod	Dhule	Jalgaon	Jhabua	Nandurbar	
States(total number of respondents)							
Gujarat (1060)	-	738	-	-	-	-	738
Madhya (835) Pradesh	-	-	-	-	491	-	491
Maharashtra (790)	-	-	189	248	-	207	644
Rajasthan (480)	438	-	-	-	4	-	442
Grand Total	438	738	189	248	495	207	2315

2 For the convenience of the reader few states such as Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Nepal, Punjab, and Telangana with have been categorized as Other states.

Table 8 : Age wise distribution of workers (figures in %)

Age in years	12-21	22-31	32-41	42-51	52-61	62-71
	16.25	36.66	27.88	12.43	4.83	0.95

Table 8 seeks to classify and categorize the respondents according to their age as per their states of origin. This can help with insights into which age group in particular migrates from which states. Generally speaking a certain clustering can be observed around the age group of 22-31 years for all states with 37% respondents falling under this age group; while 28% of the total workers fall under the age group of 32-41 years. One knows, intuitively that the workers tend to migrate in, what can be considered the most productive age for work. The numbers in the tables below highlights these observations for the states that see the most number of workers migrating to Surat.

Level of education among the workers as shown in Table 9 reflects that 44.7% of total respondents have never been to school and identify themselves as illiterate. One sees, although, that about 22.5% of workers have studied up till the Secondary level of school. Interestingly among the respondents, one also observes that there are candidates who have completed their post graduation but work as part of the informal labor force in the construction industry. Those who have been able to complete their undergraduate and post graduate studies have not been able to find suitable jobs either in their source or destination of migration and thus are forced to work as construction labor.

Table 9 : Education level among the respondents

Level Of Education	No. of Workers (%)			
	Female	Male	Grand total (N=3415)	
Illiterate	-	7.96	36.78	44.74
Primary level	1 -5	0.61	13.56	14.17
Secondary Level	6- 9	0.88	21.67	22.55
Matriculation and above	10-12	0.53	16.49	17.01
Undergraduate	BA	-	0.94	0.94
	Bsc	-	0.11	0.12
	FY BA	-	0.06	0.06
Certificate courses	ITI	-	0.06	0.06
	LLB	-	0.03	0.03
	MA	-	0.09	0.09
Post Graduate	Medical	-	0.03	0.03

Table 10 shows the classification of the respondents according to the reported nature of the work they perform at construction and building sites. According to the sex wise distribution of workers across types of work, it is visible that about 65% of workers are *majdoors* or are involved in what can be loosely articulated as construction work, which is largely unskilled. The table further shows that majority of female respondents (90%

Table 10: Distribution of workers according to the nature of their work

Nature of Work	Sex distribution (figures in %)		
	Female	Male	Grand Total
Construction Work	9.25	55.93	65.18
Chantar Plaster	0.06	19.77	19.82
Senting Mistri	-	4.36	4.36
Khudai Work	0.41	1.84	2.25
Bharai Work	0.20	2.02	2.23
Colour Work	0.00	1.82	1.82
Plumbing	0.00	1.29	1.29
Tiles Fitting	0.03	0.61	0.64
Tacha Marna	0.00	0.41	0.41
Loading Unloading	0.00	0.15	0.30
Machine Operator	0.00	0.26	0.26
Todfod Work	0.00	0.26	0.26
Carpenter Work	0.00	0.23	0.23
Driving	0.00	0.23	0.23
Break Machine Operator	0.00	0.18	0.18
Scrap Work	0.00	0.06	0.06
Sunari Work	0.00	0.06	0.06
Mistri	0.00	0.06	0.06
Labour Contractor	0.00	0.03	0.03
Light Fitting	0.00	0.03	0.03
Diamond cutting	0.03	0.00	0.03
Beldari	0.00	0.03	0.03
Welding Work	0.00	0.03	0.03
Band Master	0.00	0.03	0.03
Sweeper	0.00	0.03	0.03
Computer Operator	0.00	0.03	0.03
Security guard	0.00	0.03	0.03
Vetar work	0.00	0.03	0.03
Stone Cutter	0.00	0.03	0.03
Cobbler	0.00	0.03	0.03
Grand Total (N=3415)	9.99	90.01	100.00



of the total 10% female respondents in our **sample**) work as unskilled laborers at the construction site. One will also realize, that as per the trend, most of the skilled work performed at construction site is being done by men, highlighting that gender still continues to determine the skill set a particular gender can acquire – resulting that most of the skill set lie with men.

(One may choose to collapse many type of work as indicated in the table as construction work; however due to a possible loss in data integrity, the report writer chose to retain the categories as reported by the respondents)

While table 10 showed the categorization of respondents according to the nature of their work, Table 11 depicts the nature/type of wages received by the respondents. Following from the observations of the above table, the gender stereotype continues to persist when one observes that 90% of the total women respondents fall under the category of *majdoor* or unskilled labor; as for men, 60% of the total

Table 11: Classification of workers according to the wages they receive

Types of wages	Workers (figures in %)		
	Female	Male	Grand Total
Driver	0.00	0.03	0.03
Karigar	0.12	30.01	30.13
Majdoor	9.87	59.97	69.84
Grand Total (N=3415)	9.99	90.01	100

Table 12 : Incidence of non- payment of wages across the respondents

Responses	Female	Male	Grand Total
Have not faced a wage default	3.19	22.90	26.09
Faced a wage default	6.79	67.06	73.85
Faced wage default, but received wages later	0.00	0.06	0.06
Grand Total (N=3415)	9.99	90.01	100.00



respondents receive the wages commensurate for unskilled labor while 30% receive the wages of *karigar* or skilled labor.

Due to the informality of the employment arrangement, workers often encounter instances where they are either under paid or are out-rightly denied their wages. Table 12 attempts to highlight the incidence of non-payment of wages among the respondents. One observes from the table below that a minority of 26%, which is about a quarter of the sample, have never encountered an instance where they were denied their wages ever. As the data will suggest, three fourth of the sample have faced non-payment of wages, with a miniscule of them who were able to get paid later, after having been refused the first time.

Table 13, indicates how about 56% of the respondents live in open settlements, while about 40% are being able to afford a rented accommodation. A mere 4% of the migrant construction workers have been able to own a house in the city while a miniscule number either lives in government accommodation or live on the site of construction. This indicates a crucial need for the state to provide for housing for the migrant workers who are engines of the construction and building industry. Due to informality of work which entails abysmally low wages, many workers are unable to afford an accommodation in the city, even on rent. As the next section on worker settlements would discuss that in spite of living in the city – either for years together or through circular migration - many have not been able to afford a house. Thus many migrant construction workers often end up living with their families in open settlements in

Table 13: Type of accommodation among the respondents

Type of Accommodation	No. of workers	Figures in %
Open	1943	56.90
Rented	1323	38.74
Own	141	4.13
Govt. provided	2	0.06
On-Site accommodation	6	0.18
Grand Total	3415	100.00

Table 14 : Respondents registered with Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board

Membership With the Board	No. Of Workers	Figures in %
Yes	78	2.28
No	3337	97.71
Grand Total	3415	100.00

grounds, footpaths, under flyovers or foot over bridges. Living in open also entails that the workers are also exposed to harassment by the police or municipality functionaries, and they live under the constant threat of having their belongings either confiscated by the state functionaries or being stolen. Thus one will also find many workers leaving their identity documents back in the source for this particular reason as they state that many of them have experienced a theft or loss of documents since they live in the open settlements. This further entails that many workers have also faced harassment due to lack of proper identity documentation. But as one will realize getting a documentation for the city without a proof of address (in the city), leads to many workers without ID cards. Further due to informality of employment, respondents did not have a proof of working as construction workers. Although registration with BOCWWB acts as an ID document, but as number reflects above, barring a small minority, rest of the workers are not registered with the Board. Further, following from the discussion on inability to afford an accommodation many workers are forced to live in open settlements, which are not identified by the SMC and thus again the workers are left without a

proof of residence – even if a miniscule of them manage to afford an accommodation.

Under Rule -36 ,on December 18, 2004 Building and Other Construction Workers Board was formed as part of Building and Other Construction Workers's Act 1996. Under the provision of this board, construction workers registered with BOCWWB are entitled to several schemes and programmes designed for migrant workers which includes compensation in case of accidents on the site of work, medical assistance, a nutritious meal, a monthly pension of Rs.1000 to the worker after the age of 60years, financial assistance for the construction workers' children. Furthermore the workers are also entitled to get the benefits of various schemes like Housing scheme, Pradhan Mantri Social Security Scheme, Vatsalya Yojana (for young children) and skill training schemes.

However as our mapping suggests that 78 workers out of the total sample of 3415 were found to be registered with the Board, while 3337 (97.71%) respondents remained outside the purview of the BOCWWB. As discussed above repeatedly, the belief that one of the family members being registered is enough is further supported by our findings which show that only 4 women were registered with the Board. Correspondingly out of the 78 respondents who were registered, only 17 were accessing the benefits under the various provisions of the board. This additionally means that membership with the board may not necessarily entail access to the benefits that accrue to the members.

Following from the above discussion and part 1 of the report, one realizes that while *nakas* become an important location for mapping workers who migrating to work in the building and construction industry; but to have a deeper understanding of the living conditions and issues that concern the workers, the PCLRA team mapped the workers settlements as well. Migrant construction workers either migrate as labour gangs and move from one construction site to another through a petty contractor or they undertake migration between the village and the city on their

³ <https://bocwwb.gujarat.gov.in/mission-vision.htm>. Accessed on December 1, 2018.



own and go to *kadia nakas* for daily wage work. The former group – the floating migrant construction workers, are provided a place to live by the developer/contractor (generally on the site of construction). The latter group of migrant *naka* workers get irregular employment anywhere between 5- 25 days in a month depending upon the season, skill, experience. These workers have to arrange for their own housing in the city, living in various kinds of informal housing – ranging from squatter settlements, to rental arrangements, to living in public spaces like footpaths, roadsides, under flyover or foot-over bridges. Such housing arrangement are often profoundly inadequate, which remain unrecognized by the state's housing plans, policies, and programmes in spite of the ambitious programmes such as the 'Housing for All by 2022' programme, that seeks to provide houses to all- as the name suggests.

From a decade long experience of working with the migrant construction workers PCLRA identified

housing as an issue that greatly affects the urban construction workers. This issue emerged as a need for focus when PCLRA team met workers at their squatter *bastis* which revealed the abject and sub human state of their dwellings and living conditions. The broader aim of mapping of *bastis* is to build knowledge required for advocacy and to prepare policy recommendations to improve housing for migrant *naka* workers. The discussion below is to forward efforts to advocate and make a strong case for the need for state to look into the living conditions of migrant construction workers who form one of the largest groups of all service providers in the city.

Mapping of *Bastis* across the city of Surat

The following discussion is drawn from the

Table 15: The list of *bastis* along with the corresponding sample size

S.no	<i>Basti</i>	No. of Families
1	Amidhara	103
2	Bhagu Nagar	29
3	Bhagwati Nagar	91
4	Botanical Garden	236
5	Chopati Raod	38
6	Dindoli <i>Basti</i>	56
7	Gayatri Mandir Bhatar	43
8	Ichchanath SVNIT	8
9	Ichchanath	16
10	Jain Mandir Footpath <i>Basti</i>	40
11	Kapodara Wada	8
12	Krishna Nagar	39
13	Maruti Dham	23
14	Nava Bhatar	61
15	Navi Civil Foothpath <i>Basti</i>	17
16	Paliya Ground	137
17	Panchwati Society	13
18	Parvat Patiya	50
19	Prem Nagar	114
20	Sahara Darwaja	16
21	Shanti Nagar	62
22	Shri Khodal Kripa Navagam	148
23	Shriji Nagar	10
24	Shyamdas Mandir	13
25	Simada Junction	30
26	Simada Nahar	265
27	SMC Ground <i>Basti</i>	63
28	Tata Thaya	3
29	Ugat Canal	41
30	Yogi Chowk	106
Grand Total		1869

Table 16: Distribution of families according to

Categories	Number of families (%)
General	0.05
Other Backward Class	1.71
Scheduled Castes	4.72
Scheduled Tribe	93.47
Muslim	0.053
Grand Total (N=1869)	100

mapping exercise by PCLRA's team in Surat seeks to highlight the emerging trends and observations made from the data collected from the families who work as migrant construction workers and live in the workers' settlements across the city. As discussed in the beginning of this section, the survey schedule was family based. Studies on Surat in particular and Gujarat in general inform that across the construction industry- most of the workers are either intra-state or inter-state seasonal migrants. It was found that most of the respondents belonged to the neighboring states of Gujarat, namely Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra (except few of the respondents who also migrated from Uttar Pradesh). As it emerges the majority of our respondents were Scheduled Tribes from the tribal belt of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, a trend similar to what was found in the mapping across *kadia-nakas*. Many have been coming to the city for more than ten years, spending about 6-10 months in the city and who return to the villages for 15 days to a couple of months for festivals or sowing/harvesting time. There are also temporary short duration migrants who come to the city to work in the construction industry. These non permanent workers face greater exploitation and are more vulnerable when compared to other informal sector workers. The dynamics of their employment and migration also affect that these dynamics have upon their housing needs within the city are little understood. As a result they find themselves outside the purview of urban planning and housing policies which force them to live in dismal conditions. Thus to mitigate the multi dimensional precarity that a migrant construction worker is often

Table 17: Distribution of families according to their states of origin

States of Origin	Percentages (%)
Madhya Pradesh	47.03
Gujarat	24.13
Rajasthan	19.90
Maharashtra	8.61
Uttar Pradesh	0.32
Grand Total (N=1869)	100.00

them; given that the field researchers' team had attempted to do a complete documentation of worker families in the worker settlements listed above. Furthermore, one also finds region wise concentration of workers in a particular *basti*. For instance in Amidhara, about 102 workers were from Gujarat (also see table 19). This furthers our understanding that people migrate and settle in areas in close proximity to their kin or people from their source of origin.

Of the total respondents documented, we find that 93% of the respondents were Scheduled Tribes, (higher than the proportion at *nakas*

Table 18: District-wise distribution of families across various source states

Gujarat	No.	Madhya	No	Maharashtra	No	Rajasthan	No
Dahod	384	Jhabua	498	Nandurbar	119	Banswara	358
Narmada	15	Ratlam	213	Dhuliya	28	Pratapgarh	14
Chota Udaipur	14	Ujjain	72	Aurangabad	7	Grand Total	372
Others	38	Alirajpur	64	Others	7		
Grand Total	451	Dhar	27	Grand Total	161		
		Others	5				
		Grand Total	879				

exposed to, one finds that the respondents are found to be concentrated in their settlements according to their places of origin. If explored further this can reinforce our understanding around how the kin-ties become an important line of contact in the process of migration and also become significant in the survival of the migrant in the city of migration. As shared above, this can inaugurate questions around isolation, alienation, and vulnerabilities that migrants often experience after moving to the destination of migration.

The data for the discussion below was data collected over the period of February to August 2018 by the project team of PCLRA. The survey was conducted across 30 workers' settlements in Surat. During this period the surveyors' team was able to document 1869 migrant families working in the construction industry, residing across the sample *bastis*. The details of the sample size from each *basti* can be found in Table 15.

The table 15 also reflects (although implicitly) the scale of the *bastis* and number of families residing in

shown in Table 5 above), wherein majority of the respondents who work as migrant construction workers belong to the tribal belts in the shared borders of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The respondents from the SC and OBC categories form the next, although distant, majority.

One finds that most of the respondents hail from the tribal belts of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The reader may find that while Table 7 in this part of the report reflects relatively higher presence of *kadia* workers from Gujarat, the Table 17 on the other hand shows that the families who migrate from Madhya Pradesh is higher than for families from Gujarat. This difference in representation when Table 7 and 17 are juxtaposed together appears due to the fact that the project team were able to find more *bastis* of the families from Madhya Pradesh, while the team could not locate many more *bastis* of Gujarati workers at the time of this mapping.

Reading table 17 along with table 18 informs one that that most respondents have their villages located



in the tribal belt of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan (an observation that is reflected repeatedly in our mapping). As the table 18 below demonstrates that intra-state migrant workers from the state of Gujarat come from the district of Dahod (District Census Handbook shows that district is an Scheduled Tribe dominated area). Similarly, Jhabua (Madhya Pradesh), Nandurbar and Dhule (Maharashtra) and Banswara (Rajasthan) become the relatively bigger sources of migrants who are known to come from the regions that are concentrated by the Scheduled Tribe population (administratively speaking), who undertake migration in relatively larger numbers due to lack of livelihood opportunities at the source.

Table 18 gives us a relative imagination of the number of families who come from various districts

across the four source states become the respondents' source of origin. Table 19 gives us the concentration of respondents according to their source states in the sampled *bastís*. One can observe that the *bastís* have a tendency for region wise concentration of the migrant workers. Perhaps this is an indication of the security that one feels in the presence of close of distant relatives or people who share the same origin. Given that the destination of the migration at times place migrant workers in precarious and vulnerable positions, presence of the fellow migrants (of the same or neighboring source) can be a source of security. When one compares the findings as represented in this table with the findings from the *nakas*, one finds again that region wise clustering a characteristic feature that appears in the *bastís*, while in *nakas* one may not necessarily find no such clustering.

Table 19: State wise distribution of families across the sample *Bastis*

<i>Bastis</i>	Gujarat	Maharashtra	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan
Amidhara	102		1	
Bhagu Nagar			29	
Bhagwati Nagar	7		84	
Botanical <i>Basti</i>			4	3
Botanical Garden	69		116	34
Chopati Road	13		9	14
Dindoli <i>Basti</i>		43	13	
Gayatri Mandir Bhatar	3		40	
Icchanath SVNIT	8			
Ichchanath	16			
Jain Mandir Footpath <i>Basti</i>	40			
Kapodara Wada			3	5
Krishna Nagar			39	
Maruti Dham	2		21	
Nava Bhatar	15	9	37	
Navi Civil foothpath <i>Basti</i>	17			
Paliya Ground	27	1	77	32
Panchwati Society			13	
Parvat Patia	8	3	3	36
Prem Nagar	35	5	72	
Sahara Darwaja			16	
Shanti Nagar			62	
Shri Khodal Kripa (Navagam)	3	99	45	1
Shriji Nagar	8		2	
Shyamdas Mandir			12	1
Simada Junction			19	11
Simada Nahar	51		87	127
SMC Ground <i>Basti</i>	6		1	54
Tata Thaya			3	
Ugat Canal			28	13
Yogi Chowk	21	1	43	41
Grand Total	451	161	876	372

Table 20: Distribution of families according to the nature of their work

Type of work performed	Number of workers	Percentages (%)
Beldari	1	0.05
Bharai Work	48	2.57
Breaker Machine	4	0.21
Marble Cutting	1	0.05
Colour Work	2	0.11
Construction Worker	1631	87.26
Driver	12	0.64
Karigar	130	6.95
Khet Kam	8	0.43
Digging work	17	0.91
Road Work	4	0.21
Senting Work	10	0.53
Tiles Fitting	1	0.05
Grand Total	1869	100

Table 20 highlights the profile of work that the respondents engaged in the construction industry in Surat. One can see that 87% of the respondents describe themselves as *majurs* or construction workers/labourers. The next group of respondents who represent as majority are the *karigars*. Rest of the type of work performed falls roughly under the category of semi-skilled or skilled work. The profiles are recorded as per the self description of the respondents. (One can choose to combine few of the categories, the report writer has retained the categories as documented by the team for the purpose of data integrity.)

The survey schedule also sought to document the years spent by the respondents living in the city of Surat. As table 21 shows, almost half of the respondents have spent more than five years in the city. Almost one fifth of the population has spent more than 10 years. Thus

in terms of tenure of stay, the *bastis* seem to comprise of a core nucleus of permanent/ semi-permanent inhabitants surrounded by a floating population of short term migrants.

Table 21: Years lived in the City

Years lived in Surat	No. of families (%)
Less than one year	1.93
1-5 years	49.49
6-10 years	28.52
11-15 years	11.77
16-20 years	4.07
21-25 years	3.75
26-30 years	0.32
More than 30 years	0.16
Grand Total (N=1869)	100

The survey schedule also sought to find out if the respondent families are able to obtain an identity card of their residence in Surat after having spent considerable amount of time in the city. This is necessary to avail benefits of any housing scheme in the scheme. The results confirmed our intuition that there is a high chance of most worker families not having documents to prove that they have been residing in the city. Furthermore the nature of the respondents' settlement constantly faces the threat of eviction, which is why workers are also moving from one place to another – another reason why one may not be able to get a document that would validate their address of residence in the city easily.

However of the total families who were our respondents, there were two families who had been able to get a ration card of their address in Surat, while there were other two who had been able to get some



Table 22: Families with identity documents in the place of origin

Responses	No. of workers
Families without ID	3
Families with ID	1866
Grand Total	1869

Table 23: Age-wise distribution of members of families

Sex	0 to 6 years	6 to 14 years	15 and above	Grand Total
Male	235	128	1602	1965
Female	212	119	1133	1464
Grand Total	447	247	2735	3429

kind of identity document for their residence address in the city.

However, all but three respondents had their identity documents (of at least one kind) of the source village address. But due to lack of proper housing, many migrant workers choose to leave their documents back in the source village.

Given the state of accommodation of the migrant workers who are largely residing in either open or squatter settlements or in public spaces often remain unrecognized by the State functionaries and thereby remain outside the purview of many health and nutrition based schemes particularly the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme.

In the families who were our respondents across the 30 *bastis*, there were 31 women who were reported as pregnant and 41 who were lactating. As per ICDS scheme they should be come under ambit of the scheme and are entitle as beneficiaries, however they along with 447 children below the age of 6 years remain outside the coverage of the scheme.

Conclusion:

The socio-economic survey of Gujarat 2017 discusses a vision document on its section on infrastructure- the Blueprint for Infrastructure in Gujarat 2020 (BIG 2020) that aims to make Gujarat a globally preferred place to live in and do business through accelerated, balanced, inclusive and sustainable growth driven by robust social, industrial and physical infrastructure.

The BIG 2020 outlines investments in infrastructure areas. The creation of infrastructure is expected to attract investments in manufacturing and service facilities which will significantly increase employment and per capita income. Gujarat's five-pronged strategy 'Panchamrut' comprising knowledge, security, water, energy and power along with the BIG 2020 is expected to make significant impact on the state's human development index. The result (it is claimed within the socio-economic review) would be all-round development touching all citizens, including those living in the remotest parts of the state.



The world economic forum in its 2017 report on Migration and Its Impact on Cities shows how migration is changing cities and their demographic landscapes across the world. For Asia, Surat was studied as a case in point- a city that sees migration in large proportions. An article published in Times of India on October 12, 2018, discusses the trends of migration in Ahmedabad and Surat goes on to elaborate how the World Economic Forum study observes that ' the city (of Surat) has one of India's fastest growth rates, with a decadal increase of 55 – 60% over last four decades due to immigration from various parts of the state and the country'.

We know this number will increase with time, with low levels of opportunity in the states of origin; the people will be forced to migrate to the cities like Surat – wherein due to the inadequacy of the city to provide them with decent work and housing conditions; they will be absorbed in the informal sector – that provides security neither in terms of working conditions nor in living conditions. While the city of Surat progresses and makes its mark on the globe as one of the fastest growing cities – is the city prepared to provide

adequately for all its citizens who contribute towards its economy? Particularly the migrant construction workers who form the backbone of its prospering building and construction industry? At the moment – the city has no reliable estimate on the quantum of workers who work in the construction industry and neither do they have a data base of the workers' living settlements. It is to plug into the vacuum of documentation of workers that Prayas continues to undertake mapping of migrant construction workers at labour stands, worker settlements, even the migrant workers living in the construction site so as to inform the State programmes through its advocacy efforts and make appropriate policy suggestions and recommendations to the concerned departments in the Government of Gujarat. While the construction workers make a critical contribution to the progress of Surat, a pertinent question to be asked is should they be destined and be condemned to live in the underbelly of the city? Or will the city be able to recognize and acknowledge their critical contribution?

4. <https://gujecostat.gujarat.gov.in/sites/default/files/socio-economic-review-2017-18-part-i-iii.pdf>

Accessed on December 1, 2018

5. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/migration-and-its-impact-on-cities>

Accessed on December 2, 2018.

6. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/migrants-make-up-70-of-workforce-in-surat-50-in-ahmedabad-study/articleshow/66170754.cms>

Accessed on December 2, 2018.

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Glossary and Abbreviations

Abbreviations:

ASSOCHAM: Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India

CREDAI: Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India

OBC: Other Backward Class

PAN card: Permanent Account Number card

RERA: Real Estate Regulatory Authority

SC: Scheduled Caste

ST: Scheduled Tribe

SUDA: Surat Urban Development Authority

SMC: Surat Municipal Corporation

Glossary:

Anganwadi: a child care centre as part of the Integrated Child Development Services Program to combat child hunger, and malnutrition

Basti: Worker's settlement. Throughout the report 'basti' is used to denote the construction workers' settlements

Kadia: Gujarati term for construction work

Kadia- Naka: Construction labour stand

Karigar: Skilled labourer/worker

Kharchi: An allowance paid to the worker to meet daily expenses in lieu of a monthly payment of wages

Majur/Majdoor: Unskilled labourer/worker

Mukaddam: Labour contractor

Naka: market/stands. In the report nakas is used to denote construction labour stands

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Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action

PrayasCentre for Labour Research and Action (PCLRA) promotes workers' rights in the vast informal sector economy of India. It undertakes research to document work conditions in the informal sector followed by policy advocacy with the state so that workers receive their due entitlements. The Centre has done pioneering work in documenting the seasonal migration streams that feed labour to labour intensive industries like agriculture, brick kilns, and construction. Its work has facilitated development of an alternative paradigm of organizing workers that factors in the constant movement of workers, the critical role of middlemen, the nature of production process, and the socio-economic profile of workers.

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

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